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Weil, Robert, Ph.D.

City University of New York, 1991

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A

OLD CLASS IN NEW FORM

THE MODERN PROFESSIONAL PETTY BOURGEOISIE

by

ROBERT WEIL

VOLUME 1

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, the City University of New York.

1991

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ROBERT WEIL

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This manuscript has been read and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Education has been turned into a fence that hinders the advance of the working classes; it will be pulled down.[1]

Lenin

INTRODUCTION

THE NATURE OF THE QUESTION

Wherever the working class turns--in its daily life, in its fight for survival and to improve its working and living conditions, in its struggle to overthrow capitalist exploitation, in its revolution against the state that protects and props up that system, and in its battle for socialism itself--it is confronted by the social grouping broadly known as "professionals." The question of who these lawyers, doctors, academics, journalists, scientists, engineers, and so forth are, what classes they belong to, what interests they work for, and what their relations to the working class and all other segments of society are and will be in the future has become a pressing one in the United States and throughout the world today.

This is so for various reasons. In the first place, the professionals have emerged in modern times as a mass element in the population, no longer restricted to a relatively tiny sector in comparison to the overwhelming

number of wage-laborer and farming families. Because today the majority of those in the professions must hire out their labor-power to others, they seem to share the primary characteristic of all "workers." Yet their relations to the masses of the working class are marked by contradictions which are often exploitative and oppressive in character, even though they appear at times to hold out hope for progressive alignments. These differences are experienced on both sides as ones of class division, in that they reveal often profoundly distinct world outlooks, unequal degrees of power and levels of income, and differences in life-style, cultural development, and political expression.[2] Moreover as the conditions of United States workers deteriorate rapidly, with mounting attacks particularly against people of color, women and other oppressed groups, militancy is once again growing. With the potential that radical reforms, and perhaps a revolutionary perspective will again be placed on the "agenda" as a real, even if distant prospect, the question of where each major segment of the population stands becomes increasingly significant. Thus both present relations and future possibilities demand a clear class analysis of the professional grouping, to determine what part it does and can play vis-à-vis the developing forces of the working class, liberation struggles, and socialism.

But there are other and more troubling reasons which require us to seek answers as to the role of professionals.

For to the extent that these persons join in or are developed by radical and revolutionary movements, the same complexity of class relations and contradictions repeats itself within the organizations and institutions which lead those struggles. Most notably, the experience of socialism in other countries, beginning in particular with the Soviet Union, which resulted in the emergence of a new ruling group having in large measure the characteristics which are associated with "professionalism," threw a pall over the entire process of socialist revolution and led to profound discouragement for large numbers of persons otherwise progressive in outlook. This attitude has been immensely strengthened by the recent reversion of much of Eastern Europe, of China, and of other countries at least part way to capitalism, rather than to a more proletarian and democratic form of socialism. For many, the very possibilities for changing the nature of society, of being able to bring into being forms of social organization superior to capitalist ones has been brought into question. What is the use, these people ask, if our efforts will only give birth to a recreation of old patterns? The question of the professionals, therefore, goes beyond the immediate reality of their specific role in society, and raises the most fundamental issues of the nature of revolutionary change itself and the possibility of working class and liberation struggles ever being able to realize the goal of

a society free of class divisions, exploitation, and oppression.

To address these problems is to join the growing ranks of those who have attempted to analyze the place of professionals, and of such related groups as "managers," "intellectuals," and so forth. The number of those seeking to find the "solution" to this question has swelled in recent years as the position of these segments of the population became one of the central issues in social, and socialist, theory. The great variety of theories produced remind one of nothing so much as the old fable of the blind men and the elephant, each of whom grasped a different part of the beast and described what they felt: thus the tail was a rope, the trunk a snake, the leg a tree, and so forth. So too, the professionals have been classified by those examining them in every possible manner and combination of class alignment. They have thus been seen as part of the proletariat, as the lowest ranks of the capitalists or bourgeoisie, as a new class under various names, as classless, and so forth and so on in all the positions lying between these various "poles" ad infinitum. In particular, there has been, as two students of the matter put it, a virtual explosion in recent years of theories on this stratum: "The successive elaboration of 'new' classes between the proletariat and bourgeoisie--new middle, new surplus middle, new bureaucratic, new petty bourgeois, new working, professional-managerial--has

consumed the energies and absorbed the attention of activists and scholars throughout the last decade."[3]

However, these widely varying and at times fundamentally contradictory analyses have generally been united by a common approach, consisting of two related elements. First, most are based in some measure on the analysis of classes made by Karl Marx, either by accepting Marxism as authoritative, or by way of a critique of it, usually with a large admixture of non-Marxist sociological concepts. Second, most have found it necessary to come to terms with the question of the petty bourgeoisie, those smallest owners--farmers, storekeepers, and so on--who in Marxist analysis have generally formed the "middle" ground between workers and capitalists. In this case as well the petty bourgeois class is treated either in a "positive" form, with all or part of the professional element being included in it, or "negatively" as a foil against which various contrasting theories are put forward, rejecting the characteristics of the petty bourgeoisie as inapplicable to professionals, and identifying the latter as members of other classes or even as "classless." Moreover, among those who work at least in part within the Marxist tradition, there are still basic disagreements over the nature of the petty bourgeoisie, most notably whether it is capitalistic in its essential relationships or not. Even those identifying the professions as petty bourgeois have also produced a wide range of interpretations, in some

cases ballooning this class "downward" to take in a large non-professional element, in others extending it "upward" to include the top leadership in the cultural field, in academic institutions, and so on. Thus though Marxism and its conception of the petty bourgeoisie have formed a common point of reference from which to begin, those attempting to solve the problem of the class analysis of professionals have arrived at the widest possible range of alternatives.

Why then another effort? What is clearly not needed is one more "new" theory adding to the fragmentation. Instead, I will analyze what the professional sector represents in the overall development of modern class society not by concentrating on their "newness," but by reexamining their connection to the common reference point of the Marxist analysis of the petty bourgeoisie. I will make an effort to explain why, starting with such a similar set of tools, it has been possible for analysts of the professionals to reach such a wide variety of conclusions--that is, I will try to identify what it is that these various students of the question all share that has prevented any unified resolution of the problem. This will hopefully contribute, not toward an eclectic merging of opposing views, but to actually overcoming some of the contradictions which exist between these differing interpretations, each of which at times present very cogent arguments and fill in some of the elements needed to

complete the picture. It will also allow the development of a more general, integrated, and historic perspective of the modern "middle classes," from their origins at the dawn of bourgeois society through their projected demise in the socialist era. To accomplish this, however, requires a radical critique, because more is involved than simply putting together selected elements from a disparate range of analyses. It necessitates reexamining each of the major tendencies within the existing theories in the light of the Marxist concepts of capitalist exploitation and accumulation, especially as they apply to the petty bourgeoisie. What for others served merely as a starting point I will take up again as the fundamental and unresolved issue to be analyzed.

It is in fact necessary, from the outset, to understand the significance of the debate occurring over the "new" middle class strata. Of course, the burgeoning literature on this question is in part simply driven by the desire to understand society and its ever-changing components, to discover what is newest in its makeup of classes. Because much of this rapidly growing analysis draws on a similar set of ideas and data, the exact "title" which is given to the newer strata sometimes seems to be virtually arbitrary.[4] But each term, of course, delineates a concept which has larger implications. The range of language used thus points to many of the aspects of the groups being discussed, reveals the complexity of the

issue, and also expresses the particular stand taken by each analyst. Yet this variety of terminology, the varying degrees of precision used in defining terms, and the differing definitions given to the same words all make the theoretical discussion more difficult. In this introductory chapter I will use the terms "professionals," "new middle class strata," "petty bourgeoisie" and other related phrases in a somewhat loose and interchangeable manner, reflecting this jumble of terminology. It is one of the principle purposes of this work, however, to show that the category "professional" must itself be subjected to an analysis of the various classes into which it may fall, that the "newness" of this grouping is relative and must be related to "older" middle class strata, and that this examination can only be successfully accomplished by reference to the Marxist concept of the petty bourgeoisie.

The language used is thus an expression of the approach which will be taken and its broader ramifications. What is at issue is not "Marx," much less his specific terminology such as "petty bourgeoisie," but the particular image of modern society he advanced, and the revolutionary class forces which he saw as capable of eliminating its present exploitative relations and oppressive contradictions. Conversely, those who are attempting to "go beyond" the original Marxist analysis do so by proposing alternative versions of the composition of the social order, the means to change it, and the goals toward

which society should be striving. These differences therefore are not simply scholarly disagreements, but have both political and methodological implications. The latter are unavoidable and derive from the opposing assumptions which underlie each of the worldviews being adopted. This is so whether given analysts intentionally set out to develop a new political or ideological perspective, or act out of what they believe to be "neutral" scholarship. Thus what is at stake in the question of the class position of professionals and their relation to other classes is nothing less than our view of the modern world and the way we go about trying to change it.

The ideas of Marx are so well known that it may seem redundant to review them, but it is necessary to highlight the basic elements of his thought that are most relevant to the issues that will be raised in this study. Central to his worldview is the role of the proletariat, defined as a class of workers who own no means of production, and therefore have "nothing to lose" except the chains of the capitalists to whom they are compelled by their propertyless condition to sell their labor-power. They are subjected to exploitation in the form of the extraction of surplus-value, the extra value-creating labor they are forced to perform over and above the value paid to them in the form of their wages.[5] For Marx, it is this exploitative relation which both defines capitalism and the place of the working class within it.[6] The proletariat is

by definition without means of production and exploited, and it is this which gives it its unique and central role, for all other classes of modern society in varying degrees own property that frees them from exploitation and can be used to exploit others.

Thus the proletarians can end their oppression as a class only by ending their "classness" as such, the exploitative relationship which is inseparable from their lack of ownership. But to do so they must end all classes, for as long as any other class exists, it will still possess means of production and the ability to exploit the wage workers. The proletariat can escape from this relation only by concentrating all the productive forces in its own hands, thereby eliminating all other classes. Thus it alone has the necessity to see the building of a classless society through to the end. No other class can play this role, for all other modern classes contain within themselves the basis for reproducing capitalism through exploitation of proletarian wage-labor.

The capitalist system develops by concentrating the means of production into ever greater accumulations, ownership of which remains in private hands though the effects of the exercise of such control are increasingly social in scale. In the process of this expansion, it converts ever larger numbers from all other classes into proletarians, making them into the vast majority, and increasing their strength.[7] Not only propertyless, except

for their labor-power, but incapable of breaking up the ever more socially concentrated means of production of the capitalists into individually and privately owned parts, the working class can achieve its own liberation only by bringing to completion the process of socialization. This it does by introducing common social ownership, the basis for ending its exploitation, and for developing all the aspects of a socialist society.

To realize this, the workers also have to take control of the state, making it an instrument of their own class rule, and suppressing both the economic and political power of all other classes. Having no further class "beneath" them to exploit in turn, the birth of socialist society opens the way to the proletariat for the elimination of all other classes and lays the basis for the stage of communism. In that era not only every form of exploitation will be ended, but even the necessity of the division of labor will be overcome, with each individual gaining the ability to express fully their human potential in a classless, stateless, and oppressionless society. The entire passage from capitalism to socialism, and finally to the communist era, must be the work of the proletariat itself, requiring a revolutionary struggle under its own leadership, which is drawn not only from the working class, but from non-worker elements who "go over" to its side, and identify with and fight for its principles and goals.

The Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in 1917, and its aftermath, partially confirmed, but also opened the door to questions about, the accuracy of this Marxist worldview. There was first the problem that "socialism" had arisen in a largely peasant country, which despite the leading role of the proletariat, was contrary to the anticipation by Marx that it would be workers in the most advanced of the capitalist countries, where production was most socialized, who would take the lead in making socialist revolutions.[8] The failure of the European working class to follow the example of Russia in the 1920s and 1930s, the development within the Soviet Union itself of an exploitative party and state apparatus dominated by classes or strata other than the proletariat, the stalling of the drive to socialism in the so-called "Third World" under the dual weight of attacks by United States imperialism and slow economic development, and finally the recent move toward recapitalization in Eastern Europe and elsewhere have all contributed to the questioning by many of the adequacy of the ideas of Marx as an analysis of modern society, and especially the belief in a worldwide socialist victory under proletarian leadership.

It was the massive growth of "new" middle class strata in the industrial nations of the West, however, that crystalized the largely negative critique of Marxism into a positive ideology. Not only did the rise of these segments appear to reverse the Marxist prediction of growing

polarization of society into capitalist and proletariat, but the newer elements themselves seemed to offer at least the possibility of being an alternative agent to play the central role in modern society. Particularly for those still seeking a means to move radically beyond capitalism, the opportunity of replacing the apparently "failed" proletariat with another more "up-to-date" historical subject was welcomed with open arms--and especially minds. For those who rushed to embrace this newest entrant on the stage of history could often look to elements of their own professional lives for aspects of a new social order based on scientific rationality and service to the public which appeared to challenge the exclusively profit-orientated basis of capitalism. Moreover, beginning in the 1960s, it was possible to point to mass militancy, and even insurrectionary roles being played by these "new" strata.[9]

To many, these developments suggested that the old Marxist worldview was at least in need of a radical "stretching," or perhaps that a new paradigmatic framework might actually be required. Some have eagerly embraced the latter possibility, and have seen in it a chance to lay the ghost of Marx once and for all to rest. More commonly, non-Marxist elements, deriving particularly from the ideas of Max Weber, have been introduced to provide a "mix."[10] In either case, the heart of the debate is between those who believe that the working class will still assert itself "in the last analysis" as predominant, and those who advance

the thesis that the proletariat has been displaced as the central historical subject of modern society, to be replaced either by a "new" class element or by non-class formations. Some see in the newer strata the makings of a ruling class, others believe they will lead the way to a classless world in which workers too will be raised up into the "middle," still others anticipate a kind of longterm class stalemate, while others believe such groupings as the so-called "new social movements" represent the decline of class-based struggle. In all such cases, the centrality of the proletariat is rejected and the predominance of the "new" strata is brought to the fore. At times they are even given the role of leading the working class itself to socialism, which must in turn be redefined to replace the Marxist concept of proletarian rule with alternative political forms.

A typical formulation may serve to exemplify these theories:

> Our argument . . . is that contemporary politics has been transformed by the massive development of the 'educated' classes and the partial realisation of their causal powers. . . . The struggles of labour are thus transformed by, first, being removed from the centre of the historical stage; secondly, by having the service class ["the 'educated' classes"] as their apparent 'main enemy' over numbers of issues; and thirdly, through sections of that service class developing alternative political forms which 'out-radicalize' labour (feminist and ecological politics are the best examples). . . .
>
> This is not a new dilemma for labour (and for socialist politics)--after all, when Engels claimed in 1895 that socialists would become a force before which 'all the powers will have to bow' this was in fact conditional upon their success in 'conquering the greater part of the middle strata of society.'. . .

> However, it is noteworthy that if anything the conquering is now taking place the other way around.[11]

Thus, while "it is incorrect to see the service class as a potential ruling class," it will "increasingly frustrate the realisation of the powers of the proletariat," while developing its own political expressions, such as feminism, ecology, and so on.[12] What is at issue here is not the temporary growth of strength among the "newer" strata, nor even a radicalization which at times may "get ahead" of workers, but the question of whether they have "permanently" frustrated the proletarian potential, and its leading role in creating a socialist society.

A more radical viewpoint focused around these so-called "new social movements" in effect dissolves them as "class" phenomena altogether:

> It is clearly part of the self-understanding of many feminists, ecologists, peace activists, and autonomists that their identities, goals, and modes of association are historically new vis-a-vis the Old and New Lefts. Unlike the Old Left, actors involved in the contemporary movements do not view themselves in terms of a socioeconomic class. Most observers agree, however, that they come primarily from the "new middle classes," although marginals and members of the "old bourgeoisie" participate. Yet class background does not determine the collective identities of the actors or the stakes of their action.[13]

In other words, the "new social movements" may come from the middle class, but their politics and ideology are "classless." This turns out to be more than just a "self-understanding," however, for it really rests on an analysis that society is indeed moving "beyond socioeconomic class."

The Weberian concept of separate economic and political systems is critical here:

> The crucial step beyond Marxism is the thematization of the political/administrative system as a source of stratification and power rather than as a mere reflection of socioeconomic inequalities. . . . But, precisely for that reason, it cannot be analyzed through the categories of the critique of political economy.[14]

In other words, state-derived stratification and power have become the primary, or at least equal, source of division with class, and Marxism, which bases its analysis on classes, is therefore no longer an adequate analytical tool. But when combined with the earlier quote, this also implies that the proletariat, whose role Marx thought was central to the overthrow of capitalism, is now being replaced by amorphous "non-class" formations, the "new social movements," which though based primarily in the "newer middle classes," do not "view themselves in socioeconomic terms" derived from this common position.

Thus the apparently "simple" question of the nature of the "new middle class" in fact raises much more fundamental issues. The tendency exemplified by the above passages represents the "pole" which claims that new "classless" forces are already emerging which are replacing the need for a specifically class-based struggle. In an earlier essay, Jean Cohen and Dick Howard made this linkage explicit. On the one hand, they asserted:

> "Class," as the relation to the means of production, to the economic foundation of society, or to other social classes simply cannot account for the formation, power,

> interests or real potential of these groups [professionals, technocrats, et al.].[15]

But this is by no means all, for they had already claimed that

> simply because capitalism rests on the domination of the working class (among others) it does not follow that domination must exist exclusively as the power of one socio-economic class over another; nor does it follow that the road to emancipation of workers and other oppressed strata must be that of class formation and class struggle around class interests.[16]

Two declarations are notable here: that "social classes" cannot account for the professionals and other "new middle" strata, and that struggle based on class is not necessary even for the "emancipation of workers." From this it is evident that a very different political program from that of Marxism must emerge. Both the leadership of the proletariat in overcoming capitalism, and Marxist analysis which rests on that struggle, are supplanted by a politics of which the "new social movements" are said to be the representative, with each group fighting to establish its own identity, interests, and goals unrelated to socioeconomic class.

The opposing "line" to this is that the "classlessness" of the "newer" middle strata is illusory, that an analysis of their position can only be properly made by an examinination of their relation to capitalist exploitation, that "domination" is an inadequate concept in this regard, and that the class struggle, with the proletariat in the lead, is therefore still "on the agenda." To defend this assertion, it will be necessary to show that the "new"

elements can be analyzed with the tools derived from Marx, specifically those of classes, surplus-value and capitalist accumulation. Such an analysis will also demonstrate that their situation is in fact related to that of the "old" petty bourgeoisie. Only when the ability to make class analysis has been established and properly applied to the "newer" middle strata, can the issue of the relation of classes to other forms of oppression be correctly solved.[17] If the existence of such phenomena as the "new social movements" is used to obscure, rather than reveal, the nature of class relationships, then we will be farther from, not closer, to a "unified theory."

Even among those who have tried to hold on to the Marxist worldview, the need to extend it into new terrain, and the challenge of the non- or "post"-Marxists, have led many either to abandon central elements of Marxism or to incorporate aspects from other systems until the "rubber band" holding it all together is stretched so taut it must surely soon break. In other words, those who have set out to "rescue" Marx, have in many cases placed almost as much emphasis on what is "new," to the detriment of the "old" system, as those who have abandoned it altogether. Such a phenomenon was, of course, very familiar to Marx himself, who was if anything more scathing in his attacks on those who moved half-way toward bourgeois economics and ideology than he was on its more open and complete adherents, and who rejected the over-simplification of his ideas--which only

made them that much easier to defeat--by his supposed "supporters," finally declaring in disgust that he was not a "Marxist."[18]

Among those who continue to assert the standpoint of Marx, the problem is thus how to encompass the reality of the greatly expanded and seemingly ever more powerful "new" middle strata, while still showing that the working class will emerge triumphant in the end. Here the difficulty is that, in the process of such a defense, so much may be conceded to the proponents of the "newer" elements that the centrality of the proletariat can only be "saved" by "destroying" it, leaving the form but robbing it of its substance. While presenting a formal alternative to the "new middle class" proponents, such theories in fact go a large part of the way toward accepting the same arguments which the latter use to advance their claims. The living dynamic which drives the working class to the forefront of modern society may thereby be turned into a lifeless progression of strata and stages that loses its vital explanatory power for the historical processes of society. Thus, while the workers appear to win out "in the end" in these theories, the means by which the "newer" strata are defeated remain obscured or altogether unexplored.

However, to the extent that a struggle of these two "poles" does exist, it appears to be purely between the proletariat on the one hand and the "new middle class" on the other. The "old" petty bourgeoisie does not seem to

enter into the picture, and in fact, as will be shown below, it is the common agreement that it is irrelevant which most closely unites the two opposing camps. Yet it is here, where there is virtually no debate, that there should in fact be the most open and fierce contention, and it is at this point that once again the issue of the relevance of Marx in explaining the dynamic of the modern world is sharply raised. While Marxists have, of course, always seen the capitalists as the main enemy that would have to be overcome by the proletariat, to break the primary power of the system which exploited them, it was against the petty bourgeoisie that they believed the real battle would take place for the "soul" of the socialist movement. On the outcome of that struggle, would be determined not only the nature of "socialism," but even whether such a stage could be reached, because the duality of the petty bourgeois role in the capitalist system, opposing the "big" bourgeoisie, but in the name of small ownership, gives rise to "middle class" socialistic ideologies. To organize the working class for revolution thus required defeating all the "middle class" theories that weakened it, as only with its maximum strength, and with clarity about its own goals and abilities to realize them, could it be triumphant. It is this relationship which accounts for the depths of scorn and bitterness which Marx and Engels, and later Lenin, reserved not for the bourgeois, but for the petty bourgeois ideologues.

In their life-long struggles against these opponents, they confronted all the middle class nostrums and theories, which are so familiar to us from the proponents of its "new" strata today: the political leadership of the "old" petty bourgeoisie over the working class; the alternative of "raising up" the workers into the expanding "middle"; the possibility of achieving a classless society, as it were "directly," without the need for revolution by the proletariat; replacement of the class struggle by an opposition between the "state" and the "people"; and so forth. What was common to all these assertions was that the centrality of the working-class role in history would be "displaced" and/or replaced by the "middle classes," or by a stage of classlessness that would be achieved by "bypassing" the proletarian struggle.

Therefore, while it is true that Marx and his immediate followers only vaguely recognized the outlines of the emerging strata of professionals and other "new" middle class elements, the essential features of the ideology of the latter in relation to the proletariat were completely familiar to them, since they closely parallel those of the "old" petty bourgeoisie. Thus to "go beyond" Marxism on the role of the newer strata, it is not sufficient to confront its theories of the proletariat and to argue the strength of the "new" segments of modern society. It is equally necessary to come to terms with, and to defeat, the critique which Marx, Engels, Lenin and others made of the petty

bourgeoisie. For it is in the latter analysis that they showed how all modern society must tend toward the strengthening of the proletariat, not only in its material growth as the majority of society, and in its power versus capitalism, but in its ability to defeat politically and ideologically the middle class. It is thus in this dual struggle that the true dynamic of proletarian strength is developed and the foundation of its victory is laid.

To remove the working class from its central position in the overthrow of capitalism, to lay to rest the ideas of Marx which advocated this goal, or to redefine the problem so that the elimination of capitalist exploitation is no longer even the issue, especially as it applies to the situation of the "new middle classes," therefore requires that the Marxist analysis of the petty bourgeoisie must also be neutralized. The simplest and, as we shall see, most common means of doing this is simply to declare that the petty bourgeois phenomenon is passé, an historical remnant irrelevant to the "newer" strata. In reality, this does not neutralize the basic criticism made by Marxist theory of the middle class, but it seems to do so since it eliminates consideration of the real social actor toward which that critique was directed. If the petty bourgeoisie can be dismissed as an historical agent with relevance to today, then the analysis Marxism made of its role, notably its relationship to capitalist exploitation, as well as its own programs for a "socialist" society, can be disregarded.

This two-step shuffle leaves its practitioners free to claim that they have discovered something absolutely new in the world of classes which cannot be analyzed with tools from Marx. Of course, this represents only one extreme form of the debate, since many, perhaps most, of those involved try to integrate aspects of Marxist theory with various "newer" conceptualizations. To the extent that both these forms of analysis rest on rejection of the "old" petty bourgeoisie as irrelevant, however, the two are identical.

What is striking about most studies which have been made of the "new middle class," primarily over the past two decades, is just this element of both agreement and disagreement which they demonstrate. On the one hand, there has been a series of efforts to "define" the class position of the professionals, managers, and intellectuals by employing analyses which depart in varying degrees from the "orthodox" Marxist assertion that the petty bourgeoisie is the middle class of modern society. In these works there has been general acceptance of several basic propositions, including but not limited to the following:

1) "New" mass middle class strata have emerged under late capitalism, notably the professionals and managers;

2) The "old" middle class, or petty bourgeoisie, does not provide an adequate theoretical framework for analyzing them;

3) "Classical" Marxism recognized only the petty bourgeois form of middle class and thus is an inadequate analytical tool.

Here, however, the apparent unity on the need for something new gives way to the sharpest oppositions, and even polar interpretations of what should fill the gap which has been created by the challenge to the analysis by Marx. There is still, therefore, great disagreement as to the way in which the "newer" professional and managerial segments of society should be defined in terms of classes. This wide diversity, moreover, does not just extend to the specific proposals which these different analysts advance for the proper characterization of the "new" middle class strata. For in attempting to proceed beyond the "classical" Marxist analysis, they reopen for consideration all the foundations on which the latter rests: the definition and/or applicability of "class" itself, the material base underlying a superstructure of politics and ideology, capitalist exploitation, and the labor theory of value as its "measure," the proletariat as the historic bearer of socialism, the possibility that a classless communist society might eventually emerge, and the revolutionary means to achieve it. Examination of the literature reveals that it is through their adoption of differing permutations and combinations of theories about the above questions that the diverse analysts of the "new" middle class arrive at their varying characterizations of the latter.

This inability not only to arrive at agreement on a new paradigmatic solution, but even to accept a common set of basic assumptions and definitions from which to work, indicates that there are unexposed and fundamental weaknesses underlying the apparent acceptance of the three "post-classical-Marxist" propositions listed above. It suggests that what appears to be the strength of these varying theories, their seemingly unified project of seeking to "go beyond" traditional forms of analysis within Marxism, may itself be a, if not the, source of weakness. The "classical" body of Marxist writings does not contain an adequate portrayal of the "newer" strata. However, in the desire to escape the confining bounds of the limited treatment of this question by Marx and many of his followers, it is possible that an emphasis on "newness" has obscured linkages which tie the "new" middle class to the "older" petty bourgeoisie and the Marxist analysis of it.

This is the proposition which I have chosen to explore, by limiting my approach primarily to those who have some connection to Marxism either by an identification with a Marxist perspective or through an opposing "dialogue" which engages it. It also means that it is primarily in the meeting place between the "old" and "new" theories that the issue must be engaged. It is evident that such a debate must largely be argued on the theoretical plane. This is particularly so given that there is widespread disagreement, already noted above, on the most fundamental issues of class

and how to analyze it. Appeals to data, whether statistical or historical, can help to frame the questions, to point out the presence or absence of logical consistency in any given alternative, to determine the "boundaries" of various class definitions, and to test the results against social experience and practice. But even if, for example, "testing" reveals the nature of the "boundaries" between the "new" middle class and proletariat, we may be little further along in deciding how to characterize the former among the innumerable alternatives being offered as a solution to its proper "name."[19] Data do provide the test, but only if to begin with the issue is properly framed theoretically, and the right alternatives are tested.

For Marx, of course, history was the ultimate arbiter of whether his theories were correct, but this "proof" too can be only relative at least in the lifetime of anyone likely to read this study. As Yogi Berra has advised us, "It ain't over till it's over." Unless one adopts the reactionary view of Francis Fukuyama that "history has ended" with the recent victories of capitalism, it is evident that the issue of which class will dominate the coming millenia is a very long way indeed from being decided. Marx believed that the possibility of a proletarian reconstitution of society would be settled by historical events, but his projection of it could nevertheless only be into the future. Like him, we can observe aspects which point in that direction, but there are

many obvious countervailing indications as well, and a great deal rests on the relative importance which one attaches to various phenomena. Though Marx and Engels expressed a firm belief in the ultimate triumph of the proletariat, they noted that class struggle could also end in "the common ruin of the contending classes."[20] The "revolutionary reconstitution" of society was only one possible outcome. No one today can claim that history has finally proven their own case. Thus here too, we must look to the relative strength of alternative theories in their ability to coherently explain the meaning of the ebb and flow in the historical progression, their internal consistency, their usefulness in analyzing social phenomena, and their potential for programmatic development.

As has been shown above, the "newer" strata tend toward the "pole" that claims the right and capacity freely to create themselves in their own image, without reference to historical precedence or conditions. This includes a denial that they can even be defined as classes, and asserts the ability to determine their relationships to the proletariat and the capitalists, as it were, on their own terms. Even oppressive or exploitative relations between the middle class and the proletarians can be analyzed as if they had never happened before, as totally "new." A Marxist critique of the "new middle class" therefore requires that its self-definitions be challenged, that its claims to represent a never-before-seen "classlessness" be questioned, that its

"newness" be analyzed to show whether and to what extent it is merely a revival of the "old." It also means denying it the ability to obscure its history, and instead restoring the linkages between past and present, to reveal its role in the struggles of classes. A radical analysis is necessary not only if we are to understand the "newer" strata, but if we are to learn from the history of their previous battles with the proletariat, the better to understand the form that this class struggle can and is likely to take today and in the future.

This requires first and foremost making conscious the very nature of classes, and then in turn a specific class analysis, the usefulness of which is determined by its explanatory power, the ability not only to place each stratum correctly on a "map," but to account for its relations to others and its development. Any such contribution to an understanding as regards the "new middle classes" must deal with two main aspects. On the one hand it is necessary to attempt to "solve" the question of the class position of the professionals and other "newer" strata, and to describe the relationship which they have to the working class and the other classes of society. This must include the historic role of the professions in helping to control and shape the proletariat as a class under capitalism, as well as their present-day relations in which the professional stratum assists in "managing" the social conditions of the workers. It must show what ties the

members of the professions have to earlier parts of the "middle classes," and to what extent they share the position in class society held by the "old" petty bourgeoisie. In more specific terms, it must look again at the analysis which Marx made of the petty bourgeois owners using the same concepts he employed to examine the bourgeoisie and proletariat: relations of capitalist exploitation, the labor theory of value, and the materialist class basis underlying political and ideological expressions. Thus the study of the professionals must be extended backward to make the necessary connections with the past history of the petty bourgeoisie, and especially the historic struggle between it and the proletarians.

But the opposite need must also be met: that is, it is necessary to bring the study of the professions forward, to trace the class positions which they assume, not only in the era of mature capitalism, but also in relation to the historical stage of proletarian revolutions and the transition to socialism. In particular, it must address the question of the fusion of economic and political power in late capitalist and especially socialist societies. It must also account for the growth of such elements as the "new social movements," with progams which are not explicit as to their class interests, and analyze whether they are as "classless" as some have suggested. Therefore a coherent theory must include an indication of what the future holds for the professionals as the struggle of classes continues.

In particular it is necessary to explore the relation which they will have to the proletariat, and whether it will be the latter or some other class that will lead the way beyond capitalism, to socialism and toward achievement of a classless society.

Thus the problem in making an analysis of those in the professions is not simply nor perhaps even primarily to seek what is unique in their situation, but to explore whether they are in fact an "old class in new form," and if so to thereby gain the ability to apply to the "newer" strata the lessons of historic struggles between the working class and the petty bourgeoisie. It is just this kind of unified approach to the history of the "middle class" that is broken apart, and in general explicitly rejected, by most of those who have advanced the many "new" theories noted above. But in so doing they neglect what is in fact a critical "missing link" tying together the various stages in the development of the modern era. Just as each step in the emergence and development of capitalism is associated with a typical or dominant type of capitalist--i.e., mercantile, industrial, monopoly--without breaking the underlying unity of the class relation, so a particular form of the "middle class"--independent, managerial, professional--can also be associated with each different stage, but exhibiting the same fundamental relationships beneath the surface diversity.

At each phase in the growth, flourishing, deterioration, and overthrow of capitalism "newer" strata challenge the working class, and put forth their own programs for organization of the social system. The proletariat is forced to confront each of these elements in turn until, in the period of the transition to socialism, the conflict with the petty bourgeoisie and all the "middle classes" reaches its climax.[21] Unless these class forces are themselves examined in depth, therefore, whatever "laws" of development modern society may exhibit cannot be fully grasped, and key contradictions which arise in this period will occur over and over, without the understanding, much less the guidance, of theory.[22] It is this continuity of the historical process through which the "middle class" and its relationship to the proletariat develops, that must be grasped beneath the surface diversity.

But for this the method by which the question is examined must also be changed. Specifically, my attempt to "integrate the elephant" will rest on the following approaches: 1) I will expand the theoretical basis of the discussion beyond reliance almost entirely on the handful of works by Marx on which so many past analyses were based, by offering a reexamination of certain of his basic concepts; by reviewing other parts of the Marxist writings, the theories of Lenin and Mao in particular; and by examining the revolutionary experiences in Russia, China, and elsewhere. This will require a return to the "basics" of

tha analyasis made by Marx, notably his concept of exploitation, the labor theory of value, and the materialist analysis of classes, using them to reexamine the nature of the "new middle class" strata. 2) I will reexamine the question of the petty bourgeoisie itself, which I believe remains at the heart of the matter. It is in their misinterpretation of the petty bourgeois class, and in particular its relation to capitalist exploitation, by the great majority of those who have analyzed the professionals, that I believe can be found the origin of the plethora of contradictory ideas put forward about them. 3) I will attempt to show that the professional stratum is a directly descended form of the petty bourgeoisie, and not simply a "new" element which shares in various guises some of the attributes of that now supposedly moribund class. What I am attempting here is a defense of the thesis of the unity of the petty bourgeois strata, as the primary "middle class" of modern society, from their origins at the beginning of the capitalist era to their projected disappearance under socialism.

Part I of this work examines the common characteristics of the professions and their relationship to the main classes of capitalist society. I then propose that professionals are a form of the petty bourgeoisie, based on their ownership of what Marx calls the "means of mental production." This necessitates giving special attention to the "fence" of education and the concepts of "human,"

"cultural," or "symbolic capital." But it also requires a reinterpretation of the question of the polarization of classes in modern society. A review of the writings of Marx shows that far from simply indicating the disappearance of the petty bourgeoisie under capitalism, he believed that it would be transformed, losing its "independence" as a class, but only to reappear in the guise of a managerial stratum. From this it is possible to theorize the emergence of a further stage, the outlines of which were also recognized by the early Marxists, in which the professional elements in turn expand in size and power. The latter, however, have a greater ability to reassert the independence of the class, due to their relative social autonomy. This transformation establishes a continuity from the "old" petty bourgeoisie to the "new," including the historical movement of persons from one to another, despite major differences and changes in the nature of each of the strata. Theoretical problems such as types of ownership and inheritance, and the relative weight they should have in the criteria used to delineate classes, are taken up in this analysis.

In Part II various alternative theories of the professionals are examined and rejected. From this review I propose that there is a common error which has allowed the growth of such a plethora of "new" theories, but without any basic agreement between them. The key, I suggest, lies in the belief that the Marxist analysis of the petty bourgeoisie placed it "outside" capitalism, and thus was

unable to account for the growth of newer "capitalist" middle class strata. A review of the writings of Marx and his followers indicates that, on the contrary, they believed the "old" petty bourgeois owners to be very much a part of capitalism, and in fact a major element in both its birth and later reproduction. Thus they treated it as a class that was engaged itself in capitalist exploitation, which could be analyzed through the labor theory of value and which was expressed in its politics and ideology. By misinterpreting this analysis, those proposing various "new" theories ignore the continuity of their concepts with those of earlier Marxist ones. But in rejecting the study of the "old" petty bourgeoisie as irrelevant, they also turn away from criteria which Marx utilized in making his analysis of the "middle class." The result, in varying degrees, are logical inconsistencies and contradictory definitions of classes as an effort is made to find something "new" to replace a theory which has been rejected, but without having been truly confronted and theoretically overcome. This leads me to an analysis of the boundaries of both the "old" and "new" middle class, using common criteria for their inclusion within the petty bourgeoisie, and thus to an estimation of its size and that of its various strata.

Part III examines two opposing tendencies, the "raising up" of the professionals under monopoly capitalism and imperialism, and their contradictory decline or "proletarianization." I then look at the special

characteristics marking the stratum of "semi-professionals," and show that they also have continuity with an "older" class, that of the "semi-proletariat," which has its own ideological and political positions. This lays the basis for an examination of the range of politics and ideology of the petty bourgeoisie, the forms of both contradiction and unity that characterize it as a class, and the attempt by its professional strata to put forward its own social program. Here the crucial consideration is the concept of "classlessness" as applied to the "middle classes." In fact, nowhere is the continuity of "old" and "new" strata more strikingly revealed than in the commonality of their views of themselves as being "above class." By failing to notice or examine this parallel, those theorists in particular who rest their concepts of "newness" on political and ideological criteria are shown to be on especially shaky ground.

In Part IV the role of the professions is traced into the era of the transition to socialism. As the proletariat through its own struggles begins to weaken the hold of the capitalist class over society, all the "middle classes" emerge, as it were, from the shadows, to play an increasingly important role. In particular, the professionals find in this situation an "opening," a second historical opportunity, like that which earlier existed between feudalism and capitalism, to reassert the "independence" of the petty bourgeoisie. To do so, however,

they must escape from the limitations of their own narrow professional specializations, and adopt those systemic positions which reflect petty bourgeois interests as a whole, and particularly that of their entire stratum. This they accomplish through the adoption of various forms of "middle class socialism," which corresponds to aspects of the transition from capitalism to communism, but in a narrow, truncated, and distorted manner that resists the further proletarianization of society. It is in the aftermath of a proletarian revolution, when the bigger bourgeoisie have been decisively defeated, that this petty bourgeois "socialist" project reaches its climax. Gradually achieving a monopolization of the means of mental production in the period of the transition to socialism, and through it of all productive resources, it generates a stratum of "professional communists" who replace the proletarian leadership of the new society, and renew the exploitation of workers, though not generally in "big" capitalist forms.

But despite temporarily successful efforts to challenge the proletariat for leadership of society, the "middle class" once again finds itself polarizing, torn between its tendencies to regenerate a bigger bourgeoisie on the one hand, and to succumb to proletarianization on the other. At the same time it prepares its own demise at the hands of the working class, through the general and political education which it is compelled to give the proletariat as part of its defense of "middle class" socialism. The contradiction

between the monopolization of the socialist means of mental production, and their growing socialization in the minds of the proletariat and all oppressed classes, breaks out in the cultural revolution, demands for democratization, and other forms of struggle. The inequalities and distortions in the process of production and distribution associated with "middle class socialism" are thus also a source of discontent and rebellion.

Faced with the growing threat to their class power, the professional petty bourgeoisie must choose between placing themselves once again under the protection of the capitalists, or the further proletarianization of society, leading to their disappearance as a separate class. It is this "historic destiny" that is taken up in the final part of this work. In a concluding chapter, I apply the lessons of the earlier sections to recent events, and explore the possibilities for a revolutionary and democratic proletarian socialism. I argue that the alternative to recapitalization of those societies which have already undertaken the building of socialism can only come from a renewal of working-class revolution, with the necessity to institutionalize the power of the proletariat and other social sectors in new relationships of socialist democracy. This struggle must therefore be conducted in opposition not only to capitalist class, but to the power of those professionals who carry on aspects of bourgeois relations within the "socialist social system." This examination has

implications for the relationship in general between the working class and the professional petty bourgeoisie, and the potential for universal proletarianization as the outcome of the struggle between them is explored.

The difficulty which United States socialists have encountered in making a class analysis of the professionals is itself a barrier to unification of their movement and their ability to establish a dynamic relationship with the proletariat. For it is true not only of many activist leaders of the struggle for socialism, but also of those analyzing the professions, that in the great majority of cases they are drawn from the professional stratum. It is, notably, in the analysis of the petty bourgeoisie as a whole, and the members of the professions in particular, that most United States socialists and other progressives have been lacking, resulting in a dearth of self-examination of their own class position. It can hardly be surprising, therefore, that not only has "professionalism" already taken deep root in the progressive and embryonic socialist movements this country, but that tools to combat it have remained largely undeveloped. It is in part to help correct this situation that I have made this study. But my fundamental purpose is neither defensive, nor critical. It is to show the problem of the professionals as one of the inevitable "detours" on the road to a classless society which, though it cannot be avoided entirely, carries within it its own progressive historical resolution.

NOTES

1. V. I. Lenin, "Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants Deputies, January 10-18 (23-31), 1918," in V. I. Lenin, Collected Works (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1970-1980), vol. 26, 468.

2. See Lillian Breslow Rubin, Worlds of Pain: Life in the Working-Class Family (New York: Basic Books, 1976), for a study of these two differing "worlds," mainly through interviews with working-class families, compared to those in the professions. The premises and personal experiences on which Rubin based her work are especially instructive (7-10, 12-13).

3. Robert Schaeffer and James Weinstein, "Between the Lines," in Pat Walker, ed., Between Labor and Capital (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1978), 143. Another list is provided by Martin Oppenheimer in White Collar Politics (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1985), 45: "New class? New middle class? New working class? Professional-managerial class? Bureaucratic elite? Salariat? Tertiaires? Employees? Managerial revolutionaries? Intellectual prophets? No other occupational category has had so many contradictory labels and political missions assigned to it as has the white collar grouping. And no other continues to be so mystifying, so much the subject of controversy and debate."

4. See Magali Sarfatti Larson, The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Analysis (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977), x. Confronted by members of the "new middle class" who feared being labeled "unprofessional" if they unionized, Larson asked "what's in a name?" The problem of multiple names has its roots in this effort at self-definition by professionals who see themselves as something "other" than the working class, and who want to draw a defensible boundary around their status vis-à-vis the proletariat and all other classes. The nature and "location" of those boundaries is what is at issue in the debate over the class nature of the "new" middle strata.

5. The labor theory of value and its necessity and/or adequacy as a basis for explaining capitalist exploitation has been under attack for many years. For an analysis of this question see, inter alia, Ian Steedman, Marx After Sraffa (London: Verso, 1981), and Ian Steedman et al., The Value Controversy (London: Verso, 1981). While I do not consider all the issues raised by this debate as settled, they cannot be taken up in depth within the focus of this work. What I believe will be demonstrated in this study is that departure from or inadequate utilization of the concept of surplus-value is one of the sources of the basic flaws and unresolved contradictions in many analyses of the "new" middle strata. In this way the fundamental relations expressed in the labor theory of value will be reaffirmed, even if the formulas by which Marx illustrated it are not good mathematical "proofs."

6. Marx makes this very clear in Capital: A Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1957-1961), vol. 1, 766: "First of all, Wakefield discovered that in the Colonies, property in money, means of subsistence, machines, and other means of production, does not yet stamp a man as a capitalist if there be wanting the correlative--the wage-worker, the other man who is compelled to sell himself of his own free-will. He discovered that capital is not a thing, but a social relation between persons, established by the instrumentality of things." (See also 167-169, 714.) Elsewhere (161) he refers to: "The creation of surplus-value, and therefore the conversion of money into capital." For Marx, this form of the exploitation of wage-labor. defines capitalism, and the relation of the proletariat within it.

7. This assertion that the proletariat becomes over time the majority of society has two "dimensions" which will be part of the analysis taken up in this work. One is systemic, that is, whether the "unit" in which this claim is made is a single country, or the world system of capitalism. Proportional growth of "new" middle class strata in the industrial metropoles may be only the other side of the coin of their relative shrinking vis-à-vis the worldwide increase in the ranks of the proletariat. The other dimension is historical. At issue here is whether the unquestionable swelling of "newer" strata will be a permanent feature of modern society, or a temporary stage on the way to their proletarianization and the growing polarity of classes.

8. This "prediction" had already been qualified, especially by Engels, in response to the effects of imperialism on the working class of the colonial powers, and both he and Marx had recognized the growing potential of the revolutionary struggle in Russia. See Karl Marx and

Frederick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party, Preface to the Russian Edition of 1882," in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selected Works (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1962), vol. 1, 23: "Today . . . Russia forms the vanguard of revolutionary action in Europe." Nevertheless, the basic contradiction between the theory of advanced socialization of production and proletarianization of the population, and the outbreak of revolution in countries with a relatively less predominant working class, has remained at the center of much of the debate over the value of Marxist analysis.

9. See Jürgen Habermas, Toward a Rational Society: Student Protest, Science and Politics (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), 120-122, for suggestions that the student movement may have become the leading force in destroying "the already fragile legitimizing basis of advanced capitalism."

10. See, inter alia, Bob Carter, Capitalism, Class Conflict and the New Middle Class (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985), 36: "The dominant alternative to orthodox Marxism . . . is primarily associated with the writings of Max Weber." Analysts of the "newer" strata have been particularly inclined to accept elements of the Weberian non-class stratification categories of power and status, and his rejection of the historical materialism of Marx.

11. Nicholas Abercrombie and John Urry, Capital, Labour and the Middle Classes, Controversies in Sociology, no. 15 (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983), 151. These authors use "service class" as their term for the "new" strata.

12. Ibid.

13. Jean L. Cohen, "Strategy or Identity: New Theoretical Paradigms and Contemporary Social Movements," Social Research 52, no. 4 (Winter 1985): 667.

14. Jean L. Cohen, Class and Civil Society (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1982), 197.

15. Jean Cohen and Dick Howard, "Why Class?," chap. in Walker, Between Labor and Capital, 85.

16. Ibid., 81.

17. A full discussion of the way in which class intersects with other forms of oppression, and the adequacy of Marxism in dealing with that question, lies beyond the theme of this work, and therefore cannot be taken up in depth. It must be stressed, however, that no matter how

"general" the theoretical analysis which follows in this study, no "unified theory" of classes can be "completed" without addressing the interrelation of class per se with sexual, racial, and all other oppressions. But the issue that is raised by Cohen and Howard is whether the "new" strata can even be assigned to "classes" at all. The answer to that question is the focus of this work. It is obviously in turn closely related to the understanding of "class" in general and to its relation to all the forms of exploitation in society. Unless classes, including the "new" middle strata, are first understood, their relationships to other kinds of oppression, such as sex and race, cannot even be analyzed.

18. Frederick Engels, London, to C. Schmidt, August 5, 1890, in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 2, 486: "A dangerous friend. The materialist conception of history has a lot of them nowadays, to whom it serves as an excuse for not studying history. Just as Marx used to say about the French 'Marxists' of the late seventies: 'All I know is that I am not a Marxist.'"

19. See, for a leading example, Erik Olin Wright, Classes (London: Verso, 1985), chap. 5, where he uses empirical data to "adjudicate" between his own theories and those of others, in particular Nicos Poulantzas.

20. Marx and Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," 34. Today such "common ruin" could be interpreted to include the global threats of nuclear war and ecological disaster.

21. The "middle classes" may for some purposes be considered to include the semi-proletariat, which will be analyzed below.

22. See Paul M. Sweezy, Post-Revolutionary Society (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1980), 127-128. Discussing Ernest Mandel and the possibility of a post-revolutionary society that "is neither socialist nor capitalist," Sweezy notes: "As for the laws of development of this society, Mandel undoubtedly has a point that they have not been satisfactorily worked out."

PART I

CHAPTER 1

A PRELIMINARY DESCRIPTION OF THE PROFESSIONALS

What follows in this chapter is not an attempt at class analysis per se. Rather, I will describe certain features that are common to those in the professions, which I will then compare with the general characteristics of different classes. There is a value in looking first at these elements which provide a certain unity among all professionals, regardless of class. To begin with, if those who belong to the professions are to be discussed meaningfully as a whole, it is necessary to demonstrate that there are in fact sufficient common features in their situation to make such an examination valuable. Secondly, the specific aspects of "professionalism" may affect the role of professionals wherever they are found within the society, even if they constitute only part of a class, or of several classes; and I will have to trace these conditions and forms of social behavior throughout this analysis. Thirdly, these elements of unity must be contrasted with the divisions in the ranks of the professions, to help determine where class lines may exist,

and to indicate to what extent professionals as such act as a group, or if the barriers among and between them are stronger than their identity. Finally, a review of the common features of those in the professions points to the initial directions in which to "look for" their class positions. A similarity to or distinction from the basic aspects of certain classes will suggest the areas in which a more exact examination of this group is needed.

It must be said from the outset that even these features of the professionals are shared unevenly, for what is being dealt with here is not a precise and rigid segment of the population, but various types of occupation which have often grown up under very different circumstances and in quite distinct historical periods. These differences will have to be taken up at times throughout this study. What I want to discover here are the basics, not the great range of details. Neither will I try to make a precise class analysis of every sub-group and stratum within the larger professional sector, an effort which is, however, very much needed. That is an undertaking requiring intense detailed study, and in particular an actual acquaintance with those who are being analyzed in any given situation. Such an effort is not only beyond the scope of this one, but it cannot in any event be carried past a certain point other than "on the spot" by those with direct knowledge of the circumstances of individuals and groups.[1] This will be

merely a preliminary outline, with the more important elements taken up at greater length later on.

a) A professional is a person who has a "profession," a calling.[2] The word and the concept have strong roots in religious experience, and it was in fact the Church which during the Middle Ages long dominated those areas of life now covered by the professions.[3] What Antonio Gramsci, the late Italian Communist leader, refers to as the "aristocracy of the robe" later developed as the newly assertive monarchies required more specialized persons to justify and defend their role and to build the institutions of state, the military, law, and so on which were necessary to expand and protect their power.[4] Thus the use of "profession" came to have a secular meaning, while still retaining overtones of a vow or belief.[5] A similar if not identical form arose in China, where those scholar-officials who had passed examinations were allowed to wear the gowns signifying their class and rank. These origins linger on, notably in the authority of judicial robes, and particularly in the "cap and gown" of academic graduation, that eminently impractical form of dress which once had real symbolic value as an indication of professional status, though now so "common" that it is even used in elementary school exercises.

It is this aspect of the professions which separate them from simple acquisitions of skills. Though professionals are in general skilled labor, something more

is involved here. To borrow once more from the religious theme--"It is a way of life to them that lay ahold of it"--the professions are generally dedicated to certain propositions which are, to a great extent, articles of faith as well as occupational objectives.[6] "Academic freedom," "artistic expression," "the dignity of the law," "scientific objectivity," "a free press," "the social welfare"--these and similar expressions are surrounded by codes of behavior and sometimes actual oaths, such as the Hippocratic in medicine, which reveal entire political and philosophical attitudes, not simply job necessities. Of course, the degree to which this operates varies considerably between professions, and particularly among the individuals who take part in them. What is common to these ideas, however, is that they generally claim to be social values which exist above and beyond the immediacy of employment or of the person expressing them. They are put forward as verities--"justice," "truth," "progess"--as things which have a worth standing apart from the daily circumstances of life, and are often treated as ahistorical and outside the divisions of society. In this sense the professions attempt to act as the bearers of certain ideals and elements of social continuity often surrounded by considerable mystique, to be defended against the intrusions of non-professionals, or the forces of society which threaten to overwhelm the carrying out of professional conduct and duties.[7]

A particular part of this aspect is the access of professionals to areas of specialized knowledge, and even to matters of secrecy not available to those with whom they deal or to the general public.[8] In the professor-student relationship this basis is apparent, but it is present equally in the case of a social worker citing departmental regulations, in the unnamed sources and "inside knowledge" of journalists, and in medical or legal expertise.[9] In other cases, it is less direct, but just as forbidding to the lay person, for instance when confronting scientific or technical matters where the very terms and language employed are often completely unintelligible to outsiders.[10] Indeed, among many professionals this is an attribute which has been specifically fostered by the use of words which intentionally express even simple ideas in a complex jargon. In many professions these elements of information or knowledge are surrounded by explicit legal guarantees or privileges, such as that between lawyers and clients, doctors and patients, journalists and their sources, priests and penitents, or the "classification" of government documents.[11]

Here again, though generally representing an increment of skills higher than that in the general public, more is involved than simply specialization. It is not just trade skill, but privileged information or rarified knowledge, usually involving either a degree of theoretical expertise or a comprehensive system of practices or rules, which

marks the role of the professional, reinforced by intra-disciplinary bonds.[12] Perhaps the classic example of this is the oft-noted camaraderie of contending lawyers, for whom the issues of a case seem to get lost in the mutual drive to work things out within the legal tradition, at times to the despair of their clients.[13] Of course, some non-professional workers also have particular occupations "in their blood" - one thinks of the miners - but that example is unusual, and has much more to do with the real communities of the mining towns and family relations. The tie of the professional is generally to something more abstract, though frequently buttressed by the scientific or academic community or some similar association, to which the isolation in "ivory towers" among their own also adds in many cases.

> The monopoly of a special skill is the essence of any occupational group's claim to professional status. But expertise alone fails to distinguish a profession in the public eye; otherwise, plumbers, carpenters and electricians would easily qualify. The professionalization of social work was associated not only with the quest for a differentiating skill, but also with the establishment of a subculture or community whose members shared a group identity and values which were maintained and perpetuated by institutional agencies of control such as associations and schools.[14]

The average laborer has no such sense of a "calling," rather taking on whatever work presents itself in the struggle for survival, the peculiar characteristics of each job becoming for the moment the working-class occupation, carrying with it in the first instance no intrinsic ideal which the labor itself is supposed to realize.

b) This first aspect of "professionalism" is closely related to a second, the ability to choose how one will be trained and enter the job market.[15] It is once again not simply a matter of being "well-educated," though in general the professions involve considerable advanced education or comparable specialized training or experience in a particular field. This aspect thus applies even in those areas where promotion is "from the ranks," as is frequently the case in the civil service and military.[16] But in its "pure" form, professionalism has this specific feature: that one actually "becomes" a professional before being employed as one, a notable example of this being passing the bar before practicing as a lawyer. There is thus in professional occupations an element of choice, of voluntarism, of planning a career or life.[17] In what is frequently an almost exclusive focus on the situations within various job categories, this element of choosing what occupation is undertaken in the first place is often overlooked. Under capitalism, as in all class society, the vast majority of human beings have to "earn their bread by the sweat of their brows," under conditions which are anything but ideal or full of joy and passion. But whether they do so in a field of endeavor which they have chosen, and which holds for them an initial and residual interest, or whether they are compelled simply to "shape up" each day to whatever job is available, is still an important distinguishing factor, and can affect behavior deeply.[18]

This aspect of professional occupations has two important impacts. For one, the choice of a career is made without directly depending in the first instance on the accidents of the labor market. Of course, if the new professional cannot find employment or fails to hold it, there will in time be little or no meaning to the name alone. But in the "normal" course which follows from training, the professionals seek to fill a spot to which their education has already entitled them. Moreover, this self-definition, which in general carries with it considerable social prestige, follows them even if abandoned in practice for a considerable time, as the constant return of many retired, defeated, or resigned government officials to "lawyering" shows. There is thus a permanency which carries on outside of immediate employment.[19] Then too, for certain groups of professionals in particular, there is some degree of guaranteed job security, as seen notably in the case of tenured professors, lifetime judicial appointments, the military and civil service, and so on. But even for those lacking this kind of guarantee, the identification as lawyer, engineer, and so forth transcends the particular job and is reinforced by association within the profession, in the form of the academic or scientific community, or in other similar relationships that maintain its particular "way of life."

Of course, there are other groups of employees who have a permanency of occupational status, especially among the

more skilled. But these tend to be the exceptional circumstances for common laborers, while for the professionals it is typical. For however long they may work for the "plant" or the "office," workers rarely have the sense of continuity that professional status carries with it. As tens of thousands of employees are today finding out, one is only an "auto worker" as long as the gates are open. When they shut, no amount of skill, seniority, or dedication restores the old ties. Without a job in this society, a worker is virtually without social "identity" at all, a situation which professionals face only rarely when, for instance, they are disbarred or lose a license.[20]

Compare the following expressions from employees at the Ford plant in Mahwah, New Jersey, closing down after 25 years of operation, affecting differently professionals and non-professionals. First, assembly workers:

> Some men drifted over to the Twin Bar, a tavern across from the plant on Route 17, where beer and memories flowed.
>
> "The plant was good, I never could decide to leave," W. W. Whitakker who had worked for Ford for more than 41 years, said. "It's going to be tough not to see these guys again. This is the end."
>
> "Let it go," shouted one of his former fellow workers along the bar."[21]

Or again:

> As for the future, Mr. Spinelli, a 44-year-old resident of Jersey City, said: "I'm going to hang in awhile and collect my benefits. After a year, I'll have to train myself all over again for something new."[22]

And by contrast:

> But among the job-seeking white collar employees, many of whom will be laid off in coming weeks, there was

> no sense of the gloom and doom voiced by the blue-collar crowd before the plant closed.
>
> "No, I don't think so," responded Frank Christopian of New Windsor, when asked if he was in trouble. "Things are looking good, particularly for engineers."
>
> Christopian, 26, a quality-control engineer, has been with Ford for six years. He said he makes almost $30,000 a year. Unless he finds work with another car company, he estimated he will take a pay cut of about $5,000 a year.[23]

Despite the difference in age and years of service, the point I am making comes through: for the "former fellow workers" it is indeed the end, requiring a completely new start in some other line of work or, as is most frequently the case, accepting whatever unskilled jobs exist. For the engineer it is merely a setback in a continuing career, to which the auto plant was in a sense incidental.[24] The former come "naked" to the job market, the latter does not.

Of course, this does not mean that professionals are not also at times forced to abandon their fields and retrain, as many within the slumping auto industry are in fact finding. A distinction remains, however, perhaps most starkly revealed in countries such as India, where there is "overproduction" of professionals in many areas, and an "undersupply" in others, constituting a very major social problem.[25] In such situations many unemployed, generally young persons may refuse to accept work other than in their trained specialties, and cling to their dreams of a career, despite the completely contradictory reality of their lives and never having held a job in their fields--unless they are willing to accept a less privileged and in their eyes

"unprofessional" assignment in rural and poor regions. The status and potential of their professions linger on, however, in their minds at least, if not in an economy which has no use for them. For the average worker, even this remnant of occupational identity is lost.

c) In general, a profession must be "practiced" by the individuals who make it up if their participation in it is to bring them any direct reward in financial terms. They cannot rest on their laurels, or retire from the direct participation in their professions, and still expect to be economically self-sufficient simply by their professional status. In this, professionalism differs from "pure" business investment, in which an income is expected regardless of the direct labor input of the investor. Even though they invest in higher education, there is no such ability generally to separate out individual activity from financial return within the professions, though of course a given professional may develop the entrepreneurial side of their activities sufficiently so as to retire in some measure from immediate participation, such as a doctor who develops a clinic or hospital. Thus, there are professionals who are also business owners, and if the investor side is large enough, the owner may not "practice" at all. Even when the two forms of return, from entrepreneurial investment and labor, may appear inextricably mixed, the roles here are really distinct, however.

For the vast majority of professionals, this level of isolation from direct labor in their fields is unattainable, even if it were desirable. In most cases it is not simply financial necessity, but also an interest in their actual profession that keeps them working in their specialty. So too in most professions, unless practice is fairly constant the skills needed are lost or fall behind the current "state of the art." Thus labor is both economically a necessity and a requirement to keep the mental tools involved from falling into a kind of disrepair, "becoming rusty," as it is termed. In general, therefore, the typical professional is a "working person," not incidentally to, but as an integral part of their role in their profession. This is so regardless of whether they are "self-employed" or must hire out to others.

This necessity of direct professional practice, in combination with "careerism" and the personal "calling" required of each member of a profession, puts a premium on the role of the individual, despite the collective way in which the professions as a whole are organized. Thus: "Collectively, they solicit trust in <u>individual</u> professionals and <u>individual</u> freedom from external controls, except for the ritual entry examinations administered by peers."[26] The concept of a "profession" therefore includes in its fundamental sense both a collectivity and an emnphasis on the part played by members singly. That the attributes of professionalism are "inalienable from the

person of the producer emphasizes the producer's individuality and illuminates the essential individualism of the professional ideology."[27] Within the collective desire for income or of status, and the unified pursuit by professionals of certain common social goals, the professions therefore embrace the ideal of individualistic achievement, based on the essentially private manner in which each of their members functions. These points of professional unity do not inhibit and may indeed promote personal competition, and the communality of a profession is thus quite often accomplished through the fiercest types of individual "striving."[28] Even when the actual form of professional labor is partly collective, this underlying ideological emphasis is only partially broken down. This characteristic is both confirmed in and supported by the conditions of professional work.

d) The professions tend to allow a large degree of individual activity and initiative to those who practice them, to integrate planning and carrying out of plans, conception and execution, design and production, and are on the whole intellectual, rather than manual in emphasis. These related characteristics must, in the first instance, be treated with an element of common sense. There is no labor which is not at the same time both mental and physical, for the mind is itself part of the body, the rest of whose members cannot function without its participation, and intellectual activities as such are also physically

tiring. This is elementary. So too, all work requires intellectual skills of one sort or another, however purely physical it may at first seem, and without alertness of mind the body will be crushed or dismembered, the more so on the most "manual" jobs. As Antonio Gramsci noted: "There is no human activity from which every form of intellectual participation can be excluded: homo faber cannot be separated from homo sapiens."[29] To draw some pure and abstract line between these two inseparable aspects of human labor is therefore absurd.

But it is equally ridiculous to assert that there is no distinction in reality between the more intellectual and more physical occupations, or that the division is too minor to have any role in social differentiation. The professions are, traditionally, areas of "problem solving"--choosing from among various forms of treatment, legal alternatives, scientific hypotheses to explore, data for selection, types of services, teaching methods, or potential angles on a story--in which the initiative of the individual is itself a factor in the final outcome. Even where physical labor is crucial, for instance in the case of a surgeon, this highly intellectual component is present and removes the work from the categories normally considered "manual," particularly such routinized jobs as assembly line production.[30] In their typical practice, the professionals have considerable input into the planning, conception, and design of their labor, as well as a direct role in shaping their own work environment.

Thus it is true of those in the professions that, "because their choice was relatively free and their work relatively interesting and creative, they maintain alive the idea that work may have an intrinsic value."[31]

Marx and Engels referred to this relation by the term "self-activity," by which they meant the ability of human beings to develop "a totality of capacities" as individuals, and to produce forms of social intercourse "in no way external to them," insofar as they are neither alienated from the instruments of production nor separated by the division of labor.[32] In essence, this is a question of the degree of control which they are able to exert over their occupation or activity, or whether this has been in large part, or even entirely, lost to them or subordinated to others. In societies divided by classes, such a separation always exists, and in these cases even the most unalienated form of work represents only "restricted self-activity," for there is everywhere an imbalance between the advanced forces of production of society as a whole and the limited capabiilities present in any one individual.[33] Nevertheless, a significant difference remains between those who perform labor over which they have considerable control and which is attuned to their own development, and those whose routine functions completely disregard "individual capacities." Such a division separates most manual occupations from the professions.[34]

This aspect of professionalism is in turn reflected in and reinforced by its physical conditions, which tend to be individual or small-group in scale, and relatively intimate in their personal relationships, rather than large and collective. The office or operating room, the lab, the classroom, the studio, the consultation booth--these are the typical settings of professional work, and this remains so even when they are part of a larger institution. Similar "small-shop" work still exists in the more manual employments, where it also tends to promote a more personalized atmosphere, but such jobs are no longer the common mode of labor for the vast majority of working people. For the professionals, however, there is a strong remaining element of the sense of personal production, still largely individually shaped even if, as is increasingly the case, within an institutional setting or under guidelines handed down from above. In fact, to a certain degree, the large and well-funded institution can even offer more "self-activity."[35] Though teamwork may be necessary in many of the professional employments these days, the unique contribution of each member of such groupings remains essential, and rarely reaches the levels of total anonymity and interchangeability which marks production work in the manual occupations, where the pace and nature of the labor is determined without any regard for the individuality of the operators, who can and do replace each other regularly without any critical interruption of the work involved.

The relative autonomy of professionals in their labor is both derived from and promoted by the independent powers that professions as a whole have sought over the regulation of their own activities. "Every profession considers itself the proper body to set the terms in which some aspect of society, life or nature is thought of, and to define the general lines, or even the details, of public policy concerning it."[36] Historically, the primary instrument of this self-determination was the professional association, which was granted the right to screen applicants and to determine the requirements for practice in its field. This organizing drive has as its specific goal the exclusion of the non-professionals and those of competing professional groups from any role, so that each profession solidified around a particular function over which it had full control. Accreditation and licensing give legal authority to this exclusiveness. Autonomy on the job, therefore, is merely the recognition inside the work place of a power which has been claimed by the professions within the society, in both cases dependent on the special knowledge and qualities they are presumed to possess, which defy any outside interference by non-experts.[37]

e) Most of the professions involve activities which are at least in part directly social in character. By this I mean that they involve dealing with sizeable numbers of people who are the recipients of the labor of the professionals in more or less direct form. This is obvious

in the case of doctors, lawyers, teachers, social workers, and so on, who, moreover, in general have a certain "possessional" relationship with those involved, the terms "my patients," "my clients," "my students" being the reflection of this. In other fields, such as journalism and the arts, the relations are more indirect, but there is still commonly an element of working with or for others, either for "the public" in general or for personal customers or audiences, for whom the labor is specifically tailored and who may help to shape it.[38] Furthest removed from this kind of direct relationship are many engineers and scientists, though the "social" element of their work is certainly still present in its more or less immediate impact on society at large, for instance in the designing of public buildings or roads, the development of industrial technology, the testing of a drug or medicine, and so on. Because of professional linkage, even "pure" research shares this character.[39]

Of course, all labor has some social dimension. Whether a bolt is tightened on an assembly line may determine not only the life of a product, but of the consumer of the product as well. Moreover, there is in the very process of going to the job each day and accepting its conditions a renewal and reinforcement of the relations which underlie the society. This said, the largest part of the work force nevertheless has no direct personal form of relationship to the ultimate recipients of their products,

nor any sense of interaction between their labor and those who may eventually receive it. For many professionals this kind of relation is typical or, where indirect, still contains clear social import. The professional calling, then, is not just a matter of personal devotion, but is directed outward, toward serving the public and society as a whole. This is ultimately so even in those professions which "serve" indirectly.

The professionals are thus able to pursue their more private careers while at the same time appearing--to themselves first of all--to be promoting not only the needs of their profession as a whole, but also the requirements of the community, since to "profess" is itself to make a personal commitment to what is conceived to be a higher social goal. That the society does in fact need, in varying degrees, the skills of the professionals, while the latter are no longer generally able to function in a manner isolated from the institutions of the modern economy, merely reinforces with economic bonds what is already present in the very concept of "professionalism." Therefore, the practice of each individual professional, supported by an ideology which stresses its personal character, is nevertheless at the same time put forward as an essential element in the collective goals of the larger social order. Indeed, ideologically professionalism insists that the subjective needs of the professional should be subordinated to higher objective ideals. In this sense professionals may

be "expected to put service to others before personal profit."[40] In fact, the situation is rather more complex. For it is just this apparent lack of self-interest that is often the best and quickest road to professional advancement, since it most perfectly represents the qualities of "objectivity" that the professions exalt, and fulfills the claim to a "public service" role in the society.[41]

This aspect of professionalism may be interpreted as one in which the professionals serve as the "managers" or "maintainers" of the social order, those who shape both the physical and human environment, the treaters of its pathologies, who keep people and machinery functioning within the "system," the instillers of ideological and cultural concepts.[42] Again, this operates with varying degrees of explicitness among the different professions. Thus this dimension of professionalism can only be understood if it is seen not just as openly "managerial," but rather as the carrier and creator of certain traditions and forms of behavior which both directly and indirectly impose themselves on or are insinuated throughout society. The aura of paternalism which often accompanies professional functions, of "knowing best," is a major source of conflict between professionals and the bulk of the working class and much of society at large. It is especially prevalent in official settings such as government bureaucracies, but it is pervasive in all areas of economic, political, and

cultural life. This relationship of course reflects real power: even of life and death in certain instances, but in all cases flowing from positions either of authority, influence, or wealth not general within the population. It is also fully imbued with the existing values of a given society.[43] Just as the ideological claim to public service is not truly "selfless," therefore, neither is the social role of the professions really "neutral."

f) Professionals are commonly in direct control over the labor of a small number of subordinates, sometimes in an exploitative relationship. Research and teaching assistants, graduate students, nurses, nurses aides, and medical technicians, para-legals, teacher trainees, secretaries, typists, and others constitute the type of work so utilized. At times there is a direct financial reward to the professional for employing or being in authority over these non-professionals, semi-professional subordinates, or those still training. It is a relationship sometimes like that of masters and apprentices in the old guild system, though for many of those employed in this fashion, there is little actual possibility of advancing to full professional status. In other cases, however, it is simply direct employment of, or power over less-skilled labor, who are more or less at the command of the professional and who have no prospect whatever of joining the ranks of the latter. That salaried professionals may gain actual economic advantage from having subordinates at their command may seem

a contradiction. But this is often a matter of direct exploitation: for instance when a scientist uses research assistants to complete work which is later published or otherwise used for financial reward, or where bonuses are given for output in a department of technical or production workers over whom a professional has authority. Moreover, completing work, most notably under compulsion of a "publish or perish" atmosphere, may bring security of employment or even advancement up the salary ladder, which might otherwise be lost without "assistant" input.

Many professionals do not have this relationship to other labor, or do so only occasionally. What distinguishes their situation, however, is that this relation is likely to arise at any time, without significant change in the status of the professionals themselves. It is incidental to their own occupations. In one office a lawyer may work alone, in another be assigned a para-legal. A social worker may have to type reports in one job, in another share a pool of secretaries and typists--and so forth in all areas. It is not that such a relationship is intrinsic to the professional category, but that it easily arises within the professions in the "natural" course of things, and that it brings with it certain rewards of lightened burdens and social status, if not of more direct financial advantage, though this is also the case quite frequently. The average worker has no similar command over the labor of others without actual changes in their own position, to crew

leader, foreperson, and so on. For the professional, no such adjustment is necessary since the occupations carry with them the common necessity to assume forms of authority over other employees, without any other change of status.

Professional work is by its nature hierarchical, first because of the progression of positions within each of the professions--i.e., from teaching assistant, to associate professor, to full professor. Thus: "'A career, viewed structurally, is a succession of related jobs, arranged in a hierarchy of prestige, through which persons move in an ordered, predictable sequence.'"[4] The very pursuit of careerism by professionals therefore gives to professions as a whole a highly hierarchical structure. Then too, there exists within professions a further kind of hierarchy, such as from doctors, to nurses, to nurses aides, medical technicians, and so on; and in the society as a whole there is a similar "ranking" of the professions, between those which are well established and highly organized, notably medicine and law, and those to which professional status has been only belatedly granted or which lack powerful organizations to secure public respectability, for instance in the newer fields of social work and psychology. Finally, there are added to the forms of professional hierarchy, and reinforcing them, various kinds of discrimination and exclusion, which are directed against women, certain races and nationalities, and so on. To a great extent, these have worked to keep members of such parts of the population out

of the professions altogether. However, they have in addition helped to shape the layers of the professional hierarchy, for example between male doctors and female nurses.[45] Here again, the much vaunted "neutrality" of the professions is found to break down, not only in relation to the larger society, but internally as well.

In summary and conclusion, the above characteristics, as noted at the beginning of this chapter, are not universal or equally representative of all professional occupations, especially in their degree of effect on individual professionals in different fields or even within a single discipline. It has also been seen that, in general, they are not unique to the professions as such, often overlapping with the situation of highly skilled workers, for example. Nevertheless, it can be said that the aspects discussed above form some of the parameters of "professionalism," and provide sufficient unity in the ranks of the professionals to make their analysis as a group meaningful.

NOTES

1. Historically the most massive of such classifications took place in China during the land-reform movements of the 1930s and 1940s, and again in the 1950s and 1960s. Using the method of "self report, public appraisal," millions of peasant family members each analyzed their own class, with the help of their neighbors, under the guidance and control of Communist Party cadre. The results formed the basis for redistribution of land and other means of production, and political and economic organization. See William Hinton, Fanshen: A Documentary of Revolution in a Chinese Village (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1966), and Shenfan: The Continuing Revolution in a Chinese Village (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1984), and also Isabel Crook and David Crook, Ten Mile Inn: Mass Movement in a Chinese Village (New York: Pantheon Books, 1979).

2. See Everett C. Hughes, "Professions," chap. in The Professions in America, ed. Kenneth S. Lynn and eds. of Daedalus (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), 2: "Professionals profess. They profess to know better than others the nature of what ails them or their affairs." See also Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 227: "Professions are ideologically constructed as occupations that one enters by calling, or at least by choice. As such they appear to express an essential dimension of the self."

3. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 3-4.

4. Antonio Gramsci, The Modern Prince and Other Writings (New York: International Publishers, 1970), 119-20. Gramsci lists these as "a class of administrators, etc.; scientists, theoreticians, non-ecclesiastical philosophers, etc."

5. See Hughes, "Professions," 2: "The Oxford Shorter Dictionary tells us that the earliest meaning of the adjective 'professed' was this: 'That has taken the vows of a religious order.' By 1675, the word had been secularized thus: 'That professes to be duly qualified; professional.'" Nevertheless, despite this secularization, the historical origins persist, as noted by Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 22: "Thus, all professions contain elements that appear more starkly and more coherently in

the role of the priest. In a secularized society, the family doctor of old is one of the most direct inheritors of the role of the religious minister or priest."

6. Roy Lubove, The Professional Altruist: The Emergence of Social Work as a Career - 1880-1930, (New York: Atheneum, 1977), 118: "The profession was not only a career but a way of life which shaped personality by offering it a medium of expression."

7. See, for example, the Sigma Delta Chi, "Code of Ethics of the Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi," The Quill (September, 1980): 29, which includes statements such as: "We believe in public enlightenment as the forerunner of justice, and in our Constitutional role to seek the truth. . . . Freedom of the press is the be guarded as an inalienable right of people in a free society. . . . Secondary employment, political involvement, holding public office and service in community organizations should be avoided if it compromises the integrity of journalists and their employers. . . . Truth is our ultimate goal. . . . Objectivity in reporting the news is another goal, which serves as the mark of an experienced professional. . . . The duty of journalists is to serve the truth. . . ." And so on.

8. See Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 180: "The main instrument of professional advancement . . . is the capacity to claim esoteric and identifiable skills. . . ." See also Hughes, "Professions," 3.

9. See Maxwell H. Bloomfield, "Law: The Development of a Profession," chap. in The Professions in American History, ed. Nathan O. Hatch (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 33: "George Bernard Shaw, in one of his less elfin moods, once remarked that all professions 'are conspiracies against the laity.'. . . Professionals, by definition, hold themselves out to the public as the possessors of specialized knowledge and skills that the ordinary person lacks."

10. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 206: "Now, professions are collectively separated from the laity by inaccessible of 'tacit' knowledge as much as by testable and explicit expertise."

11. These two elements are starkly revealed in the following passage about a group of young researchers at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, in William J. Broad, "The Secret Behind Star Wars," New York Times Magazine, August 11, 1985, 49: "The fabric of friendship extended even to the language they spoke. Classified projects led to classified jokes. After a while, the young scientists began to be cut off from the spontaneity of the

outside world. A visitor could engage them in polite conversation, but so much of their world revolved around secret research that free-ranging discussions could take place only with those who had the proper security clearance." "Classified jokes" is surely the ultimate form of all professional "inside knowledge."

12. See Stephen R. Graubard, "Preface," in Lynn, The Professions in America, v, in which he quotes from A. N. Whitehead, Adventures in Ideas (Great Britain: Pelican Books, 1948) 73-74: "A craft, he explained, was 'an avocation based upon customary activities and modified by trial and error of individual practice.' A profession, in contrast, was 'an avocation whose activities are subject to theoretical analysis, and are modified by theoretical conclusions derived from that analysis.' An intellectual revolution separated these two activities. . . ." See also Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, xi, 180.

13. See Marc Galanter, "Mega-Law and Mega-Lawyering in the Contemporary United States," chap. in R. Dingwall and P. Lewis, The Sociology of the Professions (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), 159: "Loyalty is often deflected from the one-time client to the forum or opposite party with whom the lawyer has continuing relations. . . ."

14. Lubove, The Professional Altruist, 118. See also Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, x-xi: "These uncommmon occupations tend to become "real" communities, whose members share a relatively permanent affiliation, an identity, personal commitment, specific interests, and general loyalties.

These communities are concretely identified by typical organizations and institutional patterns: professional associations, professional schools, and self-administered codes of ethics. It is not clear how much "community" would exist without these institutional supports. . . ."

See also Hughes, "Professions," 3.

15. See quote in note 2 above from Larson, The Rise of Professionalism.

16. See Samuel P. Huntington, "Power, Expertise and the Military Profession," chap. in Lynn, The Professions in America, and Don K. Price, "The Profession of Government Service," chap. in Hatch, The Professions in American History.

17. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 61: "Because professional roles are privileged, desirable, reserved to a minority, and today, accessible only after relatively prolonged and difficult training, those who choose them do so, most often, by an apparently free choice: a choice,

that is, in which the individual seeks to maximize the fit between his talents or preferences and a work role."

18. See Rubin, Worlds of Pain, 39, regarding young members of the working class: "In the context of their lives and daily struggles, looking either backward or forward makes little sense; planning for the future seems incongruous. Consequently, work life generally is not planned; it just happens. . . . not one man ever recalled thinking of, let alone planning for, a professional career."

19. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 229: "This life-plan is a privilege, enjoyed only by a minority within the labor force. Orderly careers, it has been emphasized, may well be one of the most significant expressions of inequality between different individuals and different categories of workers."

20. See Hughes, "Professions," 3: "A man who leaves a profession, once he is fully trained, licensed and initiated, is something of a renegade in the eyes of his fellows. . . . It takes a rite of passage to get him in, another to read him out." But Larson also says in The Rise of Professionalism, 229: "You cannot really unfrock a priest, unmake a doctor, or disbar a lawyer."

21. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, June 21, 1980, 5.

22. New York Times, June 21, 1980, 26.

23. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, June 27, 1980, 8.

24. The difference is starkly revealed in the loss of income involved. The auto workers had earned $15,000-$20,000 per year, $10-$12 per hour. At "job fairs" set up to help them find new employment, they got a taste of what the future would hold. "Autoworkers accustomed to earning big paychecks on the Ford Motor Co's Mahwah, N.Y., assembly line listened this week to descriptions of potential careers that pay little more than minimum wage. . . .'You have to accept the fact that you'll be earning $3.50 to $4 per hour to start. . . .'" (Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, July 19, 1980, 5, and also August 26, 1980, 5). The journalist who wrote the above article apparently did not notice the irony and inaccuracy of the use of the word "careers" to describe the minimum-wage employment awaiting these autoworkers. While they faced a loss of two-thirds of their income, involving a radical change of lifestyle, the engineer talked of a one-sixth reduction, and of course from a much higher level to begin with.

25. Hughes, "Professions," 13.

26. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 206.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid., 67, 157.

29. Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks, ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 9: "All men are intellectuals, one could say: but not all men have in society the function of intellectuals. . . . one has in mind the direction in which their specific professional activity is weighted, whether towards intellectual elaboration or towards muscular-nervous effort."

30. Nevertheless, this more "manual" aspect to surgery made it more difficult historically for surgeons to gain professional recognition. See Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 84, 87; and also Hughes, "Professions," 1.

31. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 61.

32. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The German Ideology, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1976), 91.

33. Ibid., 96-97.

34. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 59, 157.

35. Hughes, "Professions," 11-12: "But it may be possible that under present conditions the private practitioner of a profession does not have so much freedom, or at least not the same kinds of freedom as his colleague working in some sort of large organization." For an elaboration of a similar view, see Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 190-99, and 290, note 67.

36. Hughes, "Professions," 3.

37. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, xii-xiii: "If professions obtain extended powers of self-evaluation and self-control they can become almost immune to external regulation. . . . The profession is, in fact, allowed to define the very standards by which its superior competence is judged." The first six chapters of this work are an examination of the way in which the "professional project" was carried out historically, resulting in just such self-regulation.

38. Penn Kimball, "Journalism: Art, Craft or Profession?," chap. in Lynn, The Professions in America, 256, citing Times (London): "'Journalism is something more

than a craft, something other than an industry, something between an art and a ministry. Journalists proper are unofficial public servants whose purpose is to serve the community.'"

39. Wilbert Moore, The Professionals (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1970), 19: "One can readily assent to the assertion that the absence of direct and immediate clients makes an important difference in occupational role relationships. Yet it does not follow that the scientist or scholar does not have a service orientation, even if the goal pursued is abstract and impersonal, and certainly does not follow that the 'professional without clients' is not significantly oriented to other professional criteria and to the maintenance of high standards through the sanctions provided by peers (often formally constituted)." The first chapter of this work provides a useful brief summary of "The Criteria of Professionalism," including a "ranking" of professional attributes on a scale, the culminating peak of which is the achievement of autonomy.

40. Alma S. Wittlin, "The Teacher," chap. in Lynn, The Professions in America, 91.

41. See Bernard Barber, "Some Problems in the Sociology of the Professions," chap. in Lynn, The Professions in America, 18: "Individual self-interest is, of course, not utterly neglected in professional behavior, but is subserved indirectly." For a less benign view of this contradictory aspect of professionalism, see Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, "The Service Ideal Revisited," 56-63.

42. See Barbara Ehrenreich and John Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," chap. in Walker, Between Labor and Capital, 12-17.

43. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 187: "There is ample evidence that administrative professionals, as much as the others, often expect their clients to conform with the standards of the dominant culture, marked as they are by class inequality and racism. A frequent correlate of this bias is that professionals tend to conceive of their services as means of bringing nonconforming clients closer to these standards."

44. Ibid., 70, citing Harold Wilensky, "Work Careers, and Social Integration," International Social Science Journal 12 (1960): 543-60.

45. Ibid., 43, 125, 173.

CHAPTER 2

PROFESSIONALISM IN RELATION TO THE TWO MAIN CLASSES OF CAPITALIST SOCIETY

In the last chapter I focused on certain aspects which are common to the professionals as a whole. This is not in itself class analysis, which must rest at least in part on criteria which have not yet been taken into account. The problem presents itself in two forms: first, are professionals a class or part of distinct classes at all, and if so, do they fit into the basic class divisions of modern capitalist society, or are they some new or remnant class element which lies outside capitalism. To confront these two questions, it is necessary first to say something briefly about class and its analysis in general, and then turn to the classes of capitalist society to determine whether professionals exhibit some or all of the same fundamental characteristics as they do. Neither of these two initial parts of the examination will be dealt with in an exhaustive manner, it being beyond the scope of this study to attempt to "solve" the problem of what is a class in all its dimensions or to review in depth the development of the classes of capitalism. However, the later parts of this work cannot be adequately developed without a basic

grasp of the criteria used to make class analysis and the position of the main classes of capitalist society. Moreover because, as shown above, the professionals often view their role in terms which are ahistorical and outside the divisions of society--that is, primarily, of class--it is necessary to examine the very nature of classes and to determine how the professions relate to them.

In order to exist, human beings must produce and reproduce. Class is the name which is given to those major divisions of society as a whole which arise from the differing methods by which they carry out this production and reproduction, establish relations among themselves in the course of these necessary activities, and express these relationships in political, cultural, and ideological form.[1] Classes develop only historically and in relation to each other: they are not abstractions, but the actual bodies of humanity which contend over the form in which society will be organized, that is, how labor will be divided, how ownership or control of the means of production and reproduction will be established, how much wealth will be generated and by what manner and in what proportions it will be distributed, and the nature of political institutions and cultural and ideological expressions. Thus classes cannot be accurately studied except as part of the living reality of human development, and cannot be isolated from the struggles which are the very essence of class society. Marx and Engels examined

the linkage between this general "struggle of classes" and divisions and relations between the sexes, between nations, and so forth. Struggles based on sex, race, and national culture have distinct dynamics, however, each of which must be dealt with in its own terms. Analysis of these other areas largely lies outside the scope of this work, which will focus generally on "classes" in a more restricted sense, based primarily on productive relations.[2]

Each class arises historically as the expression or representative, as it were, of a particular way of organizing society. Its ability to realize this form of organization rests first and foremost on the existence of those material conditions and economic relations which allow it to develop to its fullest extent. As Lenin put it: "A social system emerges only if it has the financial backing of a definite class."[3] Thus, for instance, in the classic example studied by Marx, capitalism and the bourgeois class which organizes and represents it could not take control of the direction of society until modern commerce and industry had developed sufficiently to undermine the agricultural and relatively static basis of feudalism. Of course, this development did not just "happen," but was brought about by the active intervention of the bourgeoisie themselves, and in general this is the relation of the "levels" of human activity: that while it is developments of the underlying material, and related economic aspects of society which bring a given class into

being, yet only by its own organized struggles in the realm of political, cultural, and ideological life can it solidify the conditions of its existence and represent its interests on the historical stage. In identifying a class, therefore, it is necessary to look first to the material and economic "base" which produces it and which it represents. And yet to understand fully the role which it must play in total social development, this study must be extended to include as well its expressions on the "superstructural" level of politics, ideology, and culture.[4]

The relationship between these various aspects of human existence then is this: that on a given material basis, only a relatively narrow range of economic relations can be formed, and these in turn set the general limits to the nature of political, cultural, and ideological life. Thus, to take the simplest and most obvious example, it is impossible for a part of the population to be idle while others work, if production is not sufficient to yield a surplus by which the labor of some can support the non-labor of others.[5] And, in addition, without this freedom from work in one segment of society, certain forms of specialized actions in the "superstructure" cannot arise, since they require leisure, study, the feeding and clothing of non-productive officials and soldiers, and so on. Nevertheless, the relation between the material basis of society and those social relations which develop upon it is

not a simplistically causal one.[6] Human beings are not only instinctual and reactive in their existence, but themselves are capable of taking the initiative in changing their relations and thereby altering also the material foundations of society and the structures of the economy.[7] Thus while class analysis must always seek out first the materialist basis and economic nature of the group being analyzed, its task is never complete until it carries out an examination of the actions in the political, cultural, and ideological realms which can be expected to correspond to these more fundamental bases, and which in turn alter the latter and further their development.[8]

This dialectical contradiction between a class in its material "base" and in its actions on the level of the "superstructure" of society is subject to much misinterpretation. One-sidedness on this issue gives rise in particular to two types of error, the first of which is to reduce class analysis to a pure materialist or economist determinism in which nothing counts except the most immediate employment situation or economic status of those being examined, and the second of which is to, in essence, allow classes to "define" themselves simply on the basis of their political, cultural, or ideological expressions however ephemeral.[9] A similar error is to view class as only a totality, abstracted from the individuals who compose and shape it.[10] Such mistakes arise primarily from those who insist on attempting to make of classes an

abstraction from social reality, and who ignore the dialectical interchangeability between the material and economic realms, and those of politics, ideology, and culture.[11] It is not accidental, therefore, nor the problem it is sometimes seen as, that Marx failed to complete a precise definition of class before his death, despite his voluminous writings on almost every subject which classes affect.[12] For Marx, in his relentless pursuit of historical materialism, of the study of classes as they actually rose, played their part in social development, and declined, had no need to reduce his thoughts to this abstract level.

Lenin also, leader of the first victorious socialist revolution, had no difficulty in catching perfectly the two sides of this dialectic, that of a "definition" of class on the one hand, and on the other the extension of the nature of classes in their full historic dimension, focusing in particular on the role of class struggle and the conditions for the elimination of classes altogether, the final form of social organization as Marx foresaw it.

> And what does the "abolition of classes" mean? All those who call themselves socialists recognize this as the ultimate goal of socialism, but by no means all give thought to its significance. Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated by law) in the means of production, by their role in the social organization of labour, and, consequently, by the dimension of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy.

> Clearly, in order to abolish classes completely, it is not enough to overthrow the exploiters, the landowners and capitalists, not enough to abolish <u>their</u> rights of ownership; it is necessary also to abolish <u>all</u> private ownership of the means of production, it is necessary to abolish the distinction between town and country, as well as the distinction between manual workers and brain workers. This requires a very long period of time. In order to achieve this an enormous step forward must be taken in developing the productive forces; it is necessary to overcome the resistance (frequently passive, which is particularly stubborn and particularly difficult to overcome) of the numerous survivals of small-scale production; it is necessary to overcome the enormous force of habit and conservatism which are connected with these survivals.[13]

Thus while classes are "defined" by their position in the social economy--namely by their relations to the system of producing, means of production, division of labor, and consequently of wealth--they cannot be understood fully, their struggles cannot be analyzed, nor can they be eliminated without dealing also with their political, cultural, and ideological roles--"rights," "habit," and "conservatism." Moreover all sources of class division imply that one group can "appropriate the labor of another," and this notably includes "manual workers and brain workers." Nor can the struggles of classes be eliminated unless not only the economic base of the class system, but also the superstructure of politics, culture, and ideology which maintains and reflects it, is rooted out.

Understood in this manner, it is also evident that no one can stand "outside" of class society, anymore than they can stand outside of the human condition itself. To do so they would have to exist without a system of social

production, without a mode of producing and reproducing, outside the material base of society. No human being is born, raised to maturity, or can produce and reproduce in such isolation.[14] Of course there are groups of people or individuals who cut across the major class lines, transitional forms between the main representatives of the types of social economy. But generally in analyzing classes it is necessary to delineate the essential elements of the grouping being examined, and only then can the various departures from or historical evolutions of these fundamental characteristics be fruitfully dealt with. Attempts to proceed in the opposite direction, or to focus equally on both the "theme" and its "variations," lead inevitably to a denial of the ability to make class analysis at all. Any phenomenon can be subjected to the kind of thought where the grey areas between precise definitions are used to obliterate any useful distinctions. Certainly many difficult transitional forms exist, but with sufficient patience and analytical care, it is always possible to arrive in the end at the class basis of these positions, and give them their proper "name."

It was the great contribution of Marx, not to "discover" classes, which as he himself readily admitted, had already been done by others before him. Rather, what made his analysis so new was that he understood that class struggle was the motive force of historical development, that this was in turn based on the material conditions of

each epoch, and that a dialectical process was at work in which the classes which in every period assumed the leading role in society produced at the same time their own contradictory tendencies. The latter take the form of opposing class elements which lay the basis for the overthrow of the old mode of production and reproduction and its replacement by a new one. Thus one class supercedes another as the dominant power in the social order. In general, classes consciously pursue only their own immediate interests. Their contradictory "side," that necessary tendency to produce their opposite, another class which will in turn overthrow them, is unseen. It is precisely the function of Marxism to lay bare this "other" aspect, to see classes not as they see themselves, or as they appear to each other in their obvious and daily interactions, but rather to discover the dialectic by which they develop internally and lead the way to a historical progression, even in opposition to their own perceived class interests.[15]

It was the second great discovery of Marx, therefore, to lay bare the inner dynamic which governed the precise form in which the capitalists exploited the proletariat, and which thus shaped all the class relationships of capitalist society. Here too, the concept that the value of commodities derived from the labor needed for their production had already been recognized by the classical bourgeois economists. However, as Engels explained:

> Ever since political economy had put forward the proposition that labour is the source of all wealth and

> of all value, the question became inevitable: How is this then to be reconciled with the fact that the wage-worker does not receive the whole sum of value created by his labour but has to surrender a part of it to the capitalist? Both the bourgeois economists and the Socialists exerted themselves to give a scientifically valid answer to this question, but in vain, until at last Marx came forward with the solution.[16]

What Marx added was the crucial observation that underneath the apparent exchange of equivalents, the payment of a wage equal in value to the subsistence needs of the workers, and thus the purchase of their labor-power, lay an inequality, the actual performance of labor, which produced an extra or surplus-value, which was appropriated by the capitalist.[17]

> But this proved that the acquisition of riches by the present-day capitalists consists just as much in the appropriation of unpaid labour of others as that of the slave-owner or the feudal lord exploiting serf labour, and that all these forms of exploitation are only to be distinguished by the difference in manner and method by which the unpaid labour is appropriated. This, however, also removed the last justification for all the hypocritical phrases of the possessing classes to the effect that in the present social order right and justice, equality of rights and duties and a general harmony of interests prevail, and present-day bourgeois society, no less than its predecessors, was exposed as a grandiose institution for the exploitation of the huge majority of the people by a small, ever-diminishing minority.[18]

Thus Marx exposed the exploitative content which hid within the form of apparent equality in the daily exchanges of capitalism.

The labor theory of value is crucial because it takes us beneath the surface of capitalist society, to reveal the essential relations which underlie the apparent differentiations. In commodity production, the specific use-value of the product does not enter into its valuation,

which is determined only by the socially necessary labor time which was used to produce it.[19] When capitalism converts labor-power too into a commodity, it similarly disregards all specific qualitative characteristics, and is concerned only with its ability to produce surplus-value.[20] Thus capital too is indifferent to what it owns or produces, and merely represents a relationship of exploitation. The only "quality" that different forms of labor, whether living or dead, have for capital is thus their ability to generate directly, or assist indirectly, in producing surplus-value, and this can in turn be measured quantitatively.[21] Absent this unifying aspect, "class" analysis tends to drift toward solutions in which the specific quality either of work or of what is owned become the determinant factors. The former leads to occupations, the latter toward factors of production as the defining criteria for classes. Even if economic relations remain central, they may be reduced merely to "the identity . . . and sources of revenue":

> However, from this standpoint, physicians and officials, e.g., would also constitute two classes, for they belong to two distinct social groups, the members of each of these groups receiving their revenue from one and the same source. The same would also be true of the infinite fragmentation of interest and rank into which the division of social labour splits labourers as well as capitalists and landlords--the latter, e.g., into owners of vineyards, farm owners, owners of forests, mine owners and owners of fisheries.[22]

Thus each occupation and type of property become "classes."

For Marx, such definitions dissolve the very meaning of class under capitalism, and accept its fetishized form in

which things appear to rule over people, rather than vice versa.

> Capital is not a thing, any more than money is a thing. In capital, as in money, certain specific social relations of production between people appear as relations of things to people, or else certain social relations appear as the natural properties of things in society. Without a class dependent on wages, the moment individuals confront each other as free persons, there can be no production of surplus-value; without the production of surplus-value there can be no capitalist production, and hence no capital and no capitalist! Capital and wage-labour (it is thus we designate the labour of the worker who sells his own labour-power) only expresses two aspects of the self-same relationship. Money cannot become capital unless it is exchanged for labour-power, a commodity sold by the worker himself. Conversely, work can only be wage-labour when its own material conditions confront it as autonomous powers, alien property, value existing for itself and mantaining itself, in short as capital.[23]

It is extremely important to note the three criteria which enter into this relationship. While wage-labor is the essential element without which there can be no capital, it is not the form of wages that is crucial, but the content, in which the material conditions of production confront it as an "alien property," and in which it is exploited for the generation of surplus-value. Without these two further aspects, "work cannot be wage-labor" in the substantive meaning of that term. It is this relationship alone that defines the proletariat and capitalists as classes. By the same token, every other class of capitalist society must be defined in relation to value, and not simply as "things." Specifically, the "middle class" must also be characterized by its relationship to "alien property," and thus to the production and appropriation of surplus-value, and not

simply by either the "thinginess" of what it owns or the mere sale of its labor-power.

Because all societies with classes rest on the appropriation of the surplus-labor of the producers, for Marx the problem was how to distinguish the specific form of capitalist exploitation. This too was found in the objectification of labor as value:

> Thus the actual function specific to capital as such is the production of surplus-value which . . . is nothing but the production of surplus labour, the appropriation of unpaid labour in the course of the actual process of production. This labour manifests itself, objectifies itself, as surplus-value.[24]

At the same time, Marx had to resist those who not only assumed the permanence of capitalism, but projected it back historically, so that all previous forms of appropriation of surplus-labor were viewed as inherently capitalistic, even if imperfectly realized.

> Capital then is held to be a necessary feature of the human labour process as such, irrespective of the historical forms it has assumed; it is consequently something permanent, determined by the nature of human labour itself. In the same way, it is urged that because the process of production of capital in general is the labour process, the labour process as such, it follows that the labour process in all forms of society is necessarily capitalist in nature. Thus capital comes to be thought of as a thing, and as a thing it plays a certain role, a role appropriate to it as a thing in the process of production. It is the same logic that infers that because money is gold, gold is intrinsically money; that because wage-labour is labour, all labour is necessarily wage-labour. The identity is proved by holding fast to the features common to all processes of production, while neglecting their specific differentiae.[25]

It was the specificity of capitalist appropriation in the form of surplus-value which distinguished it historically

for Marx. If this aspect was ignored, capitalism either became blurred with all previous forms of class society, or was projected back on the latter as though it was a universal system throughout history. Either way the particular dynamic of the capitalist era was lost, the specific features of its system of productive relations were obscured, and its dialectic could not be properly grasped.

The creation of value through labor, and the appropriation of surplus-value, take place in production, not in exchange. It is thus an internal productive relationship, outside the market.

> We have seen that the transformation of money into capital breaks down into two wholly distinct, autonomous spheres, two entirely separate processes. The first belongs to the realm of the circulation of commodities and is acted out in the market-place. It is the sale and purchase of labour-power. The second is the consumption of the labour-power that has been acquired, i.e., the process of production itself. In the first process the capitalist and the worker confront one another merely as the owners respectively of money and commodities, and their transactions, like those of all buyers and sellers, are the exchange of equivalents. In the second process the worker appears pro tempore as the living component of capital itself, and the category of exchange is entirely excluded here since the capitalist has acquired by purchase all the factors of the production process, both material and personal, before the negotiations begin. However, although the two processes subsist independently side by side, each conditions the other. The first introduces the second and the second completes the first.[25]

It follows that the exploitative relation of capital to labor occurs regardless of the ability of the capitalists to realize the value of their commodities in the marketplace. It is in this sense independent of exchange. The essence of capitalism therefore cannot be discovered by an examination

of the market, much less by the imperfect measurements of prices and profits.

By the same token, capitalist exploitation is not a system of inequality, which can be gradually overcome by paying workers the full value of their actual labor. Such formulations as "a fair day's work for a fair day's pay," as Marx long ago showed, are therefore meaningless.[27] It is also impossible for capital and labor to meet "in the middle" by a gradual equalization of exchange, for the former has meaning only as an exploitative relation to the latter, which occurs outside the marketplace. Theories which attempt to reduce capitalism to inequality in exchange must therefore fail, because they miss the essential relationship of exploitation which occurs in production. So too, it is impossible for all workers to climb into the "middle class" as long as capitalist relations exist. They may, under certain circumstances, increase their income to a relatively comfortable level, but from a class standpoint this merely serves to hide their continued exploitation, which as a relation to capital has nothing to do with the absolute level of the wages they receive, but only with their relative production of surplus-value.

In his exposition of the labor theory of value, Marx thus showed that the exploiting of the proletariat was immutable as long as capitalism remained, that class division was therefore inherent and absolutely necessary to its system, that bourgeois society could never achieve

universal equality, and that for it, "general harmony" and "equal rights" were therefore impossible. This discovery of the contradictory unity of the two main classes of capitalism, inseparably locked in struggle, was itself crucial in shattering bourgeois political and ideological illusions. But in revealing the nature of the appropriation of surplus-value, Marx also exposed the inner dynamic of capitalist development, the dialectic which would lead to its own inevitable destruction. Driven inexorably to the accumulation of capital by ever greater surpluses, which required an endlessly expanding field of investment, the capitalists would at the same time not only concentrate their own resources more and more, but create the ever more vast and concentrated body of the international proletariat. Thus just as bourgeois society had grown up within feudalism until it burst the bonds of the latter, socialization of production would grow within the shell of private capitalist appropriation, and with it the mass of the proletarian class which represented these new forces, and which would overthrow it. Thus the illusion of bourgeois society as inherently equal, hid as well the falsehood of its claims to permanence.

In discovering the production, appropriation, and expanding accumulation of surplus-value, Marx also showed that capitalist exploitation and its accompanying social forms were subject to the same historical "laws" of internal decay as had been every previous stage of human society, and

that it produced from within its midst, the class which would destroy it. This process comes to an "end" with the proletariat, but only insofar as the working class itself becomes "universalized," that is, as all other classes lose their independent existence and merge into the former, a basis for a society which still has contradictions, but not of the nature of class struggle.[28] Therefore for Marx there can be only one form of classless society, and that is communism, by which is indicated an end to the divisions which have marked all societies hitherto, a universal mode of production and reproduction without inequality or exploitation. This can only be realized by the proletariat, which must put an end to all forms of oppression in order to fully realize its own non-exploitative nature and dissolve the very basis for classes.[29]

This is not meant to imply that the class as a whole, much less the specific individuals who compose it, act at all times only as the representative of these essential features. Quite the contrary, for classes are not only in struggle with each other, but every class is divided by competition within itself, and therefore subject to all kinds of distortions and conflicts, internal as well as external.[30] In real life classes dominate and influence each other, and the process by which a class carves away, as it were, the overlays of other classes and in the long run is able to arrive at its own true class interests is the very essence of the problem of revolutionary leadership, of

realizing in political, cultural, and ideological forms the historical "destiny" of any given class. This can only occur finally when material conditions are "ripe."[31] This concept, so easily accepted when applied to the capitalists or bourgeoisie, is nevertheless resisted when the question comes up of the relationship of the proletariat to socialism and/or communism. Then we hear instead of the "myth of the revolutionary proletariat,"[32] of how the idea that "the working class is inherently socialist" is a "leap of the imagination,"[33] or again, how it is a "metaphysical belief that the proletariat is destined to win through to a certain consciousness."[34]

Few today would express doubts that the new bourgeoisie was proven to be the historical bearer of capitalism and of its politics, culture, and ideology, even though centuries were required to win the majority of that class away from allegiance to the feudal system and to carry out its revolutions, which often failed or, even if victorious, were in many cases later at least partially reversed. Indeed, even after the first such struggles, in the United States and France, there was continual backsliding toward concepts of feudalism, for instance among the Americans who appealed to Washington to be king, with even John Adams wanting the president to be addressed as "Majesty."[35] Nor should it be forgotten that that great tribune of "pure" bourgeois freedom, Thomas Jefferson, owned slaves, and that it took almost a century and the bloodiest war up to that time to

drive this "impure" remnant of a non-bourgeois mode of production from the emerging capitalist U.S. Yet the proletariat is considered by many, even among Marxists, to lack any fundamental role as the historic bearer of socialism, much less communism, on the strength of the undoubted truth that after just a century and a half of working-class struggle, the revolutions which it has already made remain "incomplete" or have even been reversed, and that many or even most workers have not yet come to an understanding of the necessity to break with capitalist forms, and do not openly declare themselves to be either socialist or communist or pursue the goals which those concepts represent.[36]

But millions of others do believe, and have acted on their beliefs. Marx and Engels placed this in historic perspective:

> It is not a question of what this or that proletarian, or even the whole proletariat, at the moment regards as its aim. It is a question of what the proletariat is, and what, in accordance with this being, it will historically be compelled to do. Its aim is visibly and irrevocably foreshadowed in its own life situation as well as in the whole organisation of bourgeois society today. There is no need to explain here that a large part of the English and French proletariat is already conscious of its historic task and is constantly working to develop that consciousness into complete clarity.[37]

This conscious class struggle necessarily grows and wanes with the changing conditions of society, and its "necessity" can only be grasped in the last analysis over very long historical periods. In dealing with such events as the American Revolution, it is customary to recognize that the

colonists were "compelled to do" things which they only slowly and reluctantly recognized as necessary.[38] Thus what is reflected in the charges of "myth," "imagination," and "metaphysical beliefs" leveled at Marxism is not any fundamental historical difference in the manner in which the bourgeoisie and proletariat come to realize their class interests, but the dual standards used to analyze them.

It is only from this standpoint that the classes of capitalism can properly be examined. On the one side, it is the capitalist class, or the "big" bourgeoisie, which carries out the organization of this stage of social development, and imposes its forms of expression on all other classes which it is able to dominate and exploit. The material basis of capitalism lies in the ownership by the bourgeois class of most of the primary means of production and reproduction, such as land, factories, and so on. In the division of social labor they are the managers of society as a whole and of the major productive units, removed in virtually all instances from any direct participation in manual work or from the more specialized forms of intellectual activity needed to keep physical production going, devoting themselves instead to "business" as such. Their combined control over the means of production and the managerial power allows them to expropriate wealth from those actually involved in production. This takes the form of the extraction of surplus-value, the value yielded from the labor of workers

above what is paid to them in the form of wages. Indeed, the bourgeoisie is able to command the work of essentially all other members of society, whether or not these persons are a source of immediate profit to the capitalist class or simply serve to meet its demands for personal services and social support. The bourgeoisie is the main recipient of the wealth of society, seizing its portion out of all relation to its quite limited numbers, utilizing what it thus appropriates to expand its economic power and satisfy its luxurious wants.

The main political expression of the capitalist class historically is the modern nation state, which in its economic basis is primarily the solidification of the various divisions of the international market among competing groups. The bourgeoisie dominates society politically not only through the institutions of state, the military, the legal system, and so on, but by the use of its immense wealth, which distorts even the most apparently democratic processes and subordinates them to those who have the most money. Though it alternates between "reactionary" and "liberal" phases, the capitalist class never willingly yields control in any real measure to other classes, and maintains a dictatorship over the working class in particular, resorting to force if necessary to preserve its power. Culturally the bourgeoisie turns every expression of human existence--art, music, sexual love, and so on--into a source of profit. Its highest honors are always held out to

the powerful and the rich, or to those who have aided them directly or indirectly, the more so if they have risen from "rags to riches," the favorite story of the capitalist class, as it repeats ad nauseum the historic symbolism of its own emergence as the poor orphan of feudal society to be ruler of the house. Ideologically the bourgeoisie disdains all appeal to philosophy or sentiment, exalting instead the law of the jungle, the "survival of the fittest," though it clothes its indifference to human values in the empty and mawkish remnants of feudalism, such as the "regal" pomp and circumstance surrounding the U.S. presidency, or in a "do-goodism" that in only very small measure returns some of what it has appropriated, and which is but a pale reflection of "noblesse oblige."

Opposite the capitalist class or bourgeoisie--in every sense --stands the working class or proletariat. Its material base is the denial of all that which the capitalists possess. Thus it is excluded from ownership of any means of production or reproduction insofar as they are sources of social wealth. In this it stands opposed to all the propertied classes of society:

> In other words, all material wealth confronts the worker as the property of the commodity possessors. What is proposed here is that he works as a non-proprietor and that the conditions of his labour confront him as alien property.[39]

As a consequence, far from any role in managing society or their places of work, the proletariat are prevented from the exercise of judgment or control even, in most cases, over

the most immediate circumstances of their labor. Theirs is the principle muscle and brain which performs the actual work of production and reproduction of the economic power of capital, and which provides the services demanded by the bourgoisie and by all the well-to-do members of capitalist society.

The workers themselves have no power to command the work of any others, but are subordinated in all their relationships to those who do. They have no access to social wealth other than by selling their labor-power to the owners of the means of production and reproduction, the capitalists, and from their labor is stolen a major portion of the value produced each day, to support the capitalist class and to swell its control over all aspects of the social order. Their wages need be no higher than the minimal human survival level, which allows them to return to work each day and to raise their replacements, that is, their children. Though many rise above this starvation rate, others are in fact pushed below it, and even the temporarily better-off know that the slightest twist of their fortunes may precipitate them to the lowest depths, a "fate" which is in fact the common experience of those for whom capitalism no longer has use.

The political expression of the proletariat derives from its conditions of exclusion from ownership and control within society, but equally from the fulfillment of the potential inherent in its fundamental working situations.

Thus in place of the nation state it raises the banner of true international unity and equality, placing the needs of universal production above any of the temporary historical divisions of the market inherited from capitalism, while within each society it demands an end to any private ownership and appropriation of social wealth, to be replaced by the collective control of all resources, for which it has been prepared by mass industrial employment. On this basis it creates new forms of political life, which enforce proletarian class power and socialist organization, and which demand the right of each individual to participate directly and democratically in control of the forces which affect their lives.

Culturally the working class places the dignity of human labor at the center of the values of society, and seizes back in the name of humanity those parts of life which belong to personal existence and social expression, freed at last from their exploitation and degradation at the hands of the bourgeoisie for the ends of capitalist profit. In these ways it opens up all aspects of society for participation by every individual, each of whom is encouraged to develop fully all their personal capabilities, and to overcome natural limitations and the division of labor. In its world-view, the proletariat disdains utopianism and false idealism, but places its faith instead in facing reality in all circumstances, and in an attitude of true scientific investigation in the service of all

humankind, having as its goal the revolutionary transformation of the society, in both its material aspects and its human relations.

Of course the characteristics which I have outlined here are only the historic tendencies of these two classes, respectively. Nevertheless, it is against these essential characteristics that it is necessary to measure the various groups within society, including the professionals, to arrive at their class positions. Two things stand out in this comparison. The first is that, as I have noted above, professionals must in general "practice" their profession, that is, they are in the overwhelming majority working people who cannot live on the wealth produced by others. In this respect they share the condition of the working class as a whole, which must always labor for its very existence. Moreover, in a growing number of cases, the relationship is even more direct, for millions of professionals today have no way to earn their living other than by hiring themselves out for wages and salaries to the capitalist owners of the means of production and reproduction, or to the governmental, cultural, and other institutions which the latter dominate. In these two respects they are clearly related to the proletariat, and separated from the primary characteristics of the capitalist class or bourgeoisie. In addition, there is found here one very major division within the ranks of the professionals themselves, that between the "self-employed," who retain immediate control over their own

labor and in the first instance do appear to gain fully the wealth that they produce, and those who must hire out to others, losing in that degree their power to shape their own working conditions and opening themselves up to exploitation. It will be necessary to focus particular attention on this distinction, therefore, and try to determine whether it is a class demarcation among professionals.

On the other hand, the earlier review showed a wide range of circumstances in which the professionals differed from the common situations of the average worker. In particular, it will be necessary to analyze whether differences in relation to knowledge, the job market, control over work, and the social import of their labor help serve to actually divide professionals in class terms from the proletariat, or whether these are merely heightened forms of the various divisions which mark the working class itself. In other words, it must be decided if what is being dealt with here are mere quantitative factors, or if fundamentally different qualities of relations to means of production and reproduction, divisions of labor, and portion or manner of acquiring wealth are involved. However, in two aspects, there already emerges a definite distinction even from the preliminary outline undertaken above. These are the tendency of the professionals to assume a managerial function over society as a whole, and particularly their "natural" ability to command the labor of others, or at

least to share in authority over other employees, placing them in a potentially exploitative relation. In these two regards they definitely depart from the fundamental conditions of the working class, and take on the characteristics of the bourgeoisie or the capitalist class, even if only in a pale reflection of the overall power exercised by the latter.

This initial comparison of the professionals as a group with the two main classes of capitalist society indicates that they lie between the "poles" which these primary class forces represent. This in itself, of course, does not answer the question of whether the members of the professions are themselves part of a separate class, "new" or "old" as the case may be, or are among the lower or upper echelons of one or the other of the two major classes. However, it is important to point out certain consequences which flow from the position of the professionals in the "middle," as it were, between the proletariat and the capitalists. Because the professions share only partially the attributes of these two classes, whose relation forms the primary contradiction under capitalism, and because of their assertion of certain "special" features, most notably professional autonomy and the claim to be relatively free of self-interest, many professionals view themselves as lying "outside" or "above" class. Magali Sarfatti Larson calls attention to this aspect: "Professions derive an ideology of neutrality from their generalized, 'societal' appeal--that

is, an ideology which implicitly stresses the classlessness of professionals and, explicitly, the service to the public as a whole."[40] However, it is not so much their subjective claims, as their objective conditions which give birth to this ideological expression. In other words, it is their actual position, not only "between," but to some extent independent of, the primary capitalist class contradictions that allows the professionals the illusion that they are "classless." In particular, the "self-definition" granted professional groupings allows them to imagine that they are not bound by class attributes.

As has already been shown, however, this position is doubly false. For in the first place, no segment of a class society can in fact be "classless," since all assert some particular interest in relation to the means of production, the division of labor, and sources of wealth. That a particular group departs in some way from the main contradiction of other classes in a given social order only means that special care is needed to arrive properly at what actual class situation they occupy. Such a differentiation is by no means an adequate basis on which to claim "classlessness," or its related ideological forms of "neutrality" and "objectivity." In addition, it has also been shown that even in the narrow sense these claims on the part of the professionals are unacceptable. In practice, the professions cannot help but uphold in virtually all instances the cultural and ideological norms of the dominant

class in society, and in fact to help maintain its position of economic and political control. Since under capitalism the bourgeoisie holds this power, the professionals are indeed its faithful servants, however much they may strain at the leash against some of the more explicit forms of their own domination, and despite pockets of dissident intellectuals who break with the capitalist system. Thus while the subjective ideology of the professions stresses that they are "neutral," their objective circumstances reveal quite the opposite. The very illusion of being "classless" can itself weaken their ability to resist the actual control of the dominant classes.[41] Thus neither in relation to "class" in general, nor in the narrow sense of their own immediate practice can any professional assertion of "classlessness" be maintained.

Regardless of the extent to which they do or do not assert such claims, the professionals are adept at playing on the "duality" of their character in relation to the proletariat and the capitalists, for it is sometimes in their interests to emphasize their closeness to the one, at other times to the other, to gain independence from both. Thus many professionals seek to establish their differences from most workers by insisting on their "professionalism" and the attributes of "managerial" authority which they hold in the society and over other labor. In this role they seek assistance from the bourgeoisie, claiming that they are an indispensable element in the maintenance of its social

order. Especially when their own authority is challenged by the working class, they are quick to assume attitudes of paternalistic superiority, and to insist on their right to be judged by other standards than the proletarians. Yet in other circumstances, the professionals are at pains to stress that they are just "working people" like any worker and that the latter should therefore support them in their struggles against bourgeois domination or exploitation. In this mode, the elitism seen in so many of those in the professions is hidden behind a facade of the similar conditions of all who must labor. It is particularly common to find those of a radical persuasion stressing these ties, and overlooking their actual difference with most workers. Thus the professionals play on their own middle position, as necessary.

NOTES

1. Marx and Engels, The German Ideology, 37: "The way in which men produce their means of subsistence depends first of all on the nature of the means of subsistence they actually find in existence and have to reproduce. . . . This mode of production must not be considered simply as being the reproduction of the physical existence of these individuals. Rather it is a definite form of activity of these individuals, a definite form of expressing their life, a definite mode of life on their part."

2. Marx and Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," 34: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." For the relation of the origin of classes to the family and nation see Marx and Engels, The German Ideology, 50-52.

3. V. I. Lenin, "On Cooperation," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 33, 469.

4. Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 1, 272: "Upon the different forms of prosperity, upon the social conditions of existence, rises an entire superstructure of distinct and peculiarly formed sentiments, illusions, modes of thought and views of life. The entire class creates and forms them out of its material foundations and out of the corresponding social relations." See also, Karl Marx, "Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 1, 362-363: "In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general."

5. Engels to C. Schmidt, August 5, 1980, 486: "But strangely enough it has not struck anyone that, after all, the method of distribution essentially depends on how much there is to distribute, and that this must surely change with the progress of production and social organisation, so that the method of distribution may also change, presumably."

6. Frederick Engels, London, to J. Bloch, September 21-22, 1890, in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 2, 488: "Hence if someone twists this into saying that the economic element is the only determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure . . . also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their form. There is an interaction of all these elements in which, amid all the endless host of accidents (that is, of things and events, whose inner connection is so remote or so impossible of proof that we can regard it as non-existent, as negligible) the economic movement finally asserts itself as necessary. Otherwise the application of the theory to any period of history one chooses would be easier than the solution of a simple equation of the first degree."

7. Frederick Engels, London, to H. Starkenburg, January 25, 1894, in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 2, 504-5: "Political, juridical, philosophical, religious, literary, artistic, etc., development is based on economic development. But all these react upon one another and also upon the economic basis. It is not that the economic conditions is the cause and alone active, while everything else only is passive effect. There is, rather, interaction on the basis of economic necessity, which ultimately always asserts itself. . . . Men make their history themselves, ony they do so in a given environment which conditions it and on the basis of actual relations already existing, among which the economic relations, however much they may be influenced by the other--political and ideological--ones, are still ultimately the decisive ones, forming the red thread which runs through them and alone leads to understanding."

8. Ibid., 505: "The further the particular sphere which we are investigating is removed from the economic sphere and approaches that of pure abstract ideology, the more shall we find it exhibiting accidents in its development, the more will its curve run in a zigzag. But if you plot the average axis of the curve, you will find that the axis of this curve will run more and more nearly parallel to the axis of the curve of economic development the longer the period considered and the wider the field dealt with."

9. Thus, on the one hand, Engels writes in his letter to C. Schmidt, August 5, 1890, 486: "If this man [Paul Barth] has not discovered that while the material mode of existence is the primum agens this does not preclude the ideological spheres from reacting upon it in their turn, though with a secondary effect, he cannot possibly have understood the subject he is writing about." But on the other hand Engels protests in a letter (London, to F. Mehring, July 14, 1893, in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 2, 497), against "the so-called thinker . . . [who] works with mere thought material, which he accepts without examination as the product of thought, and does not investigate further for a more remote source independent of thought; indeed this is a matter of course to him, because, as all action is mediated by thought, it appears to him to be ultimately based on thought."

10. Frederick Engels to J. Bloch, September 21-22, 1890, 489: "History is made in such a way that the final result always arises from conflicts between many individual wills, of which each again has been made what it is by a host of particular conditions of life. Thus there are innumerable intersecting forces, an infinite series of parallelograms of forces which give rise to one resultant--the historical event. . . . But from the fact that individual wills--of which each desires what he is impelled to by his physical constitution and external, in the last resort economic, circumstances (either his own personal circumstances or those of society in general)--do not attain what they want, but are merged into a collective mean, a common resultant, it must not be concluded that their value is equal to zero. On the contrary, each contributes to the resultant and is to this degree involved in it."

11. Frederick Engels, London, to C. Schmidt, October 27, 1890, in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 2, 496: "Or why do we fight for the political dictatorship of the proletariat if political power is economically impotent? Force (that is, state power) is also an economic power! . . . What these gentlemen all lack is dialectics. They always see only here cause, there effect. That this is a hollow abstraction, that such metaphysical polar opposites exist in the real world only during crises, while the whole vast process goes on in the form of interaction--though of very unequal forces, the economic movement being by far the strongest, most primeval, most decisive--that everything is relative and nothing absolute--this they never begin to see. Hegel has never existed for them."

12. For a discussion of the effect of the lack of a clear definition of "class" by Marx, see Barbara Ehrenreich and John Ehrenreich, "Rejoinder," chap. in Walker, Between Labor and Capital, 322-323.

13. V. I. Lenin, "A Great Beginning: Heroism of the Workers in the Rear, 'Communist Subbotniks,'" in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 29, 421.

14. Karl Marx, Grundrisse: Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy, trans. and with a foreward by Martin Nicolaus (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1973), 84: "The human being is in the most literal sense a [political animal], not merely a gregarious animal, but an animal which can individuate itself only in the midst of society. Production by an isolated individual outside society--a rare exception which may well occur when a civilized person in whom the social forces are already dynamically present is cast by accident into the wilderness--is as much of an absurdity as is the development of language without individuals living together and talking to each other."

15. Marx and Engels, The German Ideology, 41: "The social structure and the state are continually evolving out of the life-process of definite individuals, however, of these individuals, not as they may appear in their own or other people's imagination, but as they actually are, i.e., as they act, produce materially, and hence as they work under definite material limits, presuppositions and conditions independent of their will."

16. Frederick Engels, "Karl Marx," in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 2, 165.

17. See Karl Marx, "Appendix: Results of the Immediate Process of Production," in Karl Marx, Capital: The Critique of Political Economy, trans. Ben Fowkes, with an introduction by Ernest Mandel, vol. 1 (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1977), 954: "The commodity as the product of capital can be said to contain both paid and unpaid labour. It has already been mentioned that this is not strictly true since the labour itself is not bought or sold directly. But the commodity contains a specific overall quantity of objectified labour. A portion of this objectified labour . . . is exchanged for the equivalent of the worker's wages; another portion is appropriated by the capitalist without any equivalent being paid. Both portions are objectified and so present as parts of the value of the commodity. And it is a convenient abbreviation to describe the one as paid and the other as unpaid labour."

18. Engels, "Karl Marx," 166.

19. Anwhar Shaikh, "The Poverty of Algebra," chap. in Steedman et al., The Value Controversy, 272-273: "Thus labor too acquires an additional aspect when it is aimed at producing commodities: it acquires the aspect of abstract

labour, and from this point of view all commodity-producing labour becomes qualitatively alike and quantitatively comparable."

20. Ibid., 270-271: "Neither the connection of a given labour process to the social division of labour, nor indeed the actual usefulness of the product itself, is of any immediate interest to the capitalist involved: only profit matters, in the final analysis."

21. Ibid., 994: "The work that is added to this is a specific additional quantity of general social labour and may be represented as an additional amount of value or sum of money. The labour already contained in the means of production is identical to what is now added. The two kinds of labour are distinguished only by the fact that the one is already objectified in use-values while the other is in the process of being so objectified. The one is in the past, the other in the present; the one dear, the other living; the one objectified in the past, the other objectifying itself in the present."

22. Marx, Capital, vol. 3, 863.

23. Marx, "Appendix," 1005-6.

24. Ibid., 978.

25. Ibid., 981-82.

26. Ibid., 1002.

27. See Karl Marx, "Wages, Price, and Profit," in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 1, 446: "Instead of the conservative motto, 'A fair day's wage for a fair day's work!, they ought to inscribe on their banner the revolutionary watchword, 'Abolition of the wages system!'"

28. Karl Marx, London, to J. Weydemeyer, March 5, 1852, in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 2, 452.

29. Marx and Engels, The German Ideology, 60: "In all previous revolutions the mode of activity always remained unchanged and it was only a question of a different distribution of this activity, a new distribution of labour to other persons, whilst the communist revolution is directed against the hitherto existing mode of activity, does away with labour, and abolishes the rule of all classes with the classes themselves, because it is carried through by the class which no longer counts as a class in society, which is not recognised as a class, and is in itself the expression of the dissolution of all classes, nationalities, etc., within present society. . . ."

30. Ibid., 83, 85: "Competition separates individuals from one another, not only the bourgeois but still more the workers, in spite of the fact that it brings them together. Hence it is a long time before these individuals can unite. . . . The separate individuals form a class only insofar as they have to carry on a common battle against another class; in other respects they are on hostile terms with each other as competitors." See also Marx and Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," 43: "This organisation of the proletarians into a class, and consequently into a political party, is continually being upset again by the competition between the workers themselves. But it ever rises up again, stronger, firmer, mightier."

31. Ibid., 62: "And if these material elements of a complete revolution are not present--namely, on the one hand the existing productive forces, on the other the formation of a revolutionary mass . . . then it is absolutely immaterial for practical development whether the idea of this revolution has been expressed a hundred times already, as the history of communism proves."

32. Cohen and Howard, "Why Class?," 95.

33. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "Rejoinder," 331.

34. C. Wright Mills, White Collar: The American Middle Classes (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951), 296.

35. Richard Hofstadter, William Miller, and Daniel Aaron, The American Republic, vol. 1, To 1865 (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1959), 261.

36. For a relatively agnostic view of the possibility of the proletariat achieving socialism, see Paul M. Sweezy, Post-Revolutionary Society, 47-48.

37. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Criticism: Against Bruno Bauer and Company (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1975), 44-45.

38. Hofstadter, Miller, and Aaron, The American Republic, vol. 1, 148, 162: "The colonists, however, for all their English customs and manners and their sincere loyalty to the Crown, refused to accept Parliament's right to govern their internal affairs or to draw upon them as a source of revenue. . . . The Americans were driven to take an increasingly daring stand in their resistance not merely by the course of events but also by the logic of their arguments against Parliament's interference with their affairs."

39. Marx, "Appendix," 1003.

40. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 157. See also xiv: "Both sociological ideal-types and the self-presentation of professions imply the professions are independent from or at least neutral vis-a-vis the class structure. Professionals can be viewed as themselves constituting a class--especially if class is reduced to its indicators, socioeconomic status and occupation. But the emphasis on the professions' cognitive mastery and the implications of 'class neutrality' place them, rather, in the stratum of educated and 'socially unattached' intellectuals whom Karl Mannheim described. . . . Mannheim's notion that cultural life in capitalist societies was *becoming* 'increasingly detached from a given class' contrasts sharply with the Marxist tradition."

41. Ibid., 237, where Larson cites Robert Merton, "The Machine, the Worker, and the Engineer," 87: "'Paradoxically, the same ideology of the "expert," which gives the technician a certain autonomy within his or her own specialty, simultaneously prepares the technician to execute blindly the designs of others.'"

CHAPTER 3

THE GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PETTY BOURGEOISIE

There is, however, another class which historically has also exhibited this "mix" of characteristics drawn from both workers and capitalists. This is, of course, the petty bourgeoisie, which Marxist analysis has shown to lie, as it were, between the two "poles" of the capitalist class structure. The question of whether the petty bourgeois owners actually exist "outside" of capitalism or "within" it is one I will have to return to later. But it can be stated unequivocally at the outset that Marx and those who built on his analysis have always recognized that the economic, political, ideological, and cultural features of the petty bourgeoisie exhibit characteristics found in common with each of the two main classes of capitalism, the working class and the bourgeoisie, respectively, as well as showing differences from both and certain "unique" aspects of its own.[1] It is therefore necessary to devote especial attention to the nature of the petty bourgeois relationship, to determine whether the professions may fall wholly or in part within this class. Moreover, even if the inclusion of professionals in this category were to be ruled out, it would behoove us to look closely at the petty

bourgeoisie, since a study of their social role, which seems at times to lie closer to the workers, at others to act in ways that resemble the behavior of the bourgeoisie, will in any event throw light on the role of such "middle" classes of whatever identity.

The term "petty bourgeoisie" may be loosely translated as small owner or minor businessperson. It referred classically to the artisans and traders of the towns which emerged under feudalism as the first centers of bourgeois life.[2] By extension, it includes as well the small independent farmers and all who are individual owners of productive or commercial property.[3] The form of social economy represented by this class is petty commodity production and exchange, that is, small-scale producing and trading of goods and services. It is important thus to distinguish the petty bourgeoisie from two other related groups, the first of whom are sometimes called simply "petty producers,"[4] those who are individual property owners, but who merely consume their own production, the primary example being subsistence farmers, those who represent what Lenin called "small patriarchal,"[5] "to a considerable extent natural, peasant farming."[6] On the other hand, it is necessary to separate out the bound serf farmers and peasant traders of feudal times, who are not "free" persons and therefore do not properly fall within the general category of bourgeois society.[7] These two groups may overlap or even be identical under feudalism.

The petty bourgeoisie is a member of the bourgeois social order, however, participating as independent actors in the marketplace, able to dispose freely of both their goods and their labor. This class has come over time to include all the minor producers and traders of commodities and services in modern society who own or possess significant, even if small, portions of the means of production and reproduction, including land, buildings, tools, or machinery.

It is evident from the outset that in just this last aspect the petty bourgeoisie differs fundamentally from the working class or proletariat, who are excluded from any ownership of these primary productive sources of social wealth.[8] The petty bourgeois class, on the other hand, labor on property which they possess, and thus control at least in substantial degree the nature of their own work.[9] Of course they can be, and in general are, subject to many forms of pressure from outside, notably from banks, creditors, government, and so on, but in their immediate conditions of labor they are "their own boss" and answer only to themselves and the necessities of their businesses.[10] On the other hand, the petty bourgeoisie are also distinguished in a fundamental way from the conditions of the capitalists and big bourgeoisie, in that they must labor on what they own, and cannot simply live off the value of these investments. Because their property is so small-scale, it is incapable of generating the income

necessary for their survival without the input of their own work and frequently that of their families as well. This is so even if they supplement their own labor by hiring others.[11] The petty bourgeoisie, therefore, belong in general to the classes that must work, to those who must earn their living by their own labor and not through the exploitation of others alone. Moreover, their property will in most cases rapidly depreciate in value if they do not tend constantly to its upkeep, a condition which has destroyed millions of farms and small shops when their owners can no longer work, or when their children depart from them for other areas or occupations.

The most common mistake in analyzing the petty bourgeoisie, however, is to imagine them simply as isolated individual units, not only independent, but self-contained in a manner which removes them from any capitalist taint. This is particularly evident in the mythology surrounding the so-called "family farm." Communities resembling this "pure" form of independence have at times come into existence, but such relations are not a necessary class characteristic of the petty bourgeoisie. In reality, a vast number of those who participate in small-scale commodity production and exchange, and frequently the majority, either suplement their income by hiring out as part-time or seasonal labor to others, or else are themselves the employers of one or more workers. In this way they themselves take part in the capitalist mode of

production, the hallmark of which is the hiring and sale, and the exploitation, of labor-power for wages. Such ties to capitalism are further reinforced in a thousand ways by links to the controlling bourgeois power in the form of banks, suppliers, and so on. What marks the petty bourgeois class, therefore, is not its complete independence from capitalism, but a much more limited relationship: because they are the primary source of their own income based on labor on their own minor property, they are the owners of what they produce and thus are able to keep for themselves the value of their own surplus.[12] In their personal labor they are thus relatively free from the condition of being either exploiter or exploited, regardless of all the other ways in which they are enmeshed within capitalism.

Taken not as an abstraction, but in its actual historical development, what best describes the relation of the petty bourgeoisie to the capitalist system is thus partial "autonomy."[13] But this characteristic is of great importance, because it marks this class not simply as an amalgam or a "compromise" of the features of the two main classes of capitalism, the working class and the bourgeoisie, but rather as a separate entity which has its own somewhat unique aspects. This is not to say that the petty bourgeoisie does not behave at times as if it were simply a pendulum, swinging back and forth between the two "poles" of its own existence, property-owner on the one

hand, laborer on the other. Such oscillation is in fact highly characteristic of its role in society. Thus the members of this class are constantly striving, on the one hand, to maximize their control of land and the other means of production and reproduction, to increase their investments and even, if possible, to join the capitalist ranks, to become big bourgeoisie proper. On the other hand, they are equally concerned to realize the full value of their labor, and thus struggle as "working persons" to retain whatever wealth they produce against the ravages of high taxes, exhorbitant interest rates, and any other tolls which rob them of what they see as the natural right to keep all of what they earn. This duality makes them identify at one time with the capitalists, at others with the working class, and they often assert both interests simultaneously, so that they seem in reality not to "know their own minds" on many issues.

Nevertheless, especially on the "superstructural" level of political, cultural, and ideological expressions, the petty bourgeoisie exhibits its own forms of activity, which cannot be simply defined by or fitted into the dominant social tendencies represented by the proletarian or capitalist classes. In particular, and above and beyond all else, the petty bourgeois class is a true hotbed of demands for "independence," for an idealized "freedom," which is the emergence in ideology of their desire for economic autonomy and personal liberty in their daily labor

and life--and thus also of their yearning to escape from the pressures and choices which confront them every day, not only in the objective difficulties of their position between workers and capitalists, but in the subjective need they feel to put an end to the tensions and suffering of their bifurcated role.[14] Thus the petty bourgeoisie seeks first and foremost to preserve and enlarge its autonomous position, to have a "free hand" in everything it does, an interest which in politics translates initially into a demand for "pure" democracy, for the formalities of equality, for a justice blind to social position, and for an unrestricted parliamentarianism. It does so, however, in ways oblivious to the actual inequalities of a class society, and under the pressures of reality, its democratic and egalitarian impulses easily change, even turning into their opposites. In cultural terms, this ideology exalts individualism, the belief that personal merit will triumph if only allowed to work unrestrained, an idealism of small-scale production and trade, and faith in the uniqueness of each of their personal endeavors.

Within this apparently unitary pursuit of its interests in autonomy, however, lurks the same duality which marks the petty bourgeoisie always. On the one hand, it is an essentially conservative force in history, looking backward to the "good old days," the "simpler life," a dream of suspended animation relecting the temporary period of balance between the collapsing authoritarianism of

feudalism and the all-dominating control of capitalism. In this mythology it ignores all reality on which its apparent "freedom" was based, for instance, in the U.S., the robbery and genocide of the Indian people to make way for the blissful "independence" of the frontier family farm. The memory of the petty bourgeoisie is extremely short. It remembers only that there was a time when it seemed freer of the restraints of modern society, and it strives endlessly to recapture that state. In this it rails continuously against "big business," "big labor," and "big government," in fact at any representative of the large-scale organization of industry and society, capitalist or proletarian, against which it poses individualistic, small-scale, privatized forms of labor and appropriation. But in so doing it does not abandon its own capitalistic ambitions, only demanding that these be given free rein without the "unfair competition" of the big bourgeoisie or the "excessive demands" of the truly disinherited proletariat.[15] Even as it fawns on the capitalists, this class is thus in essence a representative of reaction in its fundamental sense, so that to every new growth in the powerful forces of modern society it raises the cry: "look to the past, preserve the present, save us from the future."

But because this essential conservatism is based on such unreality in its representation of history, on a hopelessly Quixotic attempt to hold back the onward

development of society, and because it is rooted in an individualistic ideology which lends support to every personal expression of whatever kind, however absurd, it can come forth in the guise of the most varied, even outrageous "radicalism." Thus every conceivable possibility of escaping from its historical dilemma rises before the eyes of the petty bourgeoisie as a real potential, given credence by its insistence on an abstract "equality" in all its thoughts. No scheme is too outlandish to become the basis of a "system" in its vision, and it produces a veritable swarm of individuals who, in virtual isolation, are thoroughly convinced that they have all the answers to the social ills. But the petty bourgeoisie, oblivious as always to the world that made it--its most treasured belief is that it is "self-made"--fails to perceive that the more far-flung its mental strivings, the more in fact it reinforces its true pettiness, the more it solidifies its reputation as a representative of backwardness. Its individualistic "radicalism," carried to extreme, is the very essence of its basic conservatism, to the point even of reaction, not an illogical departure or division in its nature, but a true dialectic contradiction, the unity of opposites in a single identity.[16] This is of major importance when this class takes its place on the social stage.[17]

Nothing said above must be taken to imply that the petty bourgeoisie cannot, at various junctures in history,

play a progressive role.[18] Indeed, the very characteristics which determine its conservatism/radicalism at the same time make it an effective force for social progress at certain times. Resistant to the intrusions of ever more powerful capitalism into its life, and fighting to cast off all remnants of the oppression of its feudal past, it is quick to take up the battle for social freedoms and individual rights. In this its status as a property owning class, less vulnerable to the power of the capitalists than the proletariat, in the first instance, gives it a base from which to issue its challenges, and it may even temporarily take the lead in fighting for justice and against authoritarian encroachments, and is often in the forefront of revolutionary actions in the early stages. Its tendency to abstraction makes its assertions all the more forceful, as it raises a banner of democracy and liberty as universal concepts, unaffected by the particular interests or history of any special group, or the specific circumstances of the moment. Standing as it does between the major contending classes of society, it believes its viewpoint is indeed that which represents all humankind, the proper median between the narrow class concerns which it attributes to others. In this it deludes itself, but in the meantime it is able to represent in a "pure" form many of the longings of all humanity for a just and better world.[19]

Because of these characteristics, which again reveal its contradictory nature, the petty bourgeoisie is sometimes able to stand for long periods of time beside the proletariat as an ally in the struggle against the capitalist class. Always wavering, flattered by the attentions of the bourgeoisie and forever hopeful of any new possibility of joining that ruling class, fearful of the power which the capitalists hold over society, prone even in its firmest moments to fly off on tangents and to cling to its social privileges, still this class is compelled by circumstances to fight for its life, and in doing so it cannot help but find in the proletariat the staunchness that it lacks.[20] As the relentless pressure of capitalist expansion bears down on its members and threatens to reduce them to working-class status by undermining their role as independent property owners, the petty bourgeoisie is able to see in the workers its own future and to associate itself with their revolutionary cause.

But at the first easing of tensions, either through the institution of reforms by the capitalists or in the overthrow of the latter by the working classes, the petty bourgeoisie reasserts its own more conservative interests, finding in the very proletarian movement to which they have allied themselves a new and even greater threat to their autonomy. As Lenin put it, in discussing the "dual position and dual role of the peasantry,"

> in the course of the revolution, the character of the various political parties, and the numerous ideological-political trends reveal the inherently contradictory class structure of this mass, its petty-bourgeois character, the antagonism between the proprietor and the proletarian trends within it. The vacillation of the impoverished small master between the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and the revolutionary proletariat is as inevitable as the phenomenon existent in every capitalist society that an insignificant minority of small producers wax rich, "get on in the world," turn into bourgeois, while the overwhelming majority are either utterly ruined and become wage-workers or paupers, or eternally eke out an almost proletarian existence.[21]

Thus they are at best an uncertain support to the working class in its struggles, and a sure source of conflict if not of open reaction, as the proletarian revolution moves to completion.

If now the professionals as a whole are compared to the characteristics of the petty bourgeoisie, a large measure of correspondence in their circumstances is found. The owners of stores or farms, or of any similar business, have in general that same continuity of occupation, based on factcrs outside their immediate daily labor, which were found to be true also in the professions. A person is a "farmer" or a "storekeeper" simply by virtue of owning a farm or store, apart, in the first instance, from the labor of its owner, who is in all cases a possessor of property as well as a laborer, and this status is even commonly inherited. Only if the petty bourgeoisie lose their farms or stores does their occupation change, similar to the disbarring or delicensing of professionals. It is in this sense that Richard Hofstadter speaks of the "beginning of a farming

'career.'"[22] By the same token: "The entrepreneur's economic life, based upon property, embraced his entire lifetime and was set within a family heritage. . . . Secure in his world, the old entrepreneur could look upon his entire life as an economic unity. . . ."[23] Though C. Wright Mills, who wrote these words, contrasts this situation with the instability of wage and salary employees, whose "economic life is based upon the job contract and the pay period," it has already been shown above that for professionals this distinction is not sufficient, for they also share the "economic unity" of orderly careers which "embrace an entire lifetime."

Moreover, though the specialized knowledge of the petty bourgeois owner is not generally as rarified or secretive as that which marks the professions, it is usually considerable within their trade,[24] is a necessary part of their labor, and is often accompanied by a mystique and devotion not unlike that noted for the professionals, particularly in the case of farmers with their "way of life" based on land, and the oft-noted single-mindedness of those who live "for the store."[25] Farming in particular is often described in "professional" terms:

> "Thousands of young men," wrote the New York agriculturalist Jesse Buel, "do annually forsake the plough, and the honest profession of their fathers, if not to win the fair, at least from an opinion, too often confirmed by mistaken parents, that agriculture is not the road to wealth, to honor, nor to happiness. And such will continue to be the case, until our agriculturalists become qualified to assume that rank in society to which the importance of their calling, and their numbers, entitle them, and which intelligence and self-respect can alone give them."[26]

As this quote shows, such attitudes go back at least to the nineteenth century, despite their "modern" professional sound. Such similarities are reinforced by agricultural or trade associations, and a community of those with similar interests, not unlike that of professions.

But it is on more fundamental bases that the identification of petty bourgeoisie and professionals must occur if at all. On the one hand, it is as true of the petty bourgeois owners as of those in the professions on the whole, that they must perform labor themselves in order to gain an income and maintain the value of their possessions and skills. In their work, the petty bourgeoisie in addition keep a high degree of control, able to play, arrange, and carry out their labor in relative freedom, though often under various forms of pressure, such as that from bankers or suppliers who demand that certain crops be sown or particular merchandise be handled, and so on.[27] This ability to "be their own boss" is the most precious possession of the petty bourgeoisie, a value for which they will often suffer virtual financial ruin before giving up the struggle and joining the ranks of those who must directly labor for, and be exploited by, others.[28] But in their real, even if limited autonomy, they are similar to the professionals also.[29]

The occupations of petty bourgeois owners are relatively social in character, insofar as they are themselves directly engaged in the market. Moreover, many

have a sense of providing essential products or services, most notably farmers, who frequently complain that they are poorly rewarded, even though they "feed the world." Moreover, the concept of professionalism itself has come to influence the petty bourgeoisie in general.[30] The petty bourgeois owners also serve as the maintainers and "managers" of certain social resources, farm land again being the outstanding example, significant in scale taken collectively, but individually held and used. As in the case of the professionals, this combination of socially productive activity and individualistic practice generates an ideology which combines attitudes of "public service" with those of personal "striving."

Moreover, for the petty bourgeoisie, as for those in the professions, it is within the "natural" course of things to come to power over other persons, beginning with members of their own families, who may in turn be exploited.[31] The "hired hand," the "helper," the after-school employee are ubiquitous parts of the petty bourgeois scene, but they are also incidental to the identity of the members of that class itself. Individual small farmers or storekeepers move without otherwise changing conditions from doing their own labor entirely to employing one or more workers.[32] In this easy passage from "being their own boss" to bossing others they are linked as well to the attributes of the professionals analyzed above. Their paternalism is also often all too obvious, notably in the cases where they deal

with those of differing class, race, nationality, or sex. In addition, despite what may seem to be the formal equality of petty bourgeois communities, there is in fact within them a fairly rigid hierarchy, in which those who are most successful emerge as dominant and as spokespersons to the "outside." It is they who dominate the politics and culture of their community, and who serve as its primary links to the larger financial interests of capitalism. In fact, this social hierarchy and the employment of labor often overlap, as the scale of ownership determines power and prestige. In this respect too, the hierarchical pattern already observed in the professions finds a strong parallel in the petty bourgeois communities.

Most students of the professionals, even those who define the petty bourgeoisie in the most narrow and strict terms, have no hesitancy in identifying the "traditional" or independent members of the professions as belonging to that class. This identification rests in particular on the typical association of these professionals with some degree of entrepreneurial practice, with a "business," even if this is simply an office and a set of medical implements or legal books. The accompanying aspect of such businesses, of course, is that these professionals are generally free of the necessity to hire themselves out as an employee to others, and they therefore share that autonomy from direct exploitation that is the hallmark of the petty bourgeoisie. Some such "business" professionals, as noted earlier, are

substantial owners and employers in their own right, and may thereby become actual capitalists who can live primarily off the labor of others. At the opposite end of the scale are the trainees and para-professionals who may not have received full "rank" or independence and are therefore usually considered to be closer to other "workers." But the general category of independent professionals fits without much conceptual difficulty into the petty bourgeois class, with whose other members it also arose more or less at the same time historically.[33]

The main question or problem area in the class analysis of the members of professions therefore arises in the case of those who at first do not seem to share these three fundamental and inseparable characteristics: the ownership of significant even if small amounts of property in the means of production and reproduction, independence in their work, and relative autonomy from capitalist exploitation.[34] While among doctors and lawyers private practice may still predominate, it is increasingly common even in these professions to have at least associate status with some larger institution, and among academics, journalists, teachers, scientific and technical professionals, the civil service and military, and most other categories there is little if any independence from employee status any longer. Therefore it is the question of these hired-out members of the professions on which it is necessary to focus. "Independent" in the actual sense of that term they clearly

are not. But it must still be determined whether they do not in fact take part in the ownership of important means of social production and reproduction; whether their labor-power, even though sold on the "market," actually leads to the same kind of exploitation for profit as most workers; and whether they occupy a significantly different place in the division of labor, and possess a higher degree of autonomy in their work, than do proletarians. Only such an examination can indicate whether or not these professionals also belong to the petty bourgeoisie, or whether they are part of the proletariat, or of some new class, and so on. It is to this analysis, therefore, that attention must next be turned.

Yet it is precisely at this point, where the most careful examination is needed, that the question is quite often treated with the greatest amount of casualness, superficiality, and arbitrariness, and where therefore the freest forms of invention and multiplicity of solutions are to be found. The underlying cause of this diversity is typified by the writings of C. Wright Mills who, thirty years ago in White Collar, put forward a theory of the professionals which anticipated that of many of the later students of the question, including Marxists. Though Mills flirted briefly with the "petty bourgeoisie" when describing the "old middle class" to which he assigned what he called the "free professionals," he dropped the term when he turned to the salaried members of the professions, who formed part

of his "new middle class."[35] For Mills, the decisive change is that:

> Negatively, the transformation of the middle class is a shift from property to no-property; positively, it is a shift from property to a new axis of stratification, occupation.[36]

But even if dispossessed farmers or shopowners clearly lost their land or stores, it is not equally evident that the educated lose possession of their skills simply because they go to work for someone else.

The comparison is further confused because Mills fails to "require" that the professionals own property to be members of the "middle class." Thus he can state that:

> The old professional middle class never needed to possess property, but whether its members owned their means of livelihood or not, their working unit has been small and personally manageable, and their working lives have involved a high degree of independence in day-to-day decisions.[37]

But if professionals "never needed to possess property" in the first place, then for them its loss cannot be the critical basis for their changing from "old" to "new" status. If the "older" members of the professions did not need to be "propertied," in the sense of owning material means of production, in order to be "middle class," it is not clear why this is any different from the "newer" professionals merely because they are employed in a salaried position, instead of in an independent setting. Of course, employment in a large institution itself brings changes, but these are apparently not the same "property"/"no-property"

distinction that Mills used for farmers, shopowners, and so on.

The issue is obscured even further when Mills broadens his discussion out to include the class basis of "intellectuals."

> Many intellectuals are members of the old middle class; they work a specialized market made up of editors and business managers, as entrepreneurs using their education and their verbal skills as capital. Others are primarily new middle class: their styles of life and of work are set by their positions as salaried employees in various white-collar pyramids.[38]

Thus it seems that "education and verbal skills" can themselves be "capital," but if so then they are presumably "property" as well, and are the true "means of livelihood" of professionals, and the main basis for their "high degree of independence," regardless of what else they may own. But members of the profession do not lose their higher educational qualifications simply because they are salaried employees. Thus Mills creates an arbitrary barrier between the "old" and "new" professionals, who are equally possessed of "education and verbal skills," the basis of both their livelihood and their autonomous labor.

Instead of confronting this similarity, Mills drops property as a necessary basis for the class position of the professionals. Because a condition of "no-property" would normally make them members of the proletariat, he is forced to look "outside" the ownership of means of production to establish that members of the professions are "middle

class." Hence his substitution of "a new axis of stratification, occupation" for property relations. But this does not really solve the problem either, since both independent and employed professionals share the same set of occupations. Moreover, his division of the members of the professions between the two parts of the "middle class" occurs despite the many ties which Mills draws between the "older" and "newer" professionals. Thus it turns out that both "old" and "new" members of the professions can be "entrepreneurial":

> Bureaucratic institutions invade all professions and many professionals now operate as part of the managerial demiurge. But this does not mean that professionals are no longer entrepreneurs. In fact, many among the new skill groups resemble new entrepreneurs more than bureaucratic managers, and many who work in the old free professions are still free practitioners. The bureaucratic manner has not replaced the entrepreneurial; rather the professionals strata today represent various combinations of the two: at the bottom extreme, the staffs of lesser-skilled, newer members of the strata begin and remain bureaucratized; at the top, the free and the salaried professionals make their own curious adaptation to the new conditions prevailing in their work.[39]

Moreover, as noted above, Mills overlooked the orderly life-plan shared by both independent and employed professionals. Despite such parallel developments of the "old" and "new" members of the professions, Mills insists that they are in different classes.

But, in addition, Mills believed that he had gone "beyond" both Marxism and liberalism in his treatment of this problem, asserting that

> both these philosophies can characterize modern society only negatively; neither can articulate new developments

> in their own terms. We must accuse both John Stuart Mill and Karl Marx of having done their work a hundred years ago. What happened since then cannot be adequately described as the destruction of the nineteenth-century world; by now, the outlines of a new society have arisen around us, a society anchored in institutions the nineteenth century did not know. The general idea of the new middle class, in all its vagueness but also in all its ramifications is an attempt to grasp these new developments of social structure and human character.[40]

Thus an arbitrary line is drawn through the history of the "middle class": its "older" segments do constitute a subject for Marxist analysis and may even be called "petty bourgeois," but its "newer" sections cannot be analyzed using these tools. But there is really no such necessary division within the "middle classes," nor among the stratum of professionals. It is in fact their historic unity Mills so casually dismisses in rejecting the clarity of Marxist analysis of classes, replacing the petty bourgeoisie in particular with a vague pseudo-Marxist "class" of "white collar" employees, lumping together such disparate groups as "salesgirls" and engineers, secretaries and professors, whose differences are certainly at least as profound as those which divide, for instance, a doctor with a private practice and one who is employed primarily on the staff of a hospital.

Looked at from the standpoint of the new professional stratum there are obviously basic differences with the "older" petty bourgeois owners. But this distinction fades when viewed in relation to the proletariat, and the entire system of classes under capitalism. In the "old" petty

bourgeoisie the workers confronted a class committed to personal ownership or possession, wedded to ideas of individualistic competition, thoroughly imbued with the politics and ideology of the bourgeoisie, and willing to share in capitalist exploitation of the working class. The professional stratum of the "middle class," for all its "newness," is just as representative of these characteristics, and in fact puts them into effect with even more efficiency than the "older" stratum. Moreover, the proletariat in its earliest battles had to free itself from the tutelage of the petty bourgeoisie, who were willing to fight against the capitalists under certain circumstances, but not to put through the complete overturning of bourgeois social forms that threatened their own interests, and which was demanded by the revolutionary working-class movement. Nothing in this has changed with the emergence of the professionals, who put themselves forward as the advocates of reforms for the society, but who resist anything that challenges the role of the "educated classes." This fundamental similarity of class relations to the proletariat is the critical element here, uniting "old" and "new" middle class strata.

Unfortunately, as will be seen later on in this work, Mills has had many imitators, including Marxists, who have dismissed with equal casualness the petty bourgeoisie that Marx analyzed, and the form of ownership and appropriation on which this class rested, the better to put forward their

own "new," "positive" theories. In many cases these are laced with a liberal dose of non-Marxist sociological theories which "shift" from the primacy of property relations to a "mix" made up of "stratification," "occupation," and "class." Such a mixture is particularly evident in the Weberian tradition of sociology, within which Mills largely worked. But, as his own work demonstrates, this approach tends to exhibit a lack of conceptual rigor and to be riddled with internal inconsistencies.[41] What is important, therefore, is not the specific solution which Mills proposed, but the effect of the method with which he and others approach the question of the new professional stratum.

The problem here is that, in discarding the "petty bourgeoisie," or in either neglecting or misusing the studies made of it by Marxism, many analysts, including many Marxists, have thrown out as irrelevant the entire body of theory about the "older" middle class and therefore of the lessons learned about it in the course of the proletarian struggle. Thus it becomes necessary to rediscover over and over again much that is already old and previously known and, in analyzing what is truly new about modern professionals, to do so without benefit of any theoretical ties to the earlier petty bourgeois strata. It is not surprising, therefore, that the freest forms of invention are to be found among those who have analyzed the professions in this way a la Mills.

This is particularly serious where it involves the relations of the professionals to the working class, for each stratum of the "middle classes" has had a specific role to play in the creation and shaping of the proletariat. Any break in the continuity of the analysis of that process means a loss in the historical record of the working class and its struggle as well. For what is really being thrown out here is the revolutionary history of the proletariat and its struggles, not only against the capitalists, but against all the "middle" strata who have oppressed it and stood in its way as it attempted to overthrow those who are its main exploiters. Therefore, even where they do not do so as openly as Mills, such "new" theories not only divide the historical record of the "middle class," but they isolate it from the earlier stages of the proletarian struggle. This result is more crucial than the specific solutions proposed by these various analysts of the modern professional stratum and it must be confronted first if either an analysis of the professionals as a whole, or a critique of the many alternate theories regarding them, is to be successfully carried out. It is to this that I must next turn, beginning with a review of the actual position taken by Marx on this specific question. Thus it becomes necessary, as it were, to put the record "back together" again.

NOTES

1. Karl Marx, Brussels, to P. V. Annenkov, December 28, 1846, in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 2, 451-52: "In an advanced society the petty bourgeois necessarily becomes from his very position a Socialist on the one side and an economist on the other; that is to say, he is dazed by the magnificence of the big bourgeoisie, and has sympathy for the sufferings of the people. He is at once both bourgeois and a man of the people. Deep down in his heart he flatters himself that he is impartial and has found the right equilibrium, which claims to be something different from the golden mean. A petty bourgeois of this type glorifies contradiction because contradiction is the quintessence of his being. He is himself nothing but social contradiction in action. He must justify in theory what he is in practice. . . ."

2. Marx and Engels, The German Ideology, 78: "Commerce and manufacturing created the big bourgeoisie; in the guilds was concentrated the petty bourgeoisie, which no longer was dominant in the towns as formerly, but had to bow to the might of the great merchants and manufacturers."

3. The origins of the type of ownership underlying this class is summarized by Frederick Engels, in "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific," in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 2, 137: "Before capitalistic production, i.e., in the Middle Ages, the system of petty industry obtained generally, based upon the private property of the labourers in their means of production; in the country, the agriculture of the small peasant, freeman or serf; in the towns, the handicrafts organised in guilds. The instruments of labour--land, agricultural implements, the workshop, the tool--were the instruments of labour of single individuals, adapted for the use of one worker, and, therefore, of necessity, small, dwarfish, circumscribed. But, for this very reason they belonged, as a rule, to the producer himself."

4. See Charles Loren, Classes in the United States: Workers Against Capitalists (Davis, CA: Cardinal Publishers, 1977), 53-56.

5. V. I. Lenin, "The Tax in Kind," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 32, 345. Here Lenin clearly distinguishes between the "small-patriarchal and petty-bourgeois" categories within the "small proprietor element."

6. V. I. Lenin, "'Left-Wing' Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 27, 335-336. Again the "patriarchal" form is contrasted with that of "small commodity production . . . peasants who sell their grain."

7. See Marx and Engels, The German Ideology, 40: "Thus property during the feudal epoch primarily consisted on the one hand of landed property with serf labour chained to it, and on the other of the personal labour of the individual who with his small capital commands the labour of journeymen." See also 73: "In the towns which, in the Middle Ages, did not derive ready-made from an earlier period but were formed anew by the serfs who had become free, the particular labour of each man was his only property apart from the small capital he brought with him, consisting almost solely of the most necessary tools of his craft."

8. Workers may, of course, own property in the form of houses, cars, tools, and so forth, but these are not sources of their livelihood, serving instead only to meet their needs for basic subsistence, consumption, transport, and recreation.

9. Mills, White Collar, 9: "In owning land the small entrepreneur owned not merely an 'investment': he owned the sphere of his own work, and because he owned it, he was independent."

10. John C. Ensslin, "Dairy farms changing to survive," Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, May 17, 1982, 5, interview with William S. Johnson who ". . . has been a dairy farmer all his life, as were his father and grandfather, as are his brother and son. . . . Q: Why don't farmers get better organized? A: I guess farmers are generally an independent bunch. They are their own boss, supposedly. And they are very hard to organize. Good thing they are. They could rule the world if they could get it together to get organized."

11. Karl Marx, Capital, vol. 1, 330: "A certain amount of capital was necessary, in order that the number of labourers simultaneously employed, and, consequently, the amount of surplus-value produced, might suffice to liberate the employer himself from manual labor, to convert him from a small master into a capitalist, and thus formally to establish capitalist production."

12. Engels, "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific," 139: "In the medieval stage of evolution of the production of commodities, the question as to the owner of the product of labour could not arise. The individual producer, as a rule, had, from raw material belonging to himself, and generally his own handiwork, produced it with his own tools, by the labour of his own hands or of his family. There was no need for him to appropriate the new product. It belonged wholly to him, as a matter of course. His property in the product was, therefore, based upon his own labour." With this claim to ownership of the commodity goes, of course, the ability to appropriate any surplus which it contains, over and above the subsistence needs of the individual producer. This "self-appropriation" of their own full labor value remains a crucial characteristic marking the modern petty bourgeoisie.

13. The assertion that, in their essential nature, the petty bourgeoisie are only partially, and not wholly, autonomous from capitalist relations is central to the thesis of this entire work. A full discussion of this question cannot be included in this preliminary chapter on the petty bourgeois class, but the issue will be explored in depth in later chapters. The crucial element in this "autonomy within capitalism" is the ability to recapture for themselves the surplus-value of their own labor.

14. Mills, White Collar, 7: "The wide distribution of small property made freedom of a very literal sort seem, for a short time, an eternal principle."

15. Marx to P. V. Annenkov, December 28, 1846, 449, speaking of M. Proudhon, whom he considered the ideological representative of the petty bourgeoisie par excellence: "Indeed he does what all good bourgeois do. They all tell you that in principle, that is, considered as abstract ideas, competition, monopoly, etc., are the only basis of life, but that in practice they leave much to be desired. They all want competition without the lethal effects of competition. They all want the impossible, namely, the conditions of bourgeois life without the necessary consequences of those conditions. None of them understands that the bourgeois form of production is historic and transitory, just as the feudal form was. This mistake arises from the fact that the bourgeois man is to them the only possible basis of every society, that they cannot imagine a system of society in which men have ceased to be bourgeois."

16. Mills, White Collar, 56-57: "'Progressive' political movements have thus been technologically reactionary, in the literal sense; they have been carried on by those who were defending small property by waging war against large concentrations of property. . . . 'Middle-

class radicalism' in the United States has been in truth reactionary, for it could be realized and maintained only if production were kept small-scale. The small entrepreneur and his champions have accepted the basic relations of capitalism, but have hung back at an early stage, and have gained no leverage outside the system with which they might resist its unfolding. In their politics of desperation against large-scale property, small businessmen and independent farmers have demanded that the state guarantee the existence and profits of their small properties."

17. This is the origin of that phenomenon, stressed most notably by the Chinese, of "'left' in form, right in essence." Of course, the petty bourgeoisie at times adopts elements of either the rightist ideology of the big bourgeoisie, or leftist concepts of the proletariat, but its own peculiar expression is the "left/right" combination, which causes so much difficulty and confusion, because of its wolf-in-sheep-clothing character.

18. Marx to P. V. Annenkov, December 28, 1846, 452: "The petty bourgeoisie will form an integral part of all the impending social revolutions."

19. See Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," 278.

20. Karl Marx, "The Class Struggles in France, 1848-1850," in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 1, 163-164: "With the proletariat removed for the time being from the stage and bourgeois dictatorship recognized officially, the middle strata of bourgeois society, the petty bourgeoisie and the peasant class, had to adhere more and more closely to the proletariat as their position became more unbearable and their antagonism to the bourgeoisie more acute." But this situation arose only after the petty bourgeoisie first "adhered" to the bourgeoisie against the workers: "The crash of the revolutionary might of the workers was simultaneously a crash of the political influence of the democratic republicans, that is, of the republicans in the sense of the petty bourgeoisie. . . . Together with the bourgeois republicans they had conspired on April 16 against the proletariat, together with them they had warred against it in the June days. Thus they themselves blasted the background against which their party stood out as a power, for the petty bourgeoisie can preserve a revolutionary attitude toward the bourgeoisie only as long as the proletariat stands behind it." In this way they play both ends against the middle--that is, ultimately, against themselves, so that even their defensiveness is self-destructive.

21. V. I. Lenin, "The Development of Capitalism in Russia: The Process of the Formation of a Home Market for Large-Scale Industry, Preface to the Second Edition," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 3, 31-32.

22. Hofstadter, The Age of Reform, 42.

23. Mills, White Collar, 14-15.

24. See Marx and Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," 41, where they speak of the "specialized skill" of "the small tradespeople, shopkeepers, . . . handicraftsmen and peasants."

25. See David Kline, "The Embattled Independent Farmer," New York Times Magazine, November 29, 1981, 144: "Farming is more than a job; it is a whole way of life to these people." By comparison, see Lubove, The Professional Altruist, 118: "The profession was not only a career but a way of life which shaped personality by offering it a medium of expression."

26. Hofstadter, The Age of Reform, 33, citing P. W. Bidwell and John I. Falconer, History of Agriculture in the Northern United States (New York, 1941), 205.

27. See Dennis Schaal, "Family farmers: cogs in the corporate wheel," Guardian, March 22, 1978, 5: "But while the Kansas wheat farmer may nominally 'own' his produce, his costs, income and credit are completely controlled by the monopoly 'middlemen'--the farm equipment suppliers, the food processors, the marketing outfits and also the banks."

28. Frederick Engels, "Prefatory Note to The Peasant War in Germany," in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 1, 646: "There remain the peasants who cultivate their own little patches of land. In most cases they are so burdened with mortgages that they are as dependent on the usurer as the tenant on the landlord. For them also there remains only a meagre wage, which, moreover, since there are good years and bad years, is highly uncertain. . . . Still, most of these peasants cling tightly to their property, though in reality it does not belong to them but to the usurer."

29. See Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, "Turning up profits is tough on the farm," December 14, 1981, 37: "Despite the problems, Roger Landon is keen on farming. Like many new businessmen, he's proud of his independence. 'I don't want to take orders from other people,' he says. 'I want to do what I want when I want.'"

30. Mills, White Collar, 138: "So effective is the professional ideology of altruistic service that businessmen, especially certain types of small traders, are

eagerly engaged in setting up the same practices of non-competition and guild-like closure. Even among businessmen who are not directly involved in the technicalities of modern business bureaucracy, there is the urge to seem professional and to enjoy professional privileges. This, first of all, rests upon their aspiration for status: the 'professional' wears a badge of prestige."

31. Ibid., 30: "Such economic freedom as the family enterprise may enjoy is often purchased by lack of freedom within the family unit. It is, in fact, as Wilhelm Reich has noted, a feature of such petty-bourgeois life that extreme repression is often exercised in its patriarchal orbit. Child labor, often sweated child labor, has its home in the lumpen-bourgeoisie."

32. Ibid., 8: "When Lincoln, in 1861, spoke the language of the small entrepreneur it had not yet lost its meaning: 'The prudent, penniless beginner in the world labors for wages a while; saves a surplus with which to buy tools or land for himself, then labors on his own account another while, and at length hires another beginner to help him.'"

33. Thus the "free" professions, outside of both feudal and ecclesiastical control, arose simultaneously with the emergence of the peasants freed from serfdom and autonomous urban centers.

34. For an example of this view, see Mills, White Collar, 14: "The right of man 'to be free and rooted in work that is his own' is denied by the transformation of property; he cannot realize himself in his work, for work is now a set of skills sold to another, rather than something mixed with his own property."

35. Ibid., 7, 30, 65.

36. Ibid., 65.

37. Ibid., 114.

38. Ibid., 142. For Mills, the categories of intellectual and professional only partially overlap.

39. Ibid., 115.

40. Ibid., xix-xx.

41. See Erik Olin Wright, "Rethinking, Once Again, the Concept of Class Structure," chap. in Erik Olin Wright et al., The Debate on Classes (London: Verso, 1989), 316: "In principle, then, Weberians can admit an indefinite number of additional classes beside workers and capitalists

without having to postulate any underlying conflicts of material interest. All that is necessary is that a given class be characterized by a distinctive work situation and market situation, or, more broadly, by distinctive economically conditioned 'life-chances' (to use a favorite Weberian expression.)" C. Wright Mills is a perfect example of what Wright calls Weberian "solutions purchased at the price of lowering the ambitiousness of one's theoretical aspirations and abandoning the attempt at consistency with the conceptual framework." (322)

CHAPTER 4

CLASS "INDEPENDENCE" AND THE THREE STAGES OR FORMS OF THE PETTY BOURGEOISIE

Before beginning an investigation of the ownership of property, relations to exploitation, role in the division of labor, and access to social wealth of the salaried professionals, it will now be useful to broaden the analysis by placing it within a larger theoretical framework, and by introducing certain related strata or groups into the discussion. In so doing I will be, in a sense, jumping ahead of myself, presenting what would properly be a conclusion of my study, not its premise. Therefore of what follows I can only say at this point that it is in the nature of a scientific hypothesis, and not yet established by what I have already examined. Nevertheless, it will be of value in setting certain guidelines for the rest of this investigation and in particular will help to answer one troubling theoretical and historical consideration.

For even if the modern professionals are found to correspond in basic ways to the petty bourgeoisie, for many people it is virtually inconceivable that these can actually be members of the same class. Can the illiterate

peasants barely out of feudalism really be united by some fundamental ties to the highly trained and educated professors or scientists of the modern world; or the artisan working with simple hand tools be a "classmate" of the designer or operator of a present-day computer; or the owner of a "mom-and-pop" store be only another version of the technicians, teachers, social workers, and journalists of advanced industry, government, and cultural institutions? Certainly a vast gulf seems to separate the two types of "middle class," and to most observers it appears impossible that there might really be a historical continuity between such disparate social groupings. Their doubts are further reinforced by the indisputable reality that the original or "traditional" representatives of the petty bourgeoisie have declined both in their relative proportion within the general population and in total numbers, while the size of the modern salaried professional and managerial elements has greatly expanded, both absolutely and as a part of the overall society.[1]

Thus if the petty bourgeoisie as a class is seen to have continued into the present stage of late capitalism, there would seem to have to be an actual "transference" from the earlier members of the "middle class" to the more recent strata, a transition for which it is difficult to find any easy basis. At most, therefore, even those who identify the professionals as being generally petty bourgeois, sometimes do so only by noting the similarity of

their characteristics with those of the "traditional" forms of that class, but make no attempt to trace any actual lineage from one stratum to the other.[2] But if we believe that each of the classes actually comes forward in history as a unity that represents a particular manner of organizing society, such discontinuity in its historical development obviously poses very severe difficulties.

The "problem" of the decline of the independent petty bourgeoisie is not simply a matter of statistical observations, but arises also from the theoretical expression which Marx and Engels gave to this phenomenon. For instance in the Communist Manifesto, the following oft-quoted passage is to be found:

> The lower strata of the middle class--the small tradespeople, shopkeepers, and retired tradesmen generally, the handicraftsmen and peasants - all these sink gradually into the proletariat, partly because their diminutive capital does not suffice for the scale on which Modern Industry is carried on, and is swamped in the competition with the large capitalists, partly because their specialized skill is rendered worthless by new methods of production. Thus the proletariat is recruited from all classes of the population.[3]

This and similarly direct statements drawn from other parts of the Marx and Engels writings are frequently cited to justify the conclusion that the petty bourgeois class is doomed to disappear in capitalist society, and that it lingers on at best as a remnant of a pre-capitalist mode of production and reproduction, slowly driven into the ranks of the proletariat except for a few individuals able to rise into membership among the big bourgeoisie. That this

is the overall tendency of the petty bourgeoisie is indisputable, and nothing in the theoretical work of Marx suggests otherwise than that it is the historical fate of this class to gradually and eventually vanish from the social order.

But within this overall and fundamental assertion, Marx and Engels did not conceive of the decline and fall of the petty bourgeois class as a simple or linear process. Rather, basing themselves on the actual observable course of its development, they found that it was capable both of renewal and transformation, "resisting" as it were its inevitable historical demise. Thus only a few pages later in the Manifesto comes the following elaboration:

> In countries where modern civilization has become fully developed, a new class of petty bourgeois has been formed, fluctuating between proletariat and bourgeoisie and even renewing itself as a supplementary part of bourgeois society. The individual members of this class, however, are being constantly hurled down into the proletariat by the action of competition, and, as modern industry develops, they even see the moment approaching when they will completely disappear as an independent section of modern society, to be replaced, in manufactures, agriculture and commerce, by overlookers, bailiffs and shopmen.[4]

Several phrases stand out in this passage. There is first the stress on the petty bourgeoisie as a class moving between the two main classes of capitalism and constantly reviving as a segment of bourgeois society. Moreover, it is their individual fate which Marx and Engels first point to as indicative of the "falling" of the petty bourgeoisie into the ranks of the proletariat, not the class overall.

The implications of these remarks are extremely important, but must be left for later examination.

Let me focus instead on the last remarks, which seem to merely restate in slightly different phrasing the proposition of the earlier passage quoted: that the petty bourgeoisie as a class also disappears as capitalism develops. It is perhaps our unfamiliarity with the terms used here, which at least to American ears have an archaic ring, which has allowed the true meaning of this loss of "independence" of the petty bourgeoisie to be widely ignored. Yet even Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary, published in the United States, gives as its fourth definition of "overlook": "to watch over: SUPERVISE," and as its second definition of "bailiff": "one who manages an estate or farm."[5] That it is in these meanings that Marx and Engels used the three terms "overlookers, bailiffs, and shopmen" is given confirmation in Capital, where Marx has "the capitalist" exclaim,

> "Have I myself not worked? Have I not performed the labour of superintendence and of overlooking the spinner? And does not this labour, too, create value?" His overlooker and his manager try to hide their smiles.[6]

So too in Anti-Dühring, where Engels notes:

> The case of self-management, as Herr Dühring calls it--or rather, management of farms by bailiffs for the landowner's account. . . .[7]

Moreover, two years before the Manifesto was written, Engels had already had occasion to refer to "the half-bourgeois, the overlookers, foremen, and the like."[8] This

conversion of what had been the "independent" petty bourgeoisie into the capitalistic "half-bourgeois" employee is exactly what the passage from the Manifesto quoted above recorded two years later.

Writing in Capital, Marx further elaborated on this phenomenon:

> Just as at first the capitalist is relieved from actual labour so soon as his capital has reached that minimum amount with which capitalist production, as such, begins, so now, he hands over the work of direct and constant supervision of the individual workmen, and groups of workmen, to a special kind of wage-labourer. An industrial army of workmen, under the command of a capitalist, requires, like a real army, officers (managers) and sergeants (foremen, overlookers), who, while the work is being done, command in the name of the capitalist. The work of supervision becomes their established and exclusive function.[9]

Thus it is evident that with the opportunity before them, as it were, to be precise about the vanishing of all the petty bourgeoisie into the ranks of the working class--signified by the use of such terms as industrial proletariat, farm laborer, and sales clerk--Marx and Engels chose instead in the Manifesto to use three words which clearly have as their meaning supervisory or management occupations and functions. What is being described here is not the disappearance of the petty bourgeois class by its collapsing into the bottomless pit of the proletariat, but its elimination as an "independent" segment of bourgeois society, to reemerge in the transformed guise of supervisors and managers for the capitalists.

Obviously what Marx and Engels are suggesting is not that every single petty bourgeois farmer, artisan, or trader is individually transmuted into a supervisory or managerial employee, but rather that the social role of the small, independent owners of property is now carried on in a new form of class relation, in which employment by the "big" bourgeoisie becomes predominant. These ex-autonomous functions now have their link to private property not by "investment in" the means of production and reproduction, but by being "invested with" the authority over these sources of social wealth and of the labor needed to produce with them, power granted by the capitalists. This is not simply playing with words: the status of supervisory personnel generally carries with it real distinctions in the division of labor and of the wealth of society, notably in the general avoidance of manual labor, and in a higher portion of income, than is the case for the workers over whom they are placed. Frequently the relationship to the latter is a directly exploitative one, in those cases where production bonuses are given the forepersons, who then have a specific and individual interest in driving their crews as hard as possible. Even where such rewards are not immediate, there is the same incentive due to the opportunities to rise up the managerial ladder, to hobnob with the big bosses, and to lord it over the workers, often demanding kickbacks or sexual favors, which give these

capitalist functionaries more income, social prestige, and satisfaction.

Moreover, as Harry Braverman revealed in his profound work Labor and Monopoly Capital, the origins of management under capitalism actually did begin largely with the direct assumption of supervisory roles by previously independent artisans. Thus he cites the early widespread practice of subcontracting out by capitalists, not only in the form of "cottage industries," but also in mines, and in various factory settings, in which craftspersons were paid for a given amount of production and often hired their own "help," from whom they thereby profited.

> The system persisted even in the early factories. In cotton mills, skilled spinners were put in charge of machinery and engaged their own help, usually child assistants from among their families and acquaintances. Foremen sometimes added to their direct supervisory function the practice of taking a few machines on their own account and hiring labor to operate them.[10]

And quoting Studies in the Development of Capitalism by Maurice Dobbs:

> "As late as 1870 the immediate employer of many workers was not the large capitalist but the intermediate sub-contractor who was both an employee and in turn a small employer of labour. In fact the skilled worker of the middle nineteenth century tended to be in some measure a sub-contractor, and in psychology and outlook bore the marks of his status.
>
> ". . . Even in factory trades the system of sub-contracting was common: a system with its opportunities for sordid tyranny and cheating through truck and debt and the payment of wages in public houses, against which early trade unionism fought a hard and prolonged battle."[11]

In some such situations as many as 150 workers were employed, and there was even the need to establish an

intermediate form of supervision, an overseer, to manage the actual labor force. Those most exploited were not immune from exploiting others in turn, so that "'even women workers in button factories employed girl assistants.'"[12]

As always in the United States, this phenomenon took its own peculiar racist forms. Thus Herbert B. Gutman notes that when Richard L. Davis, a black organizer for the United Mine Workers visited Alabama in the late 1890s, he found the same essential system at work, but compounded by division along racial lines, which even further complicated trade union tasks:

> The fact that most Negroes worked as "laborers" for white miners (and some more fortunate Negroes) but not directly for an operator gave Davis a clue to the slow progress of Southern labor organization. A variant of the traditional English subcontract system, this relationship had racial overtones, dividing Negroes from whites as well as "laborers" from "miners." Davis explained it:
>
> ". . . In the first place, the white miners, when they went into the Southern coal fields, saw an opportunity to make money by hiring colored men to work for them; these people being ignorant of course allowed themselves to become the servant of a servant, working for from 75 cents to $1 per day, and doing all the work thereby making for his servant employer fairly good wages, while he himself only earned a pittance. This custom continued to grow until today not only the whites do this, but the colored gentlemen have adopted the system and they feel proud to stand up and tell you they made say $15 or $25 this week. But ask him, if you please, did he earn it himself, and he will answer, oh, no, I have so and so many laborers. Right here let me say that he honestly does not, for a moment, realize that he has robbed the other poor devil."[13]

Notable here is the persistence of the ideological claim of the "middle class" employers that they are "self-made," free of capitalist taint and non-exploitative, even in the

face of the clearest evidence that they are "robbing the other poor devil."

Thus more than half a century after Marx and Engels explored this phenomenon in the Communist Manifesto, the common conversion of petty bourgeois artisans and the more skilled proletarians into managers of labor for emerging capitalist employers, and the direct exploitation of workers by supervisory personnel and semi-managerial subcontractors, were still continuing. There was here no decline, much less disappearance of the "middle class," but rather its renewal in the form of supervisors with, if anything, an increase in their social power and their authority over other labor. It must be noted also that this change occurred without, in the first instance, any actual altering of their occupations, which merely came to be carried out under the aegis of capitalism instead of independently. Moreover, though the specific transitional forms noted above have today largely ended within industry, they are still apparent in the common, and highly exploitative, contractor-crew leader system in agriculture, where they rest as always on "tyranny and cheating, truck and debt and the payment of wages in public houses," against which trade unionists, like the United Farm Workers, have had to fight "a hard and prolonged battle." But most such sub-contractual supervisors eventually lost any remnant of true independence.

Even after being fully subordinated to the capitalists, however, there were still ways in which the supervisory personnel could profit directly off the workers. This was so regardless of the class origins of the forepersons themselves.

> The mine bosses were usually workers taken out of the ranks. They were given a fairly high wage and no manual work was required of them. They also had, and exerted, the privilege of petty graft at the expense of those who worked under them--they sold jobs and collected bribes for keeping them. They were responsible to mine superintendents. They were the tools with which the great tyrannies were carried out. They became spies for the owners: they did the actual job--always dictated from above--of short weighting, of increasing profits at the expense of the miners and mercilessly crushing protest.[14]

Thus the ability of supervisors to continue their petty exploitation of workers often continues despite their own subordinate roles. Even after they have become full-fledged managers under capitalism, therefore, these "half-bourgeoisie" and "servant employers" continue to renew the petty bourgeois class as a "supplementary part of bourgeois society." Thus in this form of movement to a position of authority over, and profit from, other labor a new, second, managerial stratum of the petty bourgeoisie has been created, even while they themselves have passed from "independent" status to that of being hired employees, and despite their own relative lack of autonomy.

However, Marx and Engels meant more by loss of class "independence" than simply the immediate subordination of formerly autonomous owners to a dependence on employment by

others. The concept occurs elsewhere in their works, for instance in The German Ideology, where the following is found:

> With the development of private property, we find here for the first time the same relations which we shall find again, only on a more extensive scale, with modern private property. On the one hand, the concentration of private property, which began very early in Rome . . . and proceeded very rapidly from the time of the civil wars and especially under the emperors; on the other hand, coupled with this, the transformation of the plebeian small peasantry into a proletariat, which, however, owing to its intermediate position between propertied citizens and slaves, never achieved an independent development.[15]

It must be noted first that Marx and Engels make clear that they had found in the ancient period the "same relations" as in modern times with, thus, similar basic class characteristics for the peasants and proletariat as were examined above. In this case the eliminated "middle class," the plebeian small peasantry, is largely proletarianized, that is, it actually changes its class composition.

But the effect is virtually the same as that which I have just been examining in regard to the "transference" from one stratum of the petty bourgeoisie to another, because in ancient Rome too the transformation from plebeians into proletarians still left this social grouping in the middle between the dominant classes of society, the patrician officials and landowners on the one side, and the tributary nations and enslaved populations of the imperial system on the other. In other words, its changed status

did not reduce it to one of the "poles" of the social economy in which it existed, and this is the key to what Marx and Engels meant by its inability to achieve an "independent development."

Class "independence" for the founders of Marxism was not equivalent to simple existence, but referred to the ability of classes to actually promote their own interests in an organized fashion, to play out their historical position as representatives of a particular system of production, and to assume an activist role in the contention over the way in which the society would be organized. The "middle class" of a given system, however, is not in a position itself to consolidate fully its potential. Thus the weak and ever more propertyless plebeians were deprived of effective social power. Even as proletarians, in an economy based on slaves and tribute, they lacked the ability to develop "independently," despite their similarity to the great class of modern society, since it is only with the development of large-scale industry under the capitalists that the proletariat emerges as a class in the full sense, able by its control over the actual labor of the primary productive units of the economy to contend for leadership over other classes as well. Marx sometimes referred to this distinction as that between a class which exists in itself (in German an sich), and one capable of acting for itself (für sich). Only those classes which can achieve independent development are in a

position to be transformed into the latter state, though of course whether they do is still determined by the subjective factor of revolutionary leadership.

What the petty bourgeoisie loses in the rise of capitalism, therefore, is not simply its actual existence as a class, though it must historically be made much smaller by the confiscation of much of its property by the capitalists and the corresponding reduction of millions of its members to proletarian conditions. What marks the change in the petty bourgeois position within the capitalist system is above all its loss of independence, its inability any longer to play a major organized part in social struggle which, in the rise of the bourgeois classes against feudalism and under early capitalism, the revolutionary members of this class did show with great consequences. Thus when Marx and Engels singled out for attention "overlookers, bailiffs, and shopmen," it was merely as the representatives of the general decline of the petty bourgeoisie, that is, the loss of an autonomous role under capitalism, exemplified by their conversion into supervisory and management personnel.[16] Nevertheless, the class definition of these employees is the same historically as for their independent predecessors: a small-scale relation to the ownership of property, now exercised indirectly through employment by the capitalists; the ability to receive the full value of their own labor, and thus relative autonomy from the personal production or

acquisition of surplus-value; control over the work of a limited number of workers who are subject to exploitation; and the necessity to perform labor themselves as the means to obtain an income. Their subordination to the "big" bourgeoisie, however, leaves them little ability to assert any special interests, must less to organize their entire class.

The hypothesis which I am advancing here is then this: that there is a third stratum or form of the petty bourgoisie, made up of the professionals, which represents a new stage in the development of that class.[17] Of course what is involved here is not simply a chronological progression, since to some degree the professions have existed from the earliest origins of bourgeois society, or even before. But as a massive segment of the population, capable in numbers alone of representing a significant force on the social scene, the professionals are a relatively recent phenomenon, and they have special historical functions in modern society which generally distinguish them from supervisors and managers. Specifically, though certain professional groups, such as industrial engineers, form a transitional link between these two strata, in general the professions do not relate directly to the capitalist workplace. This relative autonomy from the primary points of production and exploitation in the system of capitalism gives them a separate and distinct role.

The professional group has been growing very rapidly in the United States. In 1987 the overall statistical category of "professional" outnumbered the "executive, administrative, and managerial" grouping by 14,426,000 to 13,316,000. Moreover, the seven fastest growing occupations in 1986 were all in the professions, though generally at the "assistant" or "technician" level, that is, what may be called "semi-professionals." By contrast, in 1987, all so-called "self-employed" persons numbered only 9,624,000. Even though this included 2,714,000 people with a "professional or managerial specialty," it is evident that each of the "new" strata, by themselves, now outnumber the "old" stratum.[18] Clearly professionals have sufficient numbers to form a mass base for development of a third stage or form of the petty bourgeoisie, comparable to the earlier two, and represent the "up-and-coming" segment of the "middle classes."

It is my contention, furthermore, that the conditions which underlie the specific characteristics of "professionalism" allow this stratum to play a more autonomous role under capitalism than do the managers and supervisors, and place it in the position to once again assert the independence of the class as a whole. This results in part from their being further removed from the place where capitalism must exercise its power most directly, the point of production, and from their function more as the "managers" of the bourgeois system of society

as a whole, rather than as supervising directly its primary labor force and source of profit, the proletariat. Not only this relative isolation, but the very nature of their own activity tends to require a greater freedom of action on their part, since they are not simply part of a transmittal mechanism for the capitalist owners per se, but must in various ways explore and invent their own solutions to social problems, even when they do so directly as the employees of the bourgeoisie.[19]

These and other aspects, to which I will next turn, give to the members of professions not only a greater autonomy but at the same time a higher sense of their own particular interests, which often stand in sharp conflict with the attempts of the capitalist class to dictate the direction of their endeavors. Thus both in their objective circumstances and in their subjective consciousness they are better suited than the "overlookers, bailiffs, and shopmen" to be the leaders of an "independent" class movement. The growth of the ranks of professionals therefore "restores" the petty bourgeoisie to a position of possible organized activity and a leading role in the development of society if conditions are historically ripe.[20]

Finally, it must be kept in mind that just as no person comes into life, is raised, works, and reproduces alone, so no class arises in total isolation. Classes are not just defined in and of themselves, but also always

simultaneously in their "otherness," in their differences and struggles with one another. In this light, the petty bourgeoisie is that class which fights at all times to escape the crushing power of the capitalists and to avoid being reduced to the conditions of the proletariat. The progression from small owner, to manager, to professional can then be seen as a transformation in which there is a "trade-off": from being those who must in most instances perform manual labor like the workers, but who are still "their own bosses"--to those who must work for others, but who escape the brutality of routinized physical labor of the working class, while retaining varying degrees of self-regulation over their own activities. In either case, they are both similar to and different in fundamental respects from proletarians. Of course class positions are not simply established voluntaristically, and it is the development of material forces and of the larger economy which define this transition.

But the children who choose to abandon the small farmer and shopkeeper roles of their parents, threatened with capitalist ruin and proletarianization, to seek their own fortunes as managers and professionals, or in a desperate bid to avoid the fate of the working class, are too legion ever to be accurately enumerated. These origins of a large portion of the "newer" strata of the petty bourgeoisie have been widely observed:

> The major occupational shift in college education has been from old middle-class parents to new middle-

> class children; the major shift via high-school education has been from skilled-worker parents to new middle-class children. Colleges and universities have been social elevators carrying the children of small businessmen and farmers to the lower order of the professions.[21]

C. Wright Mills documents the above quote with a study showing that at the University of Chicago from 1893 to 1931

> about 4 out of 10 of the fathers of graduates (bachelor degrees) were in business, commercial, or proprietary occupations. Only about one-fourth of these fathers were in professional service, but 62 per cent of the sons and 73 per cent of the daughters entered such service.[22]

Thus some two-thirds of college graduates were drawn either from earlier strata of the "middle class," or represented generational reproduction of the professional stratum itself.

The very process of educating children of the "old" petty bourgeoisie for "new" roles contributed to the destruction of the former: "Rather than carry on his father's business, many a boy has been trained, at his parent's sacrifice, to help man some unit of the big-business system that has destroyed his father's business."[23] But there was little choice, for as the independent petty bourgeoisie faced growing extinction, "they have become uneasy about their ability to get their children into positions equal to or better than their own."[24] Thus to maintain the "middle-class" status of their families, they trained their own off-spring to serve the very interests that were destroying them. Larson cites a similar study,

showing the recruitment of the professionals primarily from petty bourgeois owners and managers:

> In 1924 the Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education surveyed a representative cross-section of engineering freshmen: the parents of 42.5 percent of the sample were owners or proprietors of businesses, most of them small commercial or agricultural units. Another 28.2 percent were employed in executive or supervisory positions; 5.6 percent were engineer or teachers; and 13 percent were skilled workers. Only 13 percent of the fathers had a college degree; 61.3 percent lived in rural areas or towns under 25,000.[25]

Thus almost three-quarters of these engineering students were recruited from families representing the two earlier strata of the petty bourgeoisie. In many cases, the children of petty bourgeois businesspeople first became independent professionals, as a kind of "entry level" change between the strata of their class. Thus: "Some 72 percent of the solo lawyers came from small entrepreneur families, while only 40 percent did in the control group of lawyers in large firms."[26]

Nor was this development some kind of uniquely "American exceptionalism." In Germany too: "Instead of the decline of the social groups that Marx had indicated as swelling the ranks of the proletariat, they were being reconstituted in salaried administrative, scientific and technical jobs within the productive process."[27] To this statement, the author appends an endnote citing an earlier study:

> . . . "In 1929, the most comprehensive statistical inquiry into the social origin of salaried employees, it was discovered that, including those employees who have inherited their occupation, 71.7 per cent

> originate in the middle class and only 3.3 per cent in a higher stratum; labour contributed 25 per cent."[28]

Of course such "transference" takes place most directly from the ranks of the independent professionals themselves to those of salaried employees, as was once again noted by Marx and Engels:

> The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honored and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, and man of science, into its paid wage-labourers.[29]

It is probable that this passage in the Manifesto was not meant to be taken only literally. But many "traditional" petty bourgeois members of the professions do also take on a new form under capitalism, as the bourgeoisie increasingly become the actual employers of all other persons. It is to the precise class analysis of these "paid wage-laborers" among the professionals, based on relation to the means of production, exploitation, division of labor, and the acquiring of social wealth to which I must now turn.

NOTES

1. This change occured primarily between the last third of the nineteenth and first third of the twentieth centuries. See Mills, White Collar, 63-65.

2. This is particularly the case with the "new petty bourgeoisie" of Nicos Poulantzas, which is analyzed below.

3. Marx and Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," 41. Note here the "specialized skill" which they attribute not only to those in handicraft production, but to "tradespeople, shopkeepers, and peasants."

4. Ibid., 56.

5. Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: G. & C. Merriam Co., 1970), 65, 601.

6. Marx, Capital, vol. 1, 193.

7. Frederick Engels, Anti-Dühring: Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1969), 267.

8. Frederick Engels, "The Condition of the Working-Class in England: From Personal Observation and Authentic Sources," in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, On Britain (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1962), 159.

9. Marx, Capital, vol. 1, 332.

10. Harry Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century, with a foreword by Paul Sweezy (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974), 61.

11. Ibid., 62.

12. Ibid.

13. Herbert G. Gutman, Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America: Essays in American Working-Class and Social History (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1976), 146.

14. Anthony Bimba, The Molly Maguires (New York: International Publishers, 1970), 32-33.

15. Marx and Engels, The German Ideology, 39.

16. For intermediate forms of this loss of independence, see Mills, White Collar, 26: "The power of the larger businesses is such that, even though many small businesses remain independent, they become in reality agents of larger businesses. The important point is that the small businessman has been deprived of his old entrepreneurial function." The same essential phenomenon occurs within the capitalist class as well. Thus Marx speaks of the "concentration of capitals already formed, destruction of their individual independence, expropriation of capitalist by capitalist, transformation of many small into a few large capitals (Capital, vol. 1, 625)." Here too, the formerly independent capitalists generally remain members of that class, despite their loss of autonomy, because their income is still largely derived from surplus-value obtained by exploiting workers. This is so whether they retire on the purchase price of their companies, frequently with an exchange of stock with the new "parent" enterprise, or remain on as executives, becoming managers, but still as "big" bourgeoisie.

17. This is not, of course, an original assertion. For similar positions see, inter alia, Al Szymanski, "A Critique and Extension of The Professional-Managerial Class," chap. in Walker, Between Labor and Capital, 49-65, and Judah Hill, Class Analysis: United States in the 1970's (Emeryville, CA: Class Analysis, 1975), 9-23.

18. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1989, 109th ed. (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1989), 380, table no. 627; 387, table no. 641; 388, table no. 642.

19. For the "material difference" on which the "rift" between managers and professionals is based, see Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 28. These authors at the same time stress, however, that the depth and significance of this division should not be overestimated: "The PMC at mid-century still constituted a single, coherent class."

20. "Autonomy" in labor, and class "independence" are closely related, but they are not identical and do not always occur equally together. This is most evident in managerial activities where, for instance, the relative freedom with which most top corporate managers carry on their daily administration is sometimes taken to mean that they, instead of the primary stockholders, are the real controllers of capital. But this role is usually totally

lacking in true "independence" from the interests of those who own most of the stock and sit on the board of directors, and it is just because they are such unquestioning defenders of the capitalist owners that the top managers are given their "freedom." Such derivative autonomy therefore does not indicate an "independent" role in class terms, as is even more evident among lower managers, who also may exercise a certain degree of autonomous control over daily decision-making, but who are even more clearly subordinate to "big" bourgeois interests. Only where autonomy is based on true self-regulation and has a separate material basis, as in the case with both the "old" and professional petty bourgeoisie, does the possibility of class independence arise.

21. C. Wright Mills, White Collar, 268.

22. Ibid. See p. 273 for additional studies with similar results.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

25. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 278-279, note 63.

26. Ibid., 285, note 92.

27. Carter, Capitalism, Class Conflict and the New Middle Class, 15-16.

28. Hans Spier, The Salaried Employee in Modern Society (New York: WPA Project no. 465-97-0391, 1939), 86, quoted in Carter, Capitalism, Class Conflict and the New Middle Class, 217, note 32.

29. Marx and Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," 36.

CHAPTER 5

THE MARKET IN IDEAS, THE MONOPOLY OF KNOWLEDGE, AND INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION

What then is the factor which solidifies the membership of many professionals within the petty bourgeoisie, which gives them participation in the ownership of the means of production of society, which unites those who work by themselves and those who must hire out, which separates them relative to the managerial stratum, and which allows them a greater degree of class independence? I believe it is the investment in education, by which they become in effect possessors of ideas and owners of a "share" in the monopoly of knowledge. At first reflection such a proposition must strike one as absurd, for ideas seem as uncontrollable, as free from "market relations" as the air around us. Thought, like breathing, is a function of each individual human body, and though it may be influenced, dominated, and manipulated up to a point, yet it remains essentially beyond the reach of any outside authority, an aspect to the despair of the ruling classes.

Yet if we look deeper into the matter, it is readily evident that ideas are bought and sold, produced and

marketed, exploited for profit, subjected to monopoly, and serve as a source of wealth like any other commodity. Under capitalism the market in knowledge is "big business," and the bourgeoisie seeks to bring it ever more completely under its sway. As Marx and Engels noted, speaking in broad historical terms: "As in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property."[1] Whether such "production" is to be carried out collectively and for the good of all humanity, or whether it is to be monopolized for the profit of a narrow segment of society, is an essential area of class conflict, and separates out in the most fundamental way the worldview of the proletariat from that of all other classes.

A brief review of selected items in this regard shows its dimensions. In 1987 alone, for instance, approximately 582,200 copyrights were issued in the Unites States, and 89,400 patents. But whereas in the period 1961-1970 some 73% of patented inventions were granted to corporations, with 24% going to individuals, and 3% to the federal government, by 1971-1980 the corporate proportion had risen to 76%, and by 1987 to 80%, while the other two categories for those years had dropped to only 22% and 18%, and 2% and 1%, respectively. This indicates a rapid growth in the production and control of new ideas by capitalist firms.[2] Payments to the owners of patents and copyrights run into the billions of dollars each year. For example, in 1970,

"fees and royalties," much of which falls within the category being examined, brought United States corporations almost $2.5 billion from foreign customers alone, compared to only $230 million paid out by domestic interests to holders of patents and issuers of licenses in other countries. The difference of over $2 billion was equal to well above half of the $3.6 billion in favorable balance of trade in goods and services for the United States that year.[3] It is one of the measures of the declining relative position of the United States in the international capitalist economy that patents issued in this country to domestic corporations virtually stagnated between the 1960s and 1970s, while those granted to foreign corporations and individuals approximately doubled.[4]

Monopoly of knowledge is a major source of imperialist profit from abroad. Such inequality in the monopolization of ideas becomes not only a means to economic control, but to political domination as well.[5] In certain respects, they have become the key measure of the "wealth of nations," so that: "High-quality patents are seen by many experts as potent indicators of a nation's future prosperity because they signal the emergence of important new technologies that will be under the patent holder's exclusive control for many years."[6] On such a measurement, Japan may now be pushing ahead of the United States, while entire continents, notably Africa and Latin America, are not even in the race. As a result: "The 'minority'

participation of foreign capital is usually justified by the need for technical and patent transfers."[7]

> For obvious reasons, control of the technological levers gives the multinational corporations a hold on other decisive levers of the economy. The head offices never, of course, give their affiliates the latest innovations or promote an independence that would not suit them.[8]

Such monopolization belies the belief that ideas, even those of a "purely" scientific nature, are simply objective truths isolated from exploitation in the relation between classes or nations:

> The first system of patents to protect ownership of inventions was created almost four centuries ago by Sir Francis Bacon. Bacon liked to remark that "Knowledge is power," and it has since become clear how right he was. There is little universality in scientific universals; objectively they are confined within the frontiers of the advanced nations.[9]

Thus the commercial monopolization of ideas is as inseparable from capitalism, as secret craft skills were from feudal guilds.

But this is just the tip of the iceberg, for the struggle over the control of patented methods and industrial techniques, in particular, involves an unknowable but enormous additional social expense in the form of legal costs, corporate spying, restricted production, and so forth, all of which is directed at access to and monopolizing the use of ideas on which often rests the entire foundation of specific corporate empires. Those who win out in this battle reap vast rewards, demonstrated by the high profit rates of those companies

like Polaroid and Xerox who gave their very names to the types of products they at one time monopolized, the various drug producers who control the market for "patent" medicines, or computer firms like Texas Instruments:

> Historically, electronics companies liberally licensed their patents, with royalties no more than 3 percent, or never even bothered to obtain patents. . . .
>
> But Texas Instruments has taken the concept of intellectual property as a source of revenue to a new level.
>
> "T.I. is one of the first companies that very publicly decided to make intellectual property a profit center," said Robert P. Merges, a professor at Boston University Law School.[10]

In Japan alone, this policy could increase profits by $2 billion annually. Such monopolies of ideas come at a high social cost:

> But rival semiconductor and computer companies are rising up in anger, saying that Texas Instruments' demands have become excessive, threatening to stifle innovation and to entangle the industry in wasteful lawsuits. They see Texas Instruments' actions as part of a demoralizing trend in the United States in which companies are becoming more competitive in the courtroom as they become less competitive in the technological marketplace.[11]

Here the relations of production in the form of private property in ideas holds back the development of the productive forces.

Beneath these Olympian heights a less profitable but often just as vicious contest ensues over "intellectual property" in the form of copyrights, artistic concepts, and so on, in which petty bourgeois and lesser capitalist interests contend for domination. But these struggles to control the utilization of ideas and the specific products

which flow from them, so as to enable their owners to realize a profit, only begin to measure the social impact of the monopolization of knowledge. For what is held tight by some must at the same time be denied to others, if its possession is to be made valuable, and to be useful in dominating society as a whole and other classes in particular. As Harry Braverman has shown, the entire development of modern capitalism has been a process of expropriating the skills of the traditional artisans and of even the least skilled workers, removing them to new areas of specialization under capitalist control, and in the process subordinating the labor of the working class increasingly to the ever more rigid and "mindless" routine of highly automated machine processes. Braverman quotes from Frederick Taylor, the developer of "scientific management":

> "There are many people who will disapprove of the whole scheme of a planning department to do the thinking for the men, as well as a number of foremen to assist and lead each man in his work, on the ground that this does not tend to promote independence, self-reliance, and originality in the individual. . . . Those holding this view, however, must take exception to the whole trend of modern industrial development."[12]

The most immediate impact of having some employees "think for" others was obviously a major division in manual and mental work, not only as to personnel, but in the physical location and type of labor performed.[13]

The effect of this, however, goes far beyond mere occupational separation. For what results is "a world of

labor that has become, for the largest portions of the working population, increasingly devoid of any content of either skill or scientific knowledge."[14]

> As craftsmanship is destroyed or increasingly emptied of its traditional content, the remaining ties, already tenuous and weakened, between the working population and science are more or less completely broken. This connection was, in the past, made chiefly through the craftsman or artisan section of the working class, and in the earliest period of capitalism the connection was quite close. Before the assertion by management of its monopoly over science, craftsmanship was the chief repository of scientific production technique in its then existing form, and historical accounts emphasize the origins of science in craft technique.[15]

As a result of this polarization, in which knowledge is appropriated and developed in one part of society, while it is denied to all the others: "The more science is incorporated into the labor process, the less the worker understands of the process."[16]

This development has been greatly spurred on by, and in turn helps lay the basis for, the "scientific-technical revolution," which was enormously stimulated by the capitalists and the governmental and educational institutions they control for just this purpose of increasing their domination of the working class.

> Capitalism cannot be at a standstill for a single moment. It must forever be moving forward. Competition, which is keenest in a period of crisis like the present, calls for the invention of an increasing number of new devices to reduce the cost of production. But the domination of capital converts all these devices into instruments for the further exploitation of the workers.
>
> The Taylor system is one of these devices.[17]

Thus what was previously the skill and scientific knowledge of the workers themselves, now confronts them in greatly expanded form as an alien power in the hands of the capitalists and an instrument of their oppression. "The mechanization of production robbed the working class of its last hold on the means of production--its crafts and its skills."[18] It was this, in fact, which marked the full realization of their proletarianization.

But even this only begins to capture the consequences of the changes which were occuring as the proletariat was stripped of its previous skills, for with the loss of their connection to science came as well the breaking of most of their ties to the larger intellectual and cultural community. As Braverman notes of those with craft skill:

> Such craftsmen were an important part of the scientific public of their time, and as a rule exhibited an interest in science and culture beyond that connected directly to their work. The flourishing Mechanics Institutes of the mid-nineteenth century, which in Britain numbered some 1,200 and had a membership of over 200,000, were in large measure devoted to satisfying this interest through lectures and libraries.[19]

These relationships and institutions largely declined with the "deskilling" of the workers and the appropriation of their knowledge by the bourgeoisie. This same process has also taken place in society at large, for instance, in the forceable suppression of traditional medical practices and of the women who primarily dominated this field, to be relocated under the virtually all-male control of highly trained and specialized "professional" doctors.[20]

> While blacks and women, as well as the lower middle class and the sons of workers, found themselves increasingly excluded from the reformed profession, the status of the average physician was considerably improved, as was his income, by the rapidly attained reduction in numbers.[21]

Thus class, racial, and sexual power all entered in, as white males of the bourgeois and petty bourgeois classes monopolized knowledge and thereby "considerably improved" their incomes.

Similar examples could be drawn from such fields as social work, education, and the arts, in which capitalist control spread through the displacement of traditional skills linked to everyday life in proletarian and farming communities, to be replaced by professionals of the dominant classes, race and sex, for: "The destruction of autonomous working-class culture requires (and calls forth) the emergence of new culture-producers--from physicians to journalists, teachers, admen and so on."[22] These came to dominate the community in which the worker lived, in the same way as managers took control in the work place. Thus not only ties to the "outside" world, but the indigenous intellectual development of the workers themselves was largely shattered, both at the point of production and within their communities, to be replaced by the monopolized knowledge of the capitalists on the one hand, and petty bourgeois professionals on the other.

For this to be accomplished two things had to happen. On the one hand, management itself also became a

specialized and even "skilled" occupation, in order to enforce the necessary worker discipline and faithfully transmit the directions of the capitalist class and their scientific-technological plans. Thus such remnants as sub-contracting, self-management, and even manual work by supervisory personnel, inherited from the early days of capitalism, were more and more eliminated and a higher barrier erected between those who actually perform the labor of production and those who merely organize it. Over time, even forepersons have therefore been drawn less from the "floor" and increasingly are chosen for their "otherness" from the workers, for such characteristics as a college or even graduate education, petty bourgeois class background, and so forth. This is far from universal, however, since the very authority vested in managers by the capitalist owners serves sufficiently in most cases to make the necessary separation, reinforced by differentials in income and other forms of benefits to ensure their allegiance to the bourgeoisie, even if they themselves were previously workers.

But it is a different matter with those professionals whose social position depends not in general on such direct granting of subordinate power from the ruling class, but rather on the development of special skills which can serve those same interests in more diffuse ways or assist in maintaining and managing society as a whole. Here must be developed and greatly expanded the very abilities which

previously were largely fostered by the workers and community members themselves, and thus it is the control of knowledge itself which marks this place in the division of labor.

> In the class struggle over knowledge, the most essentially human gift, the right to enjoy creative thought and put one's ideas to work, becomes problematic for the mass of uncredentialed workers. Modern professionals, seeking to lock up knowledge as their private property, can set themselves against the most elementary creative needs of the rest of the population. Like individual capitalists, professionals may not consciously intend to exploit others. But monopolizing knowledge . . . inevitably restricts the opportunities of others to think. Preserving a large class of unskilled workers is the dark side of professionalism.[23]

Therefore what appears to be the expansion of the size of the professional realms, is really only the concentration and narrowing of these functions in the social body in its entirety, removing from the reach of most workers and from entire communities the ability to govern their own work and life, to be faced instead with a smaller and more elite mass of "knowledge monopolists." This process only repeats on a higher plane the general method by which in all societies since the most primitive, the promotion of specialized skills and knowledge has been accomplished by its being lodged in certain persons, "selected" either naturally or by force, with a corresponding reduction in the practice of these same activities by those who once universally took part in them.[24]

In modern society in general, and under capitalism in particular, the primary mechanism for making this selection

is through education, but this must be understood to include access to as well as performance in schools.[25] The level of what is considered substantial knowledge in any given country at a certain point in its history will always vary, and this has of course been the case also within the United States. "Fifty years ago the general labor market was almost entirely composed of grade-school graduates; today of high-school graduates; by the early fifties 9 1/2 million college-educated youth will be in the labor market."[26] Writing in the late 1930s of the conditions of Child Workers in America, Katherine DuPre Lumpkin and Dorothy Wolff Douglas found that a high school education was the dividing line between the "middle class" and the working class. Here they noted the

> sharp change in the proportions represented in elementary schools as compared with high schools. In the high school the middle class has a preponderant representation. But of course the proportion of workers' children in the general population far exceeds that of the middle class. Says Professor Counts, writing of the period of the post-war [World War I] boom: "At the present time the public High School is attended quite largely by the children of the more well-to-do classes. This affords us the spectacle of a privilege being extended at public expense to those very classes that already occupy the privileged positions in modern society. The poor are contributing to provide secondary education for the children of the rich." . . . Based upon a sample of 17,000 children in four cities, Counts found that 61 per cent of the high school children were sons and daughters of proprietors, managers, professional people and parents in white-collar work. Only 1.2 per cent of the high school children came from common labor homes. This disparity grew in the upper years of high school. Seventy-two per cent of high school seniors were children from the upper-class groups.[27]

Thus the high schools were particularly the preserve of the petty bourgeois class, uniting all three strata of proprietors, managers, and professionals.

Nor were these divisions among the classes driven simply by economic resources or academic ability. They were explicitly designed as part of the growing system of public education in the late nineteenth century:

> The class divisions which the schools mirrored and reproduced were explicit in the Taunton Commission report on endowed higher-level schools: three grades were strictly distinguished by leaving age (eighteen or nineteen; sixteen and fourteen), by the fees paid, and by the careers for which the pupils were prepared. Free places for poor or local boys were abolished and replaced by open scholarships for "boys of real ability in whatever rank they may be found."
>
> From the first level sprang the system of "public" schools, which by 1900 served some 30,000 students. The second grade was "to educate the sons of smaller professionals and businessmen, large shopkeepers, and farmers for the professions, commerce, and industry and have a leaving age of sixteen, so as to prevent them from preparing for the university."[28]

The third level provided higher levels of technical and scientific training, and preparation for the teaching profession. Notable here is the explicit education of the children of the "old" independent petty bourgeois stratum to enter the ranks of the "new" professional amd managerial ranks, the "tranference" discussed above. Thus even while the "middle class" were still kept out of the bourgeois elite, they were able to reproduce their advantage over the proletariat through a change of strata. But at least in those days, the child of a working-class family could still gain access to skill and knowledge by other routes, notably

by apprenticing to a craftsperson or machinist, which Lumpkin and Douglas often found was a strong attractant to the bored and "outclassed" offspring of "common labor."

As these skills were taken away from the working class, however, and lodged in the office of the industrial engineer and the plant manager, the level of education representing the critical base point in this social division of labor moved upward, not only in science and technology, but in all those areas of intellectual and cultural life increasingly monopolized by the professionals. Moreover, the professions came to be more and more separated by educational standards not only from the working class but also from the other strata of the "middle class" as well. Thus C. Wright Mills noted that: "White-collar employees have monopolized high school education--even in 1940 they had completed 12 grades to the 8 grades for wage-workers and entrepreneurs."[29] But increasingly throughout the century, and especially since World War II, the mark of real education has, of course, been college and in many professions at least some specialized or graduate training has also become a necessity.[30] It is through the access to "higher education," above the high school level, that one is considered professionally prepared and a member of the educated elite, even if the latter category is no longer as exclusive as it once was. In addition, college or university training has now become the route for the

"transference" between strata of the petty bourgeoisie, the "social elevators" as Mills called them above, "carrying the children of small businessmen and farmers to the lower order of the professions."

This gap in educational status is brought out forcefully in the 1970 Census data. Though by then the median average years of schooling was 12.4, it revealed a wide range of averages for different occupations as shown in Table 1.

Table 1.--Median School Year Completed, by Occupation: 1970

Occupation	Years Completed
Professional and Technical Employees	16.2
Managers and Administrators	12.8
Sales Workers	12.5
Clericals	12.5
Craftspersons and Forepersons	12.0
Transport Equipment Operatives	11.5
Service Workers	11.4
Farmers and Farm Managers	11.2
Operatives Except Transport	10.9
Laborers Except Farm	10.7
Farm Laborers and Forepersons	9.2
Private Household Workers	9.2

Source: Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of the Population: 1970, vol. Pc(2)-7A, Occupational Characteristics: United States Summary, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1973), 1-11, table no. 1.

What clearly stands out here above any other characteristic is the true quantum leap between all other occupations and the professionals, a division almost as big as that between the "top" and "bottom" of the remaining categories, and

larger if the rather special cases of farmworkers and domestics are left out.

Moreover, the male managerial categories which exceed 16 years of education are health and school administrators, those furthest away from capitalist business operations and closest to professional careers, in fact often being drawn from among persons with medical or academic skills. Only three other management sub-groups out of more than sixty show even a 15 year school average or higher, primarily in finance, insurance, and real estate. Similarly, among salespersons it is only in the financial and related careers that a full college level is approached or exceeded. Among women managers, school administrators alone top 15 years, averaging about 17. By contrast, some sixteen out of the twenty-seven major male sub-groups of professionals, and thirteen of the female sub-categories, register more than 4 years of college level education, with many of them surpassing the 17-year mark. However, five large groupings accounting for almost 3.5 million out of some 11.7 million total persons in the professions generally show much lower levels of education, namely health, engineering, and some other miscellaneous categories, ranging from 12.9 to 14.2 years of school. Indeed there is a considerable internal gap between these last groups and the remaining professionals, an aspect I will have to return to later on. Without the inclusion of these less educated categories, the professional average

would be considerably higher, and its difference with the other occupations even greater and more evident.[31]

Of course all such gross statistical figures hide innumerable kinds of exceptions, especially on the individual level. The development of "scientific management" and social science-oriented personnel departments in industry, and of "agricultural sciences" and agribusiness, as well as the prestige of better schooling and the peer group pressure that operates in many parts of the community, all tend to push young people toward college education even if their immediate occupational plans do not absolutely require it. There is even a certain "reverse flow" recently observable among the three main strata of the petty bourgeoisie, toward "professional farming," as the following quote from an agricultural specialist and part-time onion farmer in Orange County, New York, indicates:

> Young people are coming back to the farm. The average age of the farmer has decreased. Where once a kid left the farm and went to college to learn another business, now they are going to college to learn how to run a farm. It's getting to the point where the farmer has to be one of the most highly educated persons in the world. It's not like it used to be when you could plant a crop and then collect the money. Now you have to be a chemist, an accountant, a mechanic and an electrician.[32]

Educational requirements are also rising rapidly for the managerial stratum, who are increasingly drawn from those with college degrees, and often even graduate training, in

business schools, the labor-management field, and so forth.[33]

Indeed, education is more and more the common factor which reunites the three stages or forms of the petty bourgeoisie, which reinforces their similarities within the division of labor, and which ties them together culturally and socially. But despite such interesting and perhaps even increasing exceptions, the "rule" still largely holds: the realm of higher education has been primarily the province of the professionals, and of the highest ranks of the capitalists, the owners and executives of the major industrial and commercial centers, and of the bourgeois elite in the governmental offices and cultural institutions which are their support. The bourgeoisie, as G. William Domhoff and others have shown, not only attend, but also control, the leading colleges and universities, which are not just a critical aspect of their entire social order, but an important part of the "old-boy" network of capitalist leaders.[34] By contrast, historically, and to a large extent even today, for the vast majority of the working class and for many from other classes, university education has been a closed preserve beyond their reach, so that in 1987 only 19.9% of the population over 25 had completed college, and only another 17.1% had attended at all, compared to just 10.7% and 10.6% respectively in 1970. Even among those who were 25-29 years old in 1987, the median school year completed was only 12.8, while 21.5% had

completed 1-3 years of college, and another 22.0% had graduated.[35]

The main determining factor in this "selection process" has been economic, for neither socially nor individually does higher education come cheaply. Expenditure on and by schools in 1987 was $289.5 billion, or fully 6.4% of the Gross National Product. Of this amount, $115.9 billion or 40% of the total, went for colleges and universities. There were 12,400,000 students in higher education facilities in 1986, or just over 5% of the population. Among them women predominated by 6.6 to 5.8 million, those in 4-year colleges exceeded the 2-year enrollment by 7.8 to 4.7 million, the division of public and private was 9.7 to 2.8 million, and that between undergraduate and graduate students was 10.8 to 1.4 million. The actual expenditure for tuition and fees in 1985, which may be thought of as the minimal outlay for "knowledge" itself, was just over $23 billion, but of course in most cases it is impossible to gain access to this learning process without further expenses for room and board. In 1988, in the public 4-year colleges total charges came on average to almost $4,130 per student, in private institutions $10,050. To this must of course be added books, travel, clothes and other costs which would add at least several hundred dollars more.[36]

Not surprisingly therefore, though only slightly more than half the students came from families with income of

over $10,000 that year, the percentage of those from well-to-do backgrounds able to attend was radically different from those less well off. Of dependent family members of college age during 1977, only 23% of those in the under $5,000 income bracket were enrolled, while 60% of those who came from families with $15,000 or more in income were able to attend, with the other income groups similarly ranged in between these two extremes.[37] Moreover, those from the wealthiest families would almost certainly have even higher enrollment rates, and the economic division between those attending high-priced private schools and public-supported colleges would undoubtedly differ even more. To obtain "higher education" in fact requires a considerable investment, especially when the lost earnings from the years spent in school are added. In 1987 the average male and female full-time wage and salary worker of college age made a weekly income of $257 and $226, respectively, which if work for the entire year were assumed, would be equivalent to an annual income of some $13,365 and $11,752, respectively.[38] This statistic includes many who have already completed some college schooling, but on the other hand it also counts those who have not finished high school.

Taking this as a rough measure, therefore, men and women who lose four years of work while in college would have denied themselves some $53,460 and $47,008 in earned income. To this must be added the expenses of $16,520 in

direct college outlays on average at public institutions, and $40,200 at private ones, though the most expensive schools in the latter category now charge closer to twice that amount. This still does not count the many indirect costs, such as travel and clothes. Even this assumes only four years of college, though many students now are forced to enroll for longer, in part because some 12.8% of them are employed full-time and 47.2% part-time, even during the school year.[39] Thus the total of both lost income through deferred earnings and outlays for college might range from an average "low" of some $56,500 at a public institution, to perhaps as high as $130,000 at an elite private school.

Of course this is rarely just money out-of-pocket, especially when the loss from non-earned income is included. Nevertheless, the amounts of money involved, even for direct expenses, are not unlike what it takes in many cases to set up a small business, that is, to become one of the members of the "traditional" petty bourgeoisie. Thus on the one hand, as Larson notes: "The rise of the 'learned' bourgeoisie links individual mobility to education--an attribute which, in theory, is easier to come by than capital."[40] But she adds in a note:

> Considering that the costs of a 'good' and 'recognized' education were higher than the costs of getting oneself up in business in the early part of the nineteenth century, the proposition that hierarchies based on education are more open than those based on money should not be generalized without caution.[41]

In fact, the relative ease of these two means of entering the "middle class" has no doubt fluctuated back and forth historically from one to the other. At 1987 levels, a "sheepskin" was equal to the value of a herd of between 740 and 1,700 sheep, depending on the kind of institution attended, and this is only a partially facetious way to measure what the costs of attending college for four years would buy if otherwise utilized.[42] There is, of course, no such true "average," with two-year and junior colleges of various kinds offering much quicker and cheaper educational investments on the one hand, while graduate work may add tens of thousands of dollars to the cost of training in a profession on the other, driving the total well above the figures estimated earlier. These differences in invested money, however, also largely determine the "ranking" of the professionals so produced.[43]

There are, moreover, larger social costs to this method of granting to a relatively limited portion of the population a monopolization of knowledge. Government funds at all levels provided over $40.6 billion to institutions of higher education in 1986, just about 40% of their current income, and indicating that the working-class support of upper-class students noted by Lumpkin and Douglas in the 1930s has clearly spread in recent decades to the college level. Total federal outlays for such education by that year had risen to over $11 billion yearly.[44] State and local governments add billions more,

including financial aid directly to students that do not show up in the above figures. These forms of expense must also be added to the social investment in each person being trained for the professions, and would greatly increase the dollar value which I earlier calculated for a typical four-year degree. By this enormous investing, private and public, they purchase that special property in knowledge, quantitative and qualitative, which gives them a different relation to work and exploitation than the proletariat, separates them from the other strata of the petty bourgeoisie, and allows them relative autonomy from control by the capitalists as well.

But the social relations resulting from this process have their cost, not only for those who are denied access to it, but also for the successful:

> And not only the labourers, but also the classes directly and indirectly exploiting the labourers are made subject, through the division of labour, to the tool of their function: the empty-minded bourgeois to his own capital and his own insane craving for profits; the lawyer to his fossilized legal conceptions, which dominate him as an independent power; the "educated classes" in general to their manifold species of local narrow-mindedness and one-sidedness, to their own physical and mental short-sightedness, to their stunted growth due to their narrow specialized education and their being chained for life to this specialized activity--even when this specialized activity is merely doing nothing.[45]

Since Engels wrote these perceptive words a hundred years ago, the numbers of those able to buy their way into the "educated classes" has grown greatly, but their conditions of existence and social relations have changed little.

Thus in a society which rests on the alienated labor of the proletariat, all others must also suffer their own peculiar forms of alienation, of a lack of wholeness, however much this may be compensated by interesting work or material well-being.

Engels also strikes at the treasured myth of many professionals, that because they are not like managers, in whom direct power over the working class lies, therefore they are free from any taint of the exploitation of the proletariat. For in the larger division of labor in capitalist society, they nevertheless still must fit within the general bourgeois order of control, "directly and indirectly" sharing in a system which keeps the workers down, while benefitting from the investment in their educated status, for which the working class has helped pay. Their greater autonomy, compared to most managers and supervisors, does not lift from them the general conditions of their class, which by making small investments escapes the fate of the proletariat, but thereby in no way is freed from the relations of modern society and the exploitation on which it rests. Rather they are at once exploiters and exploited, oppressors and those who are themselves oppressed, the identity of the petty bourgeoisie once capitalism is fully established.

NOTES

1. Marx and Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," 38.

2. Department of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1989, 550, table no. 917; 530, table no. 874.

3. Department of Commerce, Office of Business Economics, Survey of Current Business 51, no. 9, (September 1971): 48-49, table no. 9.

4. Department of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1989, 530, table no. 874.

5. Arthur MacEwan, Debt and Disorder: International Economic Stability and U.S. Imperial Decline (New York: Monthly Review, 1990), 65: "For example, investors in the periphery continually turn to the center as a source of new technology. At any moment, it is more profitable to adopt organizational techniques and equipment developed in the advanced countries than to build on indigenous resources and experience. As a result, in key sectors of the economies of Latin America, national capital is unable to compete with the multinationals and, indeed, welcomes entrance by the foreign firms."

6. New York Times, May 28, 1991, C1.

7. Eduardo Galeano, Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1973), 265.

8. Ibid., 267.

9. Ibid., 266.

10. New York Times, October 16, 1990, D19.

11. Ibid., D1.

12. Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capital, 127-28.

13. Ibid., 124-125.

14. Ibid., 130.

15. Ibid., 131.

16. Ibid., 425.

17. V. I. Lenin, "The Taylor System--Man's Enslavement by the Machine," Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 20, 152.

18. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 238.

19. Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capital, 133-34.

20. See Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English, Witches, Midwives, and Nurses: A History of Women Healers (Old Westbury, NY: The Feminist Press, 1973).

21. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 164.

22. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 16.

23. Charles Derber, William A. Schwartz, and Yale Magrass, Power in the Highest Degree: Professionals and the Rise of a New Mandarin Order (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 14.

24. Ibid., 14-24.

25. Nor is this simply a matter of selecting between strata or classes, but also occurs within them. See Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 204: "Educational selection, however, has an aggregate effect on professional stratification: in terms of social connections, and especially in terms of ideology, elite schools socialize their graduates into an elite. The stratification of the training centers is obviously not independent from the broader structures of social inequality which, on the contrary, are reproduced by every level of the educational system."

26. Mills, White Collar, 247.

27. Katherin DuPre Lumpkin and Dorothy Wolff Douglas, Child Workers in America (New York: International Publishers, 1937), 148.

28. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 97.

29. Mills, White Collar, 74.

30. See Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, quoting Ivar Berg, Education and Jobs: The Great Training Robbery (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), 1: "In 1950 . . . '59 percent of all persons 17 years or older had graduated from high school; by 1964, the figure was 76.3 percent. . . . whereas slightly more than 20 percent of the students who completed fifth grade in 1944 . . . went on to college, more than 40 percent of fifth graders in 1957 eventually entered college, a remarkably high "school retention" figure.'"

31. Ibid.

32. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, July 21, 1980, 5.

33. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 29: "The image of the corporate middle manager as completely divorced from the academic world is equally overdrawn. Over eighty per cent of corporate managers (at all levels) in large corporations have college training (or graduate training). . . . 'Professional' (graduate) training in law, engineering, or business schools . . . more and more becomes a prerequisite for advance on the management ladder."

34. G. William Domhoff, Who Rules America? (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1977), 16-18, 77-79.

35. Department of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1989, 130-131, table nos. 211, 212, 213.

36. Ibid., 7, table no. 2; 125, table no. 200; 127, table no. 205; 148, table no. 247; 155, table no. 261; 421, table no. 685.

37. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1979, 100th ed., (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1979), 163, table no. 269.

38. Department of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1989, 406, table no. 666.

39. Ibid., 151, table no. 252. Figures are for 1985. Of course these earnings help to compensate in part for the loss of employment which school attendance generally entails. But most of the income earned will often go for college expenses.

40. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 71.

41. Ibid., 263, note 6.

42. Department of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1989, 653, table no. 1135.

43. Barber, "Some Problems in the Sociology of the Professions," 20: "Within a given profession, the 'better' or more professional schools are more likely to be in a university, and the very best ones are typically in the very best universities." Though there is no necessary or automatic relation between quality and cost of education, expenses at "the very best" schools, especially if they are private, are usually much higher.

44. Department of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1989, 126, table no. 202; 153, table no. 257.

45. Engels, Anti-Dühring, 347. See also Marx, "Appendix," 990: "The self-valorization of capital--the creation of surplus-value--is therefore the determining, dominating and overriding purpose of the capitalist; it is the absolute motive and content of his activity . . . a highly impoverished and abstract content which makes it plain that the capitalist is just as enslaved by the relationships of capitalism as is his opposite pole, the worker, albeit in a quite different manner."

CHAPTER 6

FURTHER ASPECTS OF THE INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION AS A PROPERTY RELATIONSHIP: THE HIDDEN "SECRET" OF PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Various challenges can be and are raised to this view of investment in education as a "property" relation affecting the class of its private "owners." It is sometimes argued, for instance, that the costs of schooling are largely born by the families of the educated, thus removing the student from direct participation in the finances involved, and creating a division between those who invest in education and those who benefit from it.[1] That such a relationship is indeed common is undeniable. Take for example the following description by one of the early women workers in the first textile factories in New England, which explains how the training of many professional men came to be financed by female members of their families or friends, resulting in sharp social divisions along educational lines.

> Many of them educated the younger children of the family and young men were sent to college with the money furnished by the untiring industry of their women relatives.
>
> The most prevailing incentive to labor was to secure the means of education for some male member of the family. To make a gentleman of a brother or a son, to give him a college education, was the dominant

> thought in the minds of a great many of the better class of mill-girls. I have known more than one to give every cent of her wages, month after month, to her brother, that he might get the education necessary to enter some profession. I have known a mother to work years in this way for her boy. I have known women to educate young men by their earnings, who were not sons or relatives. There are many men now living who were helped to an education by the wages of the early mill-girls.[2]

Others among the female mill workers labored to set their brothers up on Western homesteads, as independent small owners.

In the typical case of schooling, however, not only did the men who were educated through the earnings of female relatives nevertheless hold the property rights in their knowledge, but they often scorned those who had paid for it:

> These men, educated by the labor and self-sacrifice of others, sometimes acquired just enough learning to make them look down upon the social position in which their women friends and relatives were forced to remain.[3]

In addition to the all-too-relevant light it throws on the sexual exclusivity and discrimination of the professions, widely practiced in most fields down to today, there is also revealed here a fascinating insight into how the splitting apart of the "old" petty bourgeoisie occurs even among members of one family, with some being thrown down into the proletariat and others moving into the professions.

The majority of these early female industrial workers came from the "old" petty bourgeois class which was already

under pressure from the rising capitalist merchants and first large-scale factories: "Daughters of sea-captains . . . of professional men or teachers. . . . the granddaughters of patriots. . . . Many farmers' daughters."[4] In fact, this was a perfect example of the petty bourgeoisie "ever renewing" itself, but in this case largely based on the labor of others, the female descendants of independent small owners, but who themselves belonged to the working class. Thus petty bourgeois reproduction was achieved, though only by its female children becoming proletarians. This provides further evidence as to how professionalism became differentiated, shaped not only by class relations, but by the oppression of women, who "could do nothing" with higher education, even if they could get it. But the resulting "intellectual property" clearly belonged to the male professional, whose status and income allowed him to "look down upon the social position" of the female relatives or friends, whose earnings formed his actual investment in education.

The womens' liberation movement has changed not only female participation in the professions, but the right to "intellectual property" in which they have invested. In recent years several law suits have been filed in those cases of divorce where a wife has helped to put her husband through professional training, only to see the resulting earnings come under his exclusive ownership. In early cases the claim of women to share directly in the value of

the education of their ex-husbands, on the basis of their own investment in it, was usually turned down by the courts, on the grounds that this is not "divisible property," or alienable by its immediate owner. In other words, "who" invested in their education was less important than the direct ownership by these men of their own labor-power, of which their schooling was a part. But in later instances, wives have on occasion been given a share in future earnings, or been compensated with a larger share in other forms of mutual property or by a larger alimony award.[5] However, regardless of who invests in education, the courts have generally recognized the primary right of personal property which the highly educated have in their own knowledge, even if this is sometimes then qualified by treating the payment for schooling by family members as a basis for sharing the income which such professional labor-power produces.[6]

But in the vast majority of cases the need for familial contributions to an education leads not to questions of who "owns" the final product, but rather to whether such an investment can be afforded by them at all. Indeed it is particularly when we look at the educational process from the standpoint of the family that the lost years of earning power and necessity of a student to be supported in various ways during this period leads to basic social divisions. Historically, once actually in the working class, most families found it increasingly

difficult to meet the costs just of a high school education, as has been seen above, much less to send even one member to college. The common need to help support the family, in particular among the older children, drove many from the schools at an early age, usually to be reduced to the most drudging and ill-paid occupations. For families in such situations the lost income of a child in school was no abstraction, weighed in the totality of employment over an entire lifetime. It was the stuff of daily survival, the difference between starvation and a little food on the table, and thus the familial basis of educational investment frequently served simply to prevent any of its members from acquiring such "property."[7]

Little has changed in essence in this situation down to today, with millions of working-class families managing to send a child through school only by a sacrifice of the necessities of a decent life for themselves, by two-shift labor and vacationless years so that their offspring can escape the "mill," the "plant," "the fields," or the drudgery of routine office work. For the losers in this battle there is only the growing ranks of "drop-outs," and for the winners there may be intra-family alienation and lack of understanding, the sense that "we sacrificed so much just to produce <u>this</u>?" But whatever their economic position, that families as such, and not just the individual children, are involved in most educational investment not only does not alter its character as the

property of the ex-students, but reinforces it. Nothing is more typical of petty bourgeois origins than just this investing and sacrificing over years to build up "the family business," to pass from generation to generation a little more, to make the small farm or store survive and grow always larger, to launch at least one son or daughter into some kind of career. This patriarchal character is the very essence of the petty bourgeoisie, and the professionals are merely the latest recipients of this familial form.

It is true that the intellectual property of the member of the professions, in its narrow sense of individualized knowledge, has a personal aspect which cannot be alienated to others or inherited in the usual manner. As Larson notes: "In America, 'educational credentials have become the new property' for the large mass of the population. . . . it is less determined by inheritance than all other forms and . . . its ideological fusion with the self is almost impossible to break apart and demystify."[8] Having been taken into the mind of a given person the ideas which are dispensed through the education process belong "only" to that human being. They can be used, and even exploited, by others, but this is in all cases an act which must initiate in some manner first from the individual possessor.

> This form of property has two distinctive characteristics: on the one hand, it is inseparable

> from mind and self; on the other, it constitutes a resource that cannot be depleted."[9]

But this is not quite accurate. Precisely because it is embodied in the person of its owner, professional knowledge is gradually "depleted" together with the life and labor of its possessor.

In this it operates like the "fixed capital" of machinery, which gradually "gives up" its value over its "lifetime," until one day it is retired or just "dies." This relation is recognized in Marxist economics as a transfer of values spread out in equal incremental parts through the commodities which the machine helps to produce.[10] In capitalist accounting, a similar transfer is registered through depreciation. Here material existence and monetary worth must be separated, for a machine, or a professor or doctor, may function perfectly up to the last day, but nevertheless have depleted their economic value, whether in investment in steel or in education, over a lifetime. Moreover, the measurement of such values is not only averaged over the life of the machinery or person, but is an average of all such similar units. Thus depletion also occurs indirectly, insofar as the training which a professional receives may become obsolescent through further advances in the field, just as a machine loses its value if it is superceded by more advanced methods.[11]

As to inheritability, it is true that the individualized professional property in knowledge cannot

generally be directly passed on like land or buildings.[12] But the intellectual atmosphere which is created in many families, the head-start in learning skills, the rooms full of books, the ease with which theoretical or scientific ideas are handled, the personal associations, the advantages of alumni/ae status, and the financial and social rewards of professionalism are indeed handed down from one generation to the next. They no more guarantee success to the progeny than does the inheritance of a farm or store, nor are their ranks closed to the more ambitious or those who manage to scrape together enough to make the necessary investment from outside the "educated classes." But these assets are real, nonetheless. For those who have been excluded from them this is only too painfully evident, while those who possess these advantages are all too often unwilling to admit it. Those who achieve professional rank generally carry with them as well the expectation, and indeed demand, that their children be allowed to succeed them on at least the same level. That their ungrateful offspring often have very different ideas, does not change the basic class expectation which is here expressed, and usually the child remains within the "middle," even if in another of its sub-sections. Nothing, in fact, so threatens the petty bourgeois professionals, like the rest of their class, or brings from them such unified political expressions, as any challenge to familial inheritance.

We can dismiss even more rapidly the related question, that of social, rather than private, investment in the education of the professionals, which seems to place a barrier between the public who pays and the student who gets the fruit of this expenditure, and a conflict over who "owns" the resulting rights to the use of these professional skills. First it must be said that under capitalism ownership is never determined solely by the manner in which something is acquired, "possession being nine-tenths of the law." Nor it is unusual that this obtaining of education is made socially but exploited privately: those who squatted on public land had no less of a claim to a homestead than those who paid a price for a piece of property at a certain stage of U.S. history, and the defense plants built by the government during war-time and later sold to capitalists for a small fraction of their real value thereby became no less the private possession of the latter.

> The social character of production is perhaps more visible in this case than in any other, for most education is subsidized by the state out of public funds; the products, however, are privately appropriated. Indeed, in the juridico-political framework of bourgeois society, the individual is the sole owner of his person and, therefore, of his socially produced special competences.[13]

Of course, governments, corporations, and schools themselves often try and succeed in extracting a certain quid pro quo for their financial assistance to students.[14] But in the last analysis the latter remain the possessors

of what they have acquired, bound only by legal ties to their financiers, on whom they often renege, just as the small farm or store owners default on the repayment of business loans.[15] The difference is that education cannot be "repossessed." There may be a "moral" obligation as well, but this is subject only to self-regulation.[16]

Moreover, far from destroying the property base of the petty bourgeois professionals, the provision of publicly-paid for training not only expands the size of that strata and increases its power, but also serves to legitimize it, by appearing to give it public sanction. In fact, this makes the concept of a meritocracy even more palatable, since success seems to depend above all on personal skills, rather than on the privileges that are bought through privately-paid-for education.[17] Nowhere is the idea of the "self-made" person stronger than in the products of such schools as City College in New York, where a previously tuition-free and now partially state-subsidized form of education allowed those who excelled academically to attend, regardless of their individual ability to invest. The same, of course, applies to scholarship students at private colleges.[18] In all such cases, however, there is no general challenge to the concept of the personal ownership of knowledge by the students.

At bottom all such challenges finally reduce themselves to this same question: whether the skills and knowledge acquired can really be considered property,

whether they are part of the means of production and reproduction of society, whether they can be accumulated as capital from which a return is expected, or whether they are too intangible to be accurately compared to land, stores, factories, and other material possessions and commodities. To answer this problem it is necessary to examine once again not just the uses to which capitalism puts ideas, but the manner in which it places value on all the elements which compose its social order. As Marx explained the latter point:

> Along with the extension of circulation, increases the power of money, that absolutely social form of wealth ever ready for use. . . . Since gold does not disclose what has been transformed into it, everything, commodity or not, is convertible into gold. Everything becomes saleable and buyable. The circulation becomes the great social retort into which everything is thrown, to come out again as a gold-crystal.[19]

This power is expanded infinitely under capitalism, which today spends vast sums on such intangibles as "influence" and outright bribery, and in the assets of corporations lists an item called "good will," which is their built-up public acceptance and customer relations, now given a monetary value. Of course one can reduce even such elements somewhere along the line to the expenditure of human labor, but they are in truth payments for changes in the ideas and actions of others, whether brought about honestly or otherwise. Thus capitalism converts even intangible elements into monetary values.

By the same token it monopolizes and exploits for profit those things which have only a potential value. Thus in financing the building of the Western railroads in the United States, charters were granted for land which was then sold off to raise the actual capital for construction itself. That the lands which were thereby given to certain entrepreneurs were in many cases untouched by human hand--leaving aside the Indians who were viewed only as a barrier to be cleared away--made no difference. It was theirs to dispose of as they wished, and sell it, draw rent from it, and in every other way make a profit from its "worth" they did, though in the first instance it contained no value in the form of incorporated labor. Then too, those who gain possession of, for example, the rights to mineral resources, even though these naturally-produced goods by their very nature are free from any human input, still can sell or rent their property to those who actually bring the oil and coal and iron out of the ground, though it is only by the work of the latter that these deposits are made available to human kind and thereby given any value as commodities.[20] Thus the monopolization of anything which is usable to other persons, or which even has to them the appearance of usefulness, can bring financial reward, regardless of whether it initially is the product of an amount of labor corresponding to its worth, or is merely desirable enough to demand an exchange value calculated on

its having possible future utility once it has been subjected to human activity.[21]

So too the ideas and knowledge of human beings, accumulated in practice over the millenia, once seized and monopolized by capitalism, become for it as "real" as land, stores, factories, or any other means of production. Their mental control parallels and reinforces the ownership they exercise materially as well:

> The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, consequently also controls the means of mental production, so that the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are on the whole subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relations, the dominant material relations grasped as ideas. . . .[22]

A value is placed on these "means of mental production" as surely as it is given to more corporeal substances, and in the calculations of the capitalists a headful of ideas on the part of one person is worth at least as much as a strong physique on the part of another.

Marx is extremely explicit about the accumulation of knowledge in the hands of the capitalists being a property relationship, one which is as crucial to the domination of this class over workers and the society at large as is their ownership of factories, farms, mines, and so on:

> The knowledge, the judgment, and the will, which, though in ever so small a degree, are practised by the independent peasant or handicraftsman . . . these faculties are now required only for the workshop as a whole. Intelligence in production expands in one direction, because it vanishes in many others. What is

> lost by the detail labourers, is concentrated in the capital that employs them. It is a result of the division of labour in manufactures, that the labourer is brought face to face with the intellectual potencies of the material process of production, as the property of another, and as a ruling power. This separation begins in simple co-operation, where the capitalist represents to the single workman, the oneness and the will of the associated labour. It is developed in manufacture which cuts down the labourer into a detail labourer. It is complete in modern industry, which makes science a productive force distinct from labour and presses it into the service of capital.[23]

It is in this way that those who own property in knowledge, science, and "intelligence in production" come to dominate in class society "those who lack the means of mental production."

That this intellectual possession takes the form of an aspect of labour-power changes nothing. The conversion of the ability of human beings to perform physical and mental labor into a commodity is the sine qua non of capitalism, and as in the case of all commodities, this capability too can be owned, sold, and purchased. Thus Marx stated in Capital:

> The capitalist epoch is therefore characterized by this, that labour power takes in the eyes of the labourer himself the form of a commodity which is his property; his labour consequently becomes wage-labour.[24]

Under capitalism, persons thus own their capacity for work, and this takes the form of private property, which is bought and sold on the market. "The labourer is the owner of his labour-power until he has done bargaining for its sale with the capitalist; and he can sell no more than what he has--i.e., his individual, isolated labour-power."[25] If

then, by investment in education, the value of this labour-power is made to be greater, this enhanced valuation is also the personal property of its possessor, and can command a higher market price.

> In order to modify the human organism, so that it may acquire skill and handiness in a given branch of industry, and become labour-power of a special kind, a special education or training is requisite, and this, on its part, costs an equivalent in commodities of a greater or lesser amount. This amount varies according to the more or less complicated character of the labour-power. The expenses of this education (excessively small in the case of ordinary labour-power), enter pro tanto into the total value spent in its production.
>
> The value of labour-power resolves itself into the value of a definite quantity of the means of subsistence. It therefore varies with the value of these means or with the quantity of labour requisite for their production.[26]

Education thus increases the value of the property of labor-power both for the person who sells it and the capitalist who buys it.

The bourgeoisie and their political representatives constantly speak of the need to develop, accumulate, and exploit this form of "capital." Thus an Undersecretary of Labor states that: "'Not all, but some companies make investments in new employees which must be amortized over long periods of time.'"[27] Here we see explicitly the "fixed capital" aspect discussed above. Another politician puts the matter even more bluntly:

> "Spending on education, like certain spending on health care, must be seen as investment in 'human capital.'. . .
>
> "The problem is that we have failed to develop capital markets to provide funds for investment in human capital in the same efficient manner that we have developed our securities and tax-exempt bond markets

> for investments in public and private capital assets. This failure is wasteful. If we want to build better plants and equipment or better mass transit systems, we must enable individuals to develop the talent to build them. Our task, therefore, is to create capital markets to permit students to borrow most of the cost of higher education at reasonable rates and to repay this obligation over their entire lifetimes. This is how we finance a new plant or mass transit system."[28]

So too in discussing recent engineering graduates one university placement officer speaks of how: "'Metals companies, like aluminum and steel, seem to be stockpiling talent in anticipation of a quick turnaround in the economy.'"[29]

From their enormous investments in "research and development," in industrial planning, and in social structuring, the capitalists expect just as much return, directly and indirectly, as they do in the building of a plant or the opening of a mine. Describing the Nobel Prize economist Theodore W. Schultz, the Academy which grants that award noted:

> "'Schultz and his students have shown that for a long time there has been considerably higher yield on "human capital" than on physical capital in the American economy and that this tension has resulted in a much faster expansion of educational investments than of other investments.'"[30]

Schultz calculated that the growth in the capitalization of knowledge between 1900 and 1957, depending on which figures were used, was from 8 1/2 to 11 times, while in comparison material capital grew only 4 1/2 times.[31] He summarized the effect:

> Investment in human capital is a distinctive and important feature of the economy. People invest in themselves, and these investments have become large,

> and knowledge about the human capital that is thus formed is fundamental to an understanding of economic growth. A major source of this human capital is education.[32]

Thus even if the form of investment is individual, the effect is social, and adds to the general accumulation of capital, from which a return is expected as in any other area of the economy.

Indeed the drive to realize a profit from every dollar spent is a major source of conflict between the bourgeoisie and the professionals whom they hire or sponsor to carry out their tasks. The impatience of the capitalists with "abstract science," and with similarly indirect methodologies in the study of society, is well known. Experience has taught them grudgingly that certain such "non-profit" expenses are really necessary if their technological base is to remain competitive and in order to hold together the class structure over which they rule. But they quibble at every turn, and the real pressure which they bring to bear on the shape and nature of the work of their professional subordinates, the constant attempt to limit it to what is "useful," that is profitable, in their eyes, the struggle to convert even the most intellectual occupations to the rigors of machine control and the methods of the assembly line, bring about in the professions a constant source of unease, dissatisfaction, and at times even rebellion. The profit motive and the efforts to use all thought in the service of their class

rule brings the capitalists constantly into a basic conflict with the ideals, the articles of faith, of the professionals, as well as with the autonomy and control of their labor which allows these values to be pursued with some sense of individual and social integrity.

But this is only one side of the matter. The professionals themselves take a lead in calling for the expansion of investment in intellectual as opposed to material goods.[33] They become as well willing participants in the utilization of knowledge within the overall context of capitalist production and bourgeois social institutions, as long as they are granted a degree of autonomy.[34] For the professionals also have a "piece of the action," that is, they share in the monopolization of knowledge and therefore in the property which it represents under capitalism.[35] In fact, taken as actual "intellectualism," and not simply as the commercial control over ideas as they are utilized in society, it is in the professions that the bulk of the "means of mental production" imparted by higher education are primarily lodged, by what is in reality a process of storing and accumulating intellectual possessions. Thus we find Lenin referring to "all the propertied classes, down to the petty bourgeoisie and the 'intelligentsia,'"[36] for the ownership of an education is indeed equivalent to other petty bourgeois property. But though collectively the professionals, above all, are the possessors of this aspect

of the means of mental production and reproduction of society, they are individually in control of only small amounts. In fact, in many fields they are increasingly faced with the growing mass of corporate knowledge, which is also stored and accumulated, but more and more in the "memory banks" of computers and data centers, not unlike the multitude of small farmers who together own much of the land, but who are ever more threatened by the encroachments of "agri-business."

The professionals find their private hold over much of the intellectual property of the society challenged by an octopus-like growth of capitalist control, so that they must grant a "lien" on their minds in order to gain access to the other necessary parts of the means of production and reproduction. Thus just as the farmers with land and equipment must in most cases still go yearly to the bank for financing, and pledge their crops in return, so too many professionals are forced to sign a paper in which the products of their mental labor are guaranteed to the corporation or institution as the price by which they are allowed to work with labs, computers, libraries, and so on. Then their ability to profit from any discoveries, patents, and research to which they may have even been the main contributors is severely limited. To the extent that their intellectual property remains their own, however, they expect the same return from their investment as do the capitalists also, though of course in the much smaller

quantities which the lesser value of their possessions dictate.

What must still be determined is the actual worth of the labor-power which emerges from the educational process. With their investment the students purchase certain material supports, as well as the services of teachers.[37] But this measurement does not determine the full value of the end product. What intervenes is, of course, the labor of the students in their studies.

> The value of labour-power is determined, as in the case of every other commodity, by the labour-time necessary for the production, and consequently also the reproduction, of this special article.[38]

Thus a given degree, such as a bachelors or masters, may be considered socially to have a certain average worth, combining both the material costs of dorms, books, and so on, the labor of professors and support personnel, and that of the students themselves, without which all else fails.[39] Even fraudulent degrees, therefore, have economic "value."[40] In the last analysis, however, the commodity of highly educated labor-power can only be measured by the same method as all other products, that is, by what it can be sold for, its exchange value. Even this valuation, given the realities of the market, cannot ever be considered "pure," for only on the largest social scale do the real values of all commodities balance out. Nevertheless, as Marx long ago explained, there is no other means by which

the value of any commodity is approximately realized other than by its exchange or sale.

Of course, an education may not really be worth what one pays for it. In practice real value will out. If any of the parties to the process of educating do not perform their tasks well, the theoretical worth of being an "educated person" will come to naught, whatever the investment. The quality of schooling may be so poor that there is little value for the purchasers, who cannot use the results to enhance the market price of their labor-power. There is nothing unique in this, as every petty speculator who has bought a useless piece of swamp in Florida or of desert in Arizona, or as every purchaser of a "lemon" on a used-car lot knows. Or it often turns out that the "market" is flooded in various occupations, so that the investment in training for them cannot be realized in practice. In fact, both these circumstances reflect the underlying and fundamental weakness of the education "game." This is the illusion that such schooling must automatically raise one socially in relation to the proletariat, who by comparison are considered as "unskilled."[41] In reality, much of the "higher learning" which is imparted to the petty bourgeois professionals is either so specifically geared to the needs of the capitalists, or is so isolated from the real practice of production and social relations, that it is easily rendered worthless once removed from the hothouse of colleges.

Unless the budding scholars carry out the precise functions for which the capitalist system considered training worth while, they are often without education in any other useful skill at all, and can find only "hustling" work to fill the void.

Moreover, once attempting to put their schooling into practice, they may be surprised to find that the supposedly "unskilled" workers in fact possess abilities that very much exceed their own, and indeed not infrequently earn higher incomes than at least the lower ranks of the proessionals. Marx once again noted the basis for this phenomenon:

> The distinction between skilled and unskilled labour rests in part on pure illusion, or, to say the least, on distinctions that have long since ceased to be real, and that survive only by virtue of traditional convention; in part on the helpless condition of some groups of the working-class, a condition that prevents them from exacting equally with the rest the value of their labour-power. Accidental circumstances here play so great a part, that these two forms of labour sometimes change places.[42]

This can come as a surprise only to those who do not deign to recognize the skills long ago developed and perfected by millions of working people who have to a much greater extent than is usually conceded, held on to their knowledge. The investment in education therefore may create a class barrier, one that exists between the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie in general, but it is a division which rests as much on illusion as on possession of something "real," and it does not take much dislocation

in the situation of the student or ex-student to expose this reality. What the workers suffer from is not having control over the use of what they know and the products which their knowledge helps create. Once that system is challenged, and this can occur in "small" as well as big ways, the value of "higher education" often rapidly diminishes or vanishes, while the "unskilled" workers reveal their high degree of skill not only in production, but in organizing the society.

The problem which confronted the "professional project," as Larson calls it, was therefore twofold: in relation to the capitalists, it was necessary to maintain as much as possible the autonomy of the professions and to gain as high a price as could be obtained from the sale of their commodities and services if they were independent, or their labor-power if they were not; in relation to the proletariat it was necessary to erect a class barrier which would prevent even the most skilled of workers from claiming equality to, or even "changing places" with, the professionals. For these two goals the professional association alone proved inadequate. The key to the class position of the professions was educational property, and specifically control over who had access to it and set its standards.

> The form that the modern professions take after the industrial revolution is that of corporate projects attempting, first of all, to organize "production" for a special type of market and to gain in it quasi-monopolistic control. Given the singular nature of the "commodity" to be exchanged, the organization of

> production is concerned not with an inanimate product, but with the selection of producers or providers of services. The end-point of this primary aspect of professional organization is, therefore, monopoly of relatively standardized education.[43]

The colleges and universities are thus its crucial and archetypical institutional centers.

Though formally open to all, and seeming to challenge the bourgeois form of power based on property and wealth, in fact the university was limited to a relative few, as a quasi-monopoly.

> Professionalization is thus an attempt to translate one order of scarce resources--special knowledge and skills--into another--social and economic rewards. To maintain scarcity implies a tendency to monopoly: monopoly of expertise in the market, monopoly of status in a system of stratification.[44]

The very insistency with which meritocracy was promoted by professionals, served to provide an ideological justification for monopoly.[45] The result of monopolized education was therefore to heighten the value of the commmodities, services, and labor-power of the professionals viv-à-vis those less well trained, especially workers, and to guard their autonomy against the encroachments of the capitalists.[46] This monopolizing of knowledge was recognized and resisted at the time, not only by the bourgeoisie and "old" elites, but by the working class, which was itself largely forbidden in law and practice from unionizing, "combining" and striking to enforce its own economic power.[47]

Larson examines the way in which this monopolization of education by professionals translates into protected markets.

> . . . because the standardization of professional services is bound to the production of producers--that is to say, to education--it depends upon inducing new recruits to accept the economic and social sacrifices of training. Hence, at least a moderate guarantee that the recruits' educational investment would be protected had to be sought from the beginning. In a market situation, the guarantee against risks incurred tends to take the form of monopoly, or at least of special protection by the public authorities.[48]

For "independent" professionals, the result was that they could profit from their educational investments and, like all petty bourgeoisie, receive the full value of their labor, realized in commodities or as services. These days, however, what "most professions produce" and sell is not "labor," whether directly as a service or indirectly in a commodity, but labor-power, whose value has been heightened by education.

Larson explains the attempt to translate educational monopoly into higher incomes for employed professionals:

> Today, insofar as most professionals sell their labor power to an employer, they represent but a special case within the general pattern of labor organization in capitalist societies. What complicates this specific instance is the process by which entry into professional labor markets is organized. Professional aspirants must acquire specific skills with a view to their sale. They normally acquire them through a relatively long process of training in monopolistic centers for the "production of producers."[49]

Those who are employed in salaried positions may or may not be in a position to retain the full value of what they have produced. They may receive payment equal to their labor,

or they may be subject to exploitation and appropriation of all or part of their surplus-value. That is decided, as always, by the size of their investment, whether they own all the capital they require, and so on. Only on such criteria can their class be determined.

By maintaining a monopoly price for their commodities, services, or labor-power professionals might even claim a reward in excess of the "free market" costs of their training and the value of their labor. Larson places great emphasis on this economically distorting effect of monopolization:

> . . . the monopoly over training contains an inherent contradiction: it appears to be a central condition for the effective creation of "professional exchange value," and yet it tends to place the price of professional 'commodities' outside the realm of market determination. . . .
>
> . . . While both years of schooling and credentialing are related to the market value of specific professional services, the relation appears to be ideological: indeed, it functions more as an implicit justification for the price of the professional commodity and for the privileges associated with professional work, than as the actual quantitative translation of 'average socially necessary labor time' into market value.[50]

This emphasis on monopolization, which raises the market value of the commodities and services professionals produce, and the price of their labor-power, nevertheless hides the deeper complexity of the effects of their investment in "intellectual property."

Though she recognizes the importance of the professional "production of producers" through educational investment, Larson focuses on the sale of commodities,

services, and labor-power, in which monopoly places them "outside the realm of market determination" and thus distorts prices above their "real" value. Thus, according to her, investment in educational property is only indirectly and ideologically related to what professionals earn, as monopolization prevents a direct relation. From the standpoint of the proletariat, all forms of private ownership are monopolies, and the limits which professionalism puts on who can own knowledge is no exception.[51] As Marx long ago showed, however, capitalist profits do not flow from "monopoly prices," and commodities, including labor-power, are in general exchanged for an approximation of their "true" value.

The profit which is claimed under capitalism is a result of the owning of property and the exploitation of proletarians, through appropriation of their surplus-value.[52] Even "rent," which has aspects of a "true" monopoly, rests on propertied ownership, and only shares in the surpluses already yielded by capitalist production.[53] In the case of professionals, the monopolized owning of knowledge serves first and foremost to prevent their being exploited in the same manner as the working-class, that is, it potentially allows them to retain the full value of their labor, including their own "surplus-value." If they own sufficient "intellectual property," of course, they may in addition even exploit others, directly or indirectly, receiving a share of capitalist profits.

Here in fact lies the truly unique aspect, the "secret" of professional employment. For in the case of professionals, precisely because knowledge is "intangible" and their ownership of it can be "internalized" in their own minds, it is not lost simply as a result of their hiring out to others. Nor, in fact, is loss of their propertyholding the usual basis which drives the professionals to seek employment, as is normal for other small owners.[54] "Intellectual property," therefore, is not limited to the "old" or independent members of the professions, and it is not extinguished merely on the basis of its owner being employed. It therefore can continue to limit or prevent the exploitation of surplus-value even from salaried professionals. Larson implicitly recognizes this: "The differences that exist between the direct sale of professional services and the sale of professional labor power do not prevent the resort, in both situations, to a model of profession which corresponds only to the first."[55]

What is crucial here, however, is that it is the ownership of knowledge which allows the employed professionals to "resort to the model" of the "old" independent members of the professions. The uniquely petty bourgeois condition of being both an owner of property and a laborer is here once again exhibited, but in this case it can continue to exist even under the changed relationship of being employed for a salary. This is the "hidden" aspect of professional employment, in which both ownership

and labor are combined. For the purposes of class analysis, however, the property relation on the one hand, and the sale of labor-power and subsequent performance of labor on the other, must be kept conceptually distinct.

While professionals, like other members of the petty bourgeoisie, therefore share in a form of monopolization, especially when viewed from the standpoint of the propertyless proletariat, no extra monopoly price "outside the realm of market determination" is required to account for their higher earnings. Of course, like any capitalist as well, they may have specialized monopolies which do distort "fair market value." But these are exceptional, and are in general balanced out by a loss suffered by others, or by themselves when they in turn act as buyers.[56]

What is instead fundamental is that, like all petty bourgeois owners, professionals expect both the return of the value of their invested capital, plus a profit, and to retain the full worth of any new values they add by their labor during production, including their own "surplus-value." The secret of employed professionals is that the sale of their labor-power does not put an end to their rights as property owners. Thus they may be paid the full value of their actual labor even when employed, a condition which can never apply to the propertyless proletariat as a whole, since this would mean the end of the very basis of capitalism. The "monopoly price" which professionals receive, therefore, is their claim to surplus-value as

propertyholders, for "schooling and credentials," and not just an unequal or monopolized market value for the sale of their labor-power, compared to other "workers."

It is thus their investment in "intellectual property," in sufficient quantity to serve as small capital, which makes them part of the "middle class." But for this to be achieved, there must be a realization of the dialectical process by which quantitative growth becomes qualitative change. Knowledge, like machinery or buildings, is only another form of the accumulated labor of the past:

> No production [is] possible without an instrument of production, even if this instrument is only the hand. No production without stored-up past labour, even if it is only the facility gathered together and concentrated in the hand of the savage by repeated practice. Capital is, among other things, also an instrument of production, also objectified past labour.[57]

Thus "facility" or skill is "stored-up past labor," and can serve also as "capital." Capitalism, properly speaking, however, is something much more: it is primarily a relationship in which this accumulated and objectified labor is able to exploit in turn the labor-power of others. The average worker may own a house or a car, but these are merely means to the well-being of themselves and their families and the method by which they go to work or seek recreation. But those who own five houses or cars are no longer just workers. Rather, by adding incremental quantitative changes of the same items they become petty bourgeois landlords and taxi-fleet owners who draw rent and

profit from property, which thus changes qualitatively from being merely the arena of family life into an investment which produces income, and becomes the potential basis for exploiting the labor of others.

So too, the average worker possesses the intellectual training to perform in a wide variety of jobs, and even in many cases to be counted as skilled labor. But those who, by continuing their education, add to these basic capabilities sufficient skills as to be granted a role in the possession of the monopoly store of "higher" knowledge by which capitalist production is advanced and controlled and bourgeois society is ordered and governed, though such changes may be mainly only quantitative in degree, change qualitatively at least "part way" into petty bourgeois professionals. This quantity-into-quality transformation is particularly evident in the mass educational institutions of the United States today, where the truly specialized or theoretical education that once marked the professions is often largely lacking or has been "boiled down" into an easily taken pablum. In part for this reason, a mere college degree today is generally a ticket only to entry into the "semi-professions"--to be discussed in greater depth below. "Full" professionalism increasingly requires an M.A. or more often a Ph.D., or their equivalents in the legal, medical, and other professional "trades," where the more truly qualitative skills that underlie the professions are acquired.

Of course, for something to be monopolized as property it must have a useful qualitative character that can be isolated and possessed. The atmosphere, for instance, generally belongs to no one. But if it takes the pressurized form which can be pumped into an auto tire, or the clean air which, in Japan, is dispensed by machine in areas of heavy pollution, it becomes a form of property that can be owned and sold. As Larson in particular demonstrates, a major aspect of the "professional project" was to formulate areas of knowledge in the professions in such a way that they could be qualitatively set off and thus monopolized.[58] While some element of true qualitative differentiation was always involved in such a process, there was also a good deal of making relatively banal things "profound" by placing them within a highly theoretical discourse, the purpose of which was at least as much to make them inaccessible to those "not in the know," as it was to add to their usefulness in actual social practice.

For the purposes of analyzing classes, however, it is crucial to note that mere incremental changes in the quantity of means of production owned are eventually sufficient to produce a change in quality, that is, in class relations. People belong to separate classes because of the differing quantities of what they own, and the resulting relations which they have to exploitation. Regardless of the quality of what is owned--be it land or

ideas--the quantitative amount and form of ownership held is still the primary determinant of class. Thus the same land, worked with the same tools by the same people may a be feudal lordship, a community of petty bourgeois farmers, or a capitalist farm. The same means of mental production too may be either the property of individual professional petty bourgeoisie, or be held as capital by a large corporation. In neither case is there any significant change in the quality of what is owned, but only in the quantity which is held by any single owner, and the form of class relation in which it is held. So too, the effect that a given quantity of ownership has on the quality of the relations of classes is relative, depending on the level of development. In a country with high illiteracy, simply being able to read and write may be sufficient to form the basis of an "educated class," while in another time or place bare literacy is the minimum expected of any working person. The same quantitative amount of knowledge, in other words, has different qualitative effects on the formation and relations of classes, depending on its overall role in the system of social production.

Of course, in practice, increased quantity almost always brings with it changes in the form of production, and thus associated qualitative differences as well. Increasing mechanization, buildings which serve more complex purposes, separation of manual and mental operations, and so on, are all aspects of the greater scale

of productive activities. So too, the necessity of relating ever more ideas to each other in a comprehensive system of thought drives the growth of theoretical concepts, while greater complexity and specialization promotes the expansion of esoteric knowledge. Such qualitative changes are certainly important in helping to set off certain occupations from each other, and therefore affect the relation of the classes to which they belong. In particular, once a certain qualitative level of production is established, one cannot generally enter or compete within given classes without meeting similar standards.[59] But these are not in and of themselves necessary to define a class nor, looked at from the opposite viewpoint, are they sufficient to do so. Professionals are petty bourgeois because of the scale of their investment in the means of mental production, not because of the specific qualities of their thought, however exceptional these may be. Like all other propertyholders, therefore, they expect to gain a profit off their capital, which is viewed in the first instance as a quantity of money invested, "blind" to qualitative content.

Thus professionals too use the calculations and language of capitalism. When in the schools of dentistry tuition had risen in 1982 to as high as $13,547 per year, and nationwide applications had fallen by some 35%, the head of the American Association of Dental Schools stated:

"Given the rising tuition levels . . . a student has to see himself getting more of a return for his education

by going into engineering or business than by going into dentistry."[60]

Here what counts is not professional interest, job opportunities, much less the social need for dentists, but tuition costs and the "return" on their educational investments. Thus just like the ideologists of the big bourgeoisie, those who speak for the petty bourgeois professionals often try to capitalize their possession of knowledge and turn it into class power as well.

> Thirty-five years ago John Corbin cried in the name of the educated white-collar people that education was as much a contribution to the nation's wealth as property, that education <u>was</u> the white-collar employee's "capital," the major basis of his claim to prestige, and the means by which he should close up his ranks. Yet, as a type of "capital," education carries a limitation that farms and businesses do not: its exercise is dependent upon those who control and manage jobs.[61]

It is true that hiring out always creates a degree of dependency, and thus brings with it certain limits, even for professionals.

Despite such limitations, as has been seen, the capital of the professional petty bourgeoisie carries over to "the job" and may help protect them from the exploitation suffered by other employees, including ex-farmers and businesspeople who have lost their property. Moreover ownership by professionals is sufficient at times to give them control over the labor of others, and in fact to place them in an exploitative relationship to non-professionals, and especially proletarians. Even as they themselves resist the encroachments of capitalism,

therefore, insofar as it threatens to strip them of their class autonomy, and to oppress and exploit them, they at the same time claim to be the owners of bourgeois property and cling to the right not only to receive the full value of their labor, but also to make a profit from what they too have invested, even if this means exploiting others. Here once again is revealed the dual nature of the petty bourgeoisie.

NOTES

1. See Loren, Classes in the United States, 213-16, and 276, note 137.

2. Harriet H. Robinson, "Early Factory Labor in New England," in Feminism: The Essential Historical Writings, ed. Miriam Schneir (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1972), 54. Robinson who became, "later, an active feminist," goes on to makes clear that these women strongly desired themselves the knowledge which they labored to provide for men: "The average woman of 40 years ago was very humble in her notions of the sphere of woman. What if she did hunger and thirst after knowledge? She could do nothing with it even if she could get it. So she made a fetich of some male relative, and gave him the mental food for which she herself was starving; and devoted all her energies towards helping him to become what she felt, under better conditions, she herself might have been. It was enough in those early days to be the mother or sister of somebody. . . ."

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., 51.

5. See New York Times, August 31, 1979, A14; November 21, 1982, 72; January 24, 1984, 20; Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, February 11, 1983, 9.

6. For instance, one court in New Jersey, even while awarding a spouse what it called "reimbursement alimony," stated that: "Courts may not make any permanent distribution of the value of professional degrees and licenses, whether based upon estimated worth or cost . . ." (New York Times, December 16, 1982, B6) In other words, the holder of the degree or license is permanently its owner, even if the spouse is compensated in some limited way for investing in the education on which it rests.

7. See Mills, White Collar, 267-68: "Although the middle-class monopoly on high-school education has been broken, equality of educational opportunity has not been reached; many young people are unable to complete their

secondary school education because of economic restrictions. 'Generally speaking,' Walter Kotshnig concludes, 'the children of large failies in the lowest income brackets have little chance of graduating from high school. They have to leave school early to help their families. . . . The situation on the college level is even worse. . . .' The most careful study available reveals that in many cases the father's income rather than the boy's brain determines who shall be college trained." See also Lumpkin and Douglas, Child Workers in America, 162-70.

8. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 240.

9. Ibid., 222.

10. Marx, Capital, vol. 1, 207.

11. Ibid., 210. See also Barber, "Some Problems in the Sociology of the Professions," 20: "Not only the substantive knowledge itself, but knowledge of how to keep up with continuing advances in professional knowledge is what the university school seeks to give its students. Where the body of professional knowledge is changing very rapidly, the university professional school may take a direct role in promoting the 'adult' education of the members of its profession through postprofessional training courses, seminars and institutes." But this, of course, requires a new increment of investment in "intellectual property."

12. However, it must be stressed again that in other forms it can be. Copyrights on books, or patents, with their accompanying royalties, can very well be part of a personal inheritance.

13. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 212.

14. See New York Times, August 31, 1982, B2: "Twenty-nine of 76 physicians whose medical education was subsidized by New York State in the last decade in return for practicing for a period later in medically underserved areas chose to repay their subsidies rather than fulfill their obligation, a legislative commission reported yesterday." In an attempt to obtain some public benefit, even if only monetary, the legislature "increased the penalty to double the amount of the subsidy in addition to interest." Thus socialized investment in education does not necessarily mean an effective social claim. In Europe, education is often even more widely subsidized, but a right of society to share in the results is better enforced, perhaps because the ideological sanctity of private property is not as absolute there. For instance, for graduates of the Grandes Écoles in France: "Private industries who wish to employ the members of this selected

elite have to 'buy them back'--that is, to financially compensate the state for the expenses of their education and the loss of their services." (Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 291, note 12).

15. New York Times, December 7, 1981, A19: "The overall deliquency rate was about one-third of the 167,000 former medical and health care students benefitting from this program." Delinquent student loans today run into the billions of dollars.

16. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 223: ". . . the ideal of moral obligation to the collectivity is the main ideological response of profession to the contradiction between socially produced knowledge and its private appropriation."

17. Ibid.: "For this ideological legitimation to be effective, meritocratic access to the educational system must have a semblance of reality. The growth of public investments in education and the expansion of enrollments at the higher levels confirm this appearance and are partly sustained by ideological necessity."

18. New York Times, November 9, 1982, B1: "Mr. Macioce, a trustee of [Columbia] university, is president and chief executive office of the Allied Stores Corporation. . . . 'Everything that I am today I owe to Columbia. The scholarships that enabled me to go to the college and law school were an investment in me by earlier Columbia benefactors.'"

19. Marx, Capital, vol. 1, 131-32.

20. See Marx, Capital, vol. 3, chaps. 45, "Absolute Ground-Rent," and 46, "Building Site Rent. Rent in Mining. Price of Land." See also Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 210: "The term 'fictitious commodity' is used by Karl Polyani in reference to labor, land, and money--entities which are exchanged and organized into markets even though they do not correspond to the 'empirical definition of a commodity': 'The postulate that anything that is bought and sold must have been produced for sale,' says Polyani, 'is emphatically untrue in regard to them.'" The quote is from Karl Polyani, The Great Transformation (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957), 72.

21. It is another matter whether such valuations create new additions to total value in the society or, as Marx argued, are merely a redistribution of the existing values. The point here is that the value attached even to intangibles is treated as "real" within capitalist society, regardless of its true worth.

22. Marx and Engels, The German Ideology, 67.

23. Marx, Capital, vol. 1, 361.

24. Ibid., 170, note 1.

25. Ibid., 332.

26. Ibid., 172.

27. Middletown (NY) Times-Herald Record, August 19, 1982, 51. The quoted official is Malcolm R. Lovell, Jr. He was testifying on the Reagan Administration proposal to support elimination of the mandatory retirement age, but against proposals to protect the elderly from job discrimination. The latter would not, in other words, have time to be "amortized."

28. John V. Lindsay, quoted in the New York Times, July 27, 1982, A23.

29. New York Times, May 20, 1981, A16.

30. Middletown (NY) Times-Herald Record, October 17, 1979, 7.

31. Theodore W. Schultz, "Rise in the Capital Stock Represented by Education in the United States, 1900-57," in Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Economics of Higher Education, ed. Selma J. Mushkin (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1962), 99. In the same volume, see Mary Jean Bowman, "Human Capital: Concepts and Measures," 69-92, for a discussion of some of the differences between "human" and "physical" capital. Despite such discrepancies, Bowman argues for "the feasibility of human capital measurement (91)."

32. Ibid., 93.

33. Wittlin, "The Teacher," 108: "The concept of education as investment in human beings has for a long time been familiar among economists from Adam Smith to Alfred Marshall, but the consciousness of people in general has only slightly been touched by this call for 'investment in human resources,' imperative as it is. We have too long been conditioned to investment in durable things, in inanimate objects and materials."

34. See Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 198: The creation of areas of professional discretion within overall bureaucratic control can be accomplished through "development of morale and organizational loyalty" or through "outside sources of socialization, which in our society tend to be professional institutions.

"Professionalization, in other words, makes the use of discretion predictable. It relieves bureaucratic organizations of responsibility for devising their own mechanisms of control in the discretionary areas of work. There need be no basic conflict between the professional expectation of autonomy at work and large-scale bureaucratic organizations which create, by their technology, areas of discretion. . . ."

35. Ibid., 180: ". . . the 'rewards of monopoly' are an integral part of every professional project. . . ."

36. V. I. Lenin, "The Collapse of the Second International," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 21, 227.

37. Marx, Theories of Surplus-Value (Volume IV of Capital), Part 1 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1963), 405: "If I buy the service of a teacher not to develop my faculties but to acquire some skill with which I can earn money--and if I really learn something (which in itself is quite independent of the payment for the service), then these costs of education, just as the costs of my maintenance, belong to the costs of production of my labour-power."

38. Marx, Capital, vol. 1, 170-71.

39. See Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 211: "The labor which is standardized in the case of professional 'commodities' is, first and above all, that which goes into training. Training--considered as the cooperative activity of instructors and students--appears indeed as the production of a marketable commodity, namely, the special skills of the professional producer. These skills can therefore be considered as exchange value created, in fact, before professional services are actually transacted between the provider and the user. Homogenized years of schooling and standardization credentials provide a 'universal equivalent' into which these exchange values can be translated and by which they can be measured. The monopoly of instruction and credentialing appears, thus, as the structural condition for the creation of 'professional exchange value.'"

40. See New York Times, December 7, 1984, A21: "A six-month investigation into bogus medical credentials has found that more than 10,000 people in the United States are suspected by law-enforcement agencies and professional groups of possessing fraudulent degrees. . . . 'We have found evidence that some people posing as doctors have not even graduated from high school. . . .'" The "diploma brokers and foreign medical schools that participate in fabricating credentials" even received governmental funding!

41. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 242: "For most of the men and women who strive to improve themselves or their children, getting some education, even some college degree, is seldom the door to prestigious, 'socially productive,' and 'free' intellectual jobs. The educational 'property' which they strive to acquire only brings them what seem like 'second-rate' benefits, if one compares them to the ideal privileges of professional status."

42. Marx, Capital, vol. 1, 197-98, note 1.

43. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 78.

44. Ibid., xvii. See also 51: "The monopolistic goal of the professional project, which demands regulation and control of access to the professional market on the supply side, contradicts, therefore, the democratization potential inherent in the expansion of professional markets and in the challenge to corporate privileges."

45. Ibid., 51. See also 136: "The rise of modern educational systems brings an ideological resolution to the tension between universalistic principles and exclusive privilege embodied in the notion of expertise. Mass access to the lower echelons of the public school system allows the higher levels of the educational hierarchy to claim meritocratic legitimations for their selection of entrants. The inegalitarian uses of acquired expertise are thus concealed by the alleged universalism of the schools' criteria of selection."

46. Ibid., 153: "The American university acquired, therefore, centralized and quasi-monopolistic power to sanction many different specialties as legitimate forms of knowledge and expertise."

47. Ibid., 118.

48. Ibid., 14-15.

49. Ibid., 210.

50. Ibid., 212.

51. Marx, Capital, vol. 3, 794: "Capital is . . . the means of production transformed into capital, which in themselves are no more capital than gold or silver in itself is money. It is the means of production monopolized by a certain section of society, confronting living labour-power. . . ."

52. Marx, Capital, vol. 1, 161: "The creation of surplus-value, and therefore the conversion of money into capital, can consequently be explained neither on the assumption that commodities are sold above their value, nor that they are bought below their value."

53. Marx, Capital, vol. 3, 753: "The rent, then, forms a portion of the value, or, more specifically, surplus-value, of commodities, and instead of falling into the lap of the capitalists, who have extracted it from their labourers, it falls to the share of the landlords, who extract it from the capitalists." However: "To the extent that the agricultural rent proper is purely a monopoly price, the latter can only be small, just as the absolute rent can only be small here under normal conditions whatever the excess of the product's value over its price of production." In other words, "pure" monopolization in which the owner is not engaged in production normally claims only a smaller fraction of the entire surplus-value. Professionals, who produce with their own knowledge, may thus draw "profit" and "rent," but the latter alone cannot account for their different relation to surplus-value compared to the exploited proletariat.

54. There are, of course, many intermediate stages between full ownership of property and its total loss which may drive "independent" petty bourgeois farmers or storeowners to supplement their income with "outside" employment. But for such owners to become full-time employees, usually means they have either lost their propertyholding, or no longer work on it. Such is not the case with intellectual property.

55. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 211.

56. Marx, Capital, vol. 1, 162: "To be consistent therefore, the upholders of the delusion that surplus-value has its origins in a nominal rise of prices or in the privilege which the seller has of selling too dear, must assume the existence of a class that only buys and does not sell, i.e., only consumes and does not produce."

57. Marx, Grundrisse, 85-86. See also 257-58.

58. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 222: "The possessions appropriated by the professional consist, typically, of practical and theoretical knowledge, under the form of a special competence.

59. This "entry level" cost tends to rise, therefore, whether it is to join the ranks of a "big" bourgeois car manufacturer, or to become a small farmer, or a professional.

60. New York Times, August 17, 1982, C1.

61. Mills, White Collar, 269.

PART II

CHAPTER 7

PROFESSIONALS AS "WORKERS": CHARLES LOREN AND THE QUESTION OF UNPAID LABOR

It is now necessary to turn to the other aspects of class analysis--relation to the system of production and reproduction, role in the division of labor, and consequently the origins and share of social wealth--to see to what extent investment in the means of mental production by the petty bourgeois professionals actually relieves them of the exploitation which is the lot of the proletariat, and allows them to assume and maintain special positions within the society. The focus here will be primarily on those members of the professions who hire out as employees, as they have proven the most difficult to assign to classes. My method of examining this question will be to analyze several alternative theories regarding the class to which professionals belong. These studies have been chosen because they represent major tendencies in such analyses: that professional employees are merely "workers," that they are part of a vastly expanded "new petty bourgeoisie," that they are members of some newer class altogether, or that

they lie in between existing classes, and take on a "mix" of the aspects which the latter exhibit. I will then examine what unites these very contradictory theories, and discuss the limits and size of the petty bourgeois class and its various strata.

In this chapter I will concentrate on the conditions of those within the professions who sell their labor-power as employees to the capitalists or in the "non-profit" political, cultural, and other institutions of bourgeois society. The main question here is whether these salaried professionals perform "unpaid labor," and are thereby subject to exploitation. It is of course in regard to such persons that the designation of "workers" is most often used by those studying the professions, generally with either the explicit or implicit implication that such employees are exploited and yield surplus-value to others, or at least perform unpaid work above their wages and salaries.[1] Since relative autonomy from the exploitative relations of capitalism, receiving more or less the full value of their own labor, is one of the essential characteristics of the petty bourgeoisie, this issue is crucial to any class analysis of the professionals. The question must actually be divided into two parts, the first of which is to determine whether there is at least a theoretical possibility that those who must sell their labor-power to others may nevertheless come within the petty bourgeois class, rather than belonging to the

proletariat, as would seem to be indicated by a first superficial look at their employment conditions. Secondly, it is necessary to determine whether significant numbers of those in the professions, and related groupings such as managers, do in fact have the class characteristics of the petty bourgeoisie, since in general the concept of "classes" implies a certain mass category, and not simply isolated or exceptional instances.

The failure of the proletariat in Western Europe and the United States to move in a revolutionary direction, especially after the Second World War, combined with the rise of mass professional and managerial strata, produced a stream of class analysis which tried to identify the latter as a "new working class," which might revive the radicalism of the socialist movement. In France, André Gorz in the 1960s spoke of a "new proletariat of culture,"[2] and explicitly drew a parallel between the sale of proletarian labor-power and that of salaried work, in which "capital" says to scientific and technical personnel:

> "Stop; what you are doing doesn't pay and is therefore worthless. I pay you, so I tell you what to do. I owe you nothing because I paid you your salary. . . ."
> And technicians, engineers, students, researchers discover that they are wage earners like the others, paid for a piece of work which is "good" only to the degree that it is profitable in the short run. They discover that long-range research, creative work on original problems, and the love of workmanship are incompatible with the criteria of capitalist profitability.[3]

However, Gorz also believed that there were essential differences in the situation of the "new working class,"

whose education gave them a kind of proprietary interest in their own labor-power. For Gorz, theirs is a

> labor-power which tends to escape quantitative evaluation: for qualified workers are no longer (and will become less and less) interchangeable vessels of physical energy whose power is worth nothing until and insofar as it is utilized and alienated by its purchaser, who combines it externally with other passive forces. No; the skilled workers of the leading industries, in the minority today but the majority of tomorrow, possess in their own right, unlike the classic proletarians, the labor power they lend. They possess it in their own right because they themselves acquired it. . . .[4]

Thus they are "at the same time both labor power and the owner of labor power,"[5] which they only "lend" rather than "sell."

As a result, Gorz says, they are not exploited like "classic proletarians" either, nor have they lost autonomy within their work like other workers. Rather, what they suffer from most is the alienation which results from the purpose of their labor being dominated by others, whose interests are in capitalist profit or with public goals which serve the bourgeois class.

> This conflict no longer essentially concerns the work situation, nor the exploitation of work, which is often highly paid. It hinges essentially on the contradiction between a sovereign praxis, which is an end unto itself, and an external, inert purpose, namely the requirement of capitalism to make praxis serve ends which negate it. Alienation within work tends to disappear--the teams of cultural and scientific workers are the only masters in their work--but the alienation of work continues, and tends to become intolerable, because of the limits and of the ultimate aim which the criteria of profitability (or of general policy, where public enterprises are concerned) impose on sovereign praxis.[6]

Gorz thus came close to recognizing the possibility of a petty- bourgeois form of ownership, relative autonomy from capitalist exploitation, and self-regulated labor within professional employment, but at this stage in his work, he insisted on forcing this within the framework of a "new proletariat." The basic contradiction between these positions was left unresolved, nor did he examine closely the question of how these newer "workers" related to the production and appropriation of surplus-value. Though over time this approach lost many of its followers, and Gorz himself changed his views, others attempted to carry the concept of "professional proletarians" even further.

A prime later example of the "professionals as workers" school is Charles Loren, who in his book Classes in the United States: Workers Against Capitalists, places virtually all non-independent members of the professions, as also most managers, in the proletariat, which class is thereby said to constitute 90% of the United States population as of 1970.[7] Because Loren, unlike most who adopted this viewpoint, made an effort to quantify his theory, an examination of his work is particularly useful for the light which it throws on the issue of "unpaid labor," or the production of surplus-value, by professionals, and thus whether they are exploited like proletarians.

The criteria which Loren employs for making his class analysis are as follows:

> Classes are groups of people which, owing to their different relations to the means of production, differ in relation to the surplus labor of society, generally either providing it to another group, or disposing of the surplus labor of another group, or disposing only of its own surplus labor.[8]

Loren explicitly rejects any reference to the division of labor per se in defining classes, treating this as a separate area of non-class relations:

> Classes are defined by their relation to surplus labor, not by their functions in production. It is a mistake to confuse class relations and other production relations.[9]

Specifically excluded from the determination of classes are the division between manual and mental labor, and authority relations.

> Still, the production relation between mental and manual labor is not the same thing as the class relation; the lines of division of mental and manual labor do not run along class lines. For the most part, the exploiting class does not perform mental labor, instead creating a group of mental laborers and taking measures to insure their social distance from manual laborers.[10]

Similarly managerial authority is not itself a "class relation."[11]

Loren devotes most of his book to combating opposing theories. He excoriates Gorz for implying that professionals have a different proprietary interest in their labor-power than do other proletarians, a view which Loren considers "petty bourgeois."[12] Loren believes that there is a simple solution to the class position of most of those in the professional or managerial occupations: they are proletariat untainted by any similarity to the petty

bourgeoisie. Thus in criticizing the work of Martin Nicolaus, "Proletariat and Middle Class in Marx: Hegelian Choreography and the Capitalist Dialectic," he states that

> because the writer is not aware of unpaid labor, he makes a problem out of the question of executives and managers, who can be divided among classes by quite definite criteria flowing out of the relation of classes to surplus labor.[13]

Loren is indeed very sure of his analysis, and refuses to "make a problem" out of such questions as the division among classes of "executives and managers" or of professionals. For him there is an essentially easy class line to draw within these segments of the population, below which they are workers and above which they are capitalists. But in so doing, Loren himself seems to lose track of the question of unpaid labor. At least, because he refuses to admit into his criteria for class analysis aspects of the division of labor, and because he finds no proprietorship in the means of production among the vast majority of the managers and professionals, his examination of their actual relation to surplus labor is at best cursory, which leads him into contradictions even within his own analytical approach.

To understand this properly it will help first to look at the correct and well-stated manner in which Loren describes the difficulty of determining the "boundaries" of the class of independent small owners, for whom he in general uses the term "petty producer," defined as those who "neither exploit nor give surplus labor," and who "keep

their individual surplus labor, more or less."[14] These must be distinguished at their "'upper' end" from the "small capitalists, persons who derive most of their income from the exploitation of labor but who also work in the business themselves."[15] As Loren states the problem,

> the earnings derived from the labor of the petty producer himself and the income derived from the few hired workers admit of a continuous range of proportions. How much labor must the petty producer hire in order to cross over to the capitalist class? Does this happen when 50 percent of his income is obtained by exploitation? Or 80 percent? When he leaves the shop floor or the fields for good to move into a new office? [16]

Loren does not attempt to answer systematically his own questions as to where the division between petty producers and capitalists occurs, but he does use available evidence to make an estimate of where the two meet. The poverty of U.S. statistics in this regard, which is the bane of all who try to make Marxist class analysis on the basis of such data, forces him to choose somewhat arbitrary criteria for calculating the critical dividing line, and requires using different material and approaches for the various groups being analyzed.

Thus for small farmers, where figures are available, he counts as capitalists those with an expense of $5,000 or more annually for hired labor in 1970, from whom he estimates that an equal $5,000 is expropriated as surplus-value. He includes in that class also all other "self-employed" persons who have earnings of over $25,000, which he believes would mark the level at which they get "most of

their income from the exploitation of hired workers."[17] Loren later adds the dividing line of $100,000 in active assets to these criteria.[18] As a means of finding the meeting point between the petty producers and the bourgeoisie, there can be no quarrel with the method he has used, though one could of course argue over the exact figures.

However, it is another matter when Loren uses the same analysis to establish what he also believes to be the demarcation of workers and capitalists. Thus he states that: "Those who receive surplus-value in the form of a salary bigger than any payment for labor power have been accounted members of the capitalist class."[19] This cut-off point is made specific earlier, stressing the professions:

> We will assume that with a salary of $25,000 per year or more at 1969 dollar salary levels, the person is [a] . . . member of the capitalist class. This level exceeds by 50 percent the earnings of the highest-paid professionals. . . . If a salary is not a payment for a highly skilled type of labor power, it contains surplus-value; the recipient is not yielding surplus labor but receiving it.[20]

Of course any such average will contain a wide range of values in both the high and low directions around the median figure of $25,000, but there must indeed be some such point at which the surplus-value producing working class and the surplus-value receiving capitalists balance out in income terms over the society as a whole.

It is evident that what Loren is establishing therefore is a general quantitative line delineating a

worker from a capitalist. But the effect of his method is that he takes the exact same point to mark where both wage and salary "workers" become capitalists as he had also utilized to separate the passage of the petty producers into the bourgeoisie among the self-employed. The problem with using the same dividing line for both proletariat and petty bourgeoisie in relation to the capitalist class, is that they are quite dissimilar in their own relations to the question of unpaid or surplus labor. Thus as Loren correctly states: "Workers are workers because of their relation to the means of production, which requires them to work with the means of others in return for a wage or salary and to yield up surplus labor."[21] But the petty bourgeoisie, which for Loren includes both petty producers and small employers who still have to perform labor, is distinguished precisely by its relative freedom from this necessity to produce surplus-value for others.[22] The petty bourgeois class represents a transition from those who receive the full value of their own labor "more or less," to small-scale exploiters, to the big capitalists, but a worker would have to "pass" directly from being one who is exploited to one who is an exploiter.

Thus since Loren used a figure of $25,000 to mark where the petty producers get "most" of their income from exploitation, the point at which they begin to exploit others must be a good deal lower, in fact can be no higher than $12,500 on this basis. Yet "workers" on salary must

still yield surplus-value up to the $25,000 line Loren employs. How is it that the independent petty bourgeoisie produce only $12,500 with their own labor, and appropriate a further $12,500 from others, but the same persons when salaried suddenly can yield $25,000 in value by themselves?[23] Moreover, this contradiction runs through the ranks of the professionals, dividing the "self-employed" from the "workers" :

> Those persons in white collar work who operate businesses by themselves are petty producers. A consulting engineer is as much a petty producer as a self-employed plumber or electrician. The great majority of white collar workers are sellers of their labor power, members of the working class. They must sell their ability to labor in order to survive; this is their source of income. They perform both necessary and surplus labor. They cannot go into business for themselves because they lack the means of production--office buildings and equipment, hospitals and equipment, or stores and merchandise.[24]

Thus according to Loren, a consulting engineer who owned a business and earned $24,000 would "on average" be an exploiter of hired labor, but would be an exploited "worker" if the same person was employed and paid the same amount.

So determined is Loren not to "make a problem" out of the question of professionals and managers on salary that he apparently does not see, and completely ignores, this contradiction. Moreover, there is here a direct growth of skilled "workers" into the capitalist class by just a small incremental change in their income. The question that must be asked, and which Loren does not address, is what would

happen to the production of surplus-value in this second form of transition. To carry the argument to its logical absurdity, persons hired for a salary of $24,999.99 are "workers," but at $25,000.01 they have become "capitalists." It must first be recalled that these two classes are, as Loren himself stresses, the bearers of antagonistic relations, of entirely different world outlooks, and so forth. Moreover, no one would in reality hire such a "worker," for the amount of the surplus-value produced would not even begin to pay for the paperwork and other forms of overhead, including additional means of production, needed for them to be put to work. Above and below this level there is in fact a considerable range where exploitable surpluses disappear or become negligible, and are thus "useless" to the capitalist. Then too, what of the "workers" who earn exactly $25,000, and who therefore can "neither exploit nor give surplus labor," but instead keep "their individual surplus labor"? Would this category, theoretically, be part of the petty bourgeoisie, by the measure of relation to unpaid labor?

It therefore seems that not only can there be a situation under which those who must sell their labor-power nevertheless neither exploit nor yield significant amounts of surplus-value, and retain most of the value of their own labor--the conditions which mark the petty bourgeois class--but that in fact it is impossible to change from being a worker to joining the capitalists without passing through

this stage, assuming incremental growths in income. Loren simply chooses to ignore this possibility, rather proceeding, after a description of the size of classes in the United States, of the polarization of class society, and the remaining influence of the petty bourgeoisie, to examine what he calls the "anti-class" theories of others, the bulk of his analysis. As the book proceeds, he becomes increasingly vociferous in denouncing anyone who suggests that there may in any way be a "middle class" lying between the workers and capitalists in modern society, other than the remnant of the petty producers represented exclusively by the few remaining "self-employed." Thus despite using surplus labor as the primary criterion, together with property relations, by which he assigns class, Loren quickly abandons any real examination of this factor, and in particular fails to acknowledge that the question may be just as complex in relation to the wage and salary employees as for those who own their own small businesses.

The problem, however, apparently continues to haunt him nevertheless, and he cannot help complicating the issue when, for instance, he takes up the role of the managers. Thus in applying his "worker/capitalist" dividing line to the latter he says: "Most managers are lower level managers, a group of workers," accounting for 80% of their total numbers.[25] But after subtracting those who earn more than $25,000, Loren finds that the others receive a

"managerial bonus" of 42% over the earnings of "workers in general." The purpose of this extra payment is that:

> The manager is left with a premium to induce his mind to follow and anticipate the contours of the work. With their low pay, most workers reject these concerns as being of no application to them. . . . Furthermore, "job involvement" under capitalism can only mean helping capitalists to step up the exploitation of oneself and one's fellow workers.[26]

Though Loren explicitly denies that any such differences in the "functions of production" can form a basis for class differentiation, let us look more closely at what is really happening here on his chosen ground, the relation to unpaid or surplus labor. In doing so I will temporarily accept his $25,000 line to delineate capitalists. Loren compares the salaries of managers to other "workers in general," but we must be more specific about the various categories which may be involved. If we do not exclude those with earnings over $25,000, male managers in 1969, other than in agriculture, had a median income of $11,277, or some 48% above the average of $7,610 for the entire experienced male civilian labor force. For female managers, the comparable figures were $5,495 and $3,649, or a difference of 66%. In comparison with operatives, the main productive category in manufacturing industries, the "managerial bonus" for men was 68% over the median wage of only $6,730, and for women 66% over wages of $3,635.[27]

However, though it is necessary at times to deal in such averages, it is well known that such a method often obscures reality more than it reveals it, and if blatantly

misused becomes nothing more than statistical sleight-of-hand. Among male managers fully 1,531,866 out of a total of some 5,349,040 or 29% earned $15,000 or more in 1969, or at least twice the average income for males. Of these about a half million or 9% straddled the $25,000 range, lying between yearly earnings of $20,000 and $30,000, and an additional 330,000 or 6% earned more than $30,000 that year. Among operators, by contrast, less than 1.5% had earnings above $15,000, and an infinitesimal 18,802 or .3% reached $20,000 to $30,000. Even among "craftsmen and kindred workers," the generally most skilled of the manual worker categories, only 553,589 out of 10,410,549 or just 5% had wages of over $15,000, and a bare 100,000 or so, less than 1%, $20,000 to $30,000.[28] The progression in higher earning categories for males is given in Table 2.

Table 2.--Percentage of Persons with High Earnings, by Selected Occupation

Occupation	Earnings (%)			
	$15,000-$16,999	$17,000-$19,999	$20,000-$24,999	$25,000+
Managers	7.4%	5.7%	6.3%	9.3%
Craftspersons	2.6%	1.3%	.7%	.5%
Operatives	.7%	.4%	.2%	.2%

Source: Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of the Population: 1970, vol. Pc(2)-7F, Occupation of Persons with High Earnings, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1973), 16-21, table no. 4.

Among female managers, only 51,545, or about 5%, earned over $15,000, among whom just some 15,000 or 1.5% were in the $20,000-30,000 range, while another 7,600 or so, some under 1%., exceeded $30,000 in annual median earnings. However, this still compares with only .28% of clerical workers and .16% of operatives, among women, who even reached the $15,000 level.[29] While it is thus accurate to say that managers show that "continuous range of proportions" which bring them up to and then across the line which Loren so well described as dividing petty producers and capitalists, even those manual workers with considerable skills all but disappear before reaching this mark. Moreover, since managers on salary exceeded in income those who are self-employed by $11,844 to $7,274 in 1970, it is presumably the salaried employees who fill the upper earnings levels being examined here.[30]

In fact, the "managerial bonus" for a goodly number of these "workers" is sufficient as to partially or entirely eliminate any meaningful production of "unpaid labor" on their part, given the $25,000 line which Loren utilizes. Workers yield surplus-value to capitalists, managers do not in all cases do so because they are not proletarians, but serve a different "function in production," or in the division of labor. Of course the capitalists try to buy the labor-power of these managerial employees at as low a price as possible, and are often able to suppress their salaries below what their actual labor yields in return.

So too, owners attempt to buy from each other at the lowest prices they can obtain. But just as Marx long ago showed that it is not this individual scalping of each other that can be the basis of capitalist profit as a whole, so too the robbery of surplus-value from the managerial group does not constitute the essence of their economic role. Managers have a special relation to the means of production and the division of labor and may or may not perform "unpaid labor," depending on particular circumstances. They thus show that same continuum of income that marks the "self-employed" petty bourgeoisie. Those workers hired to produce surplus-value, on the other hand, even the most skilled, drop off completely before reaching the point where they would no longer serve this primary capitalist function.

In a section describing "Types of Capitalists" Loren says: "Among capitalists, a capitalist on 'salary' is least of all of them an independent owner of the means of production."[31] Among the petty bourgeoisie too a manager on salary is "least of all of them an independent owner of the means of production," but just as this lack does not prevent others from belonging to the capitalist class, so it is the same here. These salaried petty bourgeois managers therefore have the least "independence" of their class in the meaning which we saw Marx give to that term earlier on. But they are given rewards commensurate with other petty bourgeoisie, and when these are such as to

essentially remove managerial personnel from the individual production of unpaid labor or surplus value, then we are justified in saying that they belong to a different class than the workers, just as capitalists are likewise marked off.

To argue otherwise is to say that the $24,000 a year manager of a plant who has the authority to hire and fire everyone else there is simply another "worker." It is not "workers in general" for whom there is a meeting point between the upper ranks of skilled labor and membership in the capitalist class, but rather a particular group of employees whose "functions in production" are different. Managers are paid high salaries only *in part* as a reward for any abilities, the rest of the "managerial bonus" is for "added responsibilities," which is a largely euphemistic term for the duty to drive and crush the workers. It is to buy their class loyalty, regardless of real skills, that they receive higher incomes, lighter work, and special privileges--not because they are the top of the proletariat, but to separate and isolate them from it, as members of another class.

A similar division runs through the occupations in society at large. Except for male salespersons, 17% of whom earn over $15,000 per year, and who are in many cases either "self-employed" or work virtually independently on a commission, and the 9% of male farmers and farm managers who also exceed this income level, all other male

occupations with one exception show even fewer persons receiving this level of higher earnings than do skilled craftspersons. Only among male professionals, as with managers, do we again find the meeting of the petty bourgeoisie and capitalists in a continuum of statistically meaningful income gradations.[32] The percentages in some major professions are given in Table 3.

Table 3.--Percentage of Professionals with Higher Earnings

Occupation	Earnings (%)			
	$15,000-$16,999	$17,000-$19,999	$20,000-$24,999	$25,000+
Lawyers & Judges	9%	8%	13%	32%
Doctors & Dentists	6%	5%	10%	38%
Social Scientists	11%	10%	10%	9%
College Teachers	9%	8%	7%	5%
Engineers	13%	11%	7%	4%
Physical Scientists	11%	9%	6%	4%

Source: Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of the Population: 1970, vol. Pc(2)-7F, Occupation of Persons with High Earnings, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1973), 16-21, table no. 4.

In general these professions keep pace with or even exceed the percentages of managers in the higher income levels up to $25,000. Above that mark, on the other hand, only the legal and medical professions, with a high percentage of self-employed, show large numbers of persons actually entering the capitalist class, by the standard Loren uses. For the professionals as a whole, those who own their own

businesses outpaced the salaried in earnings by an average of $16,987 to $10,645, respectively. Nevertheless, if $25,000 marks the dividing line of the petty bourgeoisie and the capitalists, then many professional employees too presumably approach and cross over this level. Among the males in the professions, almost 25% earn above $15,000, with 5% in the $20,000-$24,999 range, and 7% over $25,000.[33]

Loren describes the basis for this higher payment in the case of professionals in the following manner:

> The ruling class is served by a number of theoretical, political, ideological, and literary representatives who think about and formulate plans and culture for the capitalists and push fraudulent ideas, values, political movements and such on other classes. Performing these functions a certain number of writers, professors, political operatives, clergymen, and so forth are inducted into the capitalist class.[34]

This is exactly the case, but what Loren misses is that an even larger group of such persons are, in his felicitous phrase, "inducted" into the petty bourgeoisie by the capitalists for the same purposes. The big bourgeoisie have no need to swell to large proportions their own ranks, when for considerably less expense they can in most cases purchase very qualified representatives of their interests, or at least those who can be counted on to maintain bourgeois society and oppose working-class power. Indeed, just as in the case of managers, it is more politically valuable for the capitalists not to polarize society entirely, but to create a buffer group which will transmit its authority and ideology with just enough degree of

autonomy and separate interests to appear as a differentiated social class. These groups can then enforce the bourgeois order without revealing fully the capitalist hand which stands behind them.

That this succeeds in confusing large numbers of people into believing that everyone who is not obviously a capitalist is just another "worker" is what Loren and those like him exemplify. Whether they define the salaried professionals and managers as "old" or "new" working class, whether they see these "workers" as the most conservative and petty bourgeois-influenced of their class, or as the potential leaders of a new wave of proletarian militancy, all those who identify these employees in this manner share the same underlying arguments. In each case they ignore the differing relations to the means of production and reproduction in society which higher education and managerial authority bring, and the corresponding differences in the division of labor and in regard to the share and mode of acquiring social wealth which mark these professions and managers as part of another class, despite their wage and salary income. Attempts to argue otherwise inevitably run into trouble, as occurs with Loren when he hurriedly describes the class position of employees of the state:

> Within the military and police functions and, although less so, in the general government function, are contained the institutions of the state. The personnel of the state proper cannot be counted as part of the

> working class, although economically they are wage and salary earners.[35]

Loren simply makes this declaration and then passes on to other matters, with no attempt to give an actual class definition to the police and army, though he has just violated the basic criterion by which he makes his analysis of classes. Are soldiers part of the capitalist class? Are they "classless?" Loren does not tell us.

In reality, the police and armed forces, like all other similarly constituted groups or institutions, must be divided among various classes by the same criteria which were generally employed above, so that army privates, who are largely drawn from the working class and do most of the "productive" work of fighting, and bourgeois generals who rarely see action, parallel civilian society. The bulk of the officer corps then form a "continuous range" between these two, quite like that of the managerial structure within corporations, though the military also shares some of the attributes of "professionalism." Marx, in fact, compared the organization of production to that of an army, and traced the origin of wages to the payment of Roman soldiers.[36] Similarly, the police function in relation to the society as a whole in a manner not unlike that of forepersons in a factory: though they have certain general responsibilities for keeping order, for instance in directing traffic, their critical task under capitalism is to serve as the first rank, the shock troops, in the

suppression of the working class and of all oppressed peoples, and in protecting private property. This role separates and isolates them from the proletariat and serves as one basis for their identification as part of the "middle class."

What is important here is that Loren concedes that social "function" can in at least some cases alter class relations even among "wage and salary earners." All that would have been needed to put his efforts back on the right track would have been to recognize that the roles not only of police and soldiers, but of those in the "general government," of managers in industry, of the professional arbiters of culture and science, and so on, carry with them the same kind of social domination vis-à-vis the proletariat as that of the repressive institutions of the state, and this therefore affects their class also. Exactly where each segment of these various parts of the population fall in a larger analysis of classes can only be determined by measuring their actual positions in the overall society in relation to property, exploitation, work and income. It is not occupation or incomes alone, as Loren correctly stresses, which determine class, but a combination of factors, in which questions of ownership of the means of production and reproduction must be correlated with the division of labor and origins and share of social wealth, to yield an answer. The rigid approach taken by Loren leads him to ignore aspects of his analysis which are

in fact contradictory. But by adopting a method which attempts to define where classes meet, what Loren demonstrates, in spite of himself, is that even those professionals who are employed by others retain the ability to receive the full value of their labor, and thus to avoid being exploited like proletarians. That there are sufficient such persons to actually form a stratum of the petty bourgeoisie is also evident.

NOTES

1. Under capitalism, unpaid or surplus-labor takes the form primarily of surplus-value, the difference between the value paid to workers as wages to purchase their labor-power and of the labor they actually perform. Not all work, however, produces new values. Some workers merely help the capitalists to realize the full value of production, while others perform services which are not directly related to the generation of capitalist profits. In the latter cases, nevertheless, it is to the benefit of the capitalists to keep their labor costs as low as possible. Thus they seek to extract surplus-labor above the equivalent value which they pay in wages or salaries. In such situations it is proper to speak of exploitation, analogous to the generation of surplus-value, regardless of the degree to which the relation between employer and employee actually yields capitalist profits.

2. André Gorz, Strategy for Labor: A Radical Proposal, trans. Martin A. Nicolaus and Victoria Ortiz (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), 108.

3. Ibid., 104.

4. Ibid., 111-12.

5. Ibid., 112.

6. Ibid.

7. Charles Loren, Classes in the United States, 26-32.

8. Ibid., 9. It is important to stress that it is surplus-labor, and not just income level, which is the determining factor for Loren. Though very rich people are almost without exception within the capitalist class, and very poor persons are commonly workers, it is not possible to define classes simply by incomes. By this definition the vast majority of United States citizens become part of some vague "middle class," which lacks any other clearly distinguishing characteristics, and thereby defeats any true class analysis, which is exactly why it is used. Loren clearly rejects this in favor of a Marxist concept of

exploited surplus as the crucial element, together with property relations, in deciding class.

9. Ibid., 21.

10. Ibid., 18.

11. Ibid., 19-25.

12. Ibid., 127-38.

13. Ibid., 178. Loren here refers to Martin Nicolaus, "Proletariat and Middle Class in Marx: Hegelian Choreography and the Capitalist Dialectic," Studies on the Left 7, (Jan.-Feb. 1967).

14. Ibid., 42, 55.

15. Ibid., 43.

16. Ibid., 43-44.

17. Ibid., 30-31.

18. Ibid., 45.

19. Ibid., 96-97.

20. Ibid., 29.

21. Ibid., 28.

22. Ibid., 44.

23. There could be empirical explanations for such a contradiction, such as differences in productivity in the two situations, but Loren is making a theoretical distinction here and does not explore any such possibilities in practice.

24. Ibid., 97. Of course Loren may be right that "most white collar workers . . . are members of the working class." But it is his inclusion of "consulting engineers" and similarly educated professionals in the ranks of the proletariat, subject to the exploitation of surplus-value, that is at issue here.

25. Ibid., 110.

26. Ibid., 109-10.

27. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of the Population: 1970, vol. Pc(1)-D1, Detailed

Characteristics: United States Summary (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1973), 766-7, table no. 227, and 772-3, table no. 228.

28. Ibid., and Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of the Population: 1970, vol. Pc(2)-7F, Occupation of Persons with High Earnings (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1973), 16-21, table no. 4.

29. Department of Commerce, 1970 Census of the Population, Occupation of Persons with High Earnings, 16-21, table no. 4.

30. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1972, 93d ed. (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1972), 237, table no. 379.

31. Loren, Classes in the United States, 50.

32. Department of Commerce, 1970 Census of the Population, Occupation of Persons with High Earnings, 16-21, table no. 4.

33. Ibid., and Department of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1972, 237, table no. 379.

34. Loren, Classes in the United States, 119.

35. Ibid., 177.

36. Karl Marx, London, to Frederick Engels, September 25, 1857, in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 2, 454.

CHAPTER 8

THE "NEW PETTY BOURGEOISIE": NICOS POULANTZAS AND "UNPRODUCTIVE" MENTAL LABOR

If, as I believe I have shown in the last chapter, there is no true theoretical barrier to the identification of petty bourgeois employees lying between the capitalists and the proletarians, as measured by the relation to surplus-value, and if, regardless of the exact dividing line chosen to determine this measure, there are sufficient numbers of persons at the relevant point along an income scale to count as a portion of that class in reality, then several subsidiary questions arise. Expanding on the method which Charles Loren used, it is necessary to determine not only where the professional and managerial petty bourgeoisie at their "upper" end join the capitalists, but also where they meet the proletariat at their "lower" end. This latter point is, in fact, a more crucial one to arrive at for any working-class movement. Here again I am concerned primarily with the petty bourgeois salaried employees, and thus must deal with questions arising in their case. Among these are the following: since relative autonomy from either production or appropriation of surplus-value is one of the criteria

used to identify the petty bourgeoisie, must we not then apply this test generally, and say that any persons who do not take part in this essential relationship of capitalism belong to that class? In other words, can all those who do not help in producing values that directly generate profit, and who are therefore "unproductive" labor in relation to the capitalists as a whole, be considered part of the "petty bourgeoisie" regardless of other determining factors?

This question arises particularly in regard to the "lower" end of the class, since it is primarily among wage workers in sales, clerical, service and similar categories that this situation is to be found, and who therefore would have to be considered petty bourgeois "candidates," based on this criteria. Thus examining the problem of whether "unproductive" labor is a determinant of class will also help to identify the "bottom" of the petty bourgeoisie, that is, where it meets the proletariat. To do so, I will look at the work of Nicos Poulantzas, and specifically his book Classes in Contemporary Capitalism, where he sets forth and defends at great length a so-called "new petty bourgeoisie."[1] This will allow me also to examine a point of view at polar opposites from that found in the case of Charles Loren, for Poulantzas includes in his "new petty bourgeois" class what would have to be the majority of all the employed work force, in complete contrast to the estimate of 90% working class which Loren advanced for the

United States in the 1970s. The difference in approach of these two analysts runs much deeper, however, for whereas Loren rested his case above all else on the relations to the means of production and reproduction and especially on the resulting determinations of surplus-value, Poulantzas essentially rejects this relationship in favor of an emphasis on aspects of the division of labor and political-ideological criteria to make his class analysis.

Indeed, one is tempted to say that Poulantzas adopted this approach precisely to bypass the kinds of difficulties which it has been seen that Loren experienced in trying to use strictly economic factors. However, in so doing, he only managed to swing to the opposite extreme. Thus early in his examination of the "new petty bourgeoisie," Poulantzas outlines the questions whose answers, he claims, will "show . . . how they belong together with the traditional" members of that class, those engaged in "small-scale production and ownership, independent craftsmen and traders,"[2] even though their economic basis is different:

> What precisely defines the petty bourgeoisie in its structural class determination, i.e. its place in the social division of labour, including not only relations of production but also relations of political and ideological domination/subordination? What is its particular position in the process of the reproduction of social classes? . . . This raises another question: how, and on what basis, can social groupings that apparently have different places in economic relations belong to one and the same class, the petty bourgeoisie?[3]

Poulantzas begins to give his answer by first defining what all segments of this class have in common, that they are neither working class nor bourgeoisie. However in doing so he rejects outright any thought that these "new wage-earning groupings" share in either the owning or controlling of bourgeois property:

> The first point to note is that these groupings do not belong to the bourgeoisie, in so far as they have neither economic ownership nor possession of the means of production. On the other hand, they do represent the phenomenon of wage-labour, remunerated in the form of a wage or salary.[4]

This non-ownership is by itself sufficient to separate these persons from the capitalists, and includes a denial of any ownership of the means of mental production by professionals.

But it remains for Poulantzas to establish the criteria by which he divides such "wage-earners" between the proletariat and his "new petty bourgeoisie." To begin with, there are those Poulantzas excludes from the working class by virtue of their being "unproductive" labor. In this Poulantzas draws on two analyses of Marx: that under capitalism, only those persons who produce surplus-value for the capitalist class are considered "productive";[5] and, secondly, that a large body of workers, notably those involved in sales and financing, do not actually add to the total value generated by the society, but merely help the capitalists to realize a profit from the surplus-value they

have already expropriated, and to set their capital in motion:[6]

> In fact, it is only in terms of this role that Marx's analysis of the working class can be understood, a class that is not defined by wage labour (purchase and sale of labour-power, i.e. the 'wage-earning class'), but by productive labour, which under capitalism means labour that directly produced surplus-value. This is why, in Marx's theory, it is only those wage-earners who depend on productive capital who form part of the working class, since it is only productive capital that produces surplus-value. Wage-earners who depend on the sphere of circulation and realization of surplus-value do not form part of the working class, since these forms of capital, and the labour that depends on them, do not produce surplus-value.[7]

By extension, Poulantzas comes to include in this category not only those in the circulation process, but virtually all clerical, commercial, and service workers and the majority of civil servants as well. Only the "hard-core" in manufacturing and related employments such as utilities and certain types of transportation work escape his exclusionary process, so by the time he is done the working class has become a definite minority, and the "new petty bourgeoisie" must emerge as the largest group.

In this way he substitutes "unproductive" labor for property relations as the crucial "new petty bourgeois" criteria. This would seem to present a major obstacle to including these "newer" members of the petty bourgeoisie in the same class as its "traditional" property-owning stratum, but Poulantzas has already declared that he will disregard such differences:

> If certain groupings which at first sight seem to occupy different places in economic relations can be considered as belonging to the same class, this is

> because these places, although they are different, nevertheless have the same effects at the political and ideological level.[8]

Thus though Poulantzas uses certain economic features, including wage levels, to help outline the dimensions of his "new petty bourgeoisie," he is direct in declaring that such criteria are insufficient for defining the class or stratum as a whole:

> Reference to political and ideological relations is absolutely indispensable in order to define the place of the petty bourgeoisie in its structural class determination. This is not only in order to provide a foundation for the common class membership of the traditional and the new petty bourgeoisie, but also and above all in order to grasp the place of the new petty bourgeoisie in relation to the working class, and the fractions of this new petty bourgeoisie.[9]

In other words "political and ideological relations" are critical "structurally" not only to the common class membership of both the "traditional" and "new" petty bourgeois segments, nor even just to define their differences from the working class, but to mark the unity of its own "fractions" internally as well.

In fact, it turns out that the criterion of "unproductive" labor is itself insufficient to tie together all the various elements which Poulantzas wants to include in his "new majority," because some of them, such as technicians and managers in part perform "productive" labor. It is therefore necessary to find another basis by which to separate them from the workers.

> Technicians and engineers do tend to form part of capitalist productive labour, because they directly valorize capital in the production of surplus-value. If they do not as a group belong to the working class,

> this is because in their place within the social division of labour they maintain political and ideological relations of subordination of the working class to capital (the division of mental and manual labour), and because this aspect of their class determination is the dominant one. . . .[10]

It is thus at this point that Poulantzas brings into play his conception of "political and ideological relations," by which he means on the one hand primarily authority relationships such as those exercised by managers, and in the second instance mainly the division between mental and manual labor, both of which work to the subordinating of the proletariat.[11] The function of managerial personnel is adequate to separate them from the working class, in the view of Poulantzas, but this in itself would not link them to such non-managerial "new petty bourgeoisie" as clericals and retail clerks.

However, the higher technicians among "productive" employees are in the majority of cases distinguished not only by some aspects of authority but by their being on the "mental side" of the mental-manual division of labor. This latter characteristic, therefore, becomes for Poulantzas the key one, requiring him to establish that all members of the "new petty bourgeoisie" share the common feature of being "mental" labor in relation to workers. Using a highly theoretical argument he proceeds to claim just this noting, for instance, that even for clericals and salesworkers:

> All these things, of course, require a certain training: learning to write in a certain way, to speak in a certain way, to dress in a certain way for work,

> to take part in certain customs and usages. This 'certain way' is always the other way, opposed to that of the working class, and moreover, it claims to be the sign of a particular 'savoir-faire', which is evaluated positively in opposition to that of the working class. Everything that needs to be known in this respect is that which the others (the working class) do not know, or even cannot know.[12]

For Poulantzas, such differences are sufficient to put these employees "on the 'side,' or in the 'camp,' of mental labour, directly or indirectly,"[13] even when, as he acknowledges is often the case, their work is primarily manual. To explain this latter discrepancy, Poulantzas is compelled to argue that such situations merely reproduce and reinforce the same mental/manual division within the "mental side" of labor itself, and even "bring certain fractions of the new petty bourgeoisie close to the barrier that separates them from manual labour and from the working class."[14] But he does not go so far as to admit that perhaps there is here a commonality of manual work that is stronger than the mental characteristics he cited above.

It must be said that the division which Poulantzas here indicates does in fact exist on a wide scale, and is often encouraged by the bourgeoisie. It is not uncommon, for instance, for workers from the "shop" to be given the run-around and treated snobbishly by "front-office" persons who are "in the know," though their own jobs may be largely physical routines. "'It is no exaggeration to say that "management", from the point of view of the manual worker, ends with the lowest grade of routine work.'"[15]

Unfortunately this is reciprocated, with many workers from the floor refusing to acknowledge clericals and others as fellow members of the working class. Differences of gender, race, working hours, codes of dress, and often expectations of advancement may exacerbate such tendencies and they create important conflicts of attitude and interest among the various working-class strata. Here for instance is an example of such difficulties, taken from the magazine Women: A Journal of Liberation:

> The first morning I worked for the phone company in New York City as a typist, two girls [sic] took me around and showed me the cafeteria. We were served coffee and doughnuts by a Puerto Rican woman and a black man. The attitude of the girls was one of class superiority. They made some remarks about "those workers." The differences in the salaries of the girls (one of them black) as beginning clerks ($67 weekly before taxes) and the cafeteria workers could not have been more than 5 or 6 dollars. But the girls did not consider themselves as part of the same, that is, the working class.[16]

Such situations, compounded by racial and sexual chauvinism, including the use of the term "girls" for women, certainly do undermine the unity of the working class, often making their common organization all but impossible.

But they do not support the thesis of Poulantzas, for in the incident cited, both the typists and the service workers would have to be included as members of his "new petty bourgeoisie," since neither are generally "productive" by his standards. The conflict, therefore, is not between classes, but a division within the same class.

For Poulantzas this is the petty bourgeoisie, but his argument in this regard is unconvincing in general, because in reality both typists and service workers in such situations are overwhelmingly "manual" in their activities, neither of them needing any particular social skills for their routine jobs. Though Poulantzas, by his argument that these persons are nevertheless in the "camp" of mental labor, partaking of it "indirectly," may help explain some of their particular actions or attitudes, this is not a criterion sufficient to separate them from the working class or from one another. Rather it shows the degree to which even those who have the same relations to the means of production, necessity for wage labor, and level of income as other workers can identify themselves as non-workers in opposition to their own basic and common class interests. To argue otherwise is in the end to assert that persons can define their "own" classes simply be taking on the attitudes of those with whom they wish to be identified.

In effect this can only mean that millions of workers "become" petty bourgeoisie just by superficially adopting its life-style, and its political and ideological attitudes. It is in fact many of the most oppressed members of the proletariat, in particular low-paid women and people of color, whom Poulantzas thus assigns to his "new petty-bourgeois" class. What ultimately fails Poulantzas, however, is not these efforts to link up the

various segments of his "newer" petty bourgeoisie via "mental labor," but rather the cornerstone of his entire thesis, by which most of these employees are assigned to that class in the first place, that is, by "unproductive" labor. Here again it is not the basic description which he gives of this phenomenon which is at fault, but the mistaken usage to which he puts the analysis of "productive labor" made by Marx.

It is therefore necessary to look more closely at the Marxist basis for the thesis Poulantzas advances. Marx explained that under capitalism only those who yield surplus-value to the capitalists are considered "productive." This was meant in part to explain the unending drive of capitalism to convert all activities into "profitable" ones, an invasion of every aspect of human life which is today even more evident than in the time of Marx. Also covered by this explanation is the on-going destruction of all previous forms of social economy, such as the small farms and stores in which the labor of the owners predominates, therefore yielding little or no direct surplus-value to the capitalist class.[17] But the purpose of Marx in analyzing this phenomenon went beyond these immediate reasons, because what was at issue was the entirety of his theory of capitalism and the methods it uses to exploit the proletariat. For this, Marx had to separate his own analysis from those of predecessors, particularly the "classical" economists such as Adam Smith

and David Ricardo, and to establish two fundamental and related aspects of his theory: that the value of labor-power and of labor are not identical under capitalism, and that the ability of workers to yield surplus-value as a result of this difference is the essence of capitalist production. On the other hand, Marx explains in very clear terms why certain employees of the capitalists, particularly those in sales and financing, do not yield any additional quantities to the total values exploited by the capitalist class, but merely help the latter to realize the surplus-value they have appropriated in production.[18]

However, if commercial operations are in turn handled by a wholesaling or retailing firm, they may be a source of profit. The owner of such a company may receive say $1 million in payment from the producer, or through resale of the products, but hire the workers needed to carry out these marketing operations for only $800,000, thus realizing $200,000 above the costs of labor. Nevertheless, there is still no actual addition to the total surplus-value of the entire capitalist class, what is involved being only a redistribution among its different members. This circulation process is important to understand both because it explains the source of commercial profit, and because it indicates how many workers are actually involved in any given situation in producing surplus-value, the remaining members of the labor force being paid out of that

amount. But Marx makes clear that this distinction is in fact only a relative one:

> To industrial capital the costs of circulation appear as unproductive expenses, and so they are. To the merchant they appear as a source of his profit, proportional, given the general rate of profit, to their size. The outlay to be made for these circulation costs is, therefore, a productive investment for mercantile capital. And for this reason, the commercial labour which it buys is likewise immediately productive for it.[19]

In other words, though workers in commerce do not add directly to the total surplus-value available to the capitalist class as a whole, they do help the specific capitalists who hire them get part of it and in this sense are "productive" in the immediate case of their employers.

By analogy, commercial workers within a production firm may be paid similar wages for equivalent work as those in an independent sales enterprise. As Harry Braverman put it, "the measurement of the <u>productivity of labor</u> has come to be applied to labor of all sorts, <u>even labor which has no productivity</u>."[20] Commercial workers are thereby exploited just like any other proletariat, though the result is to save in the realization of surplus-value, not to create it. Braverman explores the consequences for class:

> Although they were at one time a means of escaping the 'misfortune' of being a productive worker, the unproductive occupations have, in the armies of labor employed at their base, for the most part lost their attractiveness and become merely another form of exploitation. From being privileged positions in which one could to a small extent share in the benefits derived by capital from productive labor, they have become mere cogs in the total machinery designed to multiply capital. And this remains true despite the

> fact that, technically speaking, all those who do not themselves produce commodity values must perforce consume a portion of the commodity values produced by others.[21]

Just as the individual worker in production has lost the role of producer, except as part of a collective laborer under capitalist control, so too "on the side of unproductive labor a mass has been created which shares in the subjugation and oppression that characterizes the lives of the productive workers."[22] This common exploited relation to capital unites them as proletarians.

The concept of "unproductive" labor, therefore, as viewed by the capitalists and as explained by Marx, is not an absolute. Rather it necessarily includes many transitional forms and grey areas which in practice blur the distinction between the various groups of workers. Many persons perform both "productive" and "unproductive" duties in the course of their work, while others shift jobs between those employers who do, and those who do not, make a direct profit from commercial activities. But Marx never had any interests in putting such distinctions into neat metaphysical "boxes," since he was concerned with the overall process of capitalist production and of the general role of the workers within it. Poulantzas, in contrast, insists on using such ideas to define whether each of these categories falls within the working class or is part of his "new petty bourgeoisie." In doing so he is forced to make essentially arbitrary distinctions: just as in regard to

"mental" labor he stretched that concept to the furthest breaking point so as to include as many wage-earners as possible, so now in the case of "unproductive" labor. Thus he makes absolute and final what for Marx was merely the various relative and overlapping roles in the ranks of the workers as they confronted the capitalist class, sometimes directly exploited of surplus-value, sometimes not.

Further than this Marx did not go, and Poulantzas is unable to cite any passage in which Marx ties these practices of capitalism to his own method of defining the working class. It is true that many of the workers involved in the circulation process, for instance, are also "unproductive" by capitalist standards, that is, they do not yield any surplus-value to the bourgeoisie. But this alone is never taken by Marx as the basis of class analysis, and the attempt of Poulantzas to do so inevitably fails. This is more than simply a case of "mistaken" interpretation, for it distorts what is the most essential feature of Marxism, the unifying condition of all proletarians. In his discussion of "unproductive" labor, Marx was not analyzing this question from the vantage point of the proletariat *in* the general sense, that is, in what way the class as a whole is exploited, but was rather demonstrating the outlook of capitalism as to these matters. Thus near the beginning of his main discussion of this question, in analyzing Adam Smith, he states:

> Productive and unproductive labour is here throughout conceived from <u>the standpoint of the</u>

> possessor of money, from the standpoint of the capitalist, not from that of the workman. . . .[23]

This view naturally ignores the conditions of the workers themselves, and most notably whether they perform unpaid labor.

Poulantzas errs because, from what is an explanatory exposition on the part of Marx, he makes a class analysis as if from the proletarian standpoint. For him the identity of "productive" labor as surplus-value yielding, as seen by the capitalists, becomes as well the operative working-class stand. Nothing could be more foreign to the spirit and practice of Marx himself, who strove throughout his entire life and with every fiber of his being to bring about the defeat of just these kinds of distortions introduced by the capitalist class. For Marx the working class were those without means of production, who have to sell their labor-power to the capitalists, who are required to perform unpaid labor which generates and realizes surplus-value, and who have "nothing to lose," a unity of condition extending in every sense beyond the immediacies of their employment or lack of it or the specific roles which fall to them within the capitalist system. It is this fundamental situation and the exploitation which results from it, not the separate tasks to which the capitalists put such workers, that defines for Marx the class of proletarians as opposed to all others. This definition is nowhere dropped in favor of the criteria of

capitalism itself, by which those not producing direct profit are to be dismissed as "unproductive" and thus turned against the "real" working class.[24]

To accept this definition is to make a travesty of the work of Marx. Yet it is this attitude on the part of the capitalists, in all its most extensive potential applications, all its possible permutations and combinations, that underlies the criteria Poulantzas uses to define "his" proletariat. Thus in reality he takes a step away from the clarity of Marx, and from a definition which explains the unifying aspects of the working class, to one resting on all the splits and divisions introduced into proletarian ranks by the bourgeoisie. In fact, for all his theoretical elaborations, Poulantzas did not get any further than C. Wright Mills, whose "new middle class" of "white collar" workers includes virtually the same categories of employees and rests on what are largely the same criteria. For Mills too the newer intermediate strata of society are to be defined not by their relationship to property, since it is assumed that they lack any share in the means of production, but instead rest on such aspects as "status," "function," and so forth. Thus just as Mills believed that he had gone "beyond" Marx in defining his "new middle class," so too Poulantzas arrives at the same result by carrying to an extreme certain aspects of the Marxist analysis of capital and of the division which the latter causes in the ranks of the workers. It is not

surprising that, using such methods, both Poulantzas and Mills have trouble precisely where they claim to be strongest, in defining the meeting point of the working class and the "middle classes." For they have focused on criteria in the making of class analysis that cannot help but blur the distinction between workers and petty bourgeoisie.

It is from this standpoint that the refusal by Poulantzas to consider ownership of the means of production as a unifying basis for the petty bourgeois class is so crucial, for by rejecting this critical element in the "triad" of proper criteria for analyzing classes, he is left with no choice other than to try to erect a theoretical construct on the production of surplus-value and the division of labor alone, together with political and ideological expressions. Having failed to perceive the control of property as the source of the different roles which the employees of capitalism must perform in regard to surplus-labor as well--in this case professional ownership of the means of mental production as a basis for receiving the full value of their own labor--Poulantzas has no way of defining this aspect of class except by the definition capitalism itself uses, that of "productive" labor. Not only is this effort doomed to failure in the largest sense, but it leaves him unable even to deal with those real divisions within the petty bourgeois class which he admits to being present.

Thus he notes on the one hand, referring to members of his "new petty bourgeoisie" that: "Of course these wage-earners are themselves exploited."[25] He thereby admits that these "newer" workers in commerce, finance, and services suffer exploitation by capital, the proletarian condition. He later elaborates on this aspect, but still insists that they are not working-class:

> So far, we have established certain common characteristics of the class determination of the new petty-bourgeois groupings; wage-earning employees who do not belong to the working class but are themselves exploited by capital, either because they sell their labour-power, or because of the dominant position of capital in the terms of exchange (services). This determination is chiefly a function of economic relation (unproductive labour).[26]

Yet though Poulantzas knows that the "traditional" petty bourgeoisie are not generally subject to exploitation, at least not in direct ways, he does not deal with the problem of including both exploited and unexploited in one class. In fact, his attempt to link "old" and "new" petty bourgeois strata is forced and artificial, and in the end fails to establish their unity, so that they are really two different "middle classes."

Moreover, these contradictions occur within his "newer" petty bourgeois stratum as well. Thus Poulantzas himself gives an excellent description of how a "new petty bourgeoisie" can also fail to be exploited under certain circumstances.

> There is still one final problem regarding the situation of service workers. Not only are these not productive workers, despite their being wage-earners, but they are not all necessarily exploited. The wage

> form no more coincides with productive labour than it does with exploitation, i.e. the extortion of surplus labour: a well-known lawyer who is the salaried employee of an enterprise that uses his services does not have surplus labour extorted from him. In a case such as this, the wage form conceals a simple exchange of equivalents.[27]

Having posed this problem, Poulantzas ignores it and goes on to other matters. But this is indeed the "final problem" on which the entire structure so carefully constructed by him collapses, for here is the real distinction in the relations to surplus-value on which true class divisions must rest, and the result is to separate the exploited workers from the unexploited petty bourgeoisie. By dividing employees according to "unproductive" labor, Poulantzas turns his back on the more fundamental division between those who perform surplus-labor for the capitalists and those who are relatively free from just this exploitation. For in fact it is not just "well-known" lawyers, but many within this and similar occupations who do not yield significant amounts of surplus-value and may actually receive small portions of it. It is here that Poulantzas should have looked for his "new petty-bourgeois" stratum and for the fundamental line between it and the working class, including the mass of "unskilled" commercial, financial, and service employees.

The attempt by Poulantzas to make class analysis on the basis only of "unproductive" and "mental" labor, disregarding crucial relations to the means of production and reproduction, is thus as inevitably "one-sided" as was

the reverse effort by Charles Loren. It is perhaps inherent in these two different approaches that they lead to diametrically opposed conclusions: in the case of Poulantzas the "new petty bourgeoisie" is grotesquely ballooned out to take in most of the working class, while in the analysis made by Loren the proletariat is so all-inclusive as to "cause" virtual elimination of the petty bourgeoisie or any "middle classes" under capitalism itself. Though each of these authors has very significant things to say within their own emphases, therefore, they fail us as a means of making an overall class analysis. What a close examination of them does reveal, however, is the necessity of returning once again to the definition of classes advanced by Lenin which I quoted earlier, in which relations to the means of production and reproduction, exploitation of surplus-value, the division of labor, and the consequent sources and portion of social wealth are all used to determine their overall position in society. On this basis the "new petty bourgeoisie" of Poulantzas must be dissolved, with many if not most of its members belonging to the proletariat, while others are found within the professional petty bourgeois stratum, with all the characteristics of that class.

NOTES

1. Nicos Poulantzas, Classes in Contemporary Capitalism, trans. David Fernbach (London: Verso, 1978). The concept of a "new petty bourgeoisie" as advanced by Poulantzas and the theoretical assumptions on which it rests have been widely reviewed and criticized. See, inter alia, Erik Olin Wright, Classes, 39-40, 154-58, 163-73, and Ellen Meiksins Wood, The Retreat from Class: A New 'True' Socialism (London: Verso, 1986), 25-50.

2. Ibid., 204.

3. Ibid., 204-5.

4. Ibid., 209.

5. The most extended discussion of "productive" and "unproductive" labor by Marx is in Theories of Surplus-Value, pt. 1, 152-413.

6. Marx, Capital, vol. 3, 274: "Merchant's capital is simply capital functioning in the sphere of circulation. The process of circulation is a phase of the total process of reproduction. But no value is produced in the process of circulation, and, therefore, no surplus-value. Only changes of form of the same mass of value take place." In a footnote on the same page, Marx rejects the arguments of those who "classify merchant's capital as productive capital." As will be seen below, there is a way in which the activities of merchants is "productive" for them, but this is not by any addition to the overall mass of surplus-value.

7. Poulantzas, Classes in Contemporary Capitalism, 94. For a review of the theories of Marx on this issue as utilized by Poulantzas to support his own thesis, see 211-16.

8. Ibid., 205.

9. Ibid., 207.

10. Ibid., 242.

11. Ibid., 248. Here Poulantzas speaks of "the political relations of management and supervision of the labour process," and "the articulation of political and ideological relations, i.e. in mental labour."

12. Ibid., 258. See also 265.

13. Ibid., 251-52.

14. Ibid., 257.

15. Ibid., 272. Poulantzas is here quoting David Lockwood, The Black-Coated Worker (London: Allen & Unwin, 1958), 81.

16. "The Secretary . . . As Worker," Women: A Journal of Liberation 2, no. 3 (1971): 38.

17. Marx, Theories of Surplus-Value, pt. 1, 406: "How very unproductive, from the standpoint of capitalist production, the labourer is who indeed produces vendible commodities, but only to the amount equivalent to his own labour-power, and therefore produces no surplus-value for capital--can be seen from the passages in Ricardo saying that the very existence of such people is a nuisance. This is the theory and practice of capital."

18. See Marx, Capital, vol. 2, 129-52, and vol. 3, 262-404 for extended analyses of the costs of circulation, and commercial and financial capital.

19. Marx, Capital, vol. 3, 296.

20. Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capital, 416.

21. Ibid., 418-19.

22. Ibid., 418.

23. Marx, Theories of Surplus-Value, pt. 1, 158.

24. While other factors of race and sex enter in, the political and ideological representatives of the capitalists know very well how to play on the idea of many industrial wage-earners that they are the only "real" workers, compared to those in offices, much less on unemployment or welfare lines. Thus what is most productive for capital becomes a popular definition of "working class" as well, and the commonality of all proletarians is obscured beneath the division which capitalism itself creates.

25. Poulantzas, Classes in Contemporary Capitalism, 212.

26. Ibid., 251.

27. Ibid., 216.

CHAPTER 9

THE "PROFESSIONAL-MANAGERIAL CLASS": THE EHRENREICHS AND "ORTHODOX MARXISM"

At the beginning of their essay "The Professional-Managerial Class," the lead article in the book Between Labor and Capital, Barbara and John Ehrenreich make the following assertion:

> Orthodox Marxism describes capitalist society as being polarized between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat; it has nothing to say about a "middle class," or of course, about middle-class radicalism. Thus, the left today may sense the impasse created by the narrowness of its class composition, but it lacks even the terms with which to describe the situation, much less a strategy of overcoming it.[1]

Furthermore, the Ehrenreichs state on the same page: "Some leftists (mainly associated with the 'new communist movement') describe students, professionals, and other educated workers as 'petty bourgeois' though more as a put-down than as a defensible analysis," in what they later call "a distinctly pejorative description."[2] Though it is true that the term "petty bourgeois" is sometimes used more pejoratively than as a precise analysis, it is another matter altogether to assert that earlier eras of Marxism lacked any description of a "middle class" in capitalism or its impact on the revolutionary movement. Such a bald,

unqualified assertion is in fact a completely false and totally outrageous misrepresentation of the history of Marxist theories. It would in reality be much closer to the truth to put forth the exact opposite: that no political question so preoccupied the founders and leading practitioners of Marxism as the role of the "middle classes" and the effect they and their representatives had on the struggles of the proletariat against capitalism and for a socialist revolution.

Thus just as examination of the works of Charles Loren and Nicos Poulantzas helped to decide if professionals and managers are part of the petty bourgeoisie, and to set the "top" and "bottom" of that class, a review of the work of the Ehrenreichs will help to find what might be called in turn its historic dimension. In other words, even among those who accept the professional-managerial groupings as distinct elements within the "middle classes," it is still necessary to determine whether they share the history and the social and political aspects of the earlier petty bourgeois stratum, or whether they are some new and unique phenomenon which arises only in the latest stage of capitalism. Because the Ehrenreichs argue that their "Professional-Managerial Class," or "PMC," fits the latter description, and has nothing to do with the earlier petty bourgeoisie, or even with the Marxist analysis of intermediate classes, it is necessary first to see whether this approach is a legitimate one. Before turning to their

own proposal, therefore, a brief review of the record of Marxism on this matter is needed, to be followed by a closer comparison of the "PMC" of the Ehrenreichs to the petty bourgeois class. Only this will indicate whether the history of the "middle classes" in the modern period is in reality a continuous one, or whether it must be broken up into several completely isolated and unrelated sections, as they insist.

It turns out that what the Ehrenreichs are really saying is this: that they have discovered a "new" class, which earlier Marxists did not foresee or analyze, because it was not yet in existence in their time, or at least not sufficiently developed to be recognized in their overall analysis of classes. They trace this to the turn of the century, when "new, educated and salaried middle class strata had appeared and were growing rapidly."[3] It was these newer intermediate groupings of "technical workers, managerial workers, 'culture' producers, etc." that were to form the "PMC."[4] The particular historical role of these new intermediate elements, "comprising a distinct class in monopoly capitalist society," was to deal with "the relation between the working class and the capitalist class."[5] The question, however, is whether the professionals and managers really did represent something entirely new under the sun as intermediaries in the struggles "between labor and capital."

Thus the Communist Manifesto not only described the "middle classes," and analyzed the various schools of petty bourgeois socialism, but Marx and Engels continued throughout their lives to confront the theories of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, whom they found to be the archetypical representative of that class. As Marx wrote of him:

> He wants to soar as the man of science above the bourgeois and the proletarians; he is nothing but the petty bourgeois perpetually tossed about between capital and labour, between political economy and communism.[6]

Moreover, the analysis of the petty bourgeoisie obviously continued after Marx, and virtually the entire life and work of Lenin was taken up with the constant need to combat the recurrence of these same "middle class" manifestations in the proletarian struggle against capitalism.[7] Thus he spoke of

> the theory of utopian, petty-bourgeois socialism, i.e., the dream of petty-bourgeois intellectuals, who sought a way to escape from capitalism not in the wage-workers' struggle against the bourgeoisie, but in appeals to the "entire nation," the "society," that is, to that very same bourgeoisie."[8]

Here indeed is "something to say about middle-class radicalism."

Similarly, though the Ehrenreichs make reference to the revolution in China, they ignore the following description by Mao in his own class analysis:

> The petty bourgeoisie. Included in this category are the owner-peasants and master handicraftsmen, the lower levels of the intellectuals--students, primary and secondary school teachers, lower government functionaries, office clerks, small lawyers--and the small traders.[9]

The official editors of his Selected Works add later on:

> By the term "petty bourgeoisie" Comrade Mao Tse-tung means those elements other than the peasants--handicraftsmen, small merchants, professional people of various kinds and petty-bourgeois intellectuals.[10]

Clearly these descriptions include many of the very groups with which the Ehrenreichs make up their "new" class. Though both the conditions and size of such strata are obviously very different in the U.S. today, it is another matter altogether for them to insist "no terms with which to describe the situation" exist. The point is not that the word of Marx, Engels, Lenin or Mao must be accepted as the final one, but that by their casual dismissal of "Orthodox" Marxism the Ehrenreichs believe themselves free to disregard all these previous analyses. Far from having "nothing to say about a 'middle class,'" Marxists have a long record of describing the professionals and managers as part of the petty bourgeoisie, which in turn is located by Marx "between capital and labor," and whose "middle-class radicalism" reflects these two opposing classes. It is therefore necessary to compare this historical analysis with that of the Ehrenreichs to see if they have found something "new."

The Ehrenreichs give the following criteria for determining class:

> 1. At all times in its historical development, a class is characterized by a common relation to the economic foundations of society--the means of production and the socially organized patterns of distribution and consumption. . . . The relations which define class arise from the place occupied by groups in the broad social division of labor, and from the basic

> patterns of control over access to the means of production and of appropriation of the social surplus.
>
> 2. However, the relation to the economic foundations of society is not sufficient to specify a class as a real social entity. At any moment in its historical development after its earliest, formative period, a class is characterized by a coherent social and cultural existence; members of a class share a common life style, educational background, kinship networks, consumption patterns, work habits, beliefs.[11]

Thus to be a separate class "as a real social entity," there must be differences in both the material basis and actual behavior of a group, and these two aspects must therefore be looked at here. In fact the Ehrenreichs go on to state that: "The relationship between class as an abstract economic relationship and class as a real social existence has been all-but-unexplored."[12] Here is the first key to their viewpoint, for "all-but-unexplored" or not, the above analysis indicates their particular bias, which is to see relations in the economy as the more "abstract" ones, while the social and cultural ties are the more "real."

Thus in reality when the Ehrenreichs turn to the definition of their "new" class, they are very selective about how they use their own criteria, and in particular the care they show in defining the economic aspects:

> We define the Professional-Managerial Class as consisting of salaried mental workers who do not own the means of production and whose major function in the social division of labor may be described broadly as the reproduction of capitalist culture and capitalist class relations.[13]

Thus what in their criteria for class analysis was described as "relation to the economic foundations of

society" and as "control over access to the means of production" has here been reduced simply to assertions that the salaried professionals and managers do not "own" productive resources. This shorter formula allows them to disregard the inconvenient possibility that controlling "access" to the means of production, especially vis-à-vis the working class, might be a common economic relation of both "old" petty bourgeoisie and "new" professional and managerial strata, who also help guard the gateways, as it were, to bourgeois private property. Moreover, this power is exercised by the professions in particular, over the accessibility of science, culture, and so forth, precisely because of their investments in the knowledge denied the proletariat, the "means of mental production" that they own and that divides them from workers.

The Ehrenreichs are similarly brief in their references to the "appropriation of the social surplus." Thus in their description of why the "PMC" can be a product only of the monopoly stage of capitalism, they list the prerequisite "that the social surplus has developed to a point sufficient to sustain the PMC in addition to the bourgeoisie, for the PMC is essentially non-productive."[14] They then note that: "The last half of the nineteenth century saw . . . the development of an enormous social surplus, concentrated in monopolistic corporations and individual capitalists. . . ."[15] The Ehrenreichs tell us little more of this "social surplus," and in particular

whether the result of its being obtained by the "PMC" is to make them free from exploitation, to give them "autonomy" from direct exploitative roles, or to allow them to become members of an exploiting class themselves. Thus here too they disregard any evidence that might link these new groupings to the petty bourgeoisie, who of course also partake of the "social surplus" by being able to retain at least some portion of their own surplus-labor, and who are, like the "PMC," "essentially nonproductive" for capital. No such similarities trouble the Ehrenreichs: behind the facade of their earlier dismissal of "Orthodox" Marxism they feel free to quickly pass over two of the primary aspects of the very criteria they have set out for making class analysis, and to be equally casual toward the Marxist analysis of the petty bourgeoisie. In fact, their own examination turns out to be devoted almost entirely to questions of the division of labor and of the social practice of the "PMC."

Let us see, therefore, whether the formulations of the Ehrenreichs are really so new, and whether they are right to denounce the inclusion in the petty bourgeoisie of salaried employees in the professions and management, "together with self-employed professionals, shopkeepers, small business men, etc.," as "a grossly incorrect class analysis."[16] Here, for instance, is their own description of the specific origins of the "PMC":

> But it would be wrong to think of the emerging PMC as being no more than passive recruits for the

> occupational roles required by monopoly capital. The people entering the class-in-formation were drawn from an older middle class. They were the sons and daughters of business men, independent professionals, prosperous farmers, etc.--groups which feared their own extinction in the titanic struggle between capital and labor.[17]

The parents of these new "PMC" functionaries were thus the "old" petty bourgeoisie. But this is exactly the same process Marx and Engels referred to in the passage from the Communist Manifesto cited earlier, wherein they described the loss of "independence" of the class of shop owners and small farmers and their reemergence in the form of "overlookers, bailiffs, and shopmen" and later, as I suggested, in the large numbers of professional employees on salary. It is thus the same "transference" within the petty bourgeoisie already examined. It would also never be known from the essay of the Ehrenreichs that, as also seen above, membership in the "educated classes" who "directly and indirectly" exploit the workers, and whose specialization comes back to torment them as well, was analyzed by Engels in Anti-Dühring writing as early as the middle 1870s. Thus they have a long way to go to prove that these strata form a separate class which emerges only as a specific product of monopoly capitalism, and thus too late for Marx and Engels to have recognized.

In fact, there is considerable contradictory evidence, based on the research of sociologists like Larson and Mills:

> The emergence of professional markets in the competitive phase of capitalism was an accessory

> development in a much more formidable transformation. In structure and ideology, the emerging modern professions foreshadowed much that could be realized in practice only in our century, when capitalism entered its corporate phase. In the first half of the nineteenth century, however, when professions began to organize and reform themselves, they were part of a world that was being subverted and reshaped by "the utopian endeavor of economic liberalism to set up a self-regulating market system."[18]

Larson therefore links modern professionalism specifically to "competitive capitalism," though its more advanced forms came in the "corporate" phase. This is borne out by her table showing the "Professional Associations of National Scope" in both England and the U.S. Of the thirteen associations formed in each country by 1897, nine were established before 1877, with the earliest in Britain that of engineers in 1818 and in the United States of dentists in 1840.[19] As it happens, 1818 was also the year in which Marx was born, so that these developments were well advanced during his lifetime.

According to Mills, the professions were dominated in numbers from an early point onward by those on salary, one mark of the "PMC" of the Ehrenreichs:

> Even in the old middle-class world of 1870, salaried professionals (mainly nurses and schoolteachers) made up a dominant section of the professional strata; only 35 per cent were free professionals. By 1940, however, only 16 per cent were.[20]

Thus here too, well before the monopoly capitalist era, the "self-employed" professional had begun to give way to those who were forced to hire out. The engineers, for instance, were from an early time largely on salaries, and this is

one reason that they were among the very first to organize.[21] Moreover, even within the professions which were dominated by those who were "free," notably medicine and the law, as the case of the nurses shows, the conversion to salaried professionals was well advanced by the 1870s, though this trend was strongest in the "lower ranks," among the "semi-professionals." Monopoly capitalism certainly greatly expanded this form of employment, and turned it into the vast majority, but it did not create it and no "new" class was required for it.

The Ehrenreichs extend their argument by insisting that the functions of these "PMC" members are different from those of the older "educated classes":

> These new operatives, the vanguard of the emerging PMC, are not simply an old intelligentsia expanding to meet the needs of a "complex" society. Their emergence in force near the turn of the century is parallel and complementary to the transformation of the working class which marks the emergence of monopoly capital.[22]

Two pages earlier, they list the first of these transformations as being:

> 1. At the point of production, the concentration of capital allowed for the wholesale purchase of science and its transformation into a direct instrument of capital. Science, and its practical offshoot engineering, were set to work producing not only "progress" in the form of new products, but new productive technologies which undercut the power of skilled labor. Labor was directly replaced by machines, or else it was "scientifically" managed in an effort to strip from the workers their knowledge and control of the productive process and reduce their labor, as much as possible, to mere motion.[23]

Yet here again, as was seen above, Marx had himself described how "the labourer is brought face to face with

the intellectual potencies of the material process of production, as the property of another." Only Marx had also added that:

> This separation begins in simple cooperation . . . is developed in manufacture . . . [and] is completed in modern industry, which makes science a productive force distinct from labour and presses it into the service of capital. . . .
>
> . . .'Ignorance is the mother of industry as well as of superstition. Reflection and fancy are subject to err; but a habit of moving the hand or the foot is independent of either. Manufacturers, accordingly, prosper most where the mind is least consulted, and where the workshop may . . . be considered as an engine.'[24]

So desirous of "mere motion" in their workers were "some few manufacturers in the middle of the 18th century," that they "preferred, for certain operations that were trade secrets, to employ half-idiotic persons."[25]

Indeed, in supporting this thesis, Marx cites one G. Garnier, who in a book published in 1796 [!], that is, almost a full century before the monopoly capitalist era, noted "'divisions . . . between hand labour and head labour'" and went on to describe this phenomenon as one of "'two classes of labour, which are striving after division and separation.'"[26] In addition Marx also quotes from W. Thompson who, writing in 1824, had used terms almost identical to those of the Ehrenreichs:

> "The man of knowledge and the productive labourer come to be widely divided from each other, and knowledge, instead of remaining the handmaid of labour in the hand of the labourer to increase his productive power . . . has almost everywhere arrayed itself against labour . . . systematically deluding and leading them (the labourers) astray in order to render

> their muscular power entirely mechanical and obedient."[27]

There is clearly no theoretical barrier separating the "intelligentsia" who even before Marx began to carry out these scientific-managerial functions and those who under "monopoly capitalism" expanded these same roles. And as was noted above, this "man of science," together with others in the professional and cultural realms, had already been converted by the bourgeoisie into "its paid wage-labourers" by the time of the Manifesto. Even earlier than that, Marx cited a study showing that

> 'in the larger joint-stock enterprises which have become so numerous, we see far-reaching combinations of the financial resources of many participants with the scientific and technical knowledge and skill of others to whom the carrying out of the work is handed over.'[28]

Thus these "others" had taken on all of their essential character by the 1840s, long before the stage of monopoly capitalism.

The situation is similar with the other two transformations that mark the "emergence of monopoly capitalism" according to the Ehrenreichs. Thus:

> The huge social surplus, concentrated in private foundations and in the public sector, began to be a force for regulation and management of civil society...Public education was vastly expanded; charity was institutionalized; public-health measures gained sponsorship and the authority of law, etc. . . . a politically motivated penetration of working-class community life: Schools imparted industrial discipline and "American" values; charity agencies and domestic scientists imposed their ideas of "right living"; public-health officials literally policed immigrant ghettoes, etc.[29]

All this is true and was certainly vastly expanded in the turn-of-the-century period the Ehrenreichs refer to, but the question is whether it needed a "new" class. Thus, for instance, the Ehrenreichs note as a sign of the "consolidation of the PMC" that "by the teens, 'experts'--college professors, researchers, PMC civic reformers--had become indispensable and routine members of the boards of trustees of key capitalist-sponsored institutions (replacing the token clergyman of an earlier era)."[30] Yet already in 1845 Engels had found that English agricultural workers were religious, but "greatly at odds with the Church," which they nevertheless were compelled to attend--in one instance because "they had certain little privileges of fire-wood and potato land (which they paid for!) on condition of going to church."[31] The reason is not hard to find, for: "The Minister is the obedient servant of the bourgeoisie."[32]

Thus did the capitalists long before the monopoly era forcibly "penetrate" the religion of the workers and change it into forms favorable to their ideological domination, carried out by the hired hands of the "middle class," the preachers, teachers, writers, and so forth. E. P. Thompson, whose definition of class the Ehrenreichs quote, explains the role of "the utility of Methodism as a work-discipline . . . as the religion of both the exploiters and the exploited," where workers "obtained recognition, perhaps for their sobriety, or chastity, or piety . . . the

stability of the family and the home."[33] Here again no new class needed to come into being to teach workers "industrial discipline" and "right living." For the period Thompson speaks of is not from 1890-1930, but rather 1790-1830! Marx in 1844 noted that for the "classical" economists

> the proletarian . . . is considered by political economy only as a worker. Political economy can therefore advance the proposition that the proletarian, the same as any horse, must get as much as will enable him to work. It does not consider him when he is not working, as a human being; but leaves such consideration to criminal law, to doctors, to religion, to the statistical tables, to politics and to the workhouse beadle.[34]

Thus it is obvious that, already by the 1840s, the capitalists and their political economists concerned themselves with workers in the factories, but left to other professionals the "regulation and management of working-class community life."

So too with the third "transformation" listed by the Ehrenreichs: "a national consumer-goods market . . . the penetration of working-class life by commodities . . . the management of consumption," and so on. "'Services' which had been an indigenous part of working-class culture were edged out by commodities conceived and designed outside of the class."[35] But again, as Engels had already noted:

> A manufacturing establishment requires many workers employed together in a single building, living near each other and forming a village of themselves in the case of a good-sized factory. They have needs for satisfying which other people are necessary: handicraftsmen, shoemakers, tailors, bakers, carpenters, stonemasons, settle at hand.[36]

Thus in the period of early industrialization, the petty bourgeoisie was drawn in to provide both the services and commodities no longer produced directly by the proletarianized laborers, a "penetration" later taken over by managers and professionals, when they in turn largely replaced the "independent" members of their class.

Like Poulantzas, the Ehrenreichs also call on political, cultural, and ideological expressions to help define their "new" class, and indeed, any fundamental division of classes must be revealed in these realms too.

> "Class harmony" was the stated goal of many outstanding PMC spokespeople, and to many in the capitalist class as well, it was clear that "professionals" could be more effective in the long run than Pinkertons. But the PMC was not merely a class of lackeys: the capitalists fought vigorously to block or modify those PMC-supported reforms which they saw as threatening their interests. As for the PMC, the very ideals of "objectivity," "rationality," etc., which justified their role to the capitalists inevitably led them into conflict with the capitalists.[37]

So too, "Veblen's vision of technocracy--a government of the experts--smacked too overtly of PMC self-interest to gain a wide following, even within the class."[38] For: "The claim to high ethical standards represents the PMC's persistent reassurance that its class interests are identical to the interests of society at large."[39] Now let us listen to Marx again:

> The peculiar character of the Social-Democracy is epitomized in the fact that democratic-republican institutions are demanded as a means, not of doing away with two extremes, capital and wage labour, but of weakening their antagonism and transforming it into harmony. However different the means proposed for the attainment of this end may be, however much it may be trimmed with more or less revolutionary notions, the

> content remains the same. This content is the transformation of society in a democratic way, but a transformation within the bounds of the petty bourgeoisie. Only one must not form the narrow-minded notion that the petty bourgeoisie on principle, wishes to enforce an egoistic class interest. Rather, it believes that the special conditions of its emancipation are the general conditions within the frame of which alone modern society can be saved and the class struggle avoided.[40]

Class "harmony," self-interest posing as a "non-egoistic" universalism, reformist alternatives to the struggle of classes: indeed "the content remains the same." Were the term not meaningless and laughable in the circumstances, it would not be out of line to accuse the Ehrenreichs of the grossest plagiarism!

Similarly, the Ehrenreichs see the need of the "PMC" to at least maintain the appearance of "autonomism" within the capitalist system, to seem to be truly in opposition to the attempt of the bourgeoisie to impose its authority and values:

> For one thing, the roles the PMC was entering and carving out for itself--as technical innovators, social mediators, culture producers, etc.--required a high degree of autonomy, if only for the sake of legitimization. Claims to "objectivity" cannot be made from an objective position of servility.[41]

Ultimately this led some professionals to call for replacing the capitalist state with their own "government of experts." But though expressed in new and "technological" form, these assertions were already long familiar in the political behavior of the petty bourgeoisie. Thus Lenin noted that in their struggle with the anarchists, "Marx and Engels contributed articles

against the Proudhonists, 'autonomists' or 'anti-authoritarians,'" various petty bourgeois schools expressing the theories of that class that society could escape the burdens of the capitalist state "overnight," that is, without a prolonged struggle of classes.[42] Such ideologies, like those based on nonpolitical "expertise" of a later day, denied the necessity of the proletariat to seize power and to use it to overthrow all class oppression. These concepts in fact disarmed the workers in relation to both the big and petty bourgeoisie. So today too the "autonomy" of the professionals is an excuse for their continued exercise of control over the proletariat, and the independence of their own class, even if this means leaving the working class helpless before the capitalists. The form has changed, but the essence of petty bourgeois "autonomism" remains.

Thus the Ehrenreichs fail to establish anything truly "new" either in the function or the behavior of their so-called "PMC" compared to the petty bourgeoisie. This is not to say that their essay has nothing to offer, the opposite being very much the case. There are several commendable aspects to what they have accomplished. To begin with, they have made an excellent review of the rise of the professional and managerial strata and the emergence of their particular roles and ideological expressions. They have secondly linked these trends to the problems of the present-day radical movement in the United States, in

ways that are all too rare in the smugly self-assured atmosphere of many socialist groupings. Thirdly, they briefly tied this development to the similar difficulties which have also been experienced in the Soviet Union, China, and many Third World nations as the professionals and managers in "socialist" governments took power in contradiction to revolutionary working-class control and proletarian democracy. There is much that, if not unique to the work of the Ehrenreichs, is nevertheless original in their presentation, which has a scope all too often lacking elsewhere. But I am reminded of the description by Marx of the archetypical petty bourgeois: "One sees that even where he is only reproducing old stuff, Proudhon makes independent discoveries; that what he is saying was new to him himself and ranks as new."[43] Thus the Ehrenreichs also, "make independent discoveries, even where they are only reproducing old stuff," and what is "new" to them must immediately "rank as new," for the whole world as well.

It is thus their own fault if, as they complain, their "critics" concentrated largely on their conception of a "new" class, for it is they who pushed this characterization into the forefront as the focal point of their entire essay. I have no need to repeat these extremely varied criticisms here, noting only that the first such critical essay in Between Labor and Capital, written by Al Szymanski, corresponds most closely to what I have argued here and largely outlines the same analysis,

though not necessarily reaching identical conclusions, as are presented throughout this study."[44] Faced with such criticism, and even with questions about the very existence of "class" and of criteria for its analysis, in their own rebuttal at the end of the book, the Ehrenreichs are forced to back way off:

> The explanation for Marx's neglect of the middle class (or classes) does not lie in Hegelian dialectics but in the simple fact that the salaried middle class was <u>not</u> yet an important factor on the scene. The only group which might be considered homologous to today's "middle class," the classical petty bourgeoisie, seemed to be dwindling numerically, and the appearance of the modern salaried professional-managerial class still awaited the emergence of modern corporations, institutionalized non-violent efforts to control the working class, the expanded state apparatus, etc. So how then are we to answer the question of whether the PMC is "truly" a class? The truth is, as the reader may be beginning to suspect, the question of whether or not the PMC is a class is neither very interesting nor very meaningful. Nor would it become much more interesting or meaningful if we could all agree on a "scientific" definition of class. . . .[45]

Whereupon they continue to use the term "PMC" and to assure us in the next to last sentence in the book that: "The only way to transcend the narrowness of the left today lies through a profound understanding of the class forces which up to now limited our outlook and strategy."[46] But how we are to arrive at this "profound understanding" if the question is "neither very interesting nor very meaningful," is a problem the Ehrenreichs leave to others.

So what, we must ask, are we to think of this kind of analysis in which the term "scientific" is only worth putting in quotes and, "leaving aside the largely sterile

debate about whether the PMC is in fact a class,"[47] either there is a "PMC" or there is not, but it does not really make any difference anyway? To suggest an answer we must turn once more to Marx, for he did indeed analyze this kind of "middle class radicalism," with its contradictory swings and its indifference to a rigorous science, once again in the case of Proudhon, since unfortunately this kind of theoretical muddle is not unique to our day:

> Proudhon had a natural inclination for dialectics. But as he never grasped really scientific dialectics he never got further than sophistry. In fact this hung together with his petty-bourgeois point of view. Like the historian Raumer, the petty bourgeois is composed of on-the-one-hand and on-the-other-hand. This is so in his economic interests and therefore his morals, in everything. He is a living contradiction. If, like Proudhon, he is in addition a clever man, he will soon learn to play with his own contradictions and develop them according to circumstances into striking, spectacular, now scandalous, now brilliant paradoxes."[48]

This contradictory approach, in other words, is merely the political and ideological expression of the class position of the petty bourgeoisie, its determination to "have it both ways" in life and therefore in thought: "Charlatanism in science and accommodation in politics are inseparable from such a point of view."[49] Some might consider this a "put down," and not a "defensible analysis," but that distinction is always a risky one when dealing with Marx. The petty bourgeoisie act the same today as they did at the time he wrote. "On-the-one-hand" there is a PMC, "on-the-other-hand" there is not. If the shoe fits, wear it.

The attempt of the Ehrenreichs to erect a "new" class on the ruins of the petty bourgeoisie therefore fails because they do not analyze the class they are supposedly replacing. While pointing easily to differences in the characteristics of the "professional-managerial" and "traditional" strata of the "middle class," they do not even try to account for the similarities. Their attack on "Orthodox" Marxism, then, is not gratuitous, but is the screen behind which they can dismiss all such relations, since the Marxist tradition is in reality the main source of the analysis which links the behavior of this "new" middle class with that of the "old." Of course, neither Marx nor Engels lived to witness this particular phenomenon in anything like its present extent. But to the degree that the transformations which lay behind the development of professional and managerial strata emerged during their lives, they examined them closely and analyzed the newer roles of these "mental laborers" also. Of even more significance, as these new groups developed, they resembled in many respects the "traditional" petty bourgeoisie, the older "middle class" of which Marx and Engels made an ongoing study, especially in just those areas of politics and ideology the Ehrenreichs stress. A most cursory review should have caused the Ehrenreichs to acknowledge such ties. But even if this were not the case, their effort would be unscientific, because no failure or abuse of

Marxist methodology by others frees them of the independent necessity to make this kind of examination.

Their own handling of this question is thus itself a form of put-down, marking them if not as members, then at least as "fellow travelers" of a new trend in the movement in which the term "Orthodox Marxist" has replaced "petty bourgeois" as an all-purpose pejorative against those one wishes to dismiss out-of-hand.[50] This substitution of a new misused term for an older one, of course, gets them absolutely nowhere, but merely robs them of the tools needed to make their own "defensible analysis." In fact, even in their complaint about the "pejorative" use of the term "petty bourgeoisie" in the place of analytical seriousness, they mimic "those Narodniks who think that the sole object of referring to petty bourgeois character is to say something exceptionally venomous, that it is simply a polemical ruse."[51] Thus even their assertion that the "new communist movement" uses "petty bourgeois" pejoratively in place of a defensible analysis is itself "old." In their very complaints, the Ehrenreichs demonstrate the historical unity of that class. That the term "petty bourgeois" has at times been used inaccurately or pejoratively, does not call for throwing it out, but for redefining it correctly. Those who choose the former course cannot hide behind the failure of others. Nor of course does it free them from the responsibility of having taken on such a task themselves, had their political outlooks so dictated.

Their excellent historic review of the rise of the professional-managerial strata, therefore in the end proves profoundly ahistorical, for it does not account for the real background out of which these groupings emerged, and thus can offer no true guide to their behavior.

Ultimately, however, the failure of the Ehrenreichs is similar to that we have already seen in the case of Loren and Poulantzas. This is their biased selectivity in the criteria of class analysis they employed, which allows them to concentrate attention on certain "new" phenomena in one area of development while disregarding the continuity displayed in other aspects by these same strata of the "middle class." In the case of the Ehrenreichs this mistake derives from their view of class as "abstract" in its economic or material base and "real" in its superstructure. Because of this they overlook the elements of unity between the "older" petty bourgeoisie and the "newer" strata in their relation to the means of production, relative autonomy from the exploitation of surplus-value, and origins and distribution of their share of the social wealth. Specifically, like Loren and Poulantzas, they disregard professional ownership of the "means of mental production," which makes them a small owner propertied class. Since they are indifferent to these common economic relationships, they ignore as well those similarities found in politics and ideology. Thus they insist that certain differences in the division of

labor alone, buttressed by political and ideological forms, can account for the creation of a "new" class within monopoly capitalism. In fact, while the professionals do reach their "peak" during this period, all their essential features were already present from quite early days in the capitalist era, and were recognized by Marx and his followers. It is the continuity of this analysis and of the history of the "middle class" that the Ehrenreichs shatter by so casually rejecting the petty bourgeoisie.

NOTES

1. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 6.

2. Ibid., 6, and 40, note 57.

3. Ibid., 7.

4. Ibid., 9.

5. Ibid., 9, 16.

6. Karl Marx, "On Proudhon (Letter to J. B. Schweitzer), London, January 24, 1865," in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 1, 394.

7. In the "Subject Index" volume to the Collected Works of Lenin, references to various aspects of the petty bourgeoisie run to more than four pages, and the list includes citations in virtually all forty-five volumes in the collection. See Reference Index to V. I. Lenin Collected Works, Part 2, Subject Index, 440-44.

8. V. I. Lenin, "Narodism and the Class of Wage-Workers," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 20, 106.

9. Mao Tse-tung, "Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society," in Mao Tse-tung, Selected Works, vol. 1 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), 15.

10. Mao Tse-tung, "Why Is It That Red Political Power Can Exist in China?," in Mao, Selected Works, vol. 1, 72, note 11.

11. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 11.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid., 12.

14. Ibid., 14.

15. Ibid. See also Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 136, who draws a similar historical relationship: "The rise of a new type of institution of higher education in the United States depended, in turn, on the massive availability of surplus capital, especially after the depression of 1893." Such universities were, of course, "a major factor in the advance of professionalization."

16. Ibid., 40, note 57.

17. Ibid., 19.

18. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 9. The quote is from Karl Polyani, The Great Transformation, 29.

19. Ibid., 246, table no. 1. More localized organization of course began even earlier. In the United States, medicine began to organize before the Revolution, and engineers by the 1830s (111, 122-23).

20. Mills, White Collar, 113.

21. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 124.

22. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 16-17.

23. Ibid., 14.

24. Marx, Capital, vol. 1, 361. The quote is from A. Ferguson, History of Civil Society, pt. 4, sect. 2 (Edinburgh: 1767), 280.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid., 362-63. The citation is from "G. Garnier, vol. V. of his translation of A. Smith, pp. 4-5," no further information given.

27. Ibid., 361, note 3, quoting W. Thompson, An Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth (London: 1824), 274.

28. Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1961), 50, citing Wilhelm Schulz, Movement of Production (Zurich and Winterthur: 1843), 40-41.

29. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 15.

30. Ibid., 26.

31. Engels, "The Condition of the Working-Class in England," 305-6.

32. Ibid., 144.

33. E. P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1966), 375, 379-80.

34. Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, 29.

35. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 15-16.

36. Engels, "The Condition of the Working-Class in England," 54.

37. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 22.

38. Ibid., 24.

39. Ibid., 26.

40. Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," 275.

41. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 22.

42. V. I. Lenin, "The State and Revolution," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 25, 440.

43. Marx, "On Proudhon (Letter to J. B. Schweitzer), January 24, 1865," 390.

44. Szymanski, "A Critique and Extension of the Professional-Managerial Class."

45. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "Rejoinder," 328.

46. Ibid., 334.

47. Ibid., 329.

48. Marx, "On Proudhon (Letter to J. B. Schweitzer), January 24, 1865," 396-97.

49. Ibid.

50. See Michael Albert and Robin Hahnel, Unorthodox Marxism: An Essay on Capitalism, Socialism and Revolution

(Boston: South End Press, 1978), 5-13, 194-95, 204-5, 216, note 34.

51. V. I. Lenin, "A Characterisation of Economic Romanticism (Sismondi and Our Native Sismondists)," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 2, 222.

CHAPTER 10

CONTRADICTORY CLASS DEFINITIONS: THE "CLASSES" OF ERIK OLIN WRIGHT

No one analyzing the "new middle class" has gone further than Erik Olin Wright in elaborating an entire "model" of modern society, notable for its comprehensiveness and elegance. His ability in Classes to conceptualize a coherent explanation of the stages of historical development based on forms of exploitation which are progressively eliminated had a well-deserved impact.[1] Yet toward the end of a follow-up volume The Debate on Classes, in which his essays form the centerpieces, Wright states:

> The theoretical aspiration was that these reconstructions of the concept of class structure would enhance its explanatory power by more adequately representing the complexities of class interests in capitalist societies and, accordingly, making it possible to map more systematically the variations in class structures across capitalist societies and the impact of those variations on processes of class formation.
>
> That aspiration has yet to be fulfilled. While I do feel that progress has been made in the conceptualization of class in the past decade, nevertheless the goal of producing a class structure concept which is at one time theoretically coherent and empirically comprehensible remains elusive.[2]

The openness of Wright in admitting his difficulties, like his willingness to change past positions, has been noted

before and well appreciated.[3] But while Wright has treated us at very great length to the reasoning behind the problems and shifts in his ideas, even more basic and obvious dilemmas which lie at the heart of his analysis have been passed over without recognition. This dialectic of feast and famine, trees and forest, is most striking. It suggests that a "remedy" can only be found through a radical reconceptualization of the issues Wright explores.

Fundamental to this reevalutation is the way in which Wright deals with, or more precisely neglects, the related problems of the "old" petty bourgeoisie and the labor theory of value. It is the manner in which he approaches these two aspects of Marxist theory that underlie the contradictions in his class analysis. The initial confusion arises over the contradictory uses which he gives to the term "petty bourgeoisie." Wright begins in Classes by giving a definition of this class that he attributes to Marx: "Throughout his work he refers to the petty bourgeoisie (self-employed who employ little or no wage labor) as a 'transitional' class. . . ."[4] Thus Wright himself acknowledges that for Marxism both those small owners who do and those who do not hire workers are included in a single class. In his own usage of the term in Classes, however, Wright drops the smaller employers, which he has stated Marx includes in the petty bourgeoisie, and instead speaks in more absolute terms of "self-employed commodity producers who employ no wage labor."[5] To place

emphasis on such a "little" difference may itself seem "petty." But the distinction is in fact of the most fundamental nature, and it lies at the center, I believe, of the difficulties which Wright continues to have in his analysis of the "middle class," most notably his problems in defining the "new" strata.

For the difference, as Wright himself stresses, is between a class which is defined as being "outside" capitalism, and does not participate in hiring exploited wage labor, and one which is "within" capitalist relations, based on just such exploitation. Thus he gives the following description of the petty bourgeoisie:

> (1) There are class locations that are neither exploiters nor exploited, i.e. people who have precisely the per capita level of the relevant asset. A petty-bourgeois, self-employed producer with average capital stock, for example, would be neither exploiter nor exploited within capitalist relations. These kinds of positions are what can be called the 'traditional' or 'old' middle class of a particular kind of class system.[6]

Nor is this merely a hypothetical or "ideal" case, for when Wright later "operationalizes" his class analysis, he states: "Conceptually the petty bourgeoisie should be restricted to owners of the means of production who have no employees."[7] Wright then places those who hire workers but must still labor themselves in a "small employer" category, a "contradictory location," which is part capitalist, part petty bourgeois.

But there are even more radical implications flowing from this, for after stating that "classes are definable

only in terms of their relations to other classes,"[8] Wright adds an endnote:

> At first glance it might seem that the use of the term 'class' to define the petty bourgeoisie (self-employed commodity producers who employ no wage labor) is an exception to this. Even in this case, however, the concept is still basically relational, for the petty bourgeoisie is a class only insofar as petty-bourgeois producers engage in systematic exchange relations with other classes. If all producers were in fact petty bourgeois (a situation that has never occurred historically) then they would cease to be a 'class' in the proper sense of the term.[9]

Thus, though in real life petty bourgeois producers may in their market exchanges be exploited by large capital, or may even be capitalistic themselves without directly employing labor, their own essential form of production is one of isolated independence, without relation to other classes.[10] In other words, the petty bourgeoisie are entangled in "external" class relationships, a situation which is unavoidable under capitalism. But unlike capitalists and workers, their ties to others are contingent, not necessary. Such relations are not part of their "definition." Since "class" is a relational term, in their own "internal" nature, the petty bourgoisie has no necessary ties to others, and is thus in its essence "classless." Wright stresses that no totally petty bourgeois society has been realized historically. But the same could be said for the proletariat. What is at issue here is the question of which modern classes are potentially "classless," or think that they are. Wright himself does not and presumably would not propose that the

petty bourgeoisie could implement its "own" non-class society, but his analysis is based on the theory that their internal relations lie "outside" class.

The position which Wright takes on this question is both strengthened and weakened in an article published after Classes, which focuses exclusively on the petty bourgeois "self-employed." Here a new distinction is introduced, within a "single" class:

> . . . when we wish to refer to the self-employed who employ no wage labor, we will use the term "pure petty bourgeoisie." The unmodified expression will include small employers as well.[11]

Both are now "petty bourgeois," but not, as it were, equally:

> Since most small employers are indeed very small--in 1980 over 50% of all employers employed fewer than five employees--Marxists generally assume that the petty bourgeois pole of such contradictory locations is dominant, and thus, typically, small employers and the pure petty bourgeoisie are descriptively combined in a more general petty bourgeois class location.[12]

Three elements are of particular note here. First, once again Wright seems to accept that Marxism has tended to include small employers within the petty bourgeoisie. Second, the concept of a "pure" class pole is used to separate off non-employers. Third, Wright states that Marxists consider this the dominant aspect.

No one can doubt that what these authors describe as "pure" petty bourgeoisie exist, that is, small owners who do not hire labor. They were particularly important, as the article says, historically: "In historical terms,

simple commodity production is generally regarded by Marxists as a form of precapitalist production. . . ."[13] They later add a footnote pointing out that "some Marxist authors suggest [that] . . . the precapitalist origins of petty commodity production does not rule out the structural fact of its continued reproduction, and under certain circumstances even expansion, within capitalism itself. . . ."[14] But the matter is left at this as far as theoretical terms go, so that the "historical" element predominates here as well, and with it the image of a petty bourgeois category "outside" capitalism.

It is indeed possible to draw on passages from Marx in support of the concept of a "pure" and precapitalist petty bourgeoisie. For instance, under the heading "The Labour of Handicraftsmen and Peasants in Capitalist Society," in Theories of Surplus-Value, we read the following:

> What then is the position of independent handicraftsmen or peasants who employ no labourers and therefore do not produce as capitalists? Either . . . they are producers of commodities, and I buy the commodity from them. . . . In this capacity they confront me as sellers of commodities, not as sellers of labour, and this relation therefore has nothing to do with the exchange of capital for labour....[and] their production does not fall under the capitalist mode of production.[15]

Here, clearly, is the image of a "pure" precapitalist, who may still exist even after buying and selling of labor-power arises. But Marx goes on, and the issue is so crucial that I must ask indulgence for quoting the relevant passages at some length:

It is possible that these producers, working with their own means of production, not only reproduce their labour-power but create surplus-value, while their position enables them to appropriate for themselves their own surplus-labour or a part of it. . . . And here we come up against a peculiarity that is characteristic of a society in which one definite mode of production predominates, even though not all productive relations have been subordinated to it. [Marx then analyzes feudal forms.]

It is exactly the same in the capitalist mode of production. The independent peasant or handicraftsman is cut up into two persons.* [*"In small enterprises . . . the employer is often his own labourer" (Storch, [Cours d'economie politique], t.I, Petersburg edition, p. 242).] As owner of the means of production he is capitalist; as labourer he is his own wage-labourer. As capitalist he therefore pays himself his wages and draws his profit on his capital; that is to say, he exploits himself as wage-labourer, and pays himself in the surplus-value, the tribute that labour owes to capital. Perhaps he also pays himself a third portion as landowner (rent). . . .

The determinate social character of the means of production in capitalist production--expressing a particular production relation--has so grown together with, and in the mode of thought of bourgeois society is so inseparable from, the material existence of these means of production as means of production, that the same determinateness (categorical determinateness) is assumed even where the relation is in direct contradiction to it. The means of production become capital only in so far as they have become separated from labourer and confront labour as an independent power. But in the case referred to the producer--the labourer--is the possessor, the owner, of his means of production. They are therefore not capital, any more than in relation to them he is a wage-labourer. Nevertheless they are looked on as capital, and he himself is split in two, so that he, as capitalist, employs himself as wage-labourer. . . .

Separation appears as the normal relation in this society. Where therefore it does not in fact apply, it is presumed and, as has just been shown, so far correctly; for (as distinct for example from conditions in Ancient Rome or Norway or in the north-west of the United States [i.e., the still largely pre-capitalist frontier]) in this society unity appears as accidental, separation as normal; and consequently separation is maintained as the relation even when one person unites the separate functions. Here emerges in a very striking way the fact that the capitalist as such is only a function of capital, the labourer is a function of labour-power. For it is also a law that economic

> development distributes functions among different persons; and the handicraftsman or peasant who produces with his own means of production will either gradually be transformed into a small capitalist who also exploits the labour of others, or he will suffer the loss of his means of production <in the first instance the latter may happen although he remains their nominal owner, as in the case of mortgages> and be transformed into a wage-labourer. This is the tendency in the form of society in which the capitalist mode of production predominates.[16]

This can, of course, be taken two ways. One is to insist that these small owners are not "really" capitalists, and that they have fallen into a kind of bourgeois "false consciousness." From this standpoint, the "pure" petty bourgeoisie still lives.

But Marx, I believe, is saying just the opposite, though never without awareness of the element of illusion that is involved. For him, capitalism has "occupied" the "pure" petty bourgeoisie themselves, has become internalized, a kind of "self-relation." But this "mode of thought" is not just an illusion, for that is their "function," so that even when they do not seem to operate as capitalists, they really do. Thus before they hire anyone else, the petty bourgeois owners "hire" themselves: they are, in effect, their own "first" employees. "Self-employment" has no meaning except as a capitalist concept. Only later may they "also" exploit the labor of others. For this reason, not only are those who hire no "other laborers" and the "small employers" part of the same class, but attempts to draw a line between the two under capitalism is artificial. Moreover, it is the capitalist

"pole" that dominates, and which "defines" their "location" as a whole, placing them "within" rather than "outside" of capitalism.

The same ownership of means of production which makes the petty bourgeoisie "capitalists," also allows them to realize the full value of their labor, realized in commodities. That is to say, though the petty bourgeois owners treat their income as divided into "wages" and "profits," the combination of the two is in fact the sum total of what their labor has produced in value, plus, as always, means of production which have been used up.

> In fact this way of presenting it, however irrational it may be on first view, is nevertheless so far correct, that in this case the producer in fact creates his own surplus-value <on the assumption that he sells his commodity at its value>, in other words, only his own labour is materialised in the whole product. But that he is able to appropriate <u>for himself</u> the whole product of his own labour, and that the excess of the value of his product over the average price for instance of his day's labour is not appropriated by a third person, a <u>master</u>, he owes not to his labour--which does not distinguish him from other labourers--but to his ownership of the means of production. It is therefore only through his ownership of these that he takes possession of his own surplus-labour, and thus bears to himself as wage-labourer the relation of being his own capitalist.[17]

It is the special aspects of this duality, this contradiction, that sets these small owners apart as "petty," but it is also from here that arises their ideology about who they really are.

From this standpoint, it is the continuing illusion of "purity" that is a form of "false consciousness," an historical throwback to the emergence of bourgeois society

out of feudalism. In fact the confusion and contradiction that runs through the two definitions used by Wright boils down to this: that the petty bourgeoisie are only "a little bit pregnant" with capitalism, though the illusion of being "pure" is still "dominant." But reality keeps interceding. When Wright tried to "operationalize" his concepts, he ran into a little problem with his survey, and

> because of an unintended ambiguity in the questionnaire design, an unknown proportion of respondents who state that they have one employee really had none (i.e. they considered themselves an employee), and thus we have defined the petty bourgeoisie as having no more than one employee.[16]

Better wording can clean up the survey, but it cannot resolve the underlying theoretical mistake. As Marx makes so clear, the very concept of "self-employment" is a capitalist one, and thus the definition "self-employed 'pure' petty bourgeoisie who employ no wage labor" is inherently contradictory. Any respondents to the questionnaire who counted themselves as their "own" employees could have walked straight out of Theories of Surplus-Value. No matter how "pure" they seem, they are part and parcel of capitalism.

For the same reason, the polarization which they continually suffer arises as an internal aspect of their condition, not just as an effect of "outside" forces. On the one hand their means of production may prove too small even to "hire themselves," in which case they will lose control to "a master," either another petty bourgeois

owner, or larger capitalists, and become the workers of these others, even if nominal ownership continues to rest in their own hands. Their further total separation from their means of production often follows. On the other hand, the petty bourgeoisie may increase their capital and join the ranks of "small capitalists who also hire the labor of others." But they do so, as Marx explains, because they have capitalized their own surplus-value and treated it as an investible profit. Far from being "neither exploiter nor exploited," the petty bourgeois owners are both, even if they are "self-employed producers with average capital stock." The very language used by Wright, as Marx explains, belies the attempt to assert that they are not. Thus Wright and Steinmetz in their article state that:

> Self-employment means, literally, being employed by oneself and is primarily contrasted to two other conditions: being employed by someone else (a wage earner) and earning an income without being employed at all (i.e., a rentier of one sort or another who receives an income without working).[19]

What they miss is that for Marx the idea of "self-employment" involves both being a "wage-earner" for oneself and gaining a "rentier" profit from capital as well. It arises precisely because small owners have become capitalistic.

This capitalization applies to all commodity production, and "invades" even the internal consumption of

their own products, of elements that are not first bought or sold, by the small owners.

> From this standpoint it is immaterial in what form the conditions of production enter into the labour process. It is unimportant . . . whether, as in the case of seed in farming, a portion of the product is at once employed by the producer as means of labour, or whether it is first sold and then converted back into a means of labour. Apart from the service they perform as use-values in the process of production, all the means of labour that have been produced now also serve as *ingredients in the valorization process*. Where they are not changed into actual money, they are converted into accounting money. . . . And to the extent to which agriculture, for example, becomes a capitalistically run branch of industry . . . to the extent to which agriculture produces for the market, i.e. produces commodities, articles for sale and not for its own immediate consumption--so too, and to the same degree, it calculates its costs, treats each item as a commodity (regardless of whether it buys it from another or from itself, i.e. from production).[20]

Marx places particular emphasis on the way in which such relations become internalized for small commodity producers:

> Thus for the individual farmer these conditions of production pass from circulation into his process of production; circulation thus becomes in effect the precondition of his production since they [the conditions of production] increasingly become commodities he has bought (or that can be bought). They have long since become commodities in his eyes, . . . that are at the same time values forming part of his capital. (When he returns them to production in nature he therefore includes them in his calculations as *things* sold him qua producer.)[21]

Capitalist exchange thus determines that all production comes to be valorized, regardless of any direct relation to the market. The small owners are their own "internal" buyers and sellers, and all their products take on a valuation, as "part of . . . capital."

The capitalistic relation in all its aspects is now internalized, and thus it is no longer possible to separate "precapitalist" production and "capitalist" circulation, "inside" and "outside." Thus to speak, as Wright does, of the linkage of the petty bourgeoisie to capitalism as one of "exchange relations" only is inadequate, even if the latter is extended to include mortgages, and so on. The capitalization of petty bourgeois means of production occurs first and foremost internally, and it is only an extension of that self-relation which is deepened by external ties. Their internal relations are thus "within" capitalism, because they rest on the basis that the "material existence" of all means of production in capitalist society constitute a single pool with the "function of capital." Marx makes this explicit:

> In considering the essential relations of capitalist production it can therefore be assumed that the entire world of commodities, all spheres of material production--the production of material wealth--are (formally or really) subordinated to the capitalist mode of production <for this is what is happening more and more completely. . . >. On this premise--which expresses the limit [of the process] and which is therefore constantly coming to an exact presentation of reality--all labourers engaged in the production of commodities are wage-labourers, and the means of production in all these spheres confront them as capital.[22]

Thus the "self-employed" petty bourgeoisie are both exploiter of and exploited by themselves, both wage-laborer and capitalist, even though they are engaged in "simple commodity production."

The location of this class between proletariat and capitalists is therefore internalized in their own basic self-relationships. Even "simple" commodity exchange, under capitalism, contains this inherent nature, and comes to represent wage-labor and profit. We can understand from this the theoretical cost of the abandonment of the labor theory of value by Wright, who states:

> Two technical points: first, I use the expression 'the fruits of labour' rather than 'labour' since the definition is meant to be independent of the tenets of the labour theory of value. . . . Second, 'surplus' is notoriously hard to define rigorously once the labour theory of value is abandoned, since its magnitude (i.e. its 'value') can no longer be defined independently of prices. Throughout this discussion, when I refer to transfers of surplus or claims on the surplus I am referring to the surplus <u>product</u> which will be appropriated by an exploiting class.[23]

And further: "What is claimed is that the income of capitalists constitutes the monetary value of the surplus produced by workers. That is sufficient for their income to be treated as exploitative."[24] Thus despite the shift, nothing is lost:

> Although clearly of great importance for the whole family of concepts directly employing value categories, it does not appear that the general Marxist concepts of class, exploitation, capitalism, class struggle, etc., require substantial respecification in light of these critiques of the concept of labour values.[25]

To which a endnote is added:

> My own position has shifted considerably in the course of the debate [about the labor theory of value]. Initially . . . I felt that the stakes were fairly high in the debate, since a rejection of the concept of labour values would undermine the concept of capitalist exploitation, which would in turn undermine the Marxist account of class relations in capitalism. My later position . . . was that it was possible to sustain the conceptual core of the Marxist theory of exploitation

> and class without the formal apparatus of the labour theory of value.[26]

The language used by Wright is particularly instructive here, because it is precisely the "formal apparatus" of Marxism that he to some extent holds on to, and the "core" that he abandons.

One can, of course, have a concept of class, even under capitalism, without the labor theory of value, and it is also possible to picture the "incomes" of classes as based on the appropriation of "products," or of their "monetary prices." Such an analysis, however, emphasizes relations only after a commodity is produced and already in the realm of an externalized exchange: the "fruit," having dropped from the tree, seems a thing apart, no longer inseparable from the process by which it has grown. But it is precisely the exploration of labor values which gave Marx the ability to understand the internal relations within the concept of class, and the linkage between them and the "outside." For him, commodity and labor value are an inseparable "unity," bearing the nature of each other even when "formally" apart. It was this which enabled him to see that even the "pure" petty bourgeoisie simultaneously realize the full value of their own labor, and at the same time treat it capitalistically as wages and profits, realized through the sale of commodities.

This, as we have already seen, is exactly what Wright fails to grasp, but this dialectic is the essence of the

theory of Marxism, what allows it to go beneath formal categories to the "core." It is possible, therefore, to appear to hold on to "the general Marxist concepts of class, exploitation, capitalism, class struggle, etc." and still reject the labor theory of value, but one will miss such "little" details as the contradictions which turn even "pure" petty bourgeoisie into capitalists, who have evolved historically into a class that is "neither exploiter nor exploited" and "both exploiter and exploited" at the very same time, but with the latter relation now the dominant one.

It is only against this background that we can understand how Wright approaches the "new" middle class, for he first defines them in "opposition" to the "old" petty bourgeois owners.

> (2) Since concrete societies are rarely, if ever, characterized by a single mode of production, the actual class structures of given societies will be characterized by complex patterns of intersecting exploitation relations. There will therefore tend to be some positions which are exploiting along one dimension of exploitation relations, while on another are exploited. Highly skilled wage-earners (e.g. professionals) in capitalism are a good example: they are capitalistically exploited because they lack assets in capital and yet are skill exploiters. Such positions are what are typically referred to as the 'new middle class' of a given class system.[27]

Thus in contrast to the "traditional" petty bourgeoisie who are "neither exploited nor exploiter," the "newer" strata are both, and this is the essential aspect of what defines their "newness." We have already seen that such a distinction can only rest on a purely "formal" grasp of the

nature of petty bourgeois ownership. Having missed the fundamental internal character of the latter "within" capitalism, and having robbed himself of the tool of the labor theory of value by which Marx discovered this relation, Wright comes doubly disarmed to his analysis of the "newer" strata. The distinction which he draws between those who are "neither" exploiter nor exploited and those who are "both" is not an adequate basis for distinguishing the "new middle class."

In between the workers who are exploited of surplus-value on the one side and the capitalists who exploit them of it on the other lies a point where petty bourgeois owners realize the full value of their own labor. I have examined this in detail above in a review of the work of Charles Loren. Thus "both exploiter and exploited," if the values on each side are equal, means that the two "cancel out," the hallmark of the petty bourgeoisie. Wright seems to propose an alternative through the concept of the intersection of more than one form of exploitation relations, i.e., capital and skill. If the two are different, they might coexist without "cancelling out," even if the values were equal, because they would represent distinct exploitative systems. This could in turn point toward a "new" non-petty bourgeois middle class, or at least some kind of newer "contradictory location" between classes. The choice of the term "highly skilled wage-earners" seeks to express this, describing both the "asset"

that is owned by the professionals, and their class relations, with hiring out for wages the "old" exploited "capitalist" side of the duality, while "skills" allows them to be "new" exploiters.

This already sets severe limits to the theoretical concept, however. "Skill" is in its simplest definition the possession of a form of knowledge which is useful in productive labor. In its common usage, to be "skilled" means to possess an increment of learning or specialization which is different from or above average. The term, however, implies that even if a skill is unique or extraordinary, it is still a personal possession, in the sense of being inseparable from the mind of its possessor. Wright emphasizes this, by in effect adopting the definitions of John Roemer, who speaks of skills as inalienable, in comparison with alienable physical means of production.[28] So defined, an apparent difference exists which could form the basis for two alternative systems of "assets" and exploitation. But while all skill may be knowledge, the reverse is not true. Taken in their entirety, the means of mental production cannot be reduced to the concept of small-scale personalized "skills." As we examined above, ideas are "big business," that are bought and sold, owned and monopolized, privatized and alienated like any other form of capital. Once capitalism is established, as the long quotation from Marx analyzed earlier makes clear, all means of production have the

"function of capital," even if they do not seem to do so, and this is as true for those in the "mental" realm as in any other. "Skills" are just their lowest level or smallest unit, and it is as unreasonable to treat them as a category that stands completely alone in the owning of "knowledge," as would be the isolation of "garden plots" from the general ownership of "land."

To be "skilled," therefore, tells us no more by itself about the class position of the possessor, than to be "garden-plotted." Rather it is only an examination of the relationships in which this possession occurs and the way in which it is utilized, that tells us how the owner fits into an existing system of classes. Marx explains the relation between "levels" of owning knowledge. For "the labourers, as subsumed under capital," the

> social character of their labour confronts them to a certain degree as capitalised (as for example in machinery the visible products of labour appear as dominating labour), the same naturally takes place with the forces of nature and science, the product of general historical development in its abstract quintessence--they confront the labourers as powers of capital. They are separate in fact from the skill and knowledge of the individual labourer--and although, in their origin, they too are the product of labour--wherever they enter into the labour-process they appear as embodied in capital. The capitalist who makes use of a machine need not understand it. . . . But science realised in the machine appears as capital in relation to the labourers. And in fact all these applications of science, natural forces and products of labour on a large scale, these applications founded on social labour, themselves appear only as means for the exploitation of labour, as means of appropriating surplus-labour, and hence confront labour as powers belonging to capital.[29]

The crucial question is thus whether knowledge functions as capital. This depends on its "scale," and its social relations.

If lawyers, for example, set up in business independently, they are then using their legal skills as means of mental production and performing labor based on this--in the way farmers use land and machines--and most analysts, including Wright, put them in the petty bourgeoisie.[30] In this case, we would expect them to gain the full rewards of their own labor. On the other hand, like farmers, they may use their knowledge as the "means for the exploitation of labor" and hire additional employees, say as legal assistants. Or they may themselves be subjected to capitalist exploitation, for instance by the bank which lent them money for their education. Such relations lead to polarization, that is, either increased hiring and "big" bourgeois status, or a fall toward "proletarianization." Thus no intrinsic gap exists here between "skill" as one form of the means of mental production and other capital, and the former obeys all the "laws" of the latter. This includes, as seen above, the contradictory nature of "pure" petty bourgeois "self-employment" under capitalism, that is, its capitalistic essence within its "pre-capitalist" form. In that internal relation one is both "exploited and exploiter," but these "cancel out" in the self-appropriation of surplus-value.

In other words, the same conversion of "skill and knowledge" into capital "wherever they occur in the labor-process" takes place here, that was earlier seen in the case of material means of production and commodities. Thus small scale ownership and production is capitalized as an internal relation regardless of the nature of what is owned, be it farmland, machines, or ideas.

The same conditions apply, even if the owner of a skill is also an employee of a capitalist firm. The setting has changed, but the economic relation has not. If professionals help to extract surplus-value from workers, but are in turn paid an extra amount over and above the costs of their own labor-power, the two may "cancel out," and they receive the full value of their labor. They are "wage-laborers" in the same sense that all commodified labor-power is under capitalism, whether self-employed or hired by others, but their ownership of the means of mental production nevertheless allows them to avoid being exploited by capitalists. Thus just as the capitalistic "self-employment" of the "old" petty bourgeoisie was the hidden reality beneath the surface of their independence, the relative freedom from exploitation is the real content which hides within professional employment. To focus only on their formal hiring out, is to miss the actual substance of their relation to capitalist exploitation.

The utility of professionals from the standpoint of capitalism is to help control the working-class and extract

surplus-value from it, and to generate intellectual products needed by "big" bourgeoisie. This role, as analyzed by the Ehrenreichs, extends beyond the realm of direct production, and in fact is concentrated in the reproduction of capitalist relations and the maintenance of bourgeois society as a whole, a task they perform all the better for possessing a relative autonomy. Their own exploitation, or lack of it, is irrelevant to this larger purpose. Moreover, as already noted above, the salary form, rather than wages, is the expression of this relationship. Thus the hired professionals are in the same contradictory role as all petty bourgeoisie under capitalism, "both exploiter and exploited," but also "neither," since they receive the full value of their labor. Of course, they can be subjected to greater direct exploitation and thus be more "proletarianized," or they can receive "extra" surplus-value and move toward the ranks of the "big" capitalists. But this is not a condition of their employment in and of itself. Thus even hired employees can belong to the petty bourgeois "middle class."

It is true that ideas have a peculiar resistance to total alienation, and this is particularly so on the level of "skills." Capitalists, for instance, may buy and sell a patent and the knowledge which it represents will never enter their own heads, or they may purchase a machine and yet "need not understand it." But a skill has a personalized character harder to alienate. Hard, but not

impossible. I could, for instance, teach you all I know about a certain profession, and then promise to retire. In such a case, my knowledge has been totally alienated from myself. Of course, it may be in my head, but it is no longer "usable" in the marketplace, and in capitalism, that is its only "location." Such a contract would, of course, be extremely unusual, precisely because my professional skill is only valuable to me as long as I can perform work based on it.[31] If I alienate it, I will starve, because unlike "big" capital, it does not produce enough profit that I can convert it into monetary form and live off income alone. But this is the condition of all petty bourgeoisie: small farmers cannot simply sell off land and machinery and retire.

Moreover, all petty bourgeois owners combine useful knowledge with utilization of physical means of production. Using this combination of mental and material resources, they add their own labor to produce commodities such as wheat and books, or perform services, such as retailing and health care. Because their capital is so small, this necessity to work is unavoidable, unless they "strike it rich" by discovering oil on their land, writing a best-seller, or patenting a very lucrative invention. "Skill" is thus the level where accumulated knowledge is united directly with the labor which utilizes it. In this "mix," the relatively greater dependence of the professionals on inalienable ideas does help define them as a stratum. In

particular, as we have seen, its monopolization must be based on artificial "enclosure" by educational and credential requirements, and the money they have invested in their education is capitalized over their lifetimes and transfers its value to their products and services. It also allows "professionalism" to outlast specific jobs. But it does not change the underlying economic relations in which professionals are "located." Like all in the petty bourgeois class, they own means of production, but the latter are insufficient to allow them to live simply off profit, so they are required to perform labor as well. Under capitalism, whether "self-employed" or hired, their ownership takes the form of "capital," and their work of "wage-labor". They are thus both part of and autonomous from capitalism, as their "skill" is utilized to exploit their labor, but they receive in return their own surplus-value. They may also engage in exploiting others.

Skills therefore do have their own characteristics, but they are a modified form of the general category of means of mental production, and are thus subject to the usual capitalist "laws." Marx, for instance, notes that even where "production cannot be separated from the act of producing, as is the case of performing artists, orators, actors, teachers, physicians, priests, etc.," they may still be subject to exploitation, as in "educational factories" or theaters.[32] But what if such professionals are "self-employed," or if they in turn hire others and

exploit them. The knowledge involved is the same regardless, even if it "functions as capital." It is a single system of exploitation operating here, not two, and it is based on capitalist assets, which include the special form of "skill." This might have been evident if Wright had started with the "old" petty bourgeoisie, including the "traditional" professionals, instead of focusing first on "newer" employees, and treating the former only as a "shadow class" of the latter.[33] The "self-employed" professionals use skills as the basis for the capitalistic exploitation of themselves and employees, others are in turn employed by "big" capitalists and used to help extract surplus-value from workers. To establish a critical division here, Wright would have had to show how this unity is "broken apart" simply by inclusion in a large capitalist firm, but he does not demonstrate this. Skills can be the basis for "self-employment" and the exploitation of others, or for "wage-labor" in the form of salaried employment, which may also contain surplus-value extracted from proletarians. In either case it is capitalistic, and marks the "middle class" role of the petty bourgeoisie, uniting "old" and "new" strata.

It is from a similar viewpoint that the managerial stratum must be understood. The attempt by Wright to devise a special "organizational" asset which is controlled by managers runs into similar difficulties as does that of "skill." But it also has specific aspects which are even

more problematic. Wright defines this "asset" as the basis for a separate class position:

> The way the process of production is organized is a productive resource distinct from the expenditure of labour power, the use of means of production or the skills of the producer. Of course there is an inter-relationship between organization and these other assets, just as there is an interdependence between means of production and skills. But organization--the conditions of coordinated cooperation among producers in a complex division of labour--is a productive resource in its own right.
>
> . . . In contemporary capitalism, organization assets are generally controlled by managers and capitalists: managers control the organization assets within specific firms under constraints imposed by the ownership of the capital assets by capitalists.[34]

For Wright, just as with skills, controlling organizational assets can serve as the basis for exploitation, but this is a "separate" system which is only "constrained" in an external manner by capitalism proper. "Control," moreover, is equated with "ownership" in the sense of effective possession. Thus managers and state bureaucrats "embody a principle of class organization which is quite distinct from capitalism, and which potentially poses an alternative to capitalist relations."[35]

Though there is no question that those in managerial positions are able to share in the exploitation of the proletariat, what is at issue here is the independence of this exploitative role. The key concept here is that of a "productive resource in its own right." This implies that it is something which is possessed and "added to" production, but that is false. As Marx explains, "the special productive power of the combined working-day is,

under all circumstances, the social productive power of labour, or the productive power of social labour. This power is due to co-operation itself."[36] It is, in the first instance, a natural increase in productivity which requires nothing other than cooperative labor, without in any way changing the inputs, as when several people lift a stone. It is true that beyond such simple examples, there is an effect on the form of production and thereby on the physical requirements. Thus: "Even without an alteration in the system of working, the simultaneous employment of a large number of labourers effects a revolution in the material conditions of the labour process."[37] But the larger buildings and new machinery that are required are not different qualitatively from other means of production. Thus no "asset" is discoverable here which is separable from those with which we are already familiar--labor, knowledge, and physical plant or tools--though obviously control over the process of cooperation can take a variety of social forms.

While it is the case that the cooperative organization of the elements of production is more efficient, one must still have control of these instruments before being able to organize them. Under capitalism, this power in the first instance is derivative, and it must thus serve the profit interests of the capitalists. As Marx explains,

> the control of the capitalist is in substance two-fold by reason of the two-fold nature of the process of production itself,--which, on the one hand, is a social process for producing use-values, on the other, a

> process for creating surplus-value--in form that control is despotic. As co-operation extends its scale, this despotism takes forms peculiar to itself. Just as at first the capitalist is relieved from actual labour so soon as his capital has reached that minimum amount with which capitalist production, as such, begins, so now, he hands over the work of direct and constant supervision of the individual workmen, and groups of workmen, to a special kind of wage-labourer. An industrial army of workmen, under the command of a capitalist, requires, like a real army, officers (managers), and sergeants (foremen, overlookers), who, while the work is being done, command in the name of the capitalist. The work of supervision becomes their established and exclusive function.[38]

While the functions may be separated, the system of exploitation is unitary and continuous. The managers are invested with power by the capitalists. No "second system" of exploitable assets is established by treating the productive elements and their form of organization as separate, and none is needed to explain managers. Like the "skilled" they are within capitalism, but their autonomy is even more derivative and lacks an independent material base.

It is of course theoretically possible for the managers to wrest more control of this process from the capitalists, and a well-known debate over just such a "managerial revolution" rages. Shifts in the relative balance of power between these two do not, however, alter the basic system. To the extent that the means of production are still used to exploit wage-labor, they are capital. The classes which carry out this exploitation therefore follow the "laws" of capitalism: those who own or control the means of production and thereby obtain surplus-

value are bourgeoisie, and those who produce it are proletariat. In between, once again, lies a "middle class" who do not need to be exploited directly by the capitalists and thus can gain the full value of their own labor, the hallmark of the petty bourgeoisie. This "center" marks the true petty bourgeois managerial stratum, "forepersons and overlookers" are subject to exploitation of a more "proletarian" type, and top managers are "big" bourgeoisie. Of course the latter lack the independence of "self-employed" owners of capital, but this is simply a more extreme version of any capitalist who is subject to external control, for instance by a bank. Thus mergers often result in former independent owners staying on as corporate managers, sharing in surplus-value with their new employer, but still in the "big" bourgeois class.

So too, if even "pure" petty bourgeoisie can be capitalist "self-employers" of their own labor, then they can easily change into being their own "managers" as well. This occurs, for instance, if they begin to lose control over their capital. The farmers who are threatened with foreclosure by the bank, and told what to plant and when to harvest it, must drive themselves and very often their family members as hard as any foreperson in a factory. Thus they become "managers" of their own labor for others. Or they may extract a higher rate of surplus-value from their "hired hands," so that they become "management" for the bankers over their own employees. In this case, the

increased exploitation of workers on the one hand, and payments to the bank on the other, may "cancel out" on the farm. They may also move "up" instead of "down," in which case their self-employment is merely the first step toward the employment, and management, of an ever larger number of wage-laborers. Once again, therefore, the attempt to isolate the "new" middle class strata as unrelated to that of the "traditional" petty bourgeoisie fails. Under capitalism, the "self-employed" owner and the "managerial" role can be combined in the same person, just as are the "capitalist" and "laborer." They are therefore "internalized" petty bourgeois relations, which can combine capitalistic forms of management and exploitation with the appropriation of their own surplus-value. Here again, "old" and "new" petty bourgeoisie coincide.

In the end, Wright is unable to establish either "skills" or "organizational assets" as the basis for a class position. Thus:

> While the ownership of skill assets may be the basis of exploitation mediated by market exchanges and internal labour-markets, it is much less clear that it is the basis of a class relation, except insofar as skills or talents enable one to gain access to other kinds of assets. Experts may have distinct interests from non-experts, but they are not clearly constituted as a class in relation to non-experts.[39]

In other words, we are back where we began. In his definition of the petty bourgoeisie, it will be recalled, Wright expressed doubt that they were in a "class" relation of exploitation. Now for those in the professions also

there is no intrinsic exploitative relationship to non-expert workers. This conclusion is stated even more explicitly in The Debate on Classes:

> In the case of skill owners, there is not necessarily an inherent social relation that binds them to the unskilled in the required way. The possession of a skill or credential may help to constitute a distinctive kind of social relation with employers, reflected in the description that skill holders are "less exploited" than the unskilled, but this does not necessarily imply a social relation built around antagonistic material interests with the unskilled themselves. Such antagonisms may exist, of course, but they are not inherent in the relations which define owners of skills/credentials as such. Thus, credentials are a relatively ambiguous basis for defining a class relation, at least if we want the concept of class to be built around relations of exploitation.[40]

Like the "pure" petty bourgeoisie, those who are "purely" professional may not be a class after all, for if their skills are not a basis for the exploitation of others, then the professionals too are in essence "classless." As with petty bourgeois owners, they may be exploited in the capitalist market, or they may "gain access to other forms of assets," i.e., capital or "organization." But in and of themselves they are "neither exploiter nor exploited," the definition of the petty bourgeoisie used by Wright. The division between "old" and "new" petty bourgeois ownership crumbles, and in the process both are, according to Wright, shown to be internally "classless."

Unable to demonstrate convincingly that either "skill" or "organizational assets" are theoretically viable as the basis for a non-capitalist system, Wright merely asserts

the "newness" of skill and organizational assets as an analytical necessity, and "retains" them to allow his overall system to work, rather than demonstrating their viability first in the analysis, and then systematizing them into a general theory.[41] What he fails to grasp is that the contradictory relation which is internal to the strata he is examining is the same as that of the "old" or "traditional" petty bourgeoisie. Since he has already rejected the petty bourgeois "model," which would offer a dialectical reconciliation with its autonomy-within-capitalism relations, Wright has nowhere left to turn. Rather than confront the "forest" which stares him in the face--dissolution of the very criteria by which he made the division between the "old" and "new" middle classes--he continues to wander among an ever-expanding number of "trees," trying to find a way out.

This is revealed even more strikingly in The Debate on Classes, where Wright makes a further attempt to understand this relationship through a discussion of the question of monopoly "rents." Using comparisons to the analysis of land rent by Marx, Wright analyzes the way in which professionals may appropriate surplus, through the monopolization of their professional skills.

> The exploitative element in the wage of a skilled wage-earner, then, is that part of the wage which directly reflects the monopoly control of the supply of that skill. One form of such monopolization is rooted in "natural" talents; another--and I believe more important--form is based on credentials. The result is a monopoly rent component of the wage. This rent component is potentially a form of exploitation.

> Why do I say simply "potentially"? . . . The monopoly rent indicates (by definition) that skilled wage-earners are able to appropriate part of the social surplus in their wage. But since the laboring activity of the skilled wage-earner is also contributing to that surplus, this need not imply that the skilled wage-earner is appropriating the labor of anyone else. The privileged position of skilled wage-earners in the labor market, in short, may simply give them the "privilege" of appropriating their own surplus.[42]

Wright then adds in a note:

> This description of the logic of exploitation mechanisms for credentialed owners is consistent with the theoretical position that they are "petty bourgeois"; the petty bourgeoisie consists of those producers who are neither exploiters nor exploited--that is, they are able to appropriate the surplus which they produce.[43]

Since Wright is here discussing skilled "wage-earners," he has in fact discovered the area in which their condition is identical to that of the "self-employed" professionals. But Wright ignores the obvious implications. Instead, he moves on to the problem of trying "to establish whether or not this rent component of the wage is sufficiently large to constitute a genuine transfer of surplus to skill owners, and thus to constitute exploitation," which he has of course already defined as non-petty bourgeois.[44]

It is here that the insistence by Wright on the special nature of "skills" limits him, for he fails to distinguish the element of capital investment in the means of mental production which they include. In fact, even "rent" as defined by Marx contains elements of capitalization that Wright overlooks. Rents can be "differential" based on the natural divergences in

productivity--the equivalent of "talent" for Wright--or "absolute" as a result of the monopolization of the finite land mass of the earth--which is paralleled by "credentials." But:

> Capital may be fixed in the land, incorporated in it either in a transitory manner . . . or more permanently. Elsewhere I have called the capital thus applied to land la terre-capital. It belongs to the category of fixed capital. The interest on capital incorporated in the land and the improvements thus made in it as an instrument of production can constitute a part of the rent paid by the capitalist farmer to the land-owner, but it does not constitute the actual ground-rent, which is paid for the use of the land as such--be it in a natural or cultivated state.[45]

What appears to be merely "rent" based on land monopoly and its differential productivity, therefore, may actually contain interest paid on fixed capital. Applied to professionals, we could say that there is indeed an element of both credential monopolization and natural talent, but there is also a form of capitalist investment--purchased knowledge which has been "fixed" in the mind--which can be the basis of exploitation.

As we have already seen in the long passage from Marx quoted above, however, this is typical of the petty bourgeois relation. Thus the "self-employed" petty bourgeoisie pay themselves not only their "wages," and the surplus-value which is the "tribute" to their capital, but "perhaps he also pays himself a third portion as landowner (rent)." The problem with the approach taken by Wright is that in attempting to isolate the "skilled" professionals from capitalism, he loses the theoretical tool which is

needed to account for the various aspects of their income. The investment in professional education does not simply amount to costs of production and deferred income, which produces a "skill" monopoly. It also involves acquisition of a portion of the total capital accumulation in the means of mental production. This capitalization demands its own "tribute," which takes the form of interest or profit on money invested. It is the basis both for capitalist "self-employment" and exploitation of others. Even more problematic still is the attempt by Wright to define a "loyalty rent" paid to managers, based on organization assets, separate from capitalist exploitation of surplus-value. Here "bureaucratization" protects "managerial prerogatives from direct interference by capitalist owners," and "is the central way through which managerial surplus appropriation is reproduced."[46]

At the end of The Debate on Classes, Wright indicates his inability to sort out the exploitation/non-exploitation roles as regards "skilled" professionals. He first notes that:

> When such an employee appropriates part of the social surplus through wages that are above the costs of reproducing labor power, the most natural way of describing the outcome is that this person has been able to appropriate part of the surplus which he or she has produced.[47]

This is the self-realization of surplus-value already examined, but Wright puts it in terms "that they are less exploited by capitalists." He then continues:

> Of course, it could happen that certain credential holders are able to appropriate so much surplus that they become, in fact, net exploiters: they could retain all of the surplus which they produce and appropriate surplus from others. The problem is that since this appropriation remains entirely contingent upon the actual performance of labor by the credentialed holder, there is no simple way of distinguishing those credential holders who are real exploiters from those who are simply "privileged" by virtue of being less exploited than other employees.
>
> This problem with skill exploitation is not simply the result of the fact that the "level" of skills varies more or less continuously (although this gradational quality to the distribution of the asset in question certainly adds to the problem). Imagine a world in which capital assets were normally distributed. . . . it would not pose the conceptual difficulties of skill assets since the income derived from the sheer ownership of capital inherently constitutes an exploitative transfer, that is, it involves the appropriation of surplus produced by others. . . . In contrast, in the case of skill exploitation, one cannot distinguish the mechanism through which the individual appropriates their own surplus and the surplus of others.[48]

Of course the measurement of exploitation is always problematic under capitalism, because it is only revealed imperfectly in the exchange process. But the "mechanism" is the appropriation of surplus-value, whether it is "their own" or that of others. It is indeed virtually impossible to measure which surpluses the professionals derive from themselves and which from other labor. But this is an "operational" problem, not a conceptual one.

Because Wright clings to the idea that "skill" is a non-capitalist asset, and abandons the labor theory of value, he is indeed left without the "mechanical" tools that he needs. In fact, much more is at stake here, for in attempting to escape this dilemma, Wright reverts "part

way" to what is probably the oldest and most discredited of Marxist "solutions," the attempt to make the "newer" strata part of the proletariat. Thus he "relaxes" the assumption "that credentialed experts were not in the working class," and instead takes up the

> alternative view, namely that in and of themselves, jobs filled by credentialed professional or expert non-managerial employees are in working-class locations in the class structure. . . . the basis for considering nonmanagerial professionals and experts as potentially part of the middle class is not a relational property of their jobs as such, but rather certain properties of the temporal dimension of professional work."[49]

The criteria for their "middle-classness" are now only external:

> Given this way of analyzing the class character of professional employment, then even if we do not consider autonomy within work or the ownership of skills/credentials as such as appropriate criteria for differentiating locations within a class structure, nevertheless professionals and experts would generally be considered in "middle-class contradictory locations" by virtue of their capacity to capitalize their income and their career trajectories into managerial hierarchies and viable petty bourgeois [i.e., self-employed] options.[50]

Thus Wright looks to "temporal" factors--capitalist investments, managerial positions, and self-employment--lying "outside" the basic aspects of professionalism, to reestablish the "location" of the professionals within the "middle class."

Even if a given professional does not choose to exercise these "options," the possibility of doing so is all that is required:

> In a sense, therefore, whether or not the capitalist investments are actually made is a secondary matter;

> the primary issue is being in a position which makes such investments possible.[51]

On this basis, Wright can conclude that "the middle class within capitalism is constituted by those locations which are simultaneously in the capitalist class and the working class."[52] But: "Skill exploitation and organization exploitation . . . are probably best viewed as the basis for strata within classes rather than for class divisions as such."[53] In other words, they are not themselves the defining characteristics of a separate "middle class," but only elements of the stratification of professionals and managers within the proletariat or bourgeoisie.

The fundamental shift away from "middleness" by Wright is all the more glaring, because even though only "partial" it is the "heart" he has removed: the existence of criteria internal to professionals which make them a "middle class," or even one of the relational classes at all. This change reveals the grave contradictions in his work. Moreover, once on this slippery slope there is no stopping. Wright moves ever further away from the idea that a simple set of materialist "assets" can be found underlying the position of the "new middle classes." Instead, he stresses that it is the "contingent events," "lived experiences," and the "actual choices made by individuals in these kinds of careers," that produce the temporal "indeterminacy or objectively ambiguous" nature of the professional class locations.[54] In the end, he states that: "If, however, we

no longer try to discover a single strategy capable of simultaneously solving all of the various conceptual problems posed by different categories of 'nonproletarianized employees, . . .'" then one approach could be needed to analyze managers, another professionals, and so on.[55]

On the surface, such separate "strategies" seem indicated. Thus the purpose of capitalist exploitation is the production and accumulation of surplus-value, while the "pure" petty bourgeois owners may appear to have as their primary goal the independence of their own labor. So too, the "old" petty bourgeoisie are themselves commodity and service producers, while the "new" professionals and managers sell their labor-power to capitalists and are not "self-employed." Between the last two occupations, there is a further barrier, for those in the professions have invested heavily in a "skill," while the managerial power is derivative and organizational. For Wright these obvious contradictions must point to fundamentally different strategies to explain their relations, and preclude a unified solution to the problem of their class locations. But as Marx noted, "all science would be superfluous if the outward appeareance and the essence of things directly coincided."[56] For him: "The production of commodities leads inexorably to capitalist production, . . . from the moment when labour-power in general becomes a commodity."[57] At that point, all means of production, both material and

mental, take the form of capital, and all laborers become "wage-workers."

The relations of capitalism thus become internalized in the "middle class," regardless of its specific forms of ownership or labor. The "pure" petty bourgeoisie are henceforth capitalistic, despite their apparent independence, while the seeming servants of capital, the managers or professionals, in fact hold on to relative work autonomy and are able to retain their own surplus-value. The "science" of the labor theory of value thus allows us to penetrate beneath the "outward appearance of things" and get to their "essence," providing a single strategy for "middle class" analysis. Viewed from the standpoint of the proletariat, whose exploitation is essential to capitalism, all the petty bourgeoisie are junior partners in the appropriation of surplus-value, first exploiting their own labor, and then that of others. Before this essential relationship, all the differences over types of work, various "assets" owned, or "independent" versus "salaried" must pale. By rejecting this underlying unity, Wright is forced to approach each variation as though it were a separate relation and form of exploitation. But such differences are like onions, in which every layer merely covers another, adding new complexities, until at the center no "core" remains to be found.

The result is a series of categories which multiply like rabbits, each meant to cover some further unresolved difficulty:

> At the core of Marxist theory is an elegant and simple abstract picture of classes in capitalist societies: a fundamentally polarized class structure which constitutes the basis for the formation of two collectively organized classes engaged in struggle over the future of the class structure itself. We have now journeyed far from that simple core. Instead of only two, polarized classes, we have contradictory locations within class relations, mediated class locations, temporally structured class locations, objectively ambiguous class locations, dualistic class locations. Instead of a simple historical vision of the epochal confrontation of two class actors, there is a picture of multiple possible coalitions of greater or lesser likelihood, stability, and power contending over a variety of possible futures. The question, then, is whether this repertoire of new complexities actually enriches the theory or simply adds confusion.[58]

That is indeed the question. Wright suggests that the confusion can be reduced by treating these categories as operating on different levels of abstraction, depending on the questions which one wishes to ask. This no doubt has some validity, but it begs the real issue. The choice which Wright poses is between a simplistic "two-class model" of Marxism and his own "repertoire" of temporalities, mediations, and ambiguities. What is missing is the very thing he set out to provide us: a clear analysis of the "middle class" of modern society, the missing "third" element. He has indeed "journeyed far," but that is in large part because he took a wrong turn in the beginning, and even now follows it. In fact, Marx did not deal just with two polarized classes, but with the

petty bourgeoisie as the other class within capitalism, a basis from which the "newer" elements could also be analyzed. The only choice Wright presents us, between an abstract Marxist "two-class polarity" or his own "repertoire of new complexities," in their infinite variety, is thus a false one. It confuses more than it enriches.

The formal categories which abound in the work of Wright, and which are added to as needed to meet some new contradiction, cannot be resolved in their own terms. They identify "locations" which can be set out on a "map," but as they multiply, the number of dimensions needed to correlate them and of boxes required to show every possible permutation and combination must also grow exponentially. In the end, a kind of supra-"classlessness" is generated, for it becomes impossible to pin anything down, since to each challenge raised a new dimension is added to account for it. The "middle class" dissolves into innumerable points where various vectors cross on a multi-dimensional grid, an endlessly shifting target, whose role in the struggle of classes is beyond clear analysis because of its multiplicity, instability, and indeterminate nature. To confront it is therefore to be led into an endless maze. In the process Wright loses, as he himself notes, the "symmetry and elegance" of his model.[59]

This need to keep adding formal categories arises because the class strata being analyzed are stripped of

their living reality, the dynamic beneath the surface. It was the immense power of Marx, that he moved behind forms themselves, to grasp the dialectic of classes in the process of material development and historical change, which transformed them from "within" above all. It was this which allowed him to understand the petty bourgeois form not as a metaphysical category frozen in time and space, whose ties to capitalism were only externalized ones, but as a relation to the means of production and labor which was in its own essence capitalistic and undergoing internal changes first and foremost. Its relationships did indeed take different forms, but not as multiple "locations" derived from innumerable factors. They were the expressions of a single contradiction, reflecting changing degrees of autonomy within the fundamental and dominant capitalist relation.

The view Marx held of the petty bourgeoisie was therefore not a jumble of ambiguity. Like his analysis of the relation of the two main classes of capitalism, his understanding of the petty bourgeois class which lay between them was also "a picture both elegant and simple." Its simplicity was in its unification of both labor and ownership of the means of production in the same person, its elegance in that this apparently "simple" combination included at one and the same time the capitalistic relation and relative autonomy from it. It was his clarity on this internal contradiction that allowed Marx to expose the

illusion of "classlessness" to which the petty bourgeoisie cling despite their role in capitalist reproduction. He also recognized that like the class itself, which assumes different forms to meet changing conditions, this ideological defense adopts innumerable masks. As "new" strata are added to the "old" one, the theory of the "classless" nature of the petty bourgeoisie must undergo transformations as well, but this apparent diversity is but the surface form of an essential unity.

NOTES

1. Wright, Classes, 82-86.

2. Wright, "Rethinking, Once Again, the Concept of Class Structure," 270.

3. See Wright et al., The Debate on Classes, statements by Guglielmo Carchedi, 105; Johanna Brenner, 184; and David Rose and Gordon Marshall, 243.

4. Wright, Classes, 8.

5. Ibid., 59. See also 149: ". . . there are people who own just enough means of production to reproduce themselves, but not enough to hire anyone else. This is the traditional 'petty bourgeoisie'."

6. Ibid., 86.

7. Ibid., 150.

8. Ibid., 34.

9. Ibid., 59, note 19.

10. Ibid., 103: "Note that some petty bourgeois, in this formulation, will actually be exploited by capital (through unequal exchange on the market) because they own such minimal means of production, and some will be capitalistic exploiters because they own a great deal of capital even though they may not hire any wage-earners. Exploitation status, therefore, cannot strictly be equated with self-employment/wage-earner status." Thus even when Wright includes "capitalistic exploiters" among the petty bourgeoisie, the emphasis remains on their role as those who do not themselves directly exploit wage-labor.

11. Erik Olin Wright and George Steinmetz, "The Fall and Rise of the Petty Bourgeoisie: Changing Patterns of Self-Employment in the Postwar United States," American Journal of Sociology 94, no. 5 (March 1989): 980, note 8.

12. Ibid., 980.

13. Ibid., 981.

14. Ibid., 983, note 10.

15. Karl Marx, Theories of Surplus-Value, pt. 1, 407.

16. Ibid., 407-9.

17. Ibid., 408-9.

18. Wright, Classes, 150.

19. Wright and Steinmetz, "The Fall and Rise of the Petty Bourgeoisie," 979.

20. Marx, "Appendix," 951-52.

21. Ibid., 952-3.

22. Marx, Theories of Surplus-Value, pt. 1, 409-10. This section follows immediately on the one cited above. Though the overall topic of this part of the work is "unproductive labor," and this is the focus of the quotation here, the essence of the discussion is the capitalization of all commodity production, regardless of the formal characteristics of hired "wage-labor."

23. Wright, Classes, 100, note 18.

24. Ibid., 102, note 32.

25. Ibid., 294.

26. Ibid., 301, note 4.

27. Ibid., p. 87.

28. Ibid., 70, 72, 77.

29. Marx, Theories of Surplus-Value, pt. 1, 391-92.

30. See Wright, "Rethinking, Once Again, the Concept of Class Structure," 334-35: "The third temporal issue which is bound up with professional careers concerns what might be termed the petty bourgeois shadow class of employees in many professional occupations. This is most clearly the case for the classic 'free professions' such as doctors and lawyers, who in many capitalist countries have the relatively open option of self-employment." Thus according to Wright even many salaried members of the professions have "petty bourgeois options," i.e., they have the possibility of going into business for themselves. Of course, in most cases, these "self-employed" professionals will own at least some minimal physical means of production as well. But these may be no more than a desk and phone in a corner of their own house. It is clearly the mental

means of production they own, not the material ones, which is the basis of their membership in the petty bourgeois class, and their ability to "employ" first themselves, and then possibly others.

31. Such arrangements may have existed on occasion in small towns which could only support a single doctor or lawyer, and in which older professionals were expected to retire to make way for a younger apprentice once the latter was sufficiently trained.

32. Marx, Theories of Surplus-Value, pt. 1, 410-11. Marx states that: "Here too the capitalist mode of production is met with only to a small extent, and from the nature of the case can only be applied in a few spheres." But it is precisely the vast expansion of the capitalization of professional labor that was not evident in his time, and that has required the investigation of the nature of the class character of the "new" middle strata.

33. See note 28.

34. Wright, Classes, 79.

35. Ibid., 89.

36. Marx, Capital, Vol. 1, 329.

37. Ibid., 324.

38. Ibid., 331-32.

39. Wright, Classes, 95. See also 107.

40. Wright, "Rethinking, Once Again, the Concept of Class Structure," 309-10.

41. Wright, Classes, 95. After reviewing the difficulty in using "skills" as the basis for an exploitative class relation, Wright states: "In spite of this, I have continued to retain skill assets in the analysis of class structures. In particular, skill/credential assets play an important role in the analysis of the problem of the middle classes in capitalism. This link to the concept of class, has not, however, been theorized satisfactorily." On the previous page, he "retains" organization assets after expressing similar doubts concerning their adequacy as the basis for an exploitative and thus relational class.

42. Erik Olin Wright, "Exploitation, Identity, and Class Structure: A Reploy to My Critics," chap. in Wright et al., The Debate on Classes, 194-95.

43. Ibid., note 9.

44. Ibid., 195.

45. Marx, Capital, vol. 3, 604-5.

46. Wright, "Rethinking, Once Again, the Concept of Class Structure," 339-40.

47. Ibid., 308.

48. Ibid., 308-9.

49. Ibid., 332.

50. Ibid., 335.

51. Ibid., 336.

52. Ibid., 347.

53. Ibid.

54. Ibid., 336-37.

55. Ibid., 338.

56. Marx, Capital, vol. 3, 797.

57. Marx, "Appendix," 951.

58. Wright, "Rethinking, Once Again, the Concept of Class Structure," 348.

59. Ibid., 339, note 90.

CHAPTER 11

"QUANTITY" AND "QUALITY": SYMBOLIC DOMINATION, LOGOCRATS, AND THE AUTONOMOUS CAPITALIZATION OF PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE

The common rejection, by analysts of the "new" middle class strata, of the relevance of the Marxist concept of the petty bourgeoisie, which expresses the dialectical unity of both inclusion in and autonomy from capitalism, participation in and relative freedom from exploitation, leaves a void which proves difficult to fill. In the last chapter it was seen how Erik Olin Wright attempted to solve this problem through the concepts of "skill" and "organization assets" which contribute to the overall productive process, but also serve as a basis for an alternative form of society to that of capitalist ownership of the means of production. In part in response to the difficulties which were encountered in his approach, others have sought a solution by examining the ways in which professional activity is in a realm of its own, with a distinctive qualitative nature or cultural content. On such a basis, there is the possibility of "culture" or "knowledge" classes, the distinguishing feature of which might be precisely their isolation from areas of material

production. Such a "cultural class" could serve as the basis for opposition to the materialist profit-orientation of capitalism. This raises the further question of whether the ownership of ideas should be thought of as a form of "capital" at all, with its implication of exploitation, or if "knowledge class" relations follow their own distinct dynamic, along an entirely "new" social dimension.

In "Beyond Cultural Capital: Toward a Theory of Symbolic Domination," Bill Martin and Ivan Szelényi seek just such a basis for the "internal differentiation of the highly educated."[1] Their purpose is essentially political, that is, they want to be able to explain why some elements of the professionals and intellectuals are among the most conservative, or perhaps even reactionary supporters of the capitalist system, while others are at times in the vanguard of anti-capitalistic social movements.[2] They therefore oppose monolithic conceptions of the "newer" strata which do not allow for internally differentiated positions within the professions, and in turn for a division in politics. Drawing on the theories of Pierre Bourdieu and Alvin Gouldner on the one hand, and those of John Roemer and Erik Olin Wright on the other, they attempt to arrive at a synthesis which can identify two major segments within the professional "new class," one with an interest in maintaining, the other with a potential basis for opposing and even superceding, the capitalist system.

From Pierre Bourdieu, Martin and Szelényi take the concepts of cultural capital and symbolic domination.[3] In the view of Bourdieu, these are only relatively autonomous from material production and therefore from the "money capitalists" who control it. Those who own capital in the sphere of culture, and who are able to manipulate the symbols of social relations, have the ability to dominate both other "middle class" elements and the proletariat. Martin and Szelényi stress that for Bourdieu this is a subordinate role to the moneyed bourgeoisie, and that it does not imply a relation of economic exploitation, only one of symbolic dominance. "Cultural capital" therefore is only a metaphorical term. For Martin and Szelényi, it is in fact the independent and self-referential aspect of this realm that is most significant. Thus they stress that "the process of cultural reproduction may subordinate practical mastery of practices (of all sorts) to symbolic mastery of those practices," and thus,

> cultural practice itself can set up a categorical relationship between two groups: those who possess the cultural tools necessary to participate in theoretical construction of everyday techniques, and those who do not. Here, there is no outside agency or relation that underlies the domination of the "holders of principles" over the "mere practitioner." Instead, <u>the relation is purely within the system of cultural production.</u>"[4]

Martin and Szelényi protest, however, that Bourdieu "reverts back to some extent to a 'class reductionism," to an economistic view of classes. Thus for him cultural

capital still "reproduces the content of existing class relations," that is, capitalism.[5]

For Martin and Szelényi, however, it is the very separation of these two realms that they wish to explore.

> Of course, in a capitalist society children of the bourgeoisie are more likely to achieve symbolic mastery, but this is beside the point. The main point is that by symbolic mastery the "mere practitioner" is subjected to a new type of domination. In order to construct a theory of the power of intellectuals we must comprehend the anatomy of this symbolic mastery, just as Marxists had to develop a theory of the political economy of the capitalist mode of production in order to grasp power under capitalism.[6]

Symbolic mastery therefore operates as an independent system of domination, with a logic unrelated to the capitalist mode of production and exploitation. Though the two intersect, and the families of the bourgeoisie have the best opportunities to also gain cultural power, the control of symbols is a separate social realm that may serve as the basis for non- or anti-capitalism.

> It may be better, therefore, to define cultural capital not as an asset that simply allows the appropriation of mechanisms of the dominant culture but as one that allows the appropriation of symbolic mastery (without prejudging the relationship between symbolic mastery and a culture that corresponds to the interests represented by reproduction of existing class relations). We are inclined to believe that one should accept the metaphorical nature of the term capital in the concept of cultural capital. But, unlike Bourdieu's acceptance of this, our acceptance does not lead us to conclude that since cultural capital is not capital proper, it is in the last instance always subordinated to the logic of money capital.[7]

Symbolic mastery may generate its own relationships "outside" the dominant interests of the existing class

structure, and thus may constitute a non-capitalist realm embedded within capitalism. Those who control the cultural field do not necessarily serve simply to reproduce the society around them, but may represent an autonomous set of interests which reflect their power over those who have merely technical abilities, and no symbolic skills.

From this standpoint, for Martin and Szelényi, the "new class" theory of Alvin Gouldner offers both weaknesses and strengths as a "corrective" to Bourdieu. On the one hand, it treats cultural capital non-metaphorically, as an actual investment which brings with it economic reward, though more in the Weberian sense of market control than in the Marxist concept of exploitation.[9] This theory is, if anything, even more "economistic" than that of Bourdieu, and thus less acceptable to Martin and Szelényi for analysis of the "new class."[9] On the other hand, precisely because for Gouldner cultural ownership by professionals represents "real" capital, it has a basis for its own autonomous power.[10] And since professional knowledge conforms to the "culture of critical discourse," it has a qualitative element that has the potential for a more complete independence *from* and opposition to the "moneyed" capitalists than did the "symbolic mastery" of Bourdieu.[11] It is thus a firmer base for a "new" class with its own interests. However, Gouldner weakens the "qualitative"

uniqueness of the latter by including in it both "humanistic intellectuals" and "technical intelligentsia."[12]

For Martin and Szelényi, the theory of John Roemer and the work of Erik Olin Wright which is based in part on it, provide a useful "bridging" of the conceptions of Bourdieu and Gouldner. As they interpret these theories, under capitalism the "new" strata are in "contradictory locations" between the capitalists and the proletariat, where their possession of "skill" and "organization" assets allow them a degree of autonomy within their general subordination to capital. But in the post-capitalist period, possession of organizational positions and skills allows managers and professionals to emerge as "new" classes with their own forms of social organization and domination.[13] While generally finding this approach persuasive, Martin and Szelényi again object to its "rather narrowly economistic interpretation" based on income inequality, its "quantitative change" orientation, and thus its neglect of the "qualitative break," which leads it to "miss the much [more] crucial problem of political/cultural domination."[14]

Their own analysis reintroduces the "quality"-based concepts of Bourdieu and Gouldner into the work of Wright to heighten the differentiation of the "new class" in relation to capitalism. Drawing on various elements from

each of the above theorists to arrive at their own composite, they offer an initial summary, in which

> we entertain the idea that the knowledge of the highly educated may simultaneously have two different aspects or faces: one can be described as human capital, and the other as cultural capital. It appears to be reasonable to regard the highly educated as human-capital owners, owners of scarce and economically useful skills, who, through the scarcity of such skills, gain privileges and (some) power and may therefore be conceived of as junior partners in exploitation. However, many of the highly educated not only use complex and sophisticated technical skills but may at the same time exercise symbolic mastery and produce theoretical knowledge and are thus involved in the culture of critical discourse. To this extent they are also cultural-capital owners, making a self-referential claim to authority which is not derived from the economic usefulness of their skills. Moreover, if the circumstances are favorable, they may use their cultural capital to undermine all other authority in society.[15]

In other words, the acquiring of specialized skills which are useful in economic production represents the general "base" achieved by those with higher education, a quantitative level of learning which can be monopolized to give them both higher income and status, as "junior partners" in capitalist exploitation. But Martin and Szelényi go on to describe a second, qualitative element of knowledge, concerned with symbolic forms, theoretical concepts, and the culture of critical discourse. This sets its possessors off from both workers and capitalists, but also from those who are highly educated only in technical skills. It thus permits the possessors of symbolic mastery and theoretical knowledge to "make a self-referential claim

to authority" from which they may be able to undermine all other sources of power.

There are two main strengths to this initial analysis, in comparison with that of Wright examined in the previous chapter. First, Martin and Szelényi are able to restore a strong sense of the "middleness" of the professionals, that is, a clear basis for distinguishing them from both the capitalists and proletariat. Wright, as we saw, had trouble maintaining his analysis on just this point. His "skill assets" proved inadequate because they were only a quantitatively small and personalized part of the "universe" of social knowledge, and thus indistinguishable from other forms of capital in the means of mental production. Martin and Szelényi "solve" this issue by identifying a "qualitative discontinuity" between the kind of learning possessed by the professionals and those with less theoretical training. Second, they bring back to the discussion the importance of the location of the professions mainly in those areas of society not directly related to the point of material production, restoring a crucial distinction between the realms engaged primarily in culture and ideology, and those mainly concerned with economic productivity, technology, and management, in more direct service to capitalism.

At one point Martin and Szelényi flirt briefly with the possibility that technical and symbolic knowledge also

brings different economic rewards, thus providing a potential basis for their having different relationships to exploitation as well:

> This synthesis would then suggest an empirically testable hypothesis: those who are cultural-capital owners are more likely to collect "rent" on their investment in education--that is, they are more likely to gain a surplus from possessing cultural capital. Those who do not possess such cultural capital, who possess skills where technical aspects are dominant (human-capital owners), would merely expect a return of their educational investment over their lifetime earnings, with no rent.[16]

However, even without empirical testing, this division flies in the face of an intuitive sense that engineers, for example, often gain much more "surplus" than humanistic scholars, not to speak of struggling artists, those "purest" of the dealers in symbols. Second, it seems to leave open whether the "rent" obtained from intellectual labor merely allows the recapture of the surplus-value of its possessor, or also involves exploiting others. However, Martin and Szelényi do not pursue this direction in their analysis. In their determination to separate off a realm of "self-grounded authority of the knowledge possessor," and to get beyond a narrowly deterministic economism, they propose an ever more radical break with the concept of cultural capital.

Thus they first raise the problem of the personal character of professional knowledge, and its failure to be "consumed in production" in the same way as material

resources. But they themselves conclude that "these issues do not seem to be decisive for the theory of cultural capital."[17] More serious is the problem of the non-convertibility of professional knowledge, its differentiation into specialized areas which its possessor cannot easily alter. Thus it does not act like transferable, abstract "money capital," which can be converted from one form into another.[18]

Further, there is a contradiction between the ways in which Gouldner defines his "general" and "cultural" capitals:

> By defining capital in terms of its imputed contribution to economic productivity, he sought to imply that cultural-capital owners could dominate the processes of material production, just as owners of economic capital had. The danger, however, is that if Marxists can show that economic capital necessarily affects productivity whereas (as Gouldner is the first to admit) cultural capital need not, then the theoretical support for the notion of a dominant class of cultural-capital owners is undermined. For, in this case, owners of economic capital seem to have a more fundamental claim on control of economic production than a cultural bourgeois could ever achieve.[19]

The insistence by Gouldner on "defining capital as that which is imputed to contribute to economic productivity" thus blurs the qualitative distinction between his "two" capitals.[20] Moreover:

> A final drawback of Gouldner's definition of cultural capital is its failure to imply that the cultural bourgeoisie is distinguished simply by possession of a form of capital which the rest of the population does not possess at all. If one wishes to define a new class on the basis of cultural capital, it would seem to be necessary to locate another nonowning class (which is subordinated). To put it crudely, the

> criterion of a class theory as opposed to a stratification theory is precisely that classes are defined by qualitative or categorical differences rather than by the quantitative variations that differentiate strata.[21]

Thus a separate "cultural capital" is brought into question.

In fact, for Martin and Szelényi, the concept of culture as "capitalistic" is never more than a metaphor, a basis from which "to explore a new type of domination, one that has certain analogies to domination by money capital but that may be structured differently and may follow a different logic."[22] As their analysis proceeds, they increasingly question even this linkage, stating that this metaphorical usage "has created more problems than it solved."[23] In the end they more or less abandon it altogether:

> We are very uneasy about using the term <u>capital</u> (human or cultural) in analyzing power aspirations and claims for rewards or privileges by the highly educated. We are quite certain that it can only be done metaphorically, and we are not convinced that such usage is justified at all. We are also very uneasy about calling the relationship between the "knows" and the "know-nots" (to use the picturesque language of Nomad) "exploitation." We are aware that terminological precision is not insignificant. Metaphors can easily mislead us: by using the language of "capital," "exploitation," and "class" we can easily drift along the conventional routes of class analysis which were designed to comprehend the nature of capital owners' power and which may, therefore, be highly inappropriate to the analysis of the nature of the power of the highly educated. Still, at this stage we do not want to get bogged down in a terminological exercise.[24]

In this sense they resolve the contradiction between the two "capitals" as defined by Gouldner, by dropping any remnant relation to capitalism as applied to professional knowledge.

The break here is indeed radical. Martin and Szelényi state that all participants in the labor market appear to have some practical or technical mastery, with "the capacity to achieve the ends set by others, particularly by employers and clients," and their incomes will therefore "reflect the economic investments made by people with this kind of knowledge."[25] In contrast, "the cultural-capital aspect of the knowledge of the highly educated" and the "symbolic mastery of practices" has a legitimacy which is "self-referential," and it is "dichotomously distributed and affords those who have it the capacity to exercise domination over those who do not."[26] Therefore:

> This aspect of the knowledge of the highly educated does not conform to any laws but its own--even in the final instance, its character, objects, development, and political implications cannot be deduced from the demands or interests of other groups, such as capitalists or workers. Finally, we can hypothesize that the relationship between this facet of knowledge and income is not dependent on the economic investment in education necessary for its acquisition. In other words, it is the "imputed," not the "real," relation to productivity that matters in income distribution for this aspect of the knowledge of the highly educated.[27]

Here the break with capitalism is complete and total, and there is the basis for an entirely new and "self-referential" class:

> If . . . symbolic mastery becomes dominant in the knowledge of a segment of the highly educated, the logic of knowledge production conforms to the laws of CCD [the culture of critical discourse] and the interests of the knowledge producers, not to the demands of the capitalist economy.[28]

It is here that "anticapitalist political attitudes are likely to emerge where the logic of symbolic domination contradicts that of capitalist appropriation."[29]

The value of the differentiation which Martin and Szelényi are in this way able to achieve between different strata of the "highly educated" comes, however, at the cost of dropping, or at least putting in abeyance, any reference to exploitation, or to the analysis of classes which rests on that relationship. Their reintroduction of a "qualitative discontinuity" in the aspects of different class formations in fact leads them to propose a break in the unified criteria by which the classes of modern society can even be analyzed. Thus they call for an entirely different methodology by which to study the "new class":

> By methodological economism we mean that his [Gouldner's] theory assumes that knowledge monopolists' power is structured in the same way as that of owners of economic capital. In analyzing the power of the new class he effects a methodological <u>imitation</u> of Marxist class analysis rather than realizing that he needs a new method to describe the new type of domination.[30]

But the issues they have left behind in reaching this conclusion are not thereby disposed of adequately. In particular, the question of exploitation cannot be

relegated even temporarily to that of a "terminological exercise."

For the problem remains that regardless of the "qualitative" aspects of the knowledge by which professionals establish their positions of domination over those less educated, the economic relations which result will still take a "quantitative" form. This includes the ability to share in the capitalist exploitation of surplus-value appropriated from the proletariat. Such relations have their own class content, regardless of the degree to which they rest on claims to an apparently "self-referential" discourse. The attempt by Martin and Szelényi to discover a "qualitative" basis for professional domination, in other words, is so radical that it strips their theory of virtually any consideration of the relation to "quantitative" production and economic exploitation. But professionals too may be exploited, or exploiters, or relatively independent from either of these conditions, and they are thus part of the "existing system of classes." These class relations are in turn based in a common system of material production, even if some strata are tied to it indirectly, and their contribution is only "imputed." Thus in examining the classes to which professionals belong it is necessary to restore the analytical unity between the "quality" of knowledge, and the "quantity" of production and exploitation.

Cornelis Disco offers both a critique of Martin and Szelényi and an attempt to reintegrate the qualitative and quantitative elements. The latter alone, he agrees, is not sufficient:

> If the only concern of a new class is with its incomes, it is indeed hard to see how intellectuals in a capitalist society could be interested in anticapitalist politics or economic arrangements--certainly, a prerequisite for a class that is held to be a serious challenger to capitalist hegemony. The horizon of such a new class would have to remain restricted to professionalization projects aimed at cornering markets in expertise and could not be expected to include opposition to capitalism as such.[31]

The qualitative element must therefore also be involved: "The capitalizable resource on the basis of which intellectuals may make a bid for class power consists of particular styles of discourse and derivative bodies of specialized knowledge and theory-based skills."[32] The relation which allows them to utilize their monopolization of certain "qualitities" of their learning to claim a portion of the "quantities" of material production of capitalist society is what remains to be explored. Disco states:

> The university . . . in contrast to its environment and the conditions chronically prevailing there, has putatively been an enclave of "free speech," a place where one could speak one's mind--more or less--and get away with it.
>
> The tacit assumption underlying the cultivation of such a deviant culture of critical discourse has, of course, been the conviction that persistent and thorough criticism was at least a necessary condition for the growth of knowledge--or, more cynically, that the appearance of persistent and thorough criticism was

> a necessary condition for the acceptance of academic knowledge as superior.[33]

This implies that, while a degree of autonomy may be necessary for professionals to generate certain kinds of "higher learning," if they were in fact entirely "self-referential," it is unclear what value society, and the capitalists in particular, would place on their activity, or why they would be rewarded for it.

Here it is not enough to reduce the issue to whether or not their knowledge contributes directly to material productivity. The larger question is what relation the "highly educated" have to the class system under which production is carried out. Thus they may be useful to capitalism, but in ways which are more indirect, allowing the professions a greater autonomy than employees who are primarily engaged in material productivity and the creation of surplus-value. Those who control production would not surrender income to someone who understands such work on a highly theoretical or symbolical plane, unless that "higher" knowledge contributes in some way either to productive activity or to the overall maintenance of the society in which it is carried out. Without such a relation, there would no longer seem to be any basis by which professionals could assert domination, much less the ability to practice exploitation, over others. Institutions such as universities may seem to stand

"outside" material production and the primary class relationship. But this does not mean that the knowledge they generate exists as a purely "qualitative" realm which "even in the final instance" is isolated from the "laws" of the capitalist relation of classes.

The concept of an entirely "self-referential" aspect to the professionals thus appears flawed, for their autonomous "quality" is necessary precisely to carry out the "quantitative" roles they perform within material production and the "existing system of classes". This interdependency gives them their growing powers:

> Knowledge, in other words, is not the key to new class power by virtue of its ability to command extraordinary money incomes but by virtue of its ability, in the monopolistic form of "cultural capital," to exploit dependencies arising from the relative lack of crucial kinds of knowledge among other social groups. The key to the rise of a new class in capitalist societies, of course, is that the lack of knowledge increasingly threatens the process of the accumulation of money capital itself at corporate, national, and international levels.[34]

The capitalists, in other words, need the mental contributions of the professionals, and this creates dependencies which the latter can exploit. This dependent relation carries with it both the ability to share in capitalist exploitation of the proletariat, and the potential to challenge the rule of the "big" bourgeoisie.

> The point, however, is not that intellectuals thereby become the recipients of extraordinary salaries (although this may well serve as both a motivation and a means of control) but that they come to hold authoritative disposition over increasing masses of liquid and embodied money capital, both private and

> public. Whether this is, or can develop into, a substantial challenge to capitalist hegemony is a matter for closer analysis.[35]

In analyzing such relations and potential challenges, however, as Disco warns: "Vague Hegelian formulations about the primacy of symbolic over material production do not turn the trick."[36]

Any "need," as Disco correctly points out, is relative and contingent. The power which derives from the control of a given resource is thus limited by the dependencies it creates. This is particularly relevant to the limits on professionalism, for

> unless these field-specific projects can be carried over into other fields, the local domination achieved can only be contingent on the weakness or indifference of closure-elites in other fields. The establishment and maintenance of a capital with society-wide currency, therefore, will require persistent efforts to abridge the autonomy of "alien" fields in such a way that correspondingly induced dependencies become more salient for participants in an "alien" field than the dependencies they may generate among themselves. Such fields become, in effect, "colonized" by the alien capital.[37]

This relativity and contingency is crucial in addressing the "self-referential" character of the professional "new class." Some needs, as Disco correctly states, are more basic than others. Control of them opens "a possible route to capital formation--and, consequently, to class formation."[38] What is required to achieve this kind of capitalization is the ability to "enclose" a resource "which is held to be necessary for life to go on at a

certain level; it is something that somebody, in some specific time and location, needs."[39] But the power of each need depends on the degree to which it is indeed critical to the lives of others. For "needs," of course, can even be purely recreational or aesthetic, and those who monopolize land which can be enjoyed by others, or artistic talents, can therefore also capitalize their resources. The power that such forms of monopolization, in and of themselves, have over the general social body will be very limited, however.

Here the point made by Disco about the "field" of effective control is relevant. Those who specialize in the less basic or more narrowly defined social areas may indeed exercise power over those who have reason to satisfy these particular needs, but they are unlikely to have much control beyond their specialties. They may wax famous, powerful, and even wealthy within a university, for instance, but the extension of their power will depend on the capacity which they have to contribute to activities outside their fields of specialization. The very exercise of their "self-referential" knowledge in broader circumstances, therefore, is both a means of extending their own control, but at the same time a form of entanglement with the "demands and interests of other groups" who require their services. Thus any attempt to move beyond the immediate areas in which they practice

their "culture of critical discourse" will to the same degree weaken their own isolation as professionals from the "outside" world.

Those who "enclose" professional knowledge thus may have the ability to dominate and even exploit those who lack it, and the qualitative character of their learning may indeed be a basis for autonomy from or even opposition to the capitalist class. But their ability to utilize theories or symbols more broadly to assert a dominant role in society will depend precisely on the degree to which they are willing to abandon "self-referential" concepts and reengage directly the needs of material production and the "existing system of classes." As Gouldner stated:

> The influence of the New Class spreads to the investment of capital as well as the management of production. The old investing class is slowly transformed into a privileged but functionless status group, into a "nobility" without function in production and administration.[40]

Whether or not one accepts the historical accuracy of this analysis by Gouldner, to the extent that the "new class" succeeds in such a transformation, it must assume an increasingly direct management of all the productive resources of society, and thus the responsibility for whether these are utilized efficiently, and in turn for the reproduction of the entire class system.

The same relation holds even if the assumption of control by the professionals is only a partial one within an organization, for

> though formally subordinate to executive heirarchies, professionals within bureaucracies are able to exploit dependencies arising from lack of knowledge and consequent uncertainty to achieve a measure of control over decision making. Though this is cast in the face-saving structure of "consultation," it nevertheless acts to limit the scope of the "norm of hierarchy." Successful challenges of this kind are of crucial importance, especially in the field of state power.[41]

Here we have an important affirmation of the ability of the professionals to maintain a high degree of autonomy, and even a share of organizational control, within the structures dominated by other classes. In the very process of assuming this "control over decision making," however, the professional also takes on responsibility, at least in part, for the functioning of these organizations, and thus potentially of the entire society. The exercise of knowledge by the professionals here again loses much of its "self-referential" quality, and more or less in proportion to the degree that they assume a direct, if only partial, control over institutions which are engaged in material production or the maintaining of social order. The isolated exercise of "symbolic mastery," in other words, becomes class power only to the extent that it increasingly "dirties its mind" with the world of basic needs, and the "demands or interests" of existing classes.

The "qualititative" basis of professional autonomy therefore can only be understood in its dialectical relation to the "quantitative" ways in which wealth is produced and distributed in all of society. The professions do not exist as something apart from the system of production of material goods, on which they too depend, nor from the exploitation which accompanies it and in which they participate. Under capitalism, their very autonomy is largely maintained, as it were, at the sufferance of the capitalists. While this autonomous role has a partially independent basis in the degree of control which they have over certain areas of knowledge, they are able to assert their own "self-referential" power only within severely limited realms. To the extent that they attempt to broaden their areas of control, and even to challenge the capitalists for power, they are themselves forced to take over the productive functions and maintenance of the social order carried out by the latter. But this increasingly involves a direct and potentially exploitative relation to all other classes, and in particular the proletariat. Here a purely "self-referential" role is even more an illusion.

Thus far from being the weakness that Martin and Szelényi consider it, the strength of the analyses made by Bourdieu, Gouldner, and Wright, and in turn by Disco, is that they maintain the "economistic" relationship between

the "qualitative" cultural realm and the "quantitative" area of material production and exploitation. The "self-referential" element in the professions is thereby kept in perspective, and exists only in relationship to the general productive system and existing class structure. The actual mechanisms by which their controlling power and exploitative relations are exercised by professionals, however, must still be analyzed. Disco offers a "pluralistic" conception:

> In venturing a general theory of capital, . . . we should be sensitive to the fact that capital--any capital--is not some kind of palpable object but is itself a historically produced structure of domination/dependence. One, but only one, aspect of this domination is the ability to extract exploitative incomes from dominated/dependent populations. Insofar as the social construction of a capital good can be said to underlie class formation, members of that class will also seek to reconstruct the world as one in which possessors of its capital good legitimately hold sway in all areas of life.[42]

He later expands on this as the basis for class analysis:

> This theory must be capable of expressing the idea of class conflict between contending capitalist classes, each of which has the ability to proletarianize populations along different dimensions--even if the populations in question are in large measure one and the same.[43]

The question, however, remains of the nature of these "contending capitalist classes," and the basis of their struggle for power. Disco himself fails to explore in depth exploitation as practiced by professionals under capitalism, and whether and in what ways it may really operate "along different dimensions," even if the

proletarian population is "in large measure one and the same."

Charles Derber, William A. Schwartz, and Yale Magrass, in Power in the Highest Degree: Professionals and the Rise of a New Mandarin Order place the same question of the relationship of the "qualitative" and "quantative" aspects of class in historical perspective, while offering a detailed analysis of the forms which professional autonomy takes organizationally in advanced capitalist society. Thus their study again raises the issue of whether there are "knowledge classes" which operate along a "different dimension." As these authors make evident, the monopolization of ideas has been a source of power throughout history, not only by dealing with the cultural and ideological realms, nor even such matters as life, death, and healing, but by "enclosing" areas of thought considered useful in production, or which reproduce the "existing system of classes."

Drawing on anthropology, they show the "dual" powers of magic: "The shaman's control grew partly from monopolies of magical knowledge about economic and other practical matters" such as "'the regulation of the weather, or any other object of general utility.'. . . Spiritual and material knowledge were woven together in a seamless magical quilt that the shamans wrapped around themselves as a single fabric bringing power."[44] Thus:

> Magic totally encloses the mind, binding the Azande to the witch doctor. Like science it is a comprehensive "logical system" with its "own rules of thought." For the Azande, it explains everything from "blight seizing the ground-nut crop" to human sickness and death.[45]

Here it is evident that even the "self-referential" character of magical knowledge "with its own rules of thought," is closely related to productive processes and the daily problems of life. It may very well have included "real" learning about seasonal patterns, for instance, as well as the "imputed" role of magic.

In this interrelation with production, control of ideas was always of necessity shared with those who were the producers.

> While their magic infused all practical activity and was, like science today, an economic source of political power, shamans did not completely monopolize economic knowledge in any tribal society.[46]

So too in more developed class societies: "Ancient Egyptians, like members of tribal societies, attributed agricultural success to practical, widely known farming techniques, combined with specialized magical knowledge monopolized by priests."[47] In its turn, the medieval Church in Europe played a similar role:

> In the Middle Ages, many Europeans believed that priestly powers to ward off sins or to bless the fields and make them fertile ('every harvest is a miracle') came directly from God to a chosen few, under the aegis of the church.[48]

But the relation to material productivity went well beyond this:

> The church contributed to production directly through its monastic orders, which were a prime source of improvements in building, timekeeping, printing, record keeping, and agriculture. Economic and otherworldly knowledge were fused in a seamless religious web owned and controlled by the church.[49]

Thus even the most developed "symbolic" realms of thought, such as magic and religion, did not operate historically in an entirely "self-referential" form but in fact were inseparably interrelated with the sphere of production and with the "demands and interests" of others in the "existing system of classes."

Yet these authors also assert a unique role for knowledge, a "qualitative" character distinct from other resources, which gives its possessors class powers in a special "logocratic" form, that has recurred throughout history:

> "Logocracy" is to magicians, priests, craftworkers, and professionals what capitalism is to capitalists, feudalism was to lords, and slavery was to ancient patricians. In logocracy, those possessing knowledge--not those who invest capital--control and profit from economic enterprises and occupy the highest seats of government.[50]

This form of social control has existed "imperfectly--in history. From earliest known times until the rise of capitalism, knowledge classes have, to a degree, been ruling classes."[51]

> In the Middle Ages, clergymen's spiritual/material knowledge helped make them, like the Egyptian priests, something close to a logocratic ruling class. Of course, the clergy shared power with feudal lords and the king, and much of the church's own power derived not from its theology, but from its vast land holdings, army, and Inquisition. But the church unquestionably

> gained much of its power by providing knowledge of life's uncertainties, both spiritual and material.[52]

Even more powerful were the Chinese mandarins, who combined literary skills with production and administration functions:

> The Confucian scholars justified their rule on the grounds that they alone could guide Chinese society according to its own richest intellectual and moral tradition. . . . the mandarins stretched their undeniable competence in the Confucian texts to a claim of universal competence, qualifying them to manage the economy and coordinate social life in every detail: 'All mediating and administrative functions were carried out by the scholar officials. They prepared the calendar, they organized transport and exchange, they supervised the construction of roads, canals, dikes, and dams.'"[53]

The Chinese mandarin class was "perhaps the purest logocracy ever seen," and "'held all the power and owned the largest amount of land.'"[54] Yet in fact, they too only shared control, subject in the last analysis to the authority of the hereditary imperial family and lords, who dominated the overall system.

These historically "ruling" forms of learning in turn lost much of their power when forced to meet the new material needs of modern society, and changing class and international relations:

> Capitalism brought science and other secular knowledge as alternative wisdom to nurture people's economic destinies, if not their souls.
>
> Spiritual/material knowledge could not compete with the rising secular/material knowledge in delivering earthly goods--and as the latter blossomed, the church's enclosure of the mind slowly weakened.[55]

The rise of the university and its gradual casting off of church authority was central to this development, as clerical concepts were replaced by those of rationality and scientific examination, and its further expression, the "culture of critical discourse." Similarly, the mandarin class and Confucianism were overthrown when they no longer proved adequate to meet the challenge of European power in the form of modern industry and science, and in particular technologically advanced military force. New intellectual trends arose to deal with the "demands and interests" of other classes, beginning a bitter struggle over the nature and control of the means of mental production in China which still rages today.

The present power of professionals is therefore only the latest form of the monopoly of knowledge, which has emerged out of struggles with many different pre-capitalist systems of thought. Instead of the authority of religion or of ancient texts, and an interdependence with royal or imperial patrons, professional claims now rest on their putative contribution to public needs, on maintaining the productivity and reproducing the class relations of the bourgeois social order, and on rational thought and critical discourse. In this modern form, the more cultural or symbolic functions and those in the material realm, like all aspects of capitalist society, have in certain respects become increasingly specialized and autonomous from each

other. The university is home to those who seem most purely to pursue knowledge for its own sake. The question nevertheless remains whether such institutional separation houses a qualitatively distinct and entirely "self-referential" professional stratum.

The specific conceptual form through which Derber, Schwartz, and Magrass analyze the autonomous organization of the modern professionals is the "logofirm." This is "logocracy" brought down to the scale of a single enterprise or corporate department:

> Unlike conventional capitalist corporations and government agencies, logofirms put professionals firmly in the drivers seat, tying both ownership and control to knowledge credentials. "Internal logofirms," are nests--such as corporate legal departments--that salaried professionals have built for themselves in corporations and government. . . . internal logofirms offer professionals a taste of mandarin power, but deny them full ownership and control.[56]

The crucial distinction of the "logofirm" is organizational form, where

> ownership is legally restricted to credentialed experts rather than, as in the traditional corporation, to anyone with capital to invest. . . . And allocation of rights among owners is largely separated from the amount of capital each may have invested in the enterprise.[57]

This does not mean that they are indifferent to making money: "Logofirms have capitalist elements, for they pursue profit like other firms. But they use a different yardstick for allocating both earnings and ultimate control."[58] Investment in physical plant does bring certain

rewards, but it is generally subordinate to the income derived from professional performance. Formulas vary, being "typically partly logocratic and partly capitalist."[59] Distribution of surplus is usually tied at least partially to the amount of business brought in by the given partner, or to the actual professional labor they perform. The senior partners share control more or less equally, and either perform management roles themselves, or turn these over to hired non-professionals.

These relations carry over to the "internal logofirm," where relative autonomy continues for salaried professional employees.

> Dependence on sponsors--that is, employers or other providers of capital--limit professionals' ability to act independently. While employee professionals do not control their organization, they tend to share with their logofirm colleagues considerable autonomy, supervisory power, and a voice in shaping the division of labor and directing the enterprise. In essence, they have created internal logofirms, which imitate the autonomous ones.[60]

Here there is necessarily some loss of independence to the employer, but the separate ownership of knowledge still remains. Thus the "self-regulatory" aspect of professionalism continues, but the degree of autonomy tends to vary with the institution:

> Internal logofirms are more robust in the nonprofit sector, where professionals have greater independence from capitalist power. In universities particularly, professionals have created impressive logocratic enclaves. While the university administration sets the overall parameters, each department functions as a semi-autonomous internal logofirm. Within their own

> departments, tenured faculty are like senior partners or master craftsmen. . . .
>
> . . . University administrators are hindered from usurping control because ostensibly, at least, they lack relevant technical knowledge. On the same logic, faculty deny a say to students and non-professionals. Through knowledge claims, faculty have been able to sustain some ownership rights despite being employees.[61]

The same kinds of relations exist for doctors in some hospitals, and the legal departments of certain corporations, though even in the universities, the tendency is to be "increasingly driven by marketing and cost accounting," and to "imitate modern business":

> The self-governing community of faculty, if it ever existed, has given way to bureaucratic and corporate control, with top managerial powers clearly removed from knowledge workers."[62]

The power of the latter, therefore, is in the last analysis exercised only "in ways that do not threaten the administration."

These concepts advanced by Derber, Schwartz, and Magrass are important in several ways to the discussion of professionalism. First, they clearly draw the historical link between the "new" professional monopolizers of knowledge and the innumerable past forms of this same phenomenon. Second, they firmly reestablish the relationship between the cultural and symbolic realms of professionalism, and material production and economic power. They particularly stress this point in their critique of others:

> Szelenyi and Martin shed the baggage of economism. They recognize real differences between knowledge and

> capital as power resources. They highlight the crucial role of culture in the power of knowledge classes. And they note the real political differences between the poets, writers, and professors (alleged to have mainly symbolic mastery) and the engineers and industrial chemists (alleged to have mainly practical mastery) that Gouldner unites in a single new class.
>
> But Szelenyi and Martin fail to recognize that the secret of professional authority--whether the doctor's, the writer's, or the engineer's--lies in the intertwining of "symbolic" and "practical" mastery.[63]

It is this "marriage of theory and practical skill, but also the fusion of cultural and economic power," as Gouldner maintained, that is crucial.[64] As they point out, however, this is correct only if it is understood not in a simplistically economistic sense, but as part of a general system of classes. Finally, in their concepts of "logocracy" and "logofirm" these authors identify knowledge as a "qualitatively" separate area of power, and are able to account for the various organizational forms which it takes under differing social conditions. Most important here is that the realm of professional authority, especially in the fields of culture and politics, can exist in relative autonomy even within social areas under non-professional control.

It is on just this point, however, that Derber, Schwartz, and Magrass exhibit both the strengths and the limits of their own analysis. On the one hand, they correctly stress that the control of knowledge can itself be the basis for class position and power. The difficulty

arises in the way they separate this realm off "qualitatively" from other productive resources. Thus:

> Knowledge, capital, and labor are the three basic factors of production. Each is essential to produce <u>all</u> goods and services in <u>all</u> societies and eras. . . .
> A group that controls one of the three factors of production can wield vast power. Medieval lords monopolized land--the most important form of capital in the Middle Ages--and thereby dominated the serfs. Nineteenth-century robber barons held sway over workers because they controlled the crucial capital of the age: money. Such mastery, rooted in control of a resource that everyone needs to survive, is what Karl Marx called class power. But Marx failed to recognize that monopolies of knowledge can bring class power as surely as monopolies of capital.[65]

This passage is a terminological nightmare, which mixes at a minimum apples and oranges, and probably pears as well. We are first given what seem to be the three essential "factors of production . . . in <u>all</u> societies and eras," labor, knowledge, and "capital" which here seems to stand for the material resources such as land and machinery. But then "money" also turns out at times to be one of the crucial "capitals," even though it is evident that it is an abstract measure that can buy any of the other three. "Capitalism" is in addition used throughout the book in its more usual sense, as the specific relations of one form of society. Thus the same term serves for the material base of all societies, as the monetary equivalent of every factor of production, and as the relationships which mark a particular system of classes and of exploitation.

This muddle is an extremely old error, dating back to the early classical economists. Marx criticized in his day those who jumbled together forms of production and productive elements:

> The folly of identifying a specific social relationship of production with the thing-like [ding-liche] qualities of certain articles simply because it represents itself in term of certain articles. . . . On the one hand, we name the elements of the labour process combined with the specific social characteristics peculiar to them in a given historical phase, and on the other hand we add an element which forms an integral part of the labour process independently of any particular social formation, as part of an eternal commerce between man and nature. By confusing the appropriation of the labour process by capital with the labour process itself, the economists transform the material elements of the labour process into capital, simply because capital itself changes into the material elements of the labour process among other things.[66]

Even the classical economists "subsequently correct . . . these illusions," which are "a very convenient method by which to demonstrate the eternal validity of the capitalist mode of production and to regard capital as an immutable natural element in human production as such."[67]

But what applies to "material elements" can also apply to immaterial ones, and "knowledge" too can be treated in "ding-liche" fashion, thus becoming the basis of a class relation, confusing elements in the labor process with the "specific social characteristics peculiar to them in a given historical phase." The three-part formulation used by Derber, Schwartz, and Magrass is in fact nothing but the Trinity Formula of "capital--interest, land--ground-rent,

labour--wages," now "updated" by substituting knowledge as the third factor in place of the earth.

> On closer examination of this economic trinity, we find the following:
>
> First, the alleged sources of the annually available wealth belong to widely dissimilar spheres and are not at all analogous with one another. They have about the same relation to each other as lawyer's fees, red beets and music!
>
> Capital, land, labour! However, capital is not a thing, but rather a definite social production relation, belonging to a definite historical formation of society, which is manifested in a thing and lends this thing a specific social character. Capital is not the sum of the material and produced means of production.[68]

All such formulas thus fail to draw a line between the "qualitative" character of what is owned, and the "quantitative" aspects which determine its class relations.

On this basis, Derber, Schwartz, and Magrass inevitably fall into theoretical confusion when they attempt to treat "logocracy" as a continuum of history, distinct from and even in opposition to "slavery, feudalism, capitalism" and so on. The Church in the feudal era, for instance, drew its income in large part from tithes, an obligatory payment justified on the basis that the clergy guaranteed the protection of the faithful in both their productive lives and their eternal souls, just as the lords protected them in their villages, extracting in turn obligations of grain and labor. The clergy were in these relationships fully "feudalistic," not a separate "logocratic" ruling class. That this relation was

compounded by vast land ownership, and by ideological defenses and political "annointment" of the feudal system of classes, only makes their own participation in a single exploitative structure clear.[69] Engels stressed just this point:

> But the great international centre of feudalism was the Roman Catholic Church. It united the whole of feudalised Western Europe, in spite of all internal wars, into one grand political system, opposed as much to the schismatic Greeks as to the Mohammedan countries. It surrounded feudal institutions with the halo of divine consecration. It has organised its own hierarchy on the feudal model, and, lastly, it was itself by far the most powerful feudal lord, holding, as it did, fully one-third of the soil of the Catholic world. Before profane feudalism could be successfully attacked in each country and in detail, this, its sacred central organisation, had to be destroyed.[70]

Thus to speak of the Church as representing a class separate from that of feudalism as a whole requires more than simply that they based their power in large measure on the control of knowledge.

In China, to an even greater degree, the mandarins were the main support of what Marx called the "Asian mode of production," and did not represent an alternate system of exploitation. To assert that it was their control of learning, rather than of land, that was the foundation of their rule is thus at best arbitrary, and confuses a specific aspect of their system of class reproduction, their monopolization of education, with the underlying economic basis of their power. Thus "logocracy" is a useful concept in pointing out the central role of

knowledge for certain ruling classes, representing the power of intellectuals over material production and exploitative class systems. But this very fusion indicates that "logocrats" do not operate along a "different dimension" from other classes.

A similar theoretical contradiction results from the failure of these authors to analyze "quantitatively" the exploitation by modern professionals. They are extremely skimpy in exploring the ways in which the professions may exploit the working class. Thus they make only passing reference to exploitation of non-professionals in the "logofirm": "Professional knowledge is the only resource with an official claim on surplus. Professionals in the logofirms we studied received anywhere from twice to ten times the compensation of nonprofessionals."[71] And later, they add that

> doctors acknowledge incentives to "sweat" or exploit the nurses and office staff. By increasing work and reducing costs among their staff, they save their own time and free up funds for purchasing new equipment or temporary office assistance and occasionally for augmenting their own salaries.[72]

They note as well that, in turn, "professional employees must contend with cost-conscious administrators who exploit doctors much as some physicians exploit nurses and clerical workers."[73] Beyond these brief mentions, however, the discussion of the forms of exploitation, and their relation to the general system of capitalism, remain essentially

unexplored. This relative disinterest in the specific ways in which professionals exploit non-professionals and proletarians in fact turns out to be indicative of the larger problem in their overall analysis.

On the one hand they describe three critical elements of all production: labor, material means, and the knowledge which is necessary to productively bring these two together. These are indeed constants throughout history, and each has a qualitative nature which distinguishes it from the others. However, any of these factors can also be measured quantitatively both in and of itself and in its relationship to the other resources. This quantitative aspect "cuts across" the qualitative lines and thus must also enter in as one of the determinants of class analysis. "Capital," for example, is not equivalent only to material means of production, but also takes the form of the ownership of knowledge and the purchase of labor-power.[74] Capitalism is thus a particular relationship of these three factors, as are feudalism, slavery, and so on. If one owns or can purchase enough physical means of production, labor-power, or knowledge to live primarily off surplus-value, then one is a capitalist. This relation has nothing to do with the qualitative differences in these three factors. It is possible to own any of them capitalistically, with or without ownership of the other two, and any of them can equally be owned non-capitalistically. Thus the ownership

of enough "quantity" of land, industry, knowledge, labor-power, or their abstract valuation as money, is sufficient to make someone a capitalist without any other "qualitative" distinction. The primary difference is between those who own enough to live off the surplus-value of others, and those who own nothing and are exploited.

But in between are always those middle categories which combine elements of the other two, who own something, but not enough to prevent their having to perform labor as well. Under capitalism, this position is that of the petty bourgeoisie. Martin and Szelényi are therefore wrong when they assert that "quantitative" measures can only distinguish strata, while "qualitative" measurements determine classes. In fact quantity is dialectically related to quality in analyzing class. What distinguishes the petty bourgeois class "qualitatively" is precisely that they are concerned with the relative autonomy of their own labor, and not simply with the income they derive from ownership. But this "quality" is itself the result of the relatively small "quantity" of what they own. On the one hand, their property is sufficient to make them too participants in the capitalistic exploitation of the proletariat. But their position has also been adequate historically to make them at times "anti-capitalist," insofar as they resist exploitation and elimination at the hands of "big" capital. Thus they have historically

produced various forms of "socialism," starting well before the time of Marx. Here then are two "contending capitalist classes," big and petty, "each of which has the ability to proletarianize populations," but they are not "along different dimensions--even if the populations in question are in large measure one and the same." What distinquishes them, rather, is that the petty bourgeois role within capitalism is only "partial," and thus can potentially exhibit "anti-capitalist" aspects at times as well.

The petty bourgeoisie defend their autonomous "way of life" based on this combination of owning and laboring, regardless of specific occupations. No additional "qualitative" content is necessary to account for this. Like "logocracy," the "logofirm" is therefore a useful concept insofar is it delineates those situations in which ownership of knowledge is a primary basis for class power. However, no specific "quality" of their education is needed to assign professionals into various classes, nor to account for the forms which their organization takes. The "logofirm," in particular, is not as unique as Derber, Schwartz, and Magrass indicate. Many small farmers, for example, belong to processing and marketing cooperatives which have much the same characteristics. Here too, only those who farm can own shares, but ownership of the assets of the cooperative itself tends to be less significant than the amount of business each farmer brings to it. Thus a

given farm owner will primarily be rewarded on the basis of how much product they sell through the coop, which is the result of their own labor, and that of any "hired hands," in working their own small property. Control is generally "one farmer, one vote" regardless of the size of the farm or of its investment in the cooperative. A non-farmer staff may be employed and exploited, and profits are a complex mix of both capitalist exploitation of others and rewards for the production of the farmers themselves. The cooperative as a whole serves to protect the "way of life" of relatively small operators in their dealings with the bigger capitalists, who control the regional and national systems of processing and distribution.

Though exact parallels may not exist, the "logofirm" is thus simply one sub-category of the typical organizational structure of petty bourgeois cooperation. Ownership of knowledge, like that of land and machinery, can be the basis for this form, in which both small capital and the labor of the owners serve to determine income, and control is equally shared. Professional incomes thus are indeed "dependent on the economic investment in education necessary for its acquisition." The graduates of high-cost schools are generally better rewarded.[75] Therefore it is the money invested in higher education which is the basis of the "logofirm," precisely because for professionals here

is the crucial meeting place of their own small capital and labor.[76]

But this does not mean that the "qualitative discontinuity" in the character of knowledge which Martin and Szeleny explore is meaningless for a class analysis of the professionals. Precisely because material production and the exploitation for which it is the basis provides the primary divisions of class, those who occupy positions in the "superstructural" areas of culture, ideology, and the state are usually in a somewhat more autonomous relation in the "existing system of classes." Thus the Church, for instance, did at times play a relatively independent role within feudalism. The Chinese mandarinate, on the other hand, was so melded into the exercise of control over both material production and the political power that there is no real way to speak of their "autonomous" role as a class of "knowledge" owners, though from the most ancient times there were always dissident intellectuals who gave unwanted advice to the Emperors. With the rise of capitalism, the various arenas of social activity have become much more separated, and are bases for an enhanced autonomy. The more qualitatively distinct a given activity is from those needed for material production and thus from the central locus of the division of classes, the greater the degree of autonomous power its possessors may practice. Especially for professionals, a distinctive "culture of critical

discourse" may make it more likely that the autonomous "quality" of their labor will be valued over mere economic "quantity."

Contrary to what Martin and Szelényi assert, therefore, it is precisely the "quantitative" aspect of their relatively small ownership of knowledge that places most professionals in the petty bourgeoisie, while it is the "qualitative" difference that determines their stratification and often more liberal politics. Politically, in the full "logocratic" case, control is exercised over the entire society. In the "logofirm," it is the autonomy of those who monopolize knowledge from the principle division of classes under capitalism that is crucial. Their location in the "qualitatively" distinct arenas of culture, ideology, and the state, means that these "superstructural" realms may serve as loci for their autonomous class power, and that under certain historical circumstances this may be the basis for opposition to, or even attempts to overthrow the ruling classes.

Professionals may therefore have both the self-interest and the power base from which to act with more relative independence than do managers or technicians, whose activities have only a marginally qualitative distinction from those of the capitalist class itself. Those in the professions may thus be somewhat more likely to exhibit a degree of "anti-capitalist" sentiments. As

already noted, Derber, Schwartz, and Magrass note that this is particularly evident in the "non-profit" fields which have greater autonomy from the centers of material production and thus from the main arena of the conflict of classes in capitalism. On the other hand, in criticizing Gouldner, they bring to the fore the clash between the "new class" of professionals and the proletariat, and thus the ambivalence of the former as a base for anti-capitalism.

The use by Derber, Schwartz, and Magrass of such terms as "mandarin" to analyze the professionals is indicative of the non-rigorous approach they bring to this issue, however. They state that

> Gouldner does not seem to grasp the long-standing status of knowledge as a class resource. . . . Like many other new-class theorists, he discounts the crucial sense in which the "new" class is not, in fact, new."

Yet this criticism of Gouldner, that his examination of the professionals as a "new class" based on the power of knowledge lacks a relation to the role of other similar historical classes, applies also to Derber, Schwartz, and Magrass. Because they virtually ignore the question of exploitation and thus of the "quantitative" element of class analysis, their own conclusions stress the "newness" of the professional statrum without ever analyzing its similarity to the "old" petty bourgeoisie. Thus they dwell on the similarity of the professions to the feudal guilds,

but "jump over" the "old" petty bourgeois form that lies between them as an historical "bridge."

The professionals must first be analyzed in terms of their "quantitative" relations, to determine the classes to which they belong. With these basic class positions decided, it is then necessary to turn to various "qualitative" aspects in analyzing why certain strata are likely to develop more autonomous power, adopt various political views, and even take a lead in "opposing" capitalism, while maintaining their role in the "existing system of classes" and exploitation. Only in this way can contradictory internal and external relations, and the economics, politics, and ideology of each class and stratum be properly understood. Thus an adequate analysis of any social grouping must rest on an examination of both the "quantitative" and "qualitative" aspects of their relations, and the dialectical unity between them. Otherwise, stripped of its basis in the quantity of investment, the "class" of professionals becomes little more than an occupational definition based on the quality of their knowledge, unrelated to their economic position or internal differentiation. It also has no relations to others with similar quantitative degrees of ownership, like farmers or storeowners, since all that counts is the qualitative nature of what is owned.

This does not mean, of course, that the specific aspects of different occupations do not set them off, or that it is not part of what makes up their "quality of life," but this again is typical of those who own small farms and stores as well. Thus the quantity of economic ownership and production, and the quality of occupational role, each have their own "lives" which develop in some degree in isolation from the other. Quantitative growth produces qualitative change in class relations, while the quality of certain occupational endeavors in turn helps set the limits to the "boundaries" of ownership. Thus the "professional project" monopolizes educational investments quantitatively by erecting qualitative "walls" which cannot be easily breached. Like all petty bourgeois owners, their relatively small investment is what allows them to support their particular "way of life," combining aspects of both "capital" and "labor," but the quality of their work helps to maintain it as well. This the professionals share with all other petty bourgeoisie.

The essence of class analysis is thus to grasp the dialectical unity of these two aspects, in which the quantity of ownership both produces and, in turn, responds to qualitative change. Gouldner laid the groundwork in this respect:

> The possession of cultural capital both unites and separates the New Class from the working class. The New Class's possession of cultural capital is not unique, for all classes possess it in some degree.

> Since all have some cultural capital, how, then, does the New Class differ from others? In two ways: first, quantitatively--it posesses a relatively great stock of it, and a relatively larger part of its income derives from it. Second, qualitatively--its culture is a special one.[78]

Despite the unresolved weaknesses in his own analysis, Gouldner set a standard from which others have, unfortunately, departed. The class analysis of the professionals can only be correctly accomplished by restoring the unity of quantity and quality, and deepening our understanding of their dialectical contradiction.

NOTES

1. Bill Martin and Ivan Szelényi, "Beyond Cultural Capital: Toward a Theory of Symbolic Domination," chap. in Ron Eyerman, Lennart G. Svensson, and Thomas Söderqvist, eds., Intellectuals, Universities, and the State in Western Modern Societies (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987), 47.

2. Ibid., 16-18.

3. Ibid., 21-27. No effort will be made here to give a full explication or critique of the theories of Bourdieu. Rather, it is the interpretation of his ideas as utilized by Martin and Szelényi, in analyzing the class position of those who own "cultural capital" or have "symbolic mastery," that is of concern for this work.

4. Ibid., 26.

5. Ibid., 21, 26.

6. Ibid., 27.

7. Ibid.

8. See Alvin Gouldner, The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class (New York: The Seabury Press, 1979), 21.

9. Martin and Szelényi, "Beyond Cultural Capital," 28-29.

10. Ibid., 28.

11. Ibid., 31-33. The "culture of critical discourse" as defined by Gouldner in The Future of Intellectuals, (28-29, 34), is based on a justification of assertions "without reference to the speaker's societal position or authority, . . . prefers to elicit voluntary consent . . . on the basis of arguments adduced," has theoreticity and reflexivity, and is thus "relatively more situation-free, more context or field independent." See these pages for a fuller discussion of the characteristics

of the culture of critical discourse, and its relation to the autonomy of the "new class."

12. Ibid., 32. See also Gouldner, The Future of Intellectuals, 30.

13. Ibid., 17.

14. Ibid., 38, 42-43.

15. Ibid., 19.

16. Ibid., 30-31.

17. Ibid., 34.

18. Ibid., 35-36.

19. Ibid., 35.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid., 36.

22. Ibid., 27.

23. Ibid., 36.

24. Ibid., 43.

25. Ibid., 43-44.

26. Ibid., 44.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid., 45.

29. Ibid. The authors add, however, that: "Of course, we regard these two extremes as ideal types: the relation between symbolic and practical mastery in the knowledge of empirical categories of the highly educated is variable. . . ."

30. Ibid., 48-49, note 18.

31. Cornelis Disco, "Intellectuals in Advanced Capitalism: Capital, Closure, and the New-Class Thesis," chap. in Eyerman, Svensson, and Söderqvist, Intellectuals, Universities, and the State, 54.

32. Ibid., 57.

33. Ibid., 70.

34. Ibid., 57.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid., 61.

37. Ibid., 64-65.

38. Ibid., 67.

39. Ibid.

40. Gouldner, The Future of Intellectuals, 17.

41. Disco, "Intellectuals in Advanced Capitalism," 71.

42. Ibid., 56.

43. Ibid., 62.

44. Derber, Schwartz, and Magrass, Power in the Highest Degree, 20.

45. Ibid., 15.

46. Ibid., 20.

47. Ibid., 21.

48. Ibid., 17.

49. Ibid., 22.

50. Ibid., 18-19.

51. Ibid., 19.

52. Ibid., 21.

53. Ibid., 23.

54. Ibid., 22.

55. Ibid., 23.

56. Ibid., 125.

57. Ibid., 126.

58. Ibid., 127.

59. Ibid., 128.

60. Ibid., 130.

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid., 131.

63. Ibid., 213.

64. Ibid.

65. Ibid., 12.

66. Marx, "Appendix," 998.

67. Ibid.

68. Marx, Capital, vol. 3, 794. It should also be noted that Derber, Schwartz, and Magrass "lose as much as they gain." Since the earth and its non-reproducible elements have natural qualities, and finite limits which lend themselves to a "monopolized terrestrial globe," they are in certain respects the "fourth" factor in all productive systems, together with other material means of production, labor, and "science." They may thus have particular economic characteristics, for example, being possessed of use-value without containing labor-value, and yielding rent, though these again are specific to given social systems. Thus to jettison land in favor of knowledge is just to overcome one limit in the analysis made by Marx, by creating another in its place.

69. It also explains why poor parish priests sometimes identified more with the peasant masses than with the church hierarchy, an internal class division also seen today in "liberation theology."

70. Engels, "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific, Special Introduction to the English Edition of 1892," 103.

71. Derber, Schwartz, and Magrass, Power in the Highest Degree, 128.

72. Ibid., 132.

73. Ibid., 133.

74. Marx, "Appendix," 996: "In so far as . . . material elements of the labour process have been purchased by the capitalist, they represent his capital. But the same applies to labour itself. It too represents his capital, for the owner of the capacity for labour owns that labour just as effectively as he owns the other material conditions of labour that he has bought."

75. Of course return on a given education is only an average of all such investments, not a guarantee that a specific amount of capital will yield an exact percentage of profit. But this is true of how capitalism distributes its rewards generally. Moreover, as in the case of every petty bourgeoisie, professional income is also determined by the skill of the labor of the owner. Thus one person may make more of a relatively poor education than another does of graduating from a top university. But this too is typical, as one farmer may make the poorest and cheapest land bloom, while another ruins even the best and most expensive farm through negligence. On the average, nevertheless, good farmland both costs more and yields better returns than does poor soil.

76. By the same token, what defines a "farmer" is land, buildings, and machinery, not education, though they may possess the latter in varying degrees. Each of these investments has its own defining "quality," but what unites them in their petty bourgeois class position is their relatively small "quantity."

77. Derber, Schwartz, and Magrass, Power in the Highest Degree, 212.

78. Gouldner, The Future of Intellectuals, 27.

CHAPTER 12

MARXISM IS NOT A "TWO-CLASS MODEL," CAPITALISM IS NOT A "TWO-CLASS ECONOMY"

The question which must now be asked is this: Is there a deeper connection between the various authors who were examined above? Is there an underlying approach to this question which ties them together, despite what at first sight seems to be the completely opposite conclusions which they reach? Is there a mistake which they all share, which produces in turn the analysis of professionals as "workers," as "new petty bourgeoisie," as various "newer" classes, or in "locations" which have become so contradictory as to lose their value for clear class analysis? I believe that there is, and that it is widely held by many others as well. What is common to each of the above theorists of the professionals and managers is not the manner in which they define the classes of the "new" members of these occupations, but rather their misunderstanding of the role of the "old" petty bourgeois stratum. Though it occurs with a different twist in each case, essentially this is put forward as one variation or another of the following: the petty bourgeoisie is not really a class of capitalist society, it lies "outside" the

polarity of proletariat and bourgeoisie which marks capitalism, and it has been virtually eliminated by the polarization of classes which that form of economy produces. This belief in the fundamentally antagonistic relation of the petty bourgeois class and the capitalist economic system, and its disappearance as that mode of production progresses, makes it necessary for each of those analyzed above to account for the professional and managerial strata of modern capitalism by some means other than as a continuation of the "old" petty bourgeoisie.

In the case of Charles Loren this is simply by making virtually all of them "workers," while most of the other authors create "new" categories of classes to fill this void. Even Nicos Poulantzas, who seems to produce a continuation of the petty bourgeois class, in reality "starts over" and invents newer criteria which he can only artificially tie to the "old" petty bourgeoisie, in the process ballooning his "new" stratum grotesquely. Let us then examine just how this question is presented by these analysts. Once again, the Ehrenreichs start by giving their characterization of Marxism:

> The classical Marxian analysis of capitalist society centers on two classes and two alone--the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The other numerically large class of mature capitalist society, the petty bourgeoisie, lies outside of this central polarity, and is in a loose sense anachronistic: a class left over from an earlier social order, which undergoes a continual process of "proletarianization" (i.e., its members are progressively forced down into the proletariat). Meanwhile, the working class not only expands to embrace the vast majority of the working

> population, but also becomes more and more homogenous and unified.[1]

Though the Ehrenreichs reject the second part of this supposedly "classical Marxian analysis," which is why their "PMC" is needed, they do assert the above interpretation of Marxism as to the petty bourgeois class.

Thus the petty bourgeoisie may "be considered a 'residual' class . . . i.e., merely 'leftover' from another era," but the "PMC" is "a formation specific to the monopoly stage of capitalism.[2]

> The classical petty bourgeoisie lies outside the polarity of labor and capital. It is made up of people who are <u>neither</u> employed by capital <u>nor</u> themselves employers of labor to any significant extent. The PMC by contrast, is employed by capital <u>and</u> it manages, controls, has authority over labor (though it does not directly employ it). The classical petty bourgeoisie is irrelevant to the process of capital accumulation and to the process of reproducing capitalist social relations. The PMC, by contrast, is essential to both.[3]

This is not, then, merely a chronological difference, but a more basic one, as to which class lies "within" the capitalist system. The Ehrenreichs thus come forward to lead the "advance" over "classical" Marxism:

> Traditional Marxist analyses of capitalist society centered on the polarization between two classes and two alone--the capitalist class and the proletariat. We have presented a very different model, one which is meant to describe the class dynamics specific to monopoly capitalist society. In this model there is a <u>three-way</u> polarization, between the capitalist class, the working class and a third class which emerges in force only with the transition to modern monopoly capitalism--the Professional-Managerial Class.[4]

Thus pre-monopoly capital is "two-class," but monopoly capital is "three-class," and the Ehrenreichs believe they have built a whole new capitalist "model."

It is important to note that several of the authors who wrote essays in Between Labor and Capital critical of the position taken by the Ehrenreichs, nevertheless share their view of Marxism on this point. Thus Jean Cohen and Dick Howard tell us that: "Marx derives a two-class model from the structural analysis of capitalism. . . ."[5] Sandy Carter informs us:

> In regard to contemporary capitalist society and the sweeping changes in class structure occurring during the last half-century, Marxist theoreticians have gradually come to see the problem of the two class model while nonetheless being bound by it. It is agreed that a broad middle strata has come into existence, yet this development is not held to alter, in a fundamental way, the nature of the class struggle.[6]

So too, Michael Albert and Robin Hahnel speak of how "the Ehrenreichs' major point in the article in this book is to challenge the sufficiency of orthodox Marxist two-class analysis of the modern capitalist economy."[7] Finally, in the graph of class relations presented by Erik Olin Wright, the petty bourgeoisie, as representatives of "simple commodity production," lie as it were "outside," or to the side, of the "capitalist mode of production."[8] More than ten years later, as seen above, toward the end of The Debate on Classes, Wright still talks about how "the core of Marxist theory is an elegant and simple abstract picture of classes in capitalist society: a fundamentally polarized

class structure which constitutes the basis for the formation of two collectively organized classes,"[9] that is, an essentially "two-class model."

If the Ehrenreichs are, on this point at least, united with some of their critics, they are also tied by the same thread to at least one of those they criticize. Thus they do not have much use for those unwilling to be as equally inventive as they are, remarking rather disparagingly:

> Poulantzas refuses to break with Marx's two-class model, taking refuge in the dogmatic assertion that to "maintain that capitalism itself produces a new class in the course of its development" is "unthinkable for Marxist theory" (emphasis ours).[10]

But even though he may differ with them over the characterization of the "new" professional and managerial strata, Poulantas shares the view of the Ehrenreichs regarding the "old" petty bourgeois owners, as lying outside the fundamental two-class polarity of the capitalist system:

> The petty bourgeoisie is not a bourgeoisie smaller than the others; it is not part of the bourgeoisie at all, since it does not exploit, or at least is not chiefly involved in exploiting, wage labour.[11]

Instead: "Labour is chiefly provided by the actual owner or by the members of his family, who are not remunerated in the form of a wage."[12] Poulantzas thus concludes that:

> The common place . . . of the traditional petty bourgeoisie in the relations of production lies in the fact that the direct producer is in each case himself the owner of the means of labour, i.e. in the combination of ownership with the absence of direct exploitation of wage-labour. This petty bourgeoisie does not belong to the capitalist mode of production, but to the simple commodity form which was historically

> the form of transition from the feudal to the capitalist mode.[13]

Thus the "old" petty bourgeois class lies "outside" capitalism.

As a result, Poulantzas summarizes: "Marx and Engels already stressed the tendency for this petty bourgeoisie to be undermined with the establishment of the dominance of the capitalist mode of production and its reproduction."[14] They are replaced by the "new" petty bourgeois stratum, the members of which do not own means of production, but are employed as wage or salary labor. These formulations are similar to ones also used by Harry Braverman:

> If we are to call this a "new middle class," however, as many have done, we must do so with certain reservations. The old middle class occupied that position by virtue of its place outside the polar class structure; it possessed the attributes of neither capitalist nor worker; it played no direct role in the capital accumulation process, whether on the one side or the other. This "new middle class," by contrast, occupies its intermediate position not because it is <u>outside</u> the process of increasing capital, but because, as part of this process, it takes its characteristics from <u>both sides</u>. Not only does it receive its petty share in the prerogatives and rewards of capital, but it also bears the mark of the proletarian condition . . . as so much hired labor. . . .[15]

So too, Derber, Schwartz, and Magrass tell us that Marx emphasized a polarized capitalist system, ignoring other classes:

> The Marxist analysis of capitalism as a two-class system pitting capitalist against labor overlooks craft workers as a potential independent knowledge class, and fails to recognize how skilled workers can exploit the unskilled.[16]

Here again, it is the educated who provide the "middle class" that Marx supposedly "missed" in analyzing capitalist society.

At first sight, Charles Loren does not seem to fit among those holding this interpretation of the petty bourgeoisie. As was seen earlier, Loren understands that the petty bourgeois and capitalist classes blend into one another, that: "Out of the petty mode of production springs capitalism."[17] Yet as he proceeds it becomes clear that for him too the petty bourgeoisie is merely a "remnant" class of non-capitalist petty producers.

> Under capitalism, the petty producer hardly has a place in the sun. His individual production is more outmoded each day. He becomes a worker or he exists under the shadow of bigger property owners, the capitalists. He loses his own name, petty producer, and is called instead petty bourgeois. All of this goes to make the petty producer class the most nearly invisible class in history.
>
> What survives as a rump is the petty bourgeoisie.[18]

For his part, Loren tries to reverse this process, speaking constantly of this class under capitalism as "petty producers" and making the petty bourgeoisie the "invisible class." Thus though he states that: "The transition from petty producers to capitalists is embodied in the term petty bourgeoisie,"[19] yet when he earlier lists the three classes under capitalism they turn out to be "the working class, the capitalist class, and the class of petty producers."[20] This is not just a matter of semantics, because what Loren wants to prove is "the nearly complete polarization of United States society into a numerically

overwhelming working class facing a narrow but dominant capitalist class."[21] The easiest route to this "proof" is to dismiss the petty bourgeoisie by the method of turning it back into a pre-capitalist class eliminated by capitalism.

This in turn serves a specific political goal, for Loren is convinced only such a "completely polarized" country can move directly to socialism:

> The predominance of the working class in the United States, facing "its" capitalist class alone, defines the revolutionary goal of socialism, and the goal of socialism certifies that overwhelming weight of the working class. Therefore, it is natural for political tendencies that oppose the revolutionary goal of socialism to misrepresent the class structure of the United States, too. If a person or group does not accept a sizeable number of workers as members of the working class, then we expect the group to define the revolution in non-socialist terms. This is the case.[22]

Shortly after, Loren makes explicit what it means to "not accept a sizeable number of workers as members of the working class":

> In revolutionary circles, talk about a large petty bourgeoisie where there is none usually means that the speaker thinks of the petty bourgeoisie as the middle class. Ignoring the economic characteristics of the petty bourgeoisie, these persons use the term as no more than a fashionable equivalent for middle class. . . . Left groups that talk about a united front against imperialism, if they make an explicit analysis of classes, say that "petty bourgeoisie" is generally used to describe the strata in between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. That is, it is a middle class. Such definitions open the door to all the usual confusions about how to define classes. . . .[23]

That is, the petty bourgeoisie does not lie between the main classes in the capitalist economic system, but lies

"outside" them, only as a "rump" of the petty producers, who are in turn the non-capitalist class of small owners.

Anyone who does not accept this view, according to Loren, is "splitting the working class," a "capitalist apologist," an "opportunist," or perhaps worse.[24] But it is Loren who exhibits opportunism in blurring the distinction of the pre-capitalist and capitalist phases of the small producers and in using the terms interchangeably and arbitrarily as fits his subjective arguments. Loren wants it both ways, because he wants capitalism without the threat of a petty bourgeois class with whom the workers might have to come to terms. He sees no way around this except to oppose the petty bourgeoisie to capitalism by making it the embodiment of the pre-capitalist "petty producers." But as Loren says: "Marxists always make a clear analysis of classes. Where there is no class analysis, there is no Marxism."[25] But where, we must ask, is clarity in this constant confusing of the basic definition of the petty bourgeoisie, which must either be primarily a class of capitalist society or "outside" it.

I have drawn at such length on so many examples because it is important to note the ubiquitousness of these views and the many supposedly specific petty bourgeois characteristics pointed to, whether on the "micro" level of the use of "family" labor exclusive of "hired workers," or the "macro" plane of irrelevance in the transition to socialism. Common to all these analyses is that the "old"

petty bourgeois class is non-exploitative, outside the system of capitalist relations and of the process of capital accumulation. The unity of so many different analysts on this question underlies their radically different proposals for the class analysis of the "new" professional and managerial strata. In response, the first thing that must be said is that the analysis of capitalism by Marx was not a "model" at all. Of course there is a certain purely abstract character to the theoretical economic parts of Capital where the relations of capitalist production are explored. Even so, that work remains perhaps the richest exploration to date of the historic reality of capitalist society as it comes into being and develops, not to speak of the vast compendium of studies both by Marx and Engels which enormously expanded on these fundamental materials.

It is true that when the founders of Marxism first looked at the "middle classes" of capitalist society they saw them largely as the remnants of earlier modes of production, but even this was never taken as a simplistic "two-class polarity." Thus speaking of the origins of industrial capitalism, Marx wrote in Capital:

> The genesis of the industrial capitalist did not proceed in such a gradual way as that of the farmer. Doubtless many small guild-masters, and yet more independent small artisans, or even wage-labourers, transformed themselves into small capitalists, and (by gradually extending their exploitation of wage-labour and corresponding accumulation) into full-blown capitalists.[26]

Thus the petty bourgeoisie did indeed play a role in capitalist accumulation, contrary to what the Ehrenreichs and Braverman may have thought. However, because "this method corresponded in no wise with the commercial requirements of the new world-market,"[27] the bulk of early capital came directly from the merchants and usurers already in existence in the Middle Ages, from the conversion of great landed estates into capitalist enterprises, from the plunder of the colonies, and so forth.

The spread of these new powers did in fact drive into the proletariat vast numbers of petty producers, who either could not compete with the capitalist concentrations emerging around them, or who were forcibly expropriated, were driven to ruin by tax policies, and so on. To the extent that they did survive as capitalism spread, it was often as left-overs of a different economy. In particular, the paternalistic guild system, in which the journeymen and the apprentices were often rewarded in "education" rather than in kind or by wages, and the patriarchal and self-sufficient small farm were not capitalist in nature.[28] In their early works, Marx and Engels tended to concentrate on these differences in modes of production, both because they were still starkly revealed in their day, and due to the necessity of establishing clearly their analysis of the economy of capitalism. As early as the Manifesto, however, which pre-dated Capital, they already spoke, as we have

seen, of how: "In countries where modern civilization has become fully developed, a new class of petty bourgeois has been formed, fluctuating between proletariat and bourgeoisie and ever renewing itself as a supplementary part of bourgeois society."[29] At the same time they noted that: "Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletarian."[30] In essence the analysis of these two contradictory tendencies has formed the heart of the petty bourgeois "problem" ever since.

To reduce the question only to the second aspect of the contradiction is to misread Marxism and to misunderstand the very role of "the petty bourgeoisie, a transition class, in which the interests of two classes are simultaneously mutually blunted,"[31] not one lying outside the capitalist polarity. As was seen above, by 1847 Marx had already found that the petty bourgeois owners were sufficiently developed as a separate class, with their very own spokesperson in the form of Proudhon, to find it necessary to refute his views, in The Poverty of Philosophy. I will not repeat his arguments again, but only note the emphasis on the petty bourgeoisie as a class caught precisely--"between capital and labor." This is clearly not the description of a representative of a non-capitalist mode of production, but rather of the "middle class" under capitalism. Just three years later, Marx and

Engels were noting that in Germany "the republican petty bourgeoisie . . . cherish the pious wish of abolishing the pressure of big capital on small capital, of the big bourgeois on the small bourgeois."[32] Thus by the middle of the nineteenth century the petty bourgeoisie were already recognizable as representatives of capital. They were in fact avidly pursuing their own attempts to rise into the "big" capitalist ranks. Thus writing about the same country two decades or so later, Engels noted that: "As to the petty bourgeois, artisans and shopkeepers, they will always remain the same. They hope to climb, to swindle their way, into the big bourgeoisie; they are afraid of being plunged down into the proletariat."[33]

In turn, Lenin began his Marxist analysis of Russia on just this same question, and he was to continue examining its development throughout his life. Indeed, one can turn to Lenin almost at random to find material on this topic, because no other matter was so central both to the developing capitalism within Russia, and to the role of the majority of the population in the revolution. Thus in the second earliest work of his we have available, Lenin examined the conversion of "natural" economic relations into those of capitalism, and "the transition from commodity to capitalist economy, the differentiation of the commodity producers into capitalists and proletarians."[34]

> The existence of these two polarizing trends among our petty producers clearly shows that capitalism and mass impoverishment, far from precluding, actually condition each other, and irrefutably proves that

> capitalism is already the main background of the economic life of Russia.[35]

Thus a quarter of a century before the revolution, Lenin found that the Russian peasantry were already caught up in capitalistic relations, which formed the "main background" of the economy. This transition from natural to commercial, and from commodity to capitalist economic forms the peasants themselves referred to as "'depeasantising,'" because: "This processes signifies the utter dissolution of the old, patriarchal peasantry and the creation of <u>new types</u> of rural inhabitants."[36] It marked the end of their role as a feudal estate or even as small "free" subsistence farmers, and their reemergence as a class of capitalist society, as petty bourgeoisie, who in turn began to polarize "internally."

Thus from the beginning, when Lenin spoke of capitalism in Russia, he did not mean simply a shell of capitalist development surrounding the peasant economy, as it were, from the outside, but rather as something internal to it. Thus while many were

> giving up land, losing economic independence, turning into proletarians, . . . on the other hand, peasants are continually enlarging their crop areas and adopting improved farming methods, . . . are beginning to procure machines, and are renting allotments and are greedily buying privately-owned land.[37]

In handicraft industry as well, capitalism arose from within the ranks of the small owners themselves, so that

> the mass of handicraftsmen have been growing poorer and poorer, sinking into dire poverty and losing economic independence, while an insignificant minority have been growing rich at the expense of that mass, accumulating

> vast amounts of capital, and turning into buyers-up, monopolising the market, and in the overwhelming majority of our handicraft industries, have, in the end, organised a completely capitalist domestic system of large-scale production.[38]

Capitalism, then, is not some metaphysical category which surrounds and then destroys other totally "independent" modes of production, but in dialectical fashion arises also within and becomes a part of those forms of social economy, so that they themselves become capitalistic as a prelude to their own destruction. Unless this dialectic is grasped, it is impossible to understand the changes which occur in small commodity production, or the role of the petty bourgeoisie, not as a victim of capitalism only, but equally as its generator, as its seedbed. It is precisely this double character which most absorbed Lenin in his life-long and world-wide study of the development of agriculture although, as the revolution approached, he turned his concentration in greater part to the growing proletarianization and revolutionary role of the peasants.

It is impossible to review this extensive literature in any detailed way. But it is necessary to indicate some of the main features, which combat the very interpretations of the petty bourgeoisie which were found so widely attributed above to the "Marxist two-class model." The first real political-ideological battle Lenin fought was against those who isolated and romanticized petty production as something "outside" capitalism:

> The idealisation of small production reveals to us another typical feature of romanticism and Narodnik

> criticism, namely, its petty bourgeois character. We have seen that the French and the Russian romanticists are unanimous in converting small production into a "social organization," into a "form of production," and in contrasting this to capitalism. We have also seen that this contrasting of one to the other is nothing but the expression of an extremely superficial understanding, that it is the artificial and incorrect singling out of one form of commodity economy (large-scale industrial capital) and condemnation of it, while utopianly idealising another form of the same commodity economy (small production) . . . they invent for themselves a sort of abstract small production existing outside of the social relations of production. . . . Actually, the small producer, whom the romanticists and the Narodniks place on a pedestal, is therefore a petty bourgeois who exists in the same antagonistic relations as every other member of capitalist society, and who defends his interests by means of a struggle which, on the one hand, is constantly creating a small minority of big bourgeois, and on the other, pushes the majority into the ranks of the proletariat . . . there are no small producers who do not stand between these two opposite classes, and the middle position necessarily determines the specific character of the petty bourgeoisie, its dual character, its two-facedness.[39]

Thus it gravitates "towards the minority which has emerged from the struggle successfully," that is, the most capitalistic, and is hostile toward the "'failures,' ie., the majority. The more commodity economy develops, the more strongly and sharply do these qualities stand out, and the more evident does it become that the idealisation of small production merely expresses a reactionary, petty-bourgeois point of view."[40]

For Lenin, therefore, "'this mode of life' (the petty-bourgeois mode) leads to capitalism and to nothing else."[41] Those who reject this analysis, he noted, "should have proved one of two things":

> either that 'petty bourgeoisie' is a wrong scientific category, that one can conceive of capitalism and commodity economy without a petty bourgeoisie . . . ,

> or that this category is inapplicable to Russia, i.e., that here we have neither capitalism nor the prevalence of commodity economy, that the small producers do not become commodity producers, that the above-mentioned process of ousting the majority and of strengthening the "independence" of the minority is not taking place among them.[42]

So integral is the petty bourgeoisie to the development of capitalism, in other words, that it is inconceivable without that class. Nor is the relationship of petty to large-scale capitalist enterprise a static, passive, or one-sided one:

> The spread of small establishments among the peasantry extends commodity economy and prepares the ground for capitalism (by creating petty masters and wage-labourers), while the swallowing-up of small establishments by manufactories and factories implies that big capitalism is utilising ground that has been prepared. The simultaneous existence of these two, seemingly contradictory, processes in one country actually has nothing contradictory about it.[43]

This is because what capitalism destroys in the more advanced parts of the country is continually regenerated again in less-developed regions and industries.

To prove these points Lenin searched constantly for relevant statistical data, combatting the same misconceptions which today have such a tired ring. Thus in the 1890s in Perm Gubernia he found that

> 'handicraftsmen' who either hire themselves out or hire others, who exploit or are exploited, are already preponderant today. . . . Thus, about 66%, or nearly two-thirds, of the "handicraftsmen" have two fundamental points of similarity, and not of difference, with capitalism: firstly, they are all commodity producers, and capitalism is nothing but commodity production developed to the full; secondly, the specifically capitalist relations of the purchase and sale of labour-power apply to a large number of them.[44]

Therefore, "the facts show that there is no special 'handicraft form of production' (that is an invention of 'handicraft' economists), that the small commodity producers give rise to large capitalist establishments."[45] Some so-called "handicraftsmen" were in fact employing scores of workers. Lenin thus exposed all the myths which surrounded this petty commodity production, such as that "family" or "community" economy meant an absence of wage workers. Quite the contrary, those small producers with the largest families proved to be the very ones most capable of the expanded exploitation of hired labor:

> Clearly, the facts point to the very opposite of what the Narodniks would have them mean: the handicraftsman does, in fact, strive for profit, and by kulak methods; he takes advantage of his greater prosperity (one of the conditions for which is the possession of a large family) to employ wage-labour on a larger scale. Having a larger number of family workers than the other handicraftsmen he uses this to oust the others by hiring the largest number of workers. "Family co-operation,". . . is a guarantee of the development of capitalist co-operation.[46]

Two decades later Lenin still found it necessary to denounce those using such terms, to prove that "'family' farming is precisely petty-bourgeois, capitalist farming," and to complain of "'family' farms, applying this sentimental catchword to farms employing wage-workers!"[47]

So too, with the supposed uniqueness of the Russian "mir", for

> the "community" village does not at all constitute a special economic form ("people's production," etc.), but is an ordinary petty-bourgeois one. Despite the theories that have prevailed here during the past half-century, the Russian community peasantry are not antagonists of capitalism, but, on the contrary, are

> its deepest and most durable foundation. The deepest--because it is here, remote from all "artificial" influences, and in spite of the institutions which restrict the development of capitalism, that we see the constant formation of the elements of capitalism within the "community" itself."[48]

Capitalism, in other words, rises "internally" from the peasants, even where they are furthest from and least affected by the centers of the capitalist system, and face the most restrictions. Because of the persistence of these mistaken ideas Lenin kept returning to this matter, noting in another criticism twenty years after the above passage that "the overwhelming majority of peasant households near Moscow are the farms of petty capitalists who hire labour."[49]

But perhaps this small-scale exploitation is softer by being more "paternalistic?" No, it is more severe than is its larger counterparts, for

> petty production keeps going under capitalism only by squeezing out of the worker a larger amount of work than is squeezed out of the working in large-scale production.[50]

But the interests of the petty producer are different, more competitive?

> If the big industrialist stops at nothing to ensure himself a monopoly, the peasant engaging in "handicrafts" is in this respect his twin brother; the petty bourgeois endeavors with his petty resources to unphold substantially the same class interests the big manufacturer seeks to protect when he clamours for protection, bonuses, privileges, etc.[51]

So not only are such petty bourgeoisie true bourgeois, contrary to what is asserted by Poulantzas, but they are in their own little way monopoly capitalists!

What capitalism displaced, therefore, was not the petty bourgeois class per se, but the "small-patriarchal," the "natural economy farms." Of course both types continued to coexist in semi-feudal Russia. But Lenin took care always to distinguish the two and the relative importance of each at any time, and there was no question which element was achieving dominance:

> That the small-peasant "structure", partly patriarchal, partly petty bourgeois, predominates in a small-peasant country is self-evident. It is an incontrovertible truth, elementary to political economy, which even the layman's everyday experience will confirm, that once you have exchange the small economy is bound to develop the petty-bourgeois-capitalist way.[52]

It is for this reason that in 1914 he could declare without equivocation: "Russia is a capitalist country; she cannot but develop capitalistically."[53] Small-scale commodity economy predominated over the majority of the land, but the petty bourgeoisie was not a remnant class in an overall system of capitalism. It was the "deepest and most durable foundation" of what Lenin meant in calling Russia a "capitalist country."

A capitalistic "middle class" thus developed with the coming of the petty bourgeoisie. It could arise even while feudal remnants were still strong, and was continually reborn within bourgeois society. Lenin directly related this constant recurrence of petty bourgeois development to "middle class radicalism" in the revolutionary movement, explaining that it could never be completely avoided while capitalism existed:

> Because in every capitalist country, side by side with the proletariat, there are always broad strata of the petty bourgeoisie, small proprietors. Capitalism arose and is constantly arising out of small production. A number of new "middle strata" are inevitably brought into existence again and again by capitalism (appendages to the factory, work at home, small workshops scattered all over the country to meet the requirements of big industries, such as the bicycle and automobile industries, etc.) These new small producers are just as inevitably being cast again into the ranks of the proletariat. It is quite natural that the petty-bourgeois world-outlook should again and again crop up in the ranks of the broad workers' parties. It is quite natural that this should be so and always will be so, right up to the changes in fortune that will take place in the proletarian revolution. For it would be a profound mistake to think that the "complete" proletarianization of the majority of the population is essential for bringing about such a revolution.[54]

Clearly the view of "complete polarization" of the classes under capitalism as the only basis on which revolutionary socialism can take power finds no echo in the work of Lenin, contrary to the assertion of Loren that this is required. Rather Lenin points both to a sizeable petty bourgeois element, as well as to its ideological strength, that is, "middle-class radicalism," within the movement right up to the hour of the proletarian revolution.

Far from finding these conditions to be weaker in the United States, both Engels and Lenin found this country to be one where capitalism came to be particularly deeply and widely developed precisely because it was a stronghold of the petty bourgeoisie. In 1893 Engels, in a letter to N. P. Danielson, criticized the views of one P. B. Struve, an early Russian "legal Marxist."

> He says, the evil consequences of modern capitalism in Russia will be as easily overcome as they are in the United States. There he quite forgets that the U.S.

> are modern, bourgeois, from the very origin; that they were founded by petits bourgeois and peasants who ran away from European feudalism in order to establish a purely bourgeois society.[55]

And found a bourgeois society they did. So much so that Lenin, who in turn clashed with Struve in one of his first political battles, himself wrote in 1905 the following, explaining the consequences that would flow from the taking over of the land in Russia by the peasantry:

> The transfer of the land to the peasants would not at all do away with the predominance of the capitalist mode of production in Russia; it would, on the contrary, provide a broader base for its development; it would bring this development from the type approximating the Italian closer to the American.[56]

Thus by 1905 the United States had become the very model for a modern petty bourgeoisie possessing its own land, on which capitalism flourished with special vigor. In 1915, Lenin found that one-half of the farms in the North and West, and two-thirds in the Northeast hired labor, and the percent was rising rapidly. His conclusion was that it was on the apparently smaller but in fact more capital-intensive farms of New England and the Mid-Atlantic that capitalist relationships were more developed,[57] so that: "Here again the famous non-capitalist, small-scale 'family' farming proves to be a myth."[58]

It is of course possible to hold on to such mythology by the creation of formal categories, such as a "pure" petty bourgeoisie untainted by capitalism, but on the basis of the above, one can no longer do so by hiding behind a "Marxist two-class model." Neither in their theoretical

analysis nor their historical review did the "Orthodox" Marxists treat the petty bourgeois owners as anything other than as agents of capital, for whom capitalist development was an internal relation, a "self-polarization." Of course, this was only "one-half" of their contradictory nature, the other being their necessity to perform labor. But the idea of a purely "non-capitalist" petty bourgeoisie was simply a myth. To support this mythology, as Lenin said, one must prove "either that 'petty bourgeoisie' is a wrong scientific category, that one can conceive of capitalism and commodity economy without a petty bourgeoisie, or that this category is inapplicable" to a given society. The many attempts to analyze the "middle class" under capitalism, based on rejecting the petty bourgeois form as "scientifically" inadequate for such purposes, have only ended in the contradictory stalemate of theories which I examined above.

There remains the question of whether it is "inapplicable." On this score, it is hardly surprising that the myth took root especially in the country which was at one and the same time the petty bourgeois society par excellence and thus most capitalist. Nowhere other than the United States did the petty bourgeoisie have the opportunity to reveal its inherent nature with such unfettered abandon, and it is thus the perfect "test case" for the applicability of the Marxist analysis of its development, and of the ideological defenses which arise to

obscure its true role. Richard Hofstadter has contrasted the "agrarian myth" with the underlying reality of petty bourgeois life in the United States. In this mythology,

> what the articulate people who talked and wrote about farmers and farming--the preachers, poets, philosophers, writers, and statesmen--liked about American farming was not, in every respect, what the typical working farmer liked. For the articulate people were drawn irresistably to the noncommercial, nonpecuniary, self-sufficient aspect of American life. To them it was an ideal. Writers like Thomas Jefferson and Hector St. Jean de Crevecoeur admired the yeoman farmer not for his capacity to exploit opportunities and make money but for his honest industry, his independence, his frank spirit of equality, his ability to produce and enjoy a simple abundance. The farmer himself, in most cases, was in fact inspired to make money, and such self-efficiency as he actually has was usually forced upon him by a lack of transportation or markets, or by the necessity to save cash to expand his operations. For while early American society was an agrarian society, it was fast becoming more commercial, and commercial goals made their way among its agricultural classes almost as rapidly as elsewhere.[59]

The myth and the reality grew in direct proportion to each other, the former becoming the ideological defense covering the latter:

> The more commercial this society became, however, the more reason it found to cling in imagination to the noncommercial agrarian values. The more farming as a self-sufficient way of life was abandoned for farming as a business, the more merit men found in what was being left behind.[60]

Increasingly this took on the form of nostalgic sentimentality.

In the process, the agrarian myth changed from being "a notion of the educated classes," to a "mass creed, a part of the country's political folklore and its nationalist ideology."[61] As a result: "Oddly enough, the

agrarian myth came to be believed more widely and tenaciously as it became more fictional."[62] But this is odd only if one is unaware of the typical ideological forms that the development of petty bourgeois capitalism assumes.

> The triumph of commercial agriculture not only rendered obsolete the objective conditions that had given to the agrarian myth so much of its original force, but also showed that the ideal implicit in the myth was contesting the ground [literally!] with another, even stronger ideal--the notion of opportunity, of career, of the self-made man. The same forces in American life that had made Jacksonian equalitarianism possible and had given to the equalitarian theme in the agrarian romance its most compelling appeal had unleashed in the nation an entrepreneurial zeal probably without precedent in history, a rage for business, for profits, for opportunity, for advancement. If the yeoman family was to maintain itself in the simple forms eulogized in the myth, it had to produce consistently a type of character that was satisfied with a traditional way of life. But the Yankee farmer, continually exposed to the cult of success that was everywhere around him, became inspired by a kind of personal dynamism which called upon the individual to surpass traditions.[63]

Thus the desire for "profits" became internalized in the "family farmer," and it was above all land, the "sacred earth" of petty bourgeois mythology, that this capitalistic spirit was realized.

> From the standpoint of the familiar agrarian panegyrics, the supreme irony was that the immense interior that had been supposed to underwrite the dominion of the yeoman for centuries did as much as anything else to destroy the yeomanlike spirit and replace it with the spirit of the businessman, even of the gambler. Cheap land invited extensive and careless cultivation. Rising land values in areas of new settlement tempted early liquidation and frequent moves, and made of the small entrepreneur a land speculator. Already in the late eighteenth century writers on American agriculture noticed that American farmers were tempted to buy more land than they could properly cultivate.[64]

Thus "family farms" rested as much on speculation as cultivation.

The land therefore became the very heart of the process of capitalization which the petty bourgeois farmers internalized;

> "The farmer, instead of completing the improvement of his present possessions, lays out all he can save in entering more land. In a district which is settling, this speculation is said to pay on the average when managed with judgment, fifteen per cent. Who then will submit to the toils of agriculture, further than bare necessity requires, for fifteen per cent? Or who would loan his money, even at fifteen per cent, where he can obtain that interest by investing it in land? Thus every description of men, almost every man, is poor in convertible property."
>
> Frequent and sensational rises in land values bred a boom psychology in the American farmer and caused him to rely for his margin of profit more on the process of appreciation than on the sale of crops. It took a strong man to resist the temptation to ride skyward on lands that might easily triple or quadruple their value in one decade and then double again in the next. It seemed ultraconservative to improve existing possessions if one could put savings or borrowings into new land. What developed in America was an agricultural society whose real attachment was not to the land but to land values.[65]

Thus the land was thoroughly capitalized, yielding its "15%." Even if improvements were made, they were often primarily to raise the value of the property, to gain a higher sale price:

> ". . . It seldom happens that an American farmer settles for good upon the land which he occupies: especially in the districts of the far West he brings land into tillage in order to sell it again, and not to farm it: he builds a farmhouse on the speculation that, as the state of the country will soon be changed by the increase of population, a good price will be gotten for it."[66]

Here real as life are the "self-employed farmers" of the Theories of Surplus-Value, who perform work as their own "wage-laborers," and invest their surpluses in the form of accumulated capital, realized in the profits brought by the sale of land or buildings.

Of course, the point here is not that nobody did any "real" farming. It is rather that even those who did farm seriously were also thoroughly imbued with the capitalistic spirit of land speculation as well. As capitalism became more general in the society, all means of production, even the land, came to be seen as "capital," and all labor was increasingly viewed as employed to realize a "profit." As Hofstadter notes, many farmers hired out as proletarians, or jobbed out work to others.[67] But this was not a necessary condition to make them what he calls "petty-capitalist,"[68] for their capitalistic nature was already thoroughly internalized, and was merely added to by "external" relations to wage labor. Of especial note is that such tendencies were particularly advanced on the frontier, the very area which is usually held up as the home extraordinaire of the "pure" petty bourgeois class.

C. Wright Mills attests to the same capitalistic phenomenon:

> Capitalism requires private owners of property who direct economic activities for private profit. Toward this system and away from subsistence, the American farmers traveled by way of new transport systems on coastal waters, rivers, turnpikes, canals, and railroads. From the beginning those on the land needed cash for taxes, mortgage payments, and necessities they could not grow or build. The American farmer, always

> an enterpriser, labored to add to his capital plant; and, as Chevalier put it in 1835, 'everyone is speculating, and everything has become an object of speculation . . . cotton, land, city and town lots, banks, railroads.' The American farmer has always been a real-estate speculator as well as a husbandsman, a 'cultivator,' as Veblen said, 'of the main chance as well as of the fertile soil,' riding the land-boom that characterized the United States history up to 1920. Here, if anywhere, the small capitalist had his rural chance.[69]

This more or less direct and immediate transition from "natural" or subsistence economy to capitalistic small commodity production and exchange is exactly what Lenin had earlier noted in Russia. There was no pause in either country for a stage of "pure" petty bourgeois forms.[70] As we have already seen, Lenin noted that the "next step" had occurred increasingly in the older farming areas of the Northeast and the Midwest, where most small farms hired additional workers. Of course, these petty bourgeoisie are capitalist only in what he calls "undeveloped, embryonic" form, even when they are the employers of proletarian labor.[71] But what has been shown here is that this class has capitalistic aspects, even when it appears to be practicing only independent small commodity production and exchange, that it is itself in a "contradictory location" between the capitalists and proletariat, and that no "new" classes are needed to play that "middle" role.

It is for this reason that Lenin can state point-blank:

> Let us note that the employment of wage-labour is not an essential feature of the concept "petty bourgeoisie." This concept covers all independent production for the market, where the social system of

> economy contains the contradictions described above . . . , particularly where the mass of producers are transformed into wage-workers.[72]

Earlier Lenin summarized the elements of this form of production:

> The system of socio-economic relations existing among the peasantry (agricultural and village-community) shows us the presence of all those contradictions which are inherent in every commodity economy and every order of capitalism: competition, the struggle for economic independence, the grabbing of land (purchasable or rentable), the concentration of production in the hands of a minority, the forcing of the majority into the ranks of the proletariat, their exploitation by a minority through the medium of merchant's capital and the hiring of farm laborers. There is not a single economic phenomenon among the peasantry that does not bear this contradictory form, one specifically peculiar to the capitalist system, i.e., that does not express a struggle and antagonism of interests, that does not imply advantage for some and disadvantage for others. It is the case with the renting of land, the purchase of land, and with "industries" in their diametrically opposite types; it is also the case with the technical progress of farming.[73]

Petty production, in other words, bears all the cut-throat marks of capitalist accumulation, even if not yet fully developed.

This is particularly evident when viewed from the standpoint of proletarians, who are excluded from ownership and exploited. Thus,

> the <u>class</u> status of the small farmers and the hired labourers is here thrown into especially sharp relief. To be sure, both labour; to be sure, both are subject to exploitation by capital, though in entirely different forms. But only vulgar bourgeois democrats will for this reason put the two different classes together and speak of small-scale operations by family farms. To do so is to cover up and disguise the <u>social</u> system of the economy--its bourgeois nature--and push into the foreground a feature common to <u>all</u> earlier formations, namely, the necessity for the petty farmer

> to work, to engage in personal, physical labor, if he is to survive.
>
> Under capitalism, the small farmer--whether he wants to or not, whether he is aware of it or not--becomes a commodity producer. And it is this change that is fundamental, for it alone even when he does not as yet exploit hired labour, makes him into a petty bourgeois and converts him into an antagonist of the proletariat. He sells his product, while the proletarian sells his labour-power. The small farmers, as a class, cannot but seek a rise in the prices of agricultural products, and this is tantamount to their joining the big landowners in sharing the ground-rent, and siding with the landowners against the rest of society. As commodity production develops, the small farmer, in accordance with his class status, inevitably becomes a petty landed proprietor.[74]

The petty producers therefore do not have to hire "outside" labor in order to be thoroughly "bourgeois." Lenin explicitly removes the dividing line between the "pure" and "small employer" parts of the class. Both treat their property as capital, drawing surplus-value as profit and rent, and both stand therefore in antagonistic and exploitative relation to the proletariat. To stress only their necessity to labor is to arbitrarily turn the clock back, emphasizing merely what ties them to earlier forms of production, and thus hiding their thoroughly "bourgeois" side.

It is also a mistake to treat the employment of workers by the petty bourgeois class as just "incidental" or "occasional" as some analysts have done. These employees are in many cases as crucial to the operations where they are employed as those in larger establishments. In a study of small dairy farms, I found that even where only one owner and one worker are "employed" together, the

labor of each is essential, and the "hired hand" usually carries the main burden, without which many "family farms" would not be viable.[75] It would be a mistake, however, to believe that this is some new or recent development, for even the apparent "independence" from capitalism of many smaller farms which are today highly mechanized and hire no wage workers is deceptive. It is therefore necessary to look at this question historically. In 1915, E. F. Doree, a leader of the Agricultural Workers' Organization, part of the Industrial Workers of the World, the I.W.W. or "Wobblies," wrote about the struggles then going on in the Mid-West, where migrant gangs worked for the much-despised "John Farmer."

> In Nebraska proper the farms are smaller, as a rule, than elsewhere in the harvest country and grow more diversified crops. Almost every farmer has one or more "hired men" and for that reason does not need so many extra men in the harvest, but in spite of this, the whole floating army marches up to get stung annually.[76]

These "hired hands" are still more common on small grain and livestock farms than is usually understood.

But mechanization drove many of them out during the First World War and the 1920s, and has continued to do so down to today. In fact, with profits from these exploited workers many small farmers now appear "less" capitalistic, insofar as they replaced hired labor with capital in the form of machines. This is the secret history underlying the seemingly "independent" farm owners. We must not be fooled by this, for capitalism big or small is an endless

process of replacing living workers with the dead and stored-up labor of their predecessors. The petty bourgeois capitalists of an earlier day thus prepared the ground for even larger capitalist farms at present, a development which can be "hidden" if we examine only the formal lack of employed workers, and not the accumulation of capital that underlies it.[77]

It is necessary once again here, just as it was in Russia a century ago to lay to rest illusions about this class. Petty bourgeois capitalism is alive and well in the United States today, and the millions of workers which it exploits are in general among the most heavily worked, poorly paid, lacking in legal protections, and least organized of any sections of the United States working class. Those employed on "family farms," in small retail and service shops, and in "micro-manufacturing" firms suffer in almost all cases from minimal wages, excessive overwork which in many instances alternates with seasonal unemployment, are excluded from many labor laws, and are ignored or neglected by the union movement. The result, just as Lenin observed, is that these workers are exploited more than those in larger establishments. The more hard-pressed the owners, the more pressure they in turn put upon their employees. Thus, for example, my study of dairy farms found that those who rent pay the lowest wages, followed by the smallest owner-operators, with the bigger capitalist farmers paying best. Moreover, on all the farm

types, the operators had personal income, even after reinvesting earnings, of almost double that of their workers.[78]

Finally, we must take note of the nature of the exploitation of workers by the "older" petty bourgeoisie. For their suffering is made heavier, in many cases, by the all-intrusive paternalism with which these small owners treat their employees. Of course, in the "best" of cases, there is sometimes a more personal relation in these establishments between boss and worker, but this is a very mixed blessing if at all. In the worst of cases conditions resemble feudalism or even semi-slavery. Thus here again it is necessary to point out that a feature which Barbara and John Ehrenreich attribute to their "PMC" is really a petty bourgeois one. Speaking of the relation of this "class" to the proletariat they say:

> The subjective dimension of these contacts is a complex mixture of hostility and deference on the part of working-class people, contempt and paternalism on the part of the PMC.[79]

It would be hard to find better words with which to describe the relation of workers and petty bourgeois employers. Except that it must be noted that in more and more cases, just as capitalist exploitation spreads among the "old" stratum of the petty bourgeoisie, so proletarian methods of struggle are spreading to larger groups of their workers. Thus class conflict in this segment of the economy can be expected to grow. So fully capitalistic are

these small operations, that the lead in forming a union among the dairy workers in the study cited above was taken by a worker who was the single paid employee on a farm.

The "reproduction of capitalist social relations," contrary to the Ehrenreichs, is thus precisely what the petty bourgeoisie is all about, it is its true historic "calling." This role does not await the coming of monopoly capitalism nor require the invention of "new" classes. The idea that the capitalist system was a "two-class economy" before the coming of the professionals and managers is thus just as mythical as the "Marxist two-class model." The latter is merely the "leftist" form of the economic myth. It is natural that as capitalism spreads its tentacles into every aspect of life and the economy, and subordinates all other classes more and more firmly to its control, that the petty bourgeoisie also would find its functions to be realizable only as a direct servant of the capitalist class and social system. But if these changes are exaggerated, if those who now perform more directly the role of "maintaining and renewing" bourgeois economic, political, and cultural forms, and preparing new areas of society for penetration by capitalism, are forced arbitrarily into some special mold, then their position in the structure of classes is obscured rather than revealed more clearly. This mistaken interpretation, however, flows inevitably from the belief that the petty bourgeoisie under capitalism is merely the dying leftover of another era, subject to

proletarianization. This is one half of its character. But it is also ever renewed by and in turn ever renews that same capitalism which threatens it with extinction. This is the other side of its nature, the part which yearns itself for capitalist success, takes up the methods of capitalism, and turns them into its very own.

This duality, in which they are both the "promoters" and "victims" of capitalism, is precisely why Marx and Engels in the Manifesto saw the political direction of the petty bourgeois class as divided in "time." In their present, the petty bourgeoisie are capitalistic, but in their future they are able to grasp the proletarian alternative, though never consistently:

> The lower middle class, the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant, all these fight against the bourgeoisie, to save from extinction their existence as fractions of the middle class. They are therefore not revolutionary, but conservative. Nay more, they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history. If by chance they are revolutionary, they are so only in view of their impending transfer into the proletariat, they thus defend not their present, but their future interests, they desert their own standpoint to place themselves at that of the proletariat.[80]

This too represents their internal polarity, which first takes the form of resistance to "big" capital while clinging to the possibility of capitalism as a "workable" system if only kept on a small scale. Only later, as it were, does the inevitable failure of this approach become evident, at which time it is possible for large numbers of petty bourgeoisie to adopt a socialist goal under the

leadership of another class, the proletariat, which does not share the same "in-between" relationship to capitalist exploitation. It is for this reason that Marx wrote that "the petty bourgeoisie can preserve a revolutionary attitude toward the bourgeoisie only as long as the proletariat stands behind it." Without this relation, its representatives merely sink down into the role of "subordinate henchmen" of the capitalist class.[81]

For the capitalists do not share the illusions of those Marxists who place the petty bourgeoisie "outside" the imagined "two-class model" of capitalist society. They know only too well how to exploit the nature of petty bourgeois capitalism to their advantage. For instance, there is the so-called "land reform" program in El Salvador:

> A later phase of this reform, conceived and directed by Americans--including Roy Prosterman, who had supervised the identically named "Land to the Tiller" pacification in Vietnam--attempted to create a class of small landholder. "There is nothing more conservative than a small farmer," said one U.S. foreign aid official. "We are going to be breeding capitalists like rabbits."[82]

Petty bourgeoisie are indeed a "breeding ground" of capitalism, but in such countries as El Salvador, where a few families control most of the land, and where a proletarian socialist movement is already in existence, imperialism cannot trust even the capitalist aspirations of the petty bourgeois owners. Therefore "land reform" is merely a trap for the peasantry, a bait which is offered to

them simply so that their leaders can be more easily eliminated:

> What happens is that the peasants are told about land distribution and that they may now elect their own leaders. Then the military goes in and kills the leaders that have been chosen by the people.[83]

Shooting peasants like rabbits is more like it, except that hunters do not usually torture their "game" before killing it.

Indeed, the military, sponsored and paid for by the United States government, were so resistant to even this pretense of distribution of lands that their death squads killed the Salvadoran leader of the reform program and two representatives of the American Institute for Free Labor Development, its multinational corporate and trade union sponsor--a minor contradiction which did not seriously disrupt the U.S.--imperialist/Salvadoran-militarist alliance. Under such circumstances petty bourgeois capitalism cannot really emerge and land reform therefore cannot succeed in defusing the revolution, so that the peasants as a whole are continually drawn more and more into the Marxist-led struggle. Nevertheless, capitalists clearly recognize in the petty bourgeoisie the longing to rise into their own ranks, and know how to exploit this effectively.

But according to Sandy Carter, writing in Between Labor and Capital:

> In Marx's day the two class model was more justified since the small and politically insignificant intermediate classes played a limited historical role.

> However as the analysis ossified into a religion it failed to account for the expanding middle class in Western Europe and it denied the revolutionary potential of the peasantry in underdeveloped capitalist countries."

It would be more accurate to say that Carter and those like him "fail to account" for the analysis of the petty bourgeoisie made by Marx, and have managed to "deny" most of the history of revolutionary Marxism since his death. It is not by following their example that we will be able to solve the question of the modern professionals. Marxists have continued to grapple with all the "intermediate classes," and have succeeded in Russia, China, Vietnam, Cuba, Angola, Mozambique, and of course to this day in Central America, to name but a few, in translating this theoretic understanding into its "revolutionary potential"--including winning over large numbers of the "newer" professional stratum. It is not they who have treated the petty bourgeoisie as "small and politically insignificant." Thus the "two-class model" does not correspond either to the reality of capitalist society or to the attitudes of the capitalists themselves; and it represents neither the theory nor practice of "Orthodox" Marxism. It is rather, as it was a hundred years ago in Russia, merely the idealized image, of capitalist society and of the relation of its own class to it, put forth by the petty bourgeoisie itself--a myth now repeated unquestioningly for so long by so many, that it has "ossified into a religion."

NOTES

1. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 6-7.

2. Ibid., 10.

3. Ibid., 17-18.

4. Ibid., 41-42.

5. Cohen and Howard, "Why Class?", 80.

6. Carter, "Class Conflict: The Human Dimension," 116.

7. Albert and Hahnel, "A Ticket to Ride: More Locations on the Class Map," 253.

8. Erik Olin Wright, "Intellectuals and the Class Structure of Capitalist Society," chap. in Walker, Between Labor and Capital, 205.

9. Wright, "Rethinking, Once Again, the Concept of Class Structure," 348.

10. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 9.

11. Poulantzas, Classes in Contemporary Capitalism, 151.

12. Ibid., 285.

13. Ibid., 285-86.

14. Ibid., 286.

15. Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capital, 407.

16. Derber, Schwartz, and Magrass, Power in the Highest Degree, 14.

17. Loren, Classes in the United States, 55.

18. Ibid., 56.

19. Ibid., 44.

20. Ibid., 10.

21. Ibid., 104.

22. Ibid., 235.

23. Ibid., 237-8.

24. Ibid., 236, 230, 244-5.

25. Ibid., 233.

26. Marx, Capital, vol. 1, 750.

27. Ibid.

28. Engels, Anti-Dühring, 320.

29. Marx and Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," 56.

30. Ibid., 35.

31. Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," 278.

32. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League," in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 1, 108.

33. Engels, "Prefatory Note to The Peasant War in Germany," 645.

34. V. I. Lenin, "On the So-Called Market Question," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 1, 107-8.

35. Ibid., 109.

36. Lenin, "The Development of Capitalism in Russia," 173. See also Lenin, "On the So-Called Market Question," 109, note.

37. Lenin, "On the So-Called Market Question," 109.

38. Ibid.

39. Lenin, "A Characterization of Economic Romanticism," 220-21.

40. Ibid., 221.

41. Ibid., 225.

42. Ibid.

43. V. I. Lenin, "The Handicraft Census of 1894-95 in Perm Gubernia and General Problems of 'Handicraft' Industry," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 2, 382.

44. Ibid., 366-7.

45. Ibid., 377-78.

46. Ibid., 373.

47. V. I. Lenin, "Bourgeois Gentlemen on 'Family' Farming," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 19, 365-6.

48. Lenin, "The Development of Capitalism in Russia," 173.

49. V. I. Lenin, "The Peasantry and Hired Labor," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 20, 111.

50. V. I. Lenin, "Petty Production in Agriculture," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 19, 282.

51. Lenin, "The Development of Capitalism in Russia," 337.

52. Lenin, "The Tax in Kind," 344.

53. V. I. Lenin, "Two Paths," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 20, 306.

54. V. I. Lenin, "Marxism and Revisionism," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 15, 39.

55. Frederick Engels, London, to N. F. Danielson, October 17, 1893, in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 2, 501.

56. V. I. Lenin, "The Agrarian Programme of the Liberals," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 8, 318-19.

57. V. I. Lenin, "New Data on the Laws Governing the Development of Capitalism in Agriculture, Part One, Capitalism and Agriculture in the United States of America," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 22, 32-34, 45-47, 88.

58. Ibid., 34.

59. Hofstadter, The Age of Reform, 23-24.

60. Ibid., 24.

61. Ibid., 28.

62. Ibid., 30.

63. Ibid., 39-40.

64. Ibid., 40-41. See also Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary, 474, where, to this day, "land-office business" is listed with the meaning: "extensive and rapid business."

65. Ibid., 41, quoting P. W. Bidwell and John I. Falconer, History of Agriculture in the Northern United States (New York, 1941), 119-20.

66. Ibid., 42, quoting from Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, vol. 2 (New York, 1899), 644.

67. Ibid., 38-39.

68. Ibid., 45.

69. Mills, White Collar, 4-5.

70. Hofstadter, The Age of Reform, 39: "The shift from self-sufficient to commercial farming varied in time throughout the West and cannot be dated with precision, but it was complete in Ohio by about 1830 and twenty years leater in Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan. All through the great Northwest, farmers whose ancestors might have lived in isolation and self-sufficiency were surrounded by jobbers, banks, stores, middlemen, horses, and machinery; and in so far as this process was unfinished in 1860, the demands of the Civil War brought it to completion."

71. Lenin, "The Handicraft Census in Perm Gubernia," 367.

72. Lenin, "The Development of Capitalism in Russia," 177, note *. Here it is interesting to observe that Lenin so totally identifies the petty bourgeoisie as "within" capitalism that he feels it necessary to show why even the small owners who do not hire workers are part of this class. This is the exact opposite of the usual "two-class model" argument, which insists that the term "petty bourgeois" applies mainly to those without hired labor.

73. Ibid., 172.

74. V. I. Lenin, "New Data on the Laws Governing the Development of Capitalism in Agriculture," 95-96.

75. Robert Weil, "Capitalist Exploitation on Dairy Farms in Columbia and Dutchess Counties of New York," unpublished paper, 11-16.

76. E. F. Doree, "Gathering the Grain," in Joyce L. Kornbluh, ed., Rebel Voices: An I.W.W. Anthology (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1964), 243-45. The article was originally published in the International Socialist Review (June 1915).

77. See Kornbluh, Rebel Voices, 233: ". . . mechanized harvesters were replacing mobile harvest hands. The combine, developed as a labor-saving device during the war, cut and threshed grain in a single operation. Five men did the work of 320." See also William Serrin, "The Hired Man: a Vanishing American," New York Times, August 4, 1979, 6: ". . . as farmers have adopted labor-reducing devices and industrial methods, the need for hired men has often been eliminated. . . . Sometimes jobs on a farm, particularly a large farm using scientific methods, must be filled by someone with extensive knowledge or special skills, not someone walking down the road, looking for a day or two of work until the next freight train comes along." This replacement of human workers with machines, and of "unskilled" labor with "skilled," is obviously not a sign of "decapitalization." It is the fullest realization of capital accumulation.

78. Weil, "Capitalist Exploitation on Dairy Farms," 17, 29-30, 49.

79. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 17.

80. Marx and Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," 44.

81. Marx, "The Class Struggles in France 1848-1850," 164.

82. Carolyn Forche, "El Salvador: The Next Vietnam?," The Progressive, February, 1981, reprinted in "Women and War in El Salvador," Women's International Resource Exchange (New York, n.d.), 15.

83. Interview with Sister Margarita Navarro, Resources for Feminist Research, March, 1981, reprinted in "Women and War in El Salvador," 34.

84. Carter, "Class Conflict: The Human Dimension," 116.

CHAPTER 13

WHAT SIZE CLASS? THE "BOUNDARIES" OF THE PETTY BOURGEOISIE

Attempts to determine the size of the petty bourgeois class and its various strata raise both theoretical and practical problems. Besides using different definitions, most analysts discussed above have not attempted to measure specific classes. However, despite widespread belief that it lies outside a "two-class polarity" of capitalism, there are those who do define the petty bourgeoisie as fully within the capitalist order. One who clearly states the continuity between the "old" petty bourgeois owners and the "new" strata is Judah Hill, who in his Class Analysis: United States in the 1970's not only treats all segments of this class as a single entity, but attempts to find the actual size of each sector of the "middle classes." Hill analyzes both the "top" and "bottom" lines for the petty bourgeoisie, and his examination is therefore a good starting point by which to return to those questions raised earlier in this study as to the "boundaries" of that class. Hill first gives the following description of the petty bourgeois strata:

> . . . there are three distinct sectors of the petit-bourgeoisie: 1) Those that own their own means of production (business sector). 2) Those that manage the means of production or the state bureaucracy but don't

> own it (managerial sector). 3) Those whose means of production are basically intellectual (professionals sector).[1]

The business sector is in turn divided into sub-sectors: "corporate," "franchise," and "small business."

What concern us here, however, are the more specific limits which Hill suggests for the petty bourgeois class, which seem to exaggerate its size by setting the upper boundary too high. For instance, Hill cites as examples of the petty bourgeoisie those who own "1 medium-sized factory, 50 short-haul trucks, a local community bank, a Holiday Inn franchise, a corner butcher shop."[2] Though the last fits the almost archetypical definition of the petty bourgeois class, the others raise more serious questions. Fifty or more employees or millions in corporate assets sets a very high standard indeed for those who are to be counted as outside the capitalist class proper, since such persons would usually live largely on surplus-value from others, not their own labor. This is confirmed when Hill assigns income figures to the various sectors and sub-sectors of the petty bourgeois class. Thus in the "business sector," that is, among those generally "self-employed" the members of the "corporate" and "franchise sub-sectors" earn from about $18,000 to an upper limit of $150,000-$200,000, while the "managerial" and "professional" sectors include salaried employees up to $80,000 and $100,000, respectively.[3] Moreover, Hill states outright that: "The corporate sub-sector businessman is a

capitalist within the capital/labor relationship. His primary income comes from exploitation of labor."[4] And he includes in the professional category even "famous movie stars, football players, and TV personalities"--figures who command not one hundred thousand, but many times that in income for their work.[5] "Stars" like these undoubtedly live in large measure off surplus-value.[6]

The position Hill takes on this question is revealed further by the way in which he defines the smallest independent owners. In the business sector, besides the corporate and franchise sub-sectors, he includes a "small business sub-sector," with incomes of only some $8,000 to $18,000.

> This sub-sector contains the small-scale businesses. Members of this sub-sector work as well as administer. That is, while they may or may not hire employees, some of their time is spent doing the work as well as administering. Thus they are, to an extent, outside the labor/capital relationship.[7]

This is exactly the "relative autonomy" found among the petty bourgeoisie. However, when he approaches the small farmers, he introduces a different form of division. Here he actually separates the smallest owners into two completely distinct classes based on size. Thus Hill defines not only a "business sector of the petit-bourgeoisie," but below them a "small farmer class," with income in its "freeholder sector" of $8,000 to around $12,600, and in its "tenant sector" of anything from $8,000 to nothing or even a loss, depending on circumstances.[8]

> The basic dividing line between the small farmer class and the petit-bourgeois class of farmer is that the small farmer spends over half of his time doing manual labor on the farm. He or she may or may not hire additional labor, but the small farmer is primarily a manual production worker. The petit-bourgeois farmer, on the other hand, is primarily a businessman, spending the majority of his time supervising the work of others, buying, selling, and doing other administrative tasks, and his income derives primarily from exploitation of hired labor.[9]

This draws a two-class line among smaller owners in farming that was not used in the "business sector" of the non-agricultural petty enterprises, a difference which Hill refers to but does not account for, noting only that there are "controversies" about this class.

Of more significance here, this introduces a fourth criterion to those which Hill earlier used to define the petty bourgeoisie:

> 1) They own, or manage, the means of production. 2) They do not have the power to control the economy of the nation as a whole. 3) Even though some of them work for salaries, they are not exploited. That is, the wealth returned to them in the form of salaries is equal to or greater than the value of the wealth or service they create (if any).[10]

But it seems that, at least for farmers, Hill has introduced a further aspect to the petty bourgeoisie, that they must be primarily exploiters of the labor of hired workers, and their income must therefore be mainly from surplus-value. Hill cites no fundamental reason or authority for the division he has made. As to the "bottom" of the class, Hill is on the right track when he tries to define a group of the most impoverished farmers beneath the petty bourgeoisie, that is, the semi-owners who do not own

their own farm or are very heavily mortgaged, and thus forced to rent land and machinery and sometimes to hire themselves out to others. The attempt of Hill to create a separate "small farmer class," however, is inadequate. He might better have taken the direction which he indicates for those who are "under" the professional and managerial sectors of the petty bourgeoisie. This he calls the "semi-professional sector" of the proletariat, those with somewhat similar backgrounds and conditions as members of the full professions, but either falling below the income levels of the latter or in other ways having been partially "proletarianized."[11] Hill suggests these may be "a separate class between the working class and the petit-bourgeoisie, sort of an in-between class."[12]

Like Charles Loren who was examined earlier, Hill thus helps us to define the questions which delineate the boundaries of the petty bourgeois class, but his actual application of these criteria reveals inconsistencies that prevent them from being taken as an overall guideline for analyzing its dimensions. Like Nicos Poulantzas, Hill "balloons" out the petty bourgeoisie by including those who properly belong to another class, in this case the capitalists rather than the proletariat, and he uses differing definitions for the "bottom" of various class strata. There remains the difficulty of arriving at some more solid measurement by which the dimensions of the petty bourgeoisie can be determined. Such an examination can be

started by looking further at the "old" petty bourgeois stratum, that is at the independent small owners of farms and stores and at "self-employed" professionals, where data is available. This will give us some background against which to look once again at the "new" strata of professional and managerial petty bourgeoisie. It will also provide us with an opportunity to examine further for the United States today the thesis of Lenin that in a fully developed capitalist economy the "middle class" can be defined as the "petty-bourgeois capitalists," and not simply as a rump "petty producer" class.

To begin with, the differences which Hill refers to are real and important ones, but they do not define the classes he names. So, for instance, his so-called "small farmer class" is the very definition of the petty bourgeoisie, while the high standard he sets for the latter more nearly defines big capitalists. This is made clear by Lenin, who divides the peasantry into three groups, the first of which are the proletarian and "small peasant" farms whose owners are actual workers or must often hire out to others.

> Group II: middle peasant farms . . . . As we have seen, a fairly large number of these exploit wage-workers. The middle peasant is a petty bourgeois who wavers between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.
> Group III: the rest, i.e., the capitalists . . . and big peasants...As we have seen, the majority of the big peasants exploit wage-workers.[13]

It is clearly the middle peasantry, that is, the petty bourgeois farmers who, in the words used by Hill for the

"small farmer class . . . may or may not hire additional labor," while it is the capitalists and the big peasants for whom the reliance on wage labor is the norm and who are thus the real candidates to fit the "supervising" and "administrative" role and to have an income "primarily from exploitation of hired labor" that Hill wrongly lays to the petty bourgeoisie. Hired labor may be absolutely crucial to the petty bourgeois farmers, while still not constituting the major source of income to the owners. When it is their primary form of wealth, we should consider them "big" bourgeoisie. This applies as well to all parts of the "business sector" of the petty bourgeoisie.

These distinctions were made even more precise by the Chinese, who in their individual classification of millions of rural families during the land reform movement found it necessary to arive at very exact forms of measurement by which the masses of peasants could determine into what class they and their fellow village members should properly be placed. Particularly important was the line between middle and rich peasants:

> Those who derived more than half of their income from their own labor tended to identify themselves with working people and consequently to support the revolution. Those who derived more than half of their income from the exploitation of other people's labor tended to identify their interests with those of the exploiters and consequently to ally themselves with the counter-revolution.
>
> It therefore made sense to divide that large group of families who had mixed incomes, who both labored and exploited, by drawing a line right down the middle. Those who earned more than half of their income by exploitation were classed as rich peasants and treated as enemies. On the other hand, those who earned half

> or more of their income by their own labor were classed as middle peasants and treated as friends.[14]

In their first criteria for class analysis, the line was actually set somewhat lower, so that only a minority of the income of the middle peasant could come from exploitation. But as the "rule of thumb" was developed for actual classification, a fifty-fifty division was in fact adopted to determine the "top" of this stratum compared to rich peasants. In practice, this meant that a peasant family could have hired equivalent amounts of labor to that provided by its own members and still qualify as "middle." Over this amount, that is if more than half of net income, not counting costs of the means of production, was produced by wage workers or derived from rent or interest, the peasant was "rich."

In other words, the petty bourgeoisie are whose own labor produces a majority of the value represented by the return they get after all productive expenses. This must include all reinvestible profits, not just their personal funds. If the income derived from hired labor and exploited surplus-value accounts for more than 50% of these returns, then the owners are in that "in-between" category equivalent to the "big peasants" of both Russia and China, but are more on the capitalist than on the petty bourgeoisie side of the class line. Above a certain point, surplus-value constitutes virtually the entire return of the business, though the owner-operators may personally

draw a salary as "managers," which may in fact be the bulk of their own funds for personal uses. But there will be another large part of income, in the form of reinvestment capital, which is derived from the exploitation of the hired work force. At this level, the owners are definitely members of the capitalist class, though still very likely to go on working in the establishment. In other words, the petty bourgeoisie are those whose own labor is absolutely necessary for operation of their business, producing a major portion of the value it generates, while capitalists are those whose own work is not economically necessary to the enterprise, though it may continue in any case. As Marx put it:

> We saw in a former chapter, that a certain minimum amount of capital was necessary, in order that the number of labourers simultaneously employed, and, consequently, the amount of surplus-value produced, might suffice to liberate the employer himself from manual labour, to convert him from a small master into a capitalist, and thus formally to establish capitalist production.[15]

Between these two classes there is of course no sharp division.

However, just as ownership of sufficiently large means of production in general makes the possessor a bourgeois proper or capitalist, so too the smallest property holdings may fall "below" the petty bourgeoisie. If the control over productive resources is too small to be the basis for necessary income, or if the owners of such property work in other circumstances as their main occupation, then they may

lose at least some part of their petty bourgeois class position. From being those who on the whole keep the full value of their own labor, though some must usually be given up to creditors and so on, they become those who are primarily exploited for surplus-value, either because the overwhelming majority of what they produce goes to rent, debt payments, and so forth, or because they simply hire out as workers and are thus partially "proletarianized." Most commonly the first of these conditions precedes and leads to the second, though this is not necessarily so. In such cases, as Marx noted, the petty bourgeoisie become merely "nominal" owners of their property, and then frequently lose it altogether. Thus we find that the "small owner" stratum of the petty bourgeois class also has a "bottom" and not simply a "top," that is, it blends into the working class on the one side just as it does into the capitalist class on the other.

Let us now apply these criteria to the statistics available as to small businesses in the United States. These are unsatisfactory from several angles as they do not correlate employment size with type of ownership or with income figures. Close study of particular situations, however, and the direct observation of the work patterns in small establishments generally allow us to make an extremely rough dividing line. Government data is virtually useless for making any definite measurement of surplus-value, especially for the smallest enterprises, and

it is therefore all but impossible to draw an exact line between classes from this material. However, there is an alternate way to measure the relation of owners to hired labor, and that is by noting the size of the employed work force. Here the problem is to determine how large a business represents the point at which the exploitation of workers exceeds the value generated by the working employers, marking the transition from petty bourgeoisie to those who are more on the "big" capitalist side of the class line. This in turn raises two further questions, the first of which is how many members of the family of the owners are likely to be employed, and also the relation which their work has to that of their hired employees. The second problem is to determine what proportion of the value produced by such workers is actually transferred to an employer as surplus-value and, thereby, what percentage of the income of the owners is derived from the exploitation of wage laborers.

My own study among "small" dairy farm operators in upstate New York, who today nevertheless own assets worth several hundred thousand dollars, confirms the characteristics of the petty bourgeoisie noted by Lenin. Thus, for instance, an increase in the work on the farms by members of the families of owners, corresponded to a larger hired wage-labor force, so that here too "family cooperation" is the basis for "capitalist cooperation." Many farmers supplement their own labor with that of one or

more relatives. By this measure, two to three hired workers would be needed to equal the value produced by members of the families of the owners themselves. However, this alone is also not an adequate measure of the relationship. For one thing, the owners do not receive the full value of the labor of their workers, but only the surplus-value. Thus more than one laborer is required to provide an equal amount to what a working owner generates. In my study of dairy farms, I found that if a farmer employed one worker, the percentage of farm operator income which is accounted for by exploited surplus-value after all expenses, including rent and interest, is 7%, the rest being the value produced by the farmers and their own families. Funds available for reinvestment are included in these total returns. If the number of workers rises to just 2.25 per farm, the percent of income that arises from exploitation climbs to 30%, despite the greater labor input by the families of the owners as well. As more laborers are added, there would be an even more rapid rate of increase in the role of surplus-value from hired workers compared to owner-generated income.[16]

Thus if employers have more than four or five employees, it is likely that a majority or even virtually all of their income will come from exploitation of workers. Such owners usually "work" on their own property, but at this level a high proportion of their time will be taken up with marketing and managerial duties. Poulantzas, among

others, uses this same five-worker dividing line for the petty bourgeoisie.[17] If even more employees are hired, up to around nine or ten, the likelihood of income for the owners coming almost entirely from surplus-value increases dramatically, they are likely to be able to absent themselves from the operation more often, and they are much more involved in "business" than in any direct production. Above ten or so employees, the firm is a clear-cut capitalist operation, though the owner is still in most cases present as the main direct manager.[18] If we compare these criteria to those which Lenin uses in analyzing the classes among peasants, though not strictly comparable, we can arrive at a division along similar lines: here the petty bourgeoisie, corresponding to the "middle peasantry," includes independent owners without any employees or with up to four or five workers, the approximate line where exploited surplus-value is the majority of income. Next comes a transitional group equivalent to "big peasants" in the five-to-ten worker range, with "capitalist" enterprises proper above that level. The intermediate group obviously shares aspects of the other two, but like Lenin I would include it more on the big capitalist "side" than in the petty bourgeoisie.

To find the "bottom" of the petty bourgeois class on the basis of statistical data is even more difficult, theoretically and practically. There is no form of measurement which gives a clear picture of those who have

insufficient resources, income, and skills to be counted among the "middle class" despite nominal ownership of some means of production. However, here too an approximate line can be drawn between these classes, to separate out those considered to fall "below" the petty bourgeoisie proper, and to more closely resemble instead the stratum of "poor or semi-owners" which stood only one step above the working class in Russia or China. Most of those with such a limited position in the economy will fit one or more of the following categories: their "business" is either marginal or part-time, their ownership of the means of production is minimal, they rent or borrow most of their capital and must pay out a large portion of their returns to landlords or lenders, their net earnings are little above or even the same or lower than that of proletarians, they have only the level of skills associated with manual crafts, or they hire out and are exploited by others and earn much of their income in other occupations.

Such conditions generally mark the existence of an "intermediate" or "in-between" stratum that is part petty bourgeois, part proletarian. In the early 1970s, those with business income of less than $10,000 were probably the closest statistical category to fit this group of semi-owners. Of course, not all those with low incomes fit equally their criteria, and some with much higher earnings also share many of these same aspects. But the $10,000 figure is the best available statistical cut-off point at

which conservatively to designate this category. Like those "above" the petty bourgeoisie, those who fall "below" are also more enmeshed in direct capitalist relations, and therefore lack the relative autonomy which marks the members of that class. Nevertheless, it must be kept in mind that even among the petty bourgeois class the "internal" form of the relation is capitalistic.

It is now possible to suggest some of the dimensions of these various strata. This requires separating the petty bourgeoisie from those on both sides of it, finding how many of its members do or do not hire labor, and determining what proportion of business is accounted for by this class. Beginning with manufacturing, the 1972 Census indicates that of 417,000 firms, 104,000 or 25% that year hired no wage workers. The data does not allow us to separate off those earning under $10,000. Another 112,000 or 27% had from 1 to 4 persons on payroll, so that the petty bourgeoisie as a whole potentially accounted for 52% of all shops. Another 47,000 or 11% of manufacturing firms had between 5 and 9 hired workers. Of course, the percentage of all those employed by these strata is very much smaller, so that those enterprises with 1 to 4 employees accounted for just 1.1% of those working in this industry, and their proportion of sales was only 1.0%.[19]

Manufacturing, however, is never the main center of petty bourgeois economic activity in an advanced capitalist country. This is to be found more in sales, services, and

agriculture. The statistics for these three parts of the economy thus give us a better understanding of the overall position of the petty bourgeoisie. In retail trade, out of a total of 1,710,000 establishments, about 13% had sales below $10,000. Some 330,000, or 19%, earned more than this amount but hired no workers. Another 730,000 or 43% had up to 5 employees. Thus the petty bourgeois class accounted for 62% of firms, while the 6 to 9 employee group added some 172,000 or 10%. Petty bourgeoisie who hire labor therefore greatly outnumbered those without employees, and the number of workers hired by this class was 1,678,000, or some 16% of paid persons in retail trade. Altogether petty bourgeois business accounted for full 22% of sales.[20] The situation is reversed somewhat in the service industries. Here those earning less than $10,000 were a very small 5% out of 1,442,000 firms. But 738,000, or 51% had income above this amount without hiring workers. Those with up to 5 paid amployees added another 469,000 or 33%. Thus the petty bourgeoisie accounted for some 84% of service enterprises. The 6 to 9 employee category had 68,000 establishments, or only about 5%. The number of workers hired by petty bourgeois employers was 899,000, or 18% of total employees in this industry, and with non-hiring petty bourgeoisie also added in they accounted for a very high 30% of sales.[21]

Statistics on farm employment are complicated by distinguishing three different categories of employees:

regular hired workers employed more than 150 days on one farm, seasonal workers employed 25 to 149 days, and a casual worker category for those employed under 25 days. However agriculture, by its nature, makes common measurements a difficult matter, since what in one branch, such as dairy, requires a full year-round employee, may in another branch like fruit require a large crew for harvesting over only a few weeks. Moreover, a single seasonal or casual worker may actually be employed for the whole year, but on more than one farm. We can not distinguish such differences from the data in the Census figures, and will therefore apply the equal criteria throughout, that employment of up to five workers is a measure of the petty bourgeois class. On the other hand, farm statistics give us the best picture of the "bottom" of the petty bourgeoisie. Of the 2,314,000 farms listed for 1974, fully 1,203,000 or 52% showed sales of less than $10,000. There is strong corroborating evidence that this does in fact more or less represent farms which are too small to count as petty bourgeois. For instance, 1,011,000 operators reported work off the farm, more than 800,000 of them for over 100 days, and 850,000 were not mainly farmers. Similarly, almost 800,000 farmers showed off-farm income greater than that which they earned by farming. So too, 900,000 are either part owners or tenants, while some 800,000 operators rented or leased land from others, and 200,000 did not farm all their own property.[22]

The Census data do not correlate these various measurements with each other or with the kinds of owners to which they apply. Some of these are of course wealthy investors or aristocrat "farmers," but the vast majority most likely are working persons who engage in farming as a side-line or who have found it necessary to take over employment because farm earnings are not sufficient. Moreover, hundreds of thousands of additional family members also do off-farm labor, and by the late 1970s the average income per person on the farms was higher from non-farming than farming work. It therefore appears justifiable to subtract the full 1.2 million farmers who earn less than $10,000 from agriculture as "below" the petty bourgeois class. Even though some of these smallest owners hire workers, in general they are much more likely to sell their own labor-power to others. Though it is impossible to come up with exact figures, a very rough calculation is that there may be some 400,000 farms with over $10,000 in earnings which do not employ hired labor, and perhaps another 600,000 or so maximum hiring 1,200,000 farmworkers.

To summarize, we can compare the employing and non-employing branches of the "old" or "independent" stratum of the petty bourgeois class, and calculate their hired labor force. A summary of these calculations is provided in Table 4. It must be stressed that these figures can only be taken as rough approximations.

Table 4.--Petty Bourgeois Enterprises, Number of Employees

Type of Enterprise	With No Employees	With 1-4/5 Employees	Total Employees
Manufacturing	104,000	112,000	197,000
Retail Trade	333,000	730,000	1,678,000
Services	738,000	469,000	899,000
Agriculture	400,000	600,000	1,200,000
Total	1,575,000	1,911,000	3,974,000

Sources: Department of Commerce, 1972 Census of Manufactures, Subject and Special Statistics, xvii; xxxii; 68, table no. 8; 1972 Census of Retail Trade, Summary and Subject Statistics, 1-8, table no. 1a; 1-37, table no. 1b; 1-66, table no. 2a; 1972 Census of Selected Services, Summary and Subject Statistics, 1-7, table no. 1a; 1-41, table no. 1b; 1-74, table no. 2a; 1974 Census of Agriculture, Summary and State Data, 1-2, table nos. 3, 4.

Thus these segments of the "old" stratum of the petty bourgeoisie alone number almost 3.5 million. Those hiring labor outnumber those who do not, and they employ almost 4.0 million workers, an average of 2 per employer, and constituting a larger work force than the petty bourgeois class itself. There are several problems with this analysis which the Census data do not allow us to overcome, however, One is that employment size is not cross referenced with type of ownership. For instance, a certain number of "small businesses" included in the figures above are actually parts of much larger chains, and those who operate them may perhaps fit better into the "managerial" stratum, or perhaps a "franchise sector" as Hill puts it. The figures themselves must sometimes be questioned,

notably because of the notorious undercounting of farmworkers and presumably in turn of those who hire them, who often escape government notice and labor regulations by claiming not to employ wage workers. Also apparently not adequately counted are wholesale firms, which add at least 147,000 petty bourgeois owners and 353,000 employees to the total given above. But these adjustments would not change the overall numbers very much.[23]

More seriously, the Census of Selected Services was indeed highly selective, excluding virtually all professional establishments, and including data only for legal services, dental clinics, and architectural, engineering, and land-surveying firms. For these three professions statistics are given in Table 5:

Table 5.--Professional Enterprises, by Number of Employees

Sector	With No Employees	With 1-4/5 Employees	Total Employees
Legal Services	61,711	63,512	109,871
Dental Laboratories	3,035	3,604	7,468
Architecture and Engineering	31,564	16,614	37,355
Total	96,310	83,730	154,694

Source: Department of Commerce, 1972 Census of Selected Services, Summary and Subject Statistics, 1-73, 1-74, table no. 1b.

In general, these professions show a similar pattern to other "older" petty bourgeois groups. Those hired by this

class account for 44% of the employees in legal service firms, 13% in architectural, engineering, and land-survey, and 26% in dental laboratories. Moreover, because among lawyers, for instance, it is common practice to share offices on a partner basis, even larger enterprises often conceal a multiplicity of essentially equal petty bourgeois owners, rather than large numbers of workers hired by a "big" capitalist firm. More important is that very substantial numbers of "self-employed" professionals, especially those in medicine are not included here. Other Census data suggest that up to 750,000 more such persons should be added to the petty bourgeoisie. If the same proportions hold, they would hire approximately an equal number of employees. Altogether, it would not be far wrong to add on another 1.0 million members to the "old" petty bourgeois stratum for a total of 4.5 millions, who in turn hire some 5.0 million workers.

The petty bourgeoisie who were "self-employed" therefore accounted for over 5% of the civilian labor force in the early 1970s, and if the workers they hired are included, this sector of employment totals 11%. In addition, it should be noted that while the proportion of the market held by the petty bourgeois owners has fallen in the last decades, the "old" stratum of this class remains an important factor in the overall economy, particularly in agriculture, services, and in retail trade. Moreover, in the United States today the petty bourgeoisie is indeed

very highly capitalistic, and cannot be treated merely as a remnant element lying "outside" the divisions and conflict of capitalist society.

NOTES

1. Hill, Class Analysis, 9.

2. Ibid., 7.

3. Ibid., 11, 13, 17, 19.

4. Ibid., 11.

5. Ibid., 18. See also 48, where such personages as Doris Day and Elizabeth Taylor, Joe Namath, and Walter Cronkite are listed as members of the petty bourgeoisie.

6. Ibid., 18. For instance, when "Uncle" Walter Cronkite, retired "to a life of yachting and some tennis," his contract included retirement pay of $1 million per year for seven years, and $150,000 annually for ten years thereafter (Parade Magazine, September 5, 1982, 20).

7. Ibid., 14.

8. Ibid., 79-83.

9. Ibid., 79.

10. Ibid., 9.

11. Ibid., 47-53.

12. Ibid., 53.

13. Lenin, "Bourgeois Gentlemen on 'Family' Farming," 367.

14. Hinton, Fanshen, 404. See also 286, 401-10, 623-26.

15. Marx, Capital, vol. 1, 330.

16. Weil, "Capitalist Exploitation on Dairy Farms," 17-21, 32.

17. Poulantzas, Classes in Contemporary Capitalism, 151-52.

18. Wright, for example, uses this figure to delineate his "small employers" from "bourgeoisie," or capitalists proper. See Classes, 150, table 5.3.

19. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of Manufactures: 1972, vol. 1, Subject and Special Statistics (Washington D.C.: GPO, 1976), xvii; xxxii; 68, table no. 8. There were an additional 122,000 or so establishments with less than 10 employees, many of which were actually part of multi-unit companies, from which detailed data was not obtained.

20. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of Retail Trade: 1972, vol. 1, Summary and Subject Statistics, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1976), 1-8, table no. 1a; 1-37, table no. 1b; 1-66, table no. 2a.

21. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of Selected Services: 1972, vol. 1, Summary and Subject Statistics (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1976), 1-7, table no. 1a; 1-41, table no. 1b; 1-74, table no. 2a.

22. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of Agriculture: 1974, vol. 1, pt. 51, Summary and State Data (Washington D.C.: GPO, 1977), 1-2, table nos. 3, 4.

23. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of Wholesale Trade: 1972, vol. 1, Summary and Subject Statistics (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1976), 1-54, table no. 1d.

CHAPTER 14

AN ESTIMATION OF THE DIMENSIONS OF THE PETTY BOURGEOIS CLASS AS A WHOLE

Turning now to the "newer" strata of the petty bourgeoisie, even greater difficulties are found in estimating their size than was the case for the "older" segment of this class. The professional and managerial employees working for wages or salary cannot be easily analyzed by the means used above in determining the classes of the "self-employed" stratum. There is here of course a similar range of employment relations, from those who work mainly "on their own," to those having a few subordinates, to heads of large crews, and so forth. Managers, in particular, could be simply placed along such a gradation or pyramid, depending on the numbers of persons working under them, and given a class position on this basis.[1] But even here the result would be misleading. The owners of small businesses are assumed to control the income derived from their own work, and that of their hired "help," minus whatever they must share with creditors, landlords, and so on. But employees of a large firm do not in general have this immediate relation to the value of their labor and that of their subordinates, since the form of payment is

much more indirect. Therefore, even the managers of a large number of workers can theoretically be forced to perform more work than is rewarded in their salaries, and may thus be exploited of surplus-value despite their own position of authority over others.

All this is even more evident in the case of professionals, who lack the clear-cut ranking of most managerial structures, and for whom data on subordinates is either largely lacking or inconclusive. Though the ability and likelihood of having other persons working under them is one characteristic of the salaried professions, as with all strata of the petty bourgeoisie, it is next to impossible to identify the members of this class solely on this basis. It is instead necessary to try to address more directly the question of how the income of these employees is generated and distributed, that is, whether they are exploited of their surplus-labor, whether they retain the more-or-less full value of their labor, or whether they receive surplus-value from the exploitation of other workers. This is the means by which in this case class can be most closely identified. The goal, however, is not to arrive at some vague "middle class" based on income level or life-style, but rather to determine the relation to surplus-value by an examination of actual production and pay, a different way of measuring the same result as was obtained earlier for "self-employed" owners.

Apart from the lack of any precise data for carrying out such a study, the problem is further complicated by other considerations. Value produced by work can not be precisely measured, since it is contained in commodities or services whose values are only established by exchange, and then even so by an averaging of the actual amounts of labor which they contain, from all those who have contributed to the work producing them. All the vagaries of the market enter in here, as well as differing costs of means of production, so that exact measurement of labor-value is impossible. This is particularly so when, as in the United States today, "free" competition has in large measure been replaced by various forms of monopolization, which distort even the approximate measurements which every act of exchange is based on. But the situation is more difficult still, since not all "work" produces an equal amount of value. The skill of the labor involved, the length of the laboring time, and the intensity with which work is in any given period carried out all must be considered in determining how much is actually produced by the person whose labor-value we are attempting to measure. In any particular case, these variables will differ considerably.

Since it is this measurement which must be compared with payment in order to show whether persons are exploited, receive the full value of their own labor, or are exploiters of others, all of these factors enter into consideration. Needless to say, such efforts must be

imperfect at best. Moreover, neither capitalist business accounts nor bourgeois government data has any interest in attempting to measure the degree of exploitation of workers per se, but is only interested in "productivity" and related matters. By extension, any class analysis based on such estimations must be less than adequate, more a suggestion of dimensions than a scientific "proof," and in all cases needing the corrective of direct observation of the circumstances under which specific persons actually labor and the other determinants which in any case must enter into analyzing classes: division of labor and relation to the means of production. Despite such caveats, I believe the method to be used here is an essentially correct one, which if by no means accurate in each detail, can indicate the general size of the class strata concerned.

The first task is to try to find a figure for what Marx called the value created by

> the expenditure of simple labour-power, i.e., of the labour-power which, on an average, apart from any special development, exists in the organism of every ordinary individual. Simple average labour, it is true, varies in character in different countries and at different times, but in a particular society it is given. Skilled labour counts only as simple labour intensified, or rather, as multiplied simple labour, a given quantity of skilled being considered equal to a greater quantity of simple labour. Experience shows that this reduction is constantly being made.[2]

To arrive at a valuation of the product of "simple" labor, preparatory to the attempt to measure more skilled labor, we must first find two things: how much value is being

produced and by whom. This is not as simple as it might seem, primarily because bourgeois statisticians have no particular reason to calculate this relation, and the measures which they use therefore either include too much or too little in both cases. To this is added the difficulty that no one occupation can be thought of as representing "simple" labor and most businesses combine many job types. But certain categories, however inadequate, can be used to approximate both the value created and the labor force which need to be measured.

In general there are two main means used in bourgeois statistics to record the values of production under capitalism, neither of which is valid for our purposes by itself. The first of these is "value added," which measures what is performed at each of the various stages of the work process, by subtracting from the price of the products the costs of materials, energy expenses, and so on. However, this measurement overstates the real values of added labor primarily because it includes the depreciation of fixed capital. Though the cost of the latter is in fact transferred to the new products by the work process, it is not an actual part of the value this labor itself yields, but is rather the "congealed labor" that earlier producers have expended. To adjust for this depreciation, among other factors, a different measure is sometimes used: "national income." This records the income which a given production process yields to those who carry

it out, and is by one method of calculation little more than wages plus profits. However, this approach understates the value of labor added, first because depreciation is very often speeded up in capitalist accounting in the United States, and secondly because such items as property taxes are also deducted, though these must clearly come from the surplus that workers yield.[3] A very broad comparison of the deviations each of these methods appear to make from real values indicates that the discrepancies are about equal. I will therefore compromise the difference between them to arrive at an estimation of the actual value which is added during the labor process. This is an admittedly rough calculation, but not grossly inaccurate.

But who must be counted as producing this value? Here we face the same kind of problem, since neither "production workers" nor "all employees" is adequate. Again a rough review indicates that a large number of those who are listed as "non-production" workers actually contribute to production, as in the case of engineers, technicians, and so on. Others clearly do not, the most obvious examples being sales employees, lawyers, and those who do similar support activities. The remaining groupings, notably clerical personnel, can easily fall into either category, and often do a mix of labor within the same occupation, so that a typist may contribute to both internal production and external sales. To reconcile these differences I will

also somewhat arbitrarily merely halve the difference, that is, I will count one-half of "non-production" employees as assisting in production, and add their numbers to the "production workers."

Before using these categories to arrive at a figure for the value of labor, I must make clear what I am and am not doing here, especially in light of the earlier discussion of "productive and unproductive labor," in regard to its usage by Poulantzas in particular. Here I am using these terms not to make any class distinctions, such as he attempted to do, but merely for the purpose of calculating what value is actually produced by given workers. Certain employees do not contribute to new production of values, as noted in that earlier discussion, but perform what are in effect "services" for the capitalists, which must be paid out of the total surplus-value the latter exploit. That these workers may in the process also be exploited, as shown above, is the reason they must be considered in most cases proletarians like any others. However, when the purpose is not to analyze their class position, but to find what value labor produces on the average, their work must be excluded.

In choosing where the best measure of "simple" labor may be made, I will concentrate on manufacturing, first because of generally better data on this industry, secondly as it was for long the largest segment of the United States economy in terms of employment, and thirdly since the work

of "operatives" in this sector is probably as close as we can come to "simple average labor." As Harry Braverman has noted:

> The entire concept of 'semi-skill,' as applied to operatives, is an increasingly delusory one. The prefix semi means 'half' or 'partly.' When this prefix is attached to the noun skill, the resulting compound word leaves the impression of a level of training and ability that lies somewhere--perhaps about halfway--between skill and the total lack of it. But for the category of operatives, training requirements and the demands of the job upon the abilities of the worker are now so low that one can hardly imagine jobs that lie significantly below them on any scale of skill.[4]

We must now take up the question of skill as applied to labor values. In the quote from Harry Braverman above, the term "semi-skilled" is taken as implying "a level of training and ability that lies somewhere--perhaps about half-way--between skill and the total lack of it." This is used by him in rejecting "semi-skilled" as applied to operatives, but we must go further. For the entire concept of the opposite of "skill" as being somehow "the total lack of it" is misleading, as Braverman surely would be the first to agree.[5] There is no such thing as human labor without skill, a condition which would more properly apply to a new-born infant than to any normal working adult. One has only to think of the total lack of coordination and conceptualization in a baby to realize what a wonder of "skills" is represented by any person with "average" but fully matured human qualities.

Moreover, even the simplest machine tending requires a wide use of such skills. This is of considerable

importance to grasp firmly, first because it confronts the bourgeois ideology of "common labor" as "unskilled," against which the more highly trained and in particular better educated portions of the population are set as though in some exalted realm, the easier to hold down the former and separate them off from the professionals and the petty bourgeois intellectuals, among others. This cultivated sense of superiority quickly collapses in other circumstances, when confronted, for instance, by the nearly universal abilities in repairing machinery found among the United States working class, requiring considerable skills. It is not the absence of skill that marks "simple" labor-power, but the systematic non-employment of those skills by capitalism which, nevertheless, can neither strip workers of their real abilities nor of their determination to use them. More important for our immediate purposes here, it is necessary to understand the standard against which "skilled labor" is measured, with "average" labor not a base of "zero," but something more figuratively in the realm of "100," a level of development which can be increased or multiplied only incrementally.

It is surely not accidental, therefore, that Engels in writing about the differences between "simple" and "compound" or skilled labor says:

> The product of one hour of compound labor is a commodity of higher value--perhaps double or treble--in comparison with the product of one hour of simple labour.[6]

Thus on the topic that Marx also examined at length from various angles, Engels estimated skilled labor as maybe twice or at most three times higher in value than unskilled labor. This is not the comparison of something with nothing, nor does skill multiply value by twenty or thirty times, but only in very small measure can it be gradually built up to perhaps double the average. This is related also to costs of training:

> All labour of a higher or more complicated character than average labour is expenditure of labour-power of a more costly kind, labour-power whose production has cost more time and labour, and which therefore has a higher value, than unskilled or simple labour-power. This power being of higher value, its consumption is labour of a higher class, labour that creates in equal times proportionally higher values than unskilled labour does.[7]

Investment in education increases such valuation only very slowly, "compounding" the years of raising and training "unskilled" workers, which enters into both the price of their labor-power and the values their expended labor creates.

Moreover, even this multiplying of the value of "simple" labor is reversed in practice in many cases by two other factors. First intensity:

> Increased intensity of labour means increased expenditure of labour in a given time. Hence a working-day of more intense labour is embodied in more products than is one of less intense labour, the length of each day being the same.[8]

Thus intensity of labor must also be considered.

> If we take two workers, even in the same branch of industry, the value which they produce in one hour of

> labour-time will always vary with the intensity of their labour and their skill.'

To this must be added that in any longer time period, such as a day, week, or year, there must also be a reckoning of the actual hours spent working, which may and do vary greatly. Each of these three factors must be weighed against the others to arrive at a comparison of the real value produced in any given situation by skilled as opposed to unskilled labor. If, for instance, the skill involved in one case is double that of "simple average labor," but if by a combination of shorter hours or less intensive labor only half as much actual work is performed, the result is to leave the total labor-value yielded just the same.

On a social scale, the same differences occur between occupations and industries. The entire course of modern capitalist development, as Marx was early to show and as has been elaborated for our day by Harry Braverman, among others, is a process of routinizing and intensifying labor by the use of larger concentrations of workers and machines which subordinate the worker to them. Speaking of the effect in England of shortening the working day, Marx noted:

> The immense impetus it gives to the development of productive power, and to economy in the means of production, imposes on the workman increased expenditure of labour in a given time, heightened tension of labour-power, and closer filling up of the pores of the working-day, or condensation of labour to a degree that is attainable only within the limits of the shortened working-day. This condensation of a greater mass of labour into a given period

> thenceforward counts for what it really is, a greater quantity of labour. In addition to a measure of its extention, i.e., duration, labour now acquires a measure of its intensity or of the degree of its condensation or density. The denser hour of the ten hours' working-day contains more labour, i.e., expended labour-power, than the more porous hour of the twelve hours' working-day. The product therefore of one hour of the former hours has as much or more value than has the product of 1 1/5 of the latter hours.[10]

The dreaded order "speedup" is quite literal: the rate at which an assembly line is operated is set ever higher to intensify labor to the breaking point. In less mechanized industries, a similar effect is often produced by the use of piece-rates which are constantly lowered to drive the workers ever faster.

In either case compulsory overtime, not compensated for by other time off, is used to "stretch out" the work over fewer and fewer workers while others starve. It is no accident that such areas of "management prerogative" are increasingly the battleground of labor struggles, for higher wages and benefits have little meaning for those who, often more or less literally, are being "worked to death." Though practices vary greatly between industries, it was manufacturing from the beginning that capitalism seized on to implement these practices, and it is still in this sector of the economy that they are today most advanced. The use of the assembly line, especially, locks the workers into the same amount of production even during overtime hours, once again allowing an extended workday without loss of intensity, a condition against which only

sloppy work is possible as a rebellion, and by increases in absenteeism to once more bring weekly hours down at least some to a bearable level.

Of the 16,397,000 employees who, by my calculations as described above, must be counted as in "production" in manufacturing in 1970, almost 8,000,000 or a fraction under half are operatives. Another almost 2 million persons are in the categories of transport operatives, laborers, and service workers whose skills in most cases do not differ greatly from those of operatives proper. The labor of the 2.5 million clericals, of which I have roughly estimated half assists in production, is also little if at all more skilled than operatives.[11] Thus almost 70% of workers in manufacturing can be counted as "simple" labor, the other portion having an admixture of craft, professional, and managerial "skills," which in a good number of cases may be largely illusory as well. Thus I will use manufacturing as the basis for my calculations, noting that the resulting figure will be somewhat higher than "pure simple labor" might be. The 16.4 million employees in that industry in "production" in 1970 yielded some $258 billion in new values by their work, for an average of some $15,731 per person.[12] The "simple" labor value might be slightly lower, perhaps closer to $15,000.

It has been more difficult to introduce mechanization and large-scale operations in most other fields, notably agriculture, services, sales, construction, and so on. Let

us take the last-named industry as a basis for comparison with what we have already found in the case of manufacturing and "simple" labor, for construction is that sector of the economy labor which employs the greatest percentage of "skilled" manual workers. Over 50% of all employees in the construction trades are craftspersons, and these are generally conceded to have the most skills of all industrial laborers, while many of the others are engineers, designers, and other professionals. All other things being equal, we might expect therefore to find workers in construction to yield a higher value per year than those in manufacturing. However, if we go back to 1967 to find a common statistical base, we find that using the same method as above to calculate values produced by labor, an average employee in the construction industry yielded only approximately $11,917 annually, while in that year the measurement of labor-value of those in manufacturing was $13,765. Thus we can say that, at the least, the employment of labor having a higher general average of skills is not by itself sufficient to extract a higher value per worker.[13]

In the case of construction, several factors would appear to enter into producing the result. For one thing, construction workers averaged only 37.7 hours weekly in 1967, compared to 40.6 for manufacturing. Many in construction are laid off seasonally or between jobs: of both male craftspersons and operatives on average only

about 60% worked all year in 1969, in manufacturing the figures were 82% and 72%, respectively.[14] A greater effect, however, must undoubtedly be laid to that lack of filling up "the pores of the working-day" in the marvelous expression used by Marx, of less "condensation" or "density" to the labor of the construction workers. It could not be otherwise. Construction work on the whole simply does not lend itself to the extreme of mechanization, of endlessly repeated routine, or scientifically programmed motions performed as rapidly as humanly possible that is the lot of so many manufacturing workers. The long walks between the various places of work, the waiting for supplies to arrive or be hoisted into place, the inability to coordinate exactly the finishing of one crew on a job so that the next can begin, all these reduce the intensity of labor on this kind of production. To this is added, in the case of construction, unions which have successfully resisted the kinds of speedup enforced elsewhere.

Unfortunately we have no statistical data by which to make a similar estimate, rough as it is, of the value produced by those in professions or of the amount of actual labor yielded by managerial personnel, and so on. But what can be said with relative certainty is that the majority of those in these occupations work under conditions which more closely resemble that found in the construction industry than in manufacturing. Of course there are exceptions in

all these situations, and no absolute lines can be drawn. But the pattern of most management and professional work is to be relatively isolated in small offices, work stations, or production units, without a high degree of imposed order or mechanization, with a more "porous" workday filled with travel time between job locations, fairly frequent breaks in routine, and the simple inability to perform most of the more intellectual or managerial endeavors with the clockwork precision of a manufacturing assembly line. As Larson puts it:

> Now, the central characteristic of expert intellectual work is that it cannot be established from the outside that a given result should be obtained in a given time. This characteristic is tied to the experts' monopoly of knowledge, which makes it even more difficult for non-experts to "see" or to replicate the productive process in which experts actually engage. The secrecy and mystery which surround the creative process maximize the self-governance conceded to experts.
>
> Thus the real and the ideological aspects of expert intellectual work combine to protect these privileged workers from the "tyranny of the clock." Even if their products and the organization of their work lives escape their control, they are masters of their time; this freedom extends from apparently trivial but nevertheless fundamental aspects of the work situation all the way to the discretion which they enjoy in the productive activity itself.[15]

Generally free of time clocks, they take coffee breaks and even vacations "with relative freedom," while "private offices, command over secretaries, reserved parking space, a waiting room, and the like--are 'protecting' their time and their work."[16]

One other word is needed, on the question of the role of salaries, which the Ehrenreichs for instance list as one

of the class aspects of their "PMC." The use of payment by salary as a factor in class analysis can be helpful, but only if it is taken as an indication, or rather as a result, of class position, not as a cause. Employees are not members of the petty bourgeoisie because they are salaried, but are paid with a salary as a consequence of or reward for being a member of the "middle" strata, or of the capitalist class proper. The form of payment is irrelevant to exploitation strictly speaking, for they can be exploited of their surplus-labor no matter how, and theoretically no matter how much, they are paid, if it still does not equal or exceed the values they produce. However, whereas the specific form by which surplus-value is appropriated under capitalism is the extraction of more hours of labor than is compensated for by the equivalent value of the wage, where this is not the main purpose of employment, the tying of labor-time to payment is not necessary. Thus a salary, which is paid for a given period regardless of exact hours worked or production yielded, becomes feasible in the place of wages.

Salaries are most commonly found among the petty bourgeoisie and bourgeoisie, because the members of these classes are not hired primarily for the direct production of surplus-value, or even receive some amount of it, and so they can be paid in more flexible form. Capitalists try to take advantage of this pattern to fool workers into the

belief that they are really "professionals," as a DuPont plant manager shows:

> Mr. Sill says his 800 workers are "salaried," but he quickly denies that this term means they are guaranteed an annual income. Rather, he says the term is meant to generate a more professional attitude, to "build a partnership." "We're on the frontier of how to create a better industrial enterprise," he said, one with smooth labor-management relations as in Japan."[17]

As the article shows many workers are not taken in, and neither should we be. A salary as such means little, unless the actual relation to surplus-value is made clear. Many employees who are on the borderline of the petty bourgeoisie are paid a semi-salary, that is, they are more or less "guaranteed an annual income," but in fact get wages primarily according to actual hours of work. The government recognizes such class lines by requiring overtime pay only below a certain salary level.[18]

It must be made clear that what is implied here is not that the professionals do not "work hard." Obviously most do, though in many occupations within the professions or among managers there is often at least the possibility of less actual work being required than in more manual types of labor. Indeed some jobs which are considered to carry with them, or be a reward for, higher skill or organizational ability, such as so-called "non-working foreperson," may in reality be all but "non-working" in practice, with time spent largely by idling around in an office between hourly "patrols" to make sure the workers do not slack off. Any measure of such jobs would have to show

them as less "productive" than that of the subordinate proletarians, regardless of their presumed higher level of skills. But in spite of this, it is not disparagement of the professionals or managers that is intended, rather a recognition that their work must necessarily contain large portions of "wasted" time as judged by the efficiency standards of industry.

The attempts to impose similar routinization on the professions are becoming more common, as I will examine later, and in these areas too opposition to the "speedup" is increasingly the focus of labor struggles. Nevertheless, even where the old standards of these occupations have been eroded or placed under strict guidelines that require a certain amount of daily "performance," objective conditions generally prevent the kind of intensity which has long since become the common situation for vast numbers of industrial workers.[19] Thus here too is present that reverse factor which cancels out most of what we might expect to result from greater professional skills. Against the increased value of skilled labor, we must place the lesser degree of intensity, the "seasonal" character of such occupations as teaching, the common practice of granting "comp-time" to make up for required overtime, and so on. In general, it is questionable if professionals and managers as a whole actually yield significantly greater labor on average than

does "simple" labor-power subject to more intense exploitation.

Further then this it is difficult to go, given a lack of statistical data which would allow a more precise measure of the value of the skills or of the labor patterns of the extremely varied professional and managerial occupations. My purpose, at any rate, is not to pin down some absolute figure, which can at best be no more than an average of a wide range of real situations, but to suggest the general point at which labor performed and earnings are equal. I will therefore take the figure of $15,000 in the Census year 1969-1970 as analyzed above as the approximate average of the value of the labor of employed adults, whether they are so-called "unskilled" but heavily exploited, or more "skilled" but subject to less intense forms of work. By this measurement, a person earning just $15,000 annually would be neither exploited nor exploiter, but instead is paid the equivalent of their own labor, the situation which in its "purest" form marks the presence of the petty bourgeoisie. Above this figure, up to perhaps double this income level, the labor of the person involved is still predominant, but increasingly is added to by the exploited surplus-value of others, equivalent to 4 or 5 workers at lower levels. Setting the "top" of this class at $30,000, moreover, leaves considerable room for the higher production of very skilled persons, who nevertheless are paid more or less the full value of their labor. Over

$30,000 or so per year surplus-value generally becomes dominant and the employee begins merging into the capitalist class proper, which by this measurement would perhaps start "formally" at an even somewhat higher figure.

Similar calculations must be made at the other end of the scale. It is therefore necessary to try to delineate more clearly the "bottom" of the petty bourgeoisie who work for wages and salaries, to find where in the progression of incomes a person is more likely to be on the "side" of that class than to be a proletarian proper. To understand this, what is needed is to look more closely not at income levels per se, but rather at the rates of exploitation of various parts of the labor force. The basic measurement to be used here is "rate of surplus-value," which is simply the amount of surplus-value divided by wage or salary. Looking back to the situation in manufacturing, we find that in 1970 the average person contributing to producing goods was paid $7,329.[20] Using the $15,731 arrived at earlier as the rough gauge of labor value from each such employee, we see that there was $8,402 surplus-value per person or a rate of exploitation of 115%. For that "simple labor power" which produces closer to $15,000, wages were $6,736, surplus-value $8,264, and the rate of exploitation was 123%. This means that more than half of the value produced by these employees was lost to them, going to the capitalists as the basis for their profits.

As income climbs, however, or if the values generated in production are lower, this ratio changes quite dramatically. The construction employees included in my earlier calculations made $6,890 on average in 1967, yielded some $5,027 in surplus-value on production of $11,917, for an exploitation rate of "only" 73%.[21] Thus well under half of the value they produce was taken by the capitalists for profit. If an employee earns $10,000 and produces $15,000, surplus-value drops to only $5,000 and the rate of exploitation is just 50%. That is, only one-third of the value of labor is given up to the capitalists, and the rate of surplus-value is less than 1/2 as great as for average persons in manufacturing, and even further below so-called "simple labor power." If we wish to be strict in our construction, then it is evident that such employees are still exploited considerably, and that they share this with the proletariat proper. But we are attempting to determine class as a whole and the behavior of the members of different parts of the society. When a person, in combination with having a distinct role in the division of labor, or having made a sizeable investment in higher education, is in addition freed from well over half of the "normal" exploitation to which workers are on average subjected, then we may consider that this is a kind of dividing line across which the employee is more on the "petty bourgeois side" of the class demarcation. As income and work performed come closer and closer together, and

exploitation becomes negligible, the more clear the line between these classes.

It must be kept in mind in this regard that even most of the "old" petty bourgeoisie, particularly in a fully developed capitalist economy, must yield up a considerable portion of their labor value to "outside" interests. Net median income of "self-employed" male managers was only $7,274 in 1970, while for professionals it was $16,987. Comparable figures for women were at an extremely low $2,697 and $2,262, respectively.[22] Even on individual labor worth $15,000, this means that over 50% of earnings were lost even to male managers, and for many members of this stratum of the petty bourgeoisie, as seen above, gross income falls as low as $10,000 at the "bottom" of this class. For many of the "older" stratum of the petty bourgeoisie, relations with the capitalists, such as landlords and bankers, no doubt drain much of the value which they produce, even if indirectly, leaving them only marginally better off than proletarians. "Self-employed" professionals, on the other hand, concentrated in law and medicine, are separated by a very considerable margin from the heavy rates of surplus-value which are routinely the lot of the proletariat proper, though it must be kept in mind that the higher skills of professionals generally would increase the amount of value they produce, which means that they too may lose some of their surplus, even though they are well rewarded.

A class, however, as noted earlier, does not exist as an absolute, but only as a social group distinguished from others having different characteristics. This has particular meaning for those many managers and professionals who can normally expect a certain amount of advancement during their careers, and who serve an "apprenticeship" at lower pay in their earlier years with the anticipation of gaining the rank of a "full" petty bourgeoisie at a later date. For instance, the income levels of college faculty in 1970 are given in Table 6.

Table 6.--Median Salary of College Faculty, by Rank: 1970

Faculty Rank	Median Annual Salary
Full Professor	$16,799
Associate Professor	$12,985
Assistant Professor	$10,698
Instructor	$ 8,357
All Faculty	$11,745
Faculty Earning Over $10,000	65%

Source: Department of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1972, 131, table no. 207.

Additional investment in education is often the means to higher rank. Such a possibility does not generally exist within the working class, among whom even craftspersons can usually barely make it into the lower levels of what would mark the start of petty bourgeois status for others, and then only in relatively small numbers. The problem now is to find the best statistical point to indicate that

transition, for which there are two main alternative approaches.

One obvious option in determining the size of the "wage and salary" segments of the petty bourgeois class would be simply to include all those who fall between a "bottom" of $10,000 and a "top" of $30,000. This would represent the broadest possible perimeters for those who are closer to the petty bourgeoisie than to the capitalists or working class. In 1970, there were about 3.2 million managers and 3.7 million professionals who had incomes in the $10,000 to $30,000 range. Another 6.0 million persons in all occupations also fell into this category.[23] Where this involves much higher education or administrative roles, some of these latter might also be considered to be petty bourgeoisie. This is particularly true in sales, clerical, and highly trained craft fields. However, $10,000 is a quite low level at which to mark the "bottom" of the wage and salary members of the petty bourgeois class proper, for at that income, the rate of surplus-value is still a very high 50% or so. At the next available statistical point of $12,000, the exploitation rate on labor value of $15,000 is only 25%, 1/4 to 1/5 the "average." At this earnings level there are respectively 2.2 and 2.4 million on salaries in managerial and professional petty bourgeois strata.[24]

An average of these two statistical points will give us a figure which is probably close to a median income for

these "newer" segments of the petty bourgeoisie. At $11,250 the rate of exploitation is thus found to be 33% on $15,000, between 1/3 and 1/4 that of most workers. It is doubtful if over such an earnings level work is primarily for the purpose of performing surplus-labor, which would be largely eaten up by overhead and would in any case be far below the "normal" rate. Above this line there were some 2.7 million each of both managers and professionals on salary in the petty bourgeoisie. The great majority of these were men, though perhaps .5 million women earned over $11,250. Among professionals the main male categories included are college faculty above the instructor level, engineers, architects, salaried lawyers, judges, doctors, and pharmacists, most scientists, mathematicians, and social scientists, airline pilots, traffic controllers, designers and public relations personnel. Outside of the managerial and professional strata, only a few salespersons average only $8,176. Still, perhaps 1.0 million more "miscellaneous" salaried employees are also petty bourgeoisie.[25]

In addition, there were in 1970 some 400,000 or so officers in the military in positions corresponding to petty bourgeois civilian roles. Basic pay in the corps that year was just under $10,000, and with added allowances averaged $12,947, similar to the "middle class" elsewhere.[26] Finally, students are frequently held to be petty bourgeoisie. But even among those who accept this analysis

the reason given is often either that these persons come from petty bourgeois backgrounds, or that they are preparing for occupations normally associated with that class. While both these factors do frequently enter in, it is generally not acceptable to define people strictly by their "pasts" or their "futures," a practice which obscures the actual content of their class positions at the present time. The condition of being a college student is relatively unique in that adults who could be otherwise employed are in the majority of cases at least partially supported by others, is an "intellectual" in the social division of labor, and are investing as well in the value of their own labor-power. This relative freedom from the conditions of capitalist exploitation is what marks students as petty bourgeoisie, though family origins, or a work-study mix, must also be considered.[27] Perhaps half of those in higher education, equivalent to about 4.3 million full-time persons in college or universities fit petty bourgeois criteria.[28]

The total membership in the petty bourgeoisie and its various strata is shown in Table 7. The petty bourgeois class accounts for 11.2% of the adult population, 13.2% of the work force, but just 9.0% of those on wage and salary. Above all, these figures indicate that the petty bourgeoisie under capitalism is indeed, as Marx and Engels stated in the Manifesto, "ever renewing itself as a supplementary part of bourgeois society."

Table 7.--Size of Petty Bourgeois Class and Strata: 1970

Stratum	Total Numbers (in millions)
Independent Stratum	4.5
Managerial Stratum	2.7
Professional Stratum	2.7
Miscellaneous Salaried Employees	1.0
Military Officers	.4
Students in Higher Education	4.3
Total Petty Bourgeois Class	15.6

Sources: Department of Commerce, 1970 Census of the Population, Occupational Characteristics, 284-304, table. no. 16; Detailed Characteristics, 766-7, table no. 227; 772-3, table no. 228; Occupations of Persons with High Earnings, 16-21, table no. 4; Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1972, 259, table no. 418; 263, table no. 431; 129, table no. 202. For the independent stratum, see chapter 13, p. 479, table no. 4.

The "newer" parts of this class outnumber the "old" stratum by 50%, not even counting the millions of college students. Yet neither managerial nor professional strata have yet equaled the size by themselves of the "self-employed" segment of the petty bourgeoisie, shrunken though it now is. Their growth, therefore, while significant, can in no way permanently reverse the decline of this class. Ever recurring in capitalist society and ever giving renewed strength to capitalism, the petty bourgeoisie are still doomed to disappear.

NOTES

1. Loren, Classes in the United States, 110: "Most managers are lower level managers, a group of workers. If each middle manager oversees five managers, then 80 percent of all managers are lower level managers." See also 267, n. 77.

2. Marx, Capital, vol. 1, 44.

3. Sloan, Harold S. and Arnold J. Juchar, Dictionary of Economics (New York: Barnes and Noble Books, 1970), 299, 459; J. L. Hanson, A Dictionary of Economics and Commerce (Eastover, Plymouth, England: MacDonald and Evans, 1977), 333-4; Erwin Essmer Nemmers, Dictionary of Economics and Business (Totowa, NJ: Littlefield, Adams & Co., 1978), 313, 507.

4. Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capital, 430.

5. Ibid., 431-32, where Braverman challenges the concept of "unskilled," but only in terms of the actual training period which such jobs require, not because of the skills which even the "average" worker brings to any job.

6. Engels, Anti-Dühring, 236.

7. Marx, Capital, vol. 1, 197.

8. Ibid., 524.

9. Engels, Anti-Dühring, 239.

10. Marx, Capital, vol. 1, 410.

11. Department of Commerce, 1970 Census of the Population, Detailed Characteristics, 778-81, table. no. 229.

12. Department of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1972, 708-9, table no. 1188.

13. Ibid., and 675, table no. 1132; 697, table no. 1172; 646, table no. 1079.; and Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1971, 92d ed. (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1971), 311,

table, no. 495. This is a very rough calculation, which halves the difference between national income and value added, and between production workers and all employees. However, if anything, it understates the difference between manufacturing and construction, since the ratio of those producing value to non-productive office labor seems to be higher in the latter industry, using the more prcise occupational categories discussed above. This would actually reduce even further the values which each worker generates there.

14. Department of Commerce, 1970 Census of the Population, Detailed Characteristics, 778, table no. 229; and Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bulletin 1312-B, Employment and Earnings: United States, 1909-71 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1972), 23, 35.

15. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 235.

16. Ibid.

17. New York Times, July 13, 1980, sec. 3, pp. 1, 13.

18. Ibid., January 14, 1981, A17. As of 1981, different rates were applied to supervisory and professional employees, $155 and $170 per week, respectively, below which they had to be paid overtime. An increase in the minimum rate put into effect in the last days of the Carter Administration gave 100,000 to 150,000 supervisors the right to overtime pay.

19. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, June 12, 1981, 61: "Research by Theodore Barry & Associates, a management consulting firm, found that the 50 percent loss in productive time among white-collar workers is about 10 percent more than their blue-collar counterparts. . . . But the firm said most lack of white-collar productivity is 'beyond the worker's control' and reflects back on top management."

20. Department of Commerce, 1970 Census of the Population, Detailed Characteristics, 778-81, table. no. 229.

21. Department of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1972, 675, table no. 1132.

22. Ibid., 237, table no. 379.

23. Department of Commerce, Census of the Population: 1970, vol. Pc(2)-7A, Occupational Characteristics: United States Summary, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1973), 284-304, table. no. 16; Detailed Characteristics, 766-7, table no.

227, 772-3, table no. 228; and Occupations of Persons with High Earnings, 16-21, table no. 4.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.

26. Department of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1972, 259, table no. 418; 263, table no. 431.

27. Hill, Class Analysis, 90, which gives some emphasis to the relative independence of the student situation. By contrast, see Erik Olin Wright, Class, Crisis and the State (London: Verso, 1979), 92-93, which stresses the "trajectory" of students in their future careers, and therefore the classes they anticipate moving into, rather than their origins. This, however, leaves out the relative autonomy of the student position per se, which often makes even those who will soon join the bourgeoisie adopt radical stances in their college years, taking on the attitudes of the petty bourgeois class to which they temporarily belong.

28. Department of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1972, 129, table no. 202.

H

OLD CLASS IN NEW FORM

THE MODERN PROFESSIONAL PETTY BOURGEOISIE

by

ROBERT WEIL

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PART III

CHAPTER 15

IMPERIALISM AND THE "ARISTOCRACY" OF THE PROFESSIONAL PETTY BOURGEOISIE

Having established the existence and the approximate size of the stratum of professional petty bourgeoisie, I must now take up those special factors which, on the one hand, have led to the "renewal" of the petty bourgeois class in the United States, and on the other hand, increasingly cause its individual members to be "constantly hurled down into the proletariat," not sparing in this process those in the professions. In other words, I will examine how the historic contradiction and polarization of the petty bourgeoisie is related to the specific role of professionals in the present period. This in turn will lead to an examination of the direction in which this "new" stratum of the petty bourgeois class is moving, and its political consequences. I will begin with those developments which have tended to increase the size of the professional segment, and to "raise it up," first because it is obviously chronological to deal with the creation of a social grouping before examining the tendencies which

work toward its destruction, secondly because the "renewal" of petty bourgeois strata is always the ultimately weaker and more evanescent tendency, while it is the demise of this class which represents the stronger aspect of the contradictory position of the "middle classes" under capitalism.

A study of these factors in the development of the professional petty bourgeoisie will also help in making an analysis of two groupings which have already been encountered, but to which I have not as yet tried to assign a class position: 1) those with some training in the professions who nevertheless do not otherwise fit the criteria for being petty bourgeois, either because the degree of exploitation to which they are subject is too great to allow their inclusion in that class, or because their possession of the means of production and role in the division of labor is so limited that it disqualifies them as "full" petty bourgeoisie; and 2) those persons in occupations outside the professional and managerial wage and salary strata who, though without apparently exceptional relations either to higher education or to any administrative role, nevertheless have relatively bigger incomes or otherwise appear to be exploited less severely than the average worker, and in other ways share some of the attributes of the "middle classes." The first of these categories applies particularly to the so-called "semi-professionals," while the second involves especially the

more skilled, best organized, and most highly paid sectors of those whose manual jobs are normally associated with the working class.

Such an examination must start by analyzing the nature of the United States economy, for the development of classes cannot be understood apart from this basis. Moreover, as will be seen, the different ways in which this economic system is "defined" can itself lead to differing implications for the class struggle. Here a curious element creeps in, for since the time of Lenin in World War I it has been generally understood, at least on the "Left," that the nature of the dominant capitalist nations of the world was imperialism, by which capitalists in those countries invested all over the globe, drawing superprofits from the colonial workers and peasants, by means of the exceptionally heavy exploitation to which they subjected them. Nothing definitive has occurred in recent years to reverse this analysis, and yet without themselves presenting evidence or theories to explain their changes, a peculiar shift has taken place in the terminology of many Marxists in the United States. During the Vietnam War, the "Left" talked constantly of "imperialism," to a degree that analyses of domestic capitalism were almost totally ignored. Now, it seems, the imperialist concept has become unfashionable, and we hear only of "monopoly capitalism."

Harry Braverman, for example, explicitly adopted this usage:

> Marxists have used various names for this new stage of capitalism since it made its appearance: finance capitalism, imperialism, neo-capitalism, late capitalism. But since it has been generally recognized that, as Lenin put it in one of the pioneer treatments of the subject, "the economic quintessence of imperialism is monopoly capitalism," it is the latter form that has proved most acceptable.[1]

Most acceptable in some quarters, perhaps, but not necessarily most accurate, for the problem with this definition is that it tends to obscure precisely those international aspects of imperialism which for Lenin were most crucial. Devoid of this larger context, "monopoly capitalism" is frequently reduced mainly to the internal relationship of classes within one country, and thus the effect on the creation and distribution of social wealth which it produces becomes primarily a question of the redistribution of the domestic surplus. Such a limited interpretation robs the thesis of Lenin regarding imperialism of its most important feature as applied to the development of socialist revolution, namely, the bribery of one part of the international working class out of the superprofits obtained by the extreme exploitation of other workers abroad.

In regard to the rise of the professional and managerial strata of the petty bourgeoisie, this shift in the definition of the United States economy also has the effect of "domesticating" the developments which lead to their growth. Thus the Ehrenreichs, who use "monopoly

capitalism" throughout their Professional-Managerial Class essay, describe how:

> The PMC emerged with dramatic suddenness in the years between 1890 and 1920, a period roughly overlapping with what historians call the Progressive Era.[2]

But though the Ehrenreichs stress the centralization and monopolization of capital, this was also the period in which United States imperialism "emerged with dramatic suddenness" upon the world. Of course the two developments are not isolated from each other, but it is a mistake to characterize the turn-of-the-century decades as ones marked primarily by a struggle for domestic reforms, as the Ehrenreichs do, without pointing out that they were also the initial period of United States colonialism in other countries. The failure to include this aspect of imperialism leaves the relations of classes under capitalism primarily as a struggle over internal surplus, and over the division of authority, knowledge, and culture in just one society. Left out is the effect on the economy as a whole, and therefore on each class, of imperialist investments abroad, and particularly the division of superprofits. The question that must be examined here is how this phenomenon relates to the petty bourgeoisie in general, and the professionals specifically, and in particular to the development of "middle class radicalism."

It is therefore necessary, before proceeding further, to clarify what in fact the history of imperialism has been in this regard. This was first analyzed even while Marx

was alive, primarily by Engels, who continued to elaborate on this problem until his own death, at which point the analysis was greatly expanded upon by Lenin. As early as 1858, Engels wrote Marx that

> the English proletariat is actually becoming more and more bourgeois, so that this most bourgeois of all nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat alongside the bourgeoisie. For a nation which exploits the whole world this is of course to a certain extent justifiable."[3]

For, Engels was later to explain further, "the workers gaily share the feast of England's monopoly of the world market and the colonies."[4] The effects of this on the class struggle were felt quite early. In 1872, Marx himself had been attacked in the First International for stating that: "'the English labour leaders had sold themselves.'"[5] A decade later Engels spoke of "'those very worst English trade unions which allow themselves to be led by men sold to, or at least paid by, the bourgeoisie.'"[6]

In 1891 Engels explained as well the political consequences of this development, by describing how the British movement was producing a "bourgeois labor party."[7] Toward the end of his life he elaborated further on the connection between the economic position of England and the lack of a revolutionary socialism there. Noting that the "'great Trades' Unions'" based on the "'labour of grown-up men'" had come to "'form an aristocracy among the working-class,'"[8] Engels concluded:

> "The truth is this: during the period of England's industrial monopoly the English working-class have, to

> a certain extent, shared in the benefits of the monopoly. These benefits were very unequally parcelled out amongst them; the privileged minority pocketed most, but even the great mass had, at least, a temporary share now and then. And that is the reason why, since the dying-out of Owenism, there has been no Socialism in England. With the breakdown of that monopoly, the English working-class will lose that privileged position; it will find itself generally -- the privileged and leading minority not excepted--on a level with its fellow-workers abroad. And that is the reason why there will be Socialism again in England."[9]

Engels himself was to see the first significant break toward his own prediction with the challenge of France, Germany, and the United States to British trade monopolization and with the rise of the "new unionism" in England itself, based on the more unskilled and militant segments of the workers. But even the leaders of this movement, most of them Socialists, tended to be tainted by a desire for a degree of bourgeois "respectability." This passage from Engels also shows us the correct usage of the concept of "monopoly capital" in its relation to "imperialism," for it is clearly the international aspects and effects he chose to stress here.

When Lenin in turn came to take up these same problems of the revolutionary movement, he of course gave primary weight to the foreign dimensions of "monopoly capitalism" also. Thus writing in 1916 in "Imperialism and the Split in Socialism" he noted that

> monopoly yields <u>superprofits</u>, i.e., a surplus of profits over and above the capitalist profits that are normal and customary all over the world. The capitalists <u>can</u> devote a part (and not a small one, at that!) of these superprofits to bribe <u>their own</u> workers, to create something like an alliance . . .

> between the workers of the given nation and their capitalists <u>against</u> the other countries.
>
> . . . A handful of wealthy countries--there are only four of them, if we mean independent, really gigantic, "modern" wealth: England, France, the United States and Germany--have developed monopoly to vast proportions, they obtain <u>superprofits</u> running into hundreds, if not thousands, of millions, they "ride on the backs" of hundreds and hundreds of millions of people in other countries and fight among themselves for the division of the particularly rich, particularly fat and particularly easy spoils.
>
> This, in fact, is the economic and political essence of imperialism. . . .[10]

Thus as early as 1916 Lenin identified the United States as one of the four countries in the entire world which were the principal beneficiaries of the superprofits drawn off the rest of the nations and colonial peoples. This means that the rise of the professional stratum as a substantial portion of the United States population coincided with the growth of these imperialist profits as well, and so "monopoly capitalism," and its effects on the structure of classes in this country at that time must not be narrowly interpreted as being only a domestic development.

Lenin many times elaborated on the "political essence" of imperialism and on the class phenomena which underlay it:

> The epoch of imperialism cannot permit the existence, in a single party, of the revolutionary proletariat's vanguard and the semi-petty-bourgeois aristocracy of the working class, who enjoy morsels of the privileges of their "own" nation's "Great-Power" status.[11]

Thus the workers who are bribed out of imperialist superprofits are turned into actual semi-petty-bourgeoisie, and this is as should be expected, for the effect of this

economic "bribery," despite its origins in the labor of others abroad, is to reduce the immediate exploitation of the workers who receive it, and therefore to lessen the surplus-value which is exploited from them. When such bribery is large enough, it eliminates the exploiting of those bribed altogether, thus generating at least one of the conditions of the petty bourgeois class proper. As a result,

> the remaining capitalist classes, the small producers and the petty bourgeoisie . . . are found in all countries. In most capitalist countries, these classes constitute a very considerable minority, approximately from thirty to fourty-five per cent of the population. Add to them the petty-bourgeois elements of the working class, and you get even more than fifty per cent.[12]

Thus, for Lenin, imperialist superprofits form the basis for the actual conversion of some workers into "petty-bourgeois elements," joining the other members of that "capitalist class."

But Lenin did not stop here, for he made clear as well the effect of imperialism on the petty bourgeoisie itself, in which

> the <u>opportunists</u> (social-chauvinists) are working hand in glove with the imperialist bourgeoisie <u>precisely</u> towards creating an imperialist Europe on the backs of Asia and Africa, and . . . objectively the <u>opportunists</u> are a section of the petty bourgeoisie and of certain strata of the working class who <u>have been bribed</u> out of imperialist superprofits and converted into <u>watchdogs</u> of capitalism and <u>corrupters</u> of the labour movement.[13]

Thus it was not only some workers, but many petty bourgeoisie as well that take a bribe from the imperialists to support their international exploitation. Lenin

returned to this analysis on many occasions, for instance stating that these two class elements actually become allies, as

> chauvinism and opportunism in the labour movement have the same economic basis: the alliance between a numerically small upper stratum of the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie--who get but morsels of the privileges of their "own" national capital--against the masses of the proletariat, the masses of the toilers and oppressed in general.[14]

However, though the petty bourgeoisie as a whole is susceptible to being used by the imperialists in this manner, the role falls heaviest on one segment of this class, that is, particularly on its "professional" or "intellectual" elements:

> The "European" type of development, in which certain strata of the petty bourgeoisie, especially the intelligentsia and an insignificant section of the labour aristocracy can share in the "Great-Power" privileges of their "own" nation, could not but have its Russian counterpart.[15]

Here not only do we find Lenin identifying the "intelligentsia"--without any spurious division into "salaried" or "independent"--as one major segment of the petty bourgeoisie, but he also identifies this particular element as the one most closely associated with the imperialists through "bribery" and as the primary agent in the corrupting of the revolutionary movement.

Those who perform this function receive special rewards, and Lenin therefore explains more specifically the situations this bribery entails:

> On the economic basis referred to above, the political institutions of modern capitalism--press, parliament, associations, congresses, etc.--have

> created political privileges and sops for the respectful, meek, reformist and patriotic office employees and workers, corresponding to the economic privileges and sops. Lucrative and soft jobs in the government or on the war industries committees, in parliament and on diverse committees, on the editorial staffs of "respectable," legally published newspapers or on the management councils of no less respectable and "bourgeois law-abiding" trade unions--this is the bait by which the imperialist bourgoisie attracts and rewards the representatives and supporters of the "bourgeois labor parties."[16]

The manner in which "this little sop" is divided up, Lenin notes two pages earlier, "is a secondary question." It does not take much imagination to translate this into present-day United States terms, in which journalists, professors, social workers, the recipients of government grants, trade union officials, and many other "office employees" take the "bait." Nor in the U.S., any less than in Russia in the days of Lenin, are such persons able easily to shed such connections and attitudes as they enter the movement. For the main point to be made here is that opportunism and reformism in the proletarian struggle arise not only out of the bribery of certain workers, but of those petty bourgeois strata from which socialist leadership largely comes as well. The latter are therefore not always as superior to non-socialist unionists in this regard as many of them might think.

Typical in this regard were Karl Kautsky and other "renegades" from the proletarian movement who helped lead the German workers toward support of imperialism: "What interested them was to maintain in all countries the petty-

bourgeois nationalism which calls itself 'internationalism' because of its 'moderation and propriety.'"[17] The narrowness of petty bourgeois interests is thereby turned to the advantage of the largest capitalists, who appeal to "nationalism"--to exploit all other countries! The petty bourgeoisie, therefore, take the lead in corrupting the movement of the workers, and are the chief agents of imperialism in carrying this out. In this role,

> Kautsky is approving the popular deception, is approving the part of the petty bourgeoisie in helping capital to trick the workers and harness them to the chariot of the imperialists.[18]

Thus while segments of both of these classes were bribed by imperialism, it is primarily the petty bourgeoisie whose class position aligns with the needs of the capitalists for allies in their exploitation of the working class abroad:

> The proletariat fights for the revolutionary overthrow of the imperialist bourgeoisie; the petty bourgeoisie fights for the reformist "improvement" of imperialism, for adaptation to it, while submitting to it.[19]

That such reformism clothes itself in "Marxism" as need be, when such ideas are current, was already perfectly evident to Lenin.

Three things are thus happening here simultaneously: 1) some workers are turned into an "aristocracy of labor" or into "semi-petty bourgeoisie," and in exceptional cases even become petty bourgeoisie proper, abandoning the path of socialism; 2) a greatly enlarged petty bourgeois stratum is formed by the creation of the "lucrative and soft jobs"

in government, journalism, trade unions, and so on, based on superprofits from abroad which supplement their "normal" professional salaries; 3) a new element is added to the three "bourgeoisie" of Engels, for there is now formed a very "bourgeois" petty bourgeoisie, an international "aristocracy" of this class as well, to correspond to the bribed section of the proletariat. That these phenomena would reach their extreme in the United States, the leader among imperialist nations, the most flooded with superprofits, is to be expected. Thus the professional petty bourgeoisie and the pre-professional students of this country are envied and imitated by their counterparts throughout the globe, just as the imperialists in the United States are the pinnacle of the international bourgeoisie, and the "aristocrats" of United States labor are the model for all "bourgeoisified" workers around the world. As an inevitable consequence, this has produced very profound historic weaknesses in the proletarian movement in the United States, and in particular limited any socialist and revolutionary forces.

Let us briefly take up each of these developments one at a time. It is impossible and also unnecessary to examine closely here the question of the "labor aristocracy" in the United States. It is only necessary to point out that there are few better candidates for this stratum than the top ranks of workers in the this country both historically and now. The imperialist expansion of

the United States across an entire continent, enslaving, conquering, and importing other peoples and nations provided the basis for an indigenous "labor aristocracy" long before the coming of overseas expansion in the late 1800s. Even on the Eastern seaboard, the skilled workers from early days formed an aristocratic group with full petty bourgeois aspects:

> In the city itself [New York], one-fifth of the white families in 1790 were slaveholders. . . . The richer New Yorkers were, the more likely they were to own slaves. But large numbers of artisans did so as well, and unlike merchants' slaves, who mostly labored as domestic servants, those belonging to artisans tended to be skilled craftsmen.
>
> The extent of artisan slaveholding . . . ought to give pause to a generation of historians (myself included) who have idealized the artisans of the early Republic as emblems of republican independence. Artisan independence clearly rested on the coerced labor of others, fatally compromising the egalitarian thrust of their social outlook. The early labor movement, for example, originated within the artisan class in the 1830s. By then slavery was dead [in the city], but it continued to cast a long shadow--the city's first unions excluded blacks from membership.[20]

Thus so "aristocratic" were the native white skilled artisans that they actually owned slaves who had comparable skills, a relationship which carried over into post-slavery times and the growing proletarianization and unionization of craftpersons.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Engels summarized:

> "Your great obstacle in America, it seems to me, lies in the exceptional position of the native workers. . . . Now a working class has developed and has also to a great extent organised itself on trade union lines. But it still takes up an aristocratic attitude and wherever possible leaves the ordinarily badly paid occupations to the immigrants, of whom only a small

> section enter the aristocratic trade unions. But these immigrants are divided into different nationalities and understand neither one another nor, for the most part, the language of the country. And your bourgeoisie know much better than the Austrian Government how to play off one nationality against the other . . . and each one against the other, so that differences in the standard of life of different workrs exist, I believe, in New York to an extent unheard of elsewhere."[21]

Gavin Mackenzie, who cites this quote, shows that white native workers dominated the crafts, benefitted most among workers from the prosperity of the United States compared to Europe, and achieved a considerable accumulation of "mean wealth."[22] He conludes that, despite the later growth of industrial unionism,

> at least at the present time in American society, craftsmen and non-skilled manual workers share anything but a common class situation: the term 'aristocracy of labour' would appear to be as applicable now as in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Indeed, in terms of their position in the class structure there is little evidence to suggest the situation has ever been different.[23]

It is evident, therefore, that the United States has long been a preeminent land of the "petty-bourgeois aristocrats of labor."

Lenin in turn analyzed the political implications of this class stratum:

> In countries more advanced than Russia, a certain reactionism in the trade unions has been and was bound to be manifested in a far greater measure than in our country. . . . The Mensheviks of the West have acquired a much firmer footing in the trade unions; there the craft-union, narrow-minded, selfish, case-hardened, covetous, and petty-bourgeois "labor aristocracy", imperialist-minded, and imperialist-corrupted, has developed into a much stronger section than in our country. . . . The struggle against the Gomperses, and against the Jouhaux, Hendersons, Merrheims, Legiens and Co. in Western Europe is much more difficult then the

> struggle against our Mensheviks who are an absolutely homogenous social and political type.[24]

The "Gomperses" of course refers to Samuel Gompers, founder of the American Federation of Labor, which was based precisely on "craft narrow-mindedness," those highly paid workers who attain what Lenin called "a tolerable, petty-bourgeois existence," and whose trade unions adopt a reactionary and imperialist-minded politics. I will not try to calculate the dimensions of this stratum, but will only note that in United States history, as in England in the time of Engels, there were sufficient superprofits that "even the great mass had, at least, a temporary share now and then." Thus virtually no segment of the working class in this country has been entirely free of the attitudes associated with the "labor aristocracy."

As to the relation of the petty bourgeoisie proper to imperialism, it should be noted that the first peak of "monopoly capitalism" was reached around 1900, having begun from about 1880 and accelerated greatly in the 1890s, while the 1920s were marked by the "new fortunes" of concentrated wealth in such industries as auto. Accompanying this was overseas expansion, from sugar investments in Hawaii in the 1880s to acquisition of the Virgin Islands in 1917, and the less-than-totally successful efforts to establish a profitable empire in the colonial territories, notably the Philippines, and in Latin America, before 1930. It was really after the Depression and largely as a consequence of

World War II that the United States emerged supreme in the imperialist competition for world control, and it is therefore in the post-war years that superprofits climbed to heights sufficient to reach into every aspect of United States industrial and social life. Parallel to this development is found the growth of the "new" strata of petty bourgeoisie in managerial and especially professional occupations. The Ehrenreichs, for instance, list seven categories of employees whose numbers they trace, where possible, from 1870 to 1930. These engineers, manufacturing managers, social workers, college faculty, accountants, government officials and administrators, and editors and reporters numbered not yet quite 300,000 by 1900 or just about 1% of the economically active population of the country. By 1930 the same eight occupations had grown to 1,060,000, still however constituting only 2.2% of the total work force.[25]

As of 1970, on the other hand, these same employment categories had almost 4 million members and represented over 4.7% of those in all civilian occupational groups. It is in recent decades, in other words, corresponding to the years of United States imperialist domination, that the bulk of the jobs in these occupations have really been created, both in absolute numbers and relative to other fields of employment. The professional and managerial petty bourgeoisie are thus very much a product of the era of United States imperialism and the "social surplus" it

stole from other lands. It should be noted also that this relationship has bearing on the concerns voiced by Charles Loren as to the incomplete polarization of the United States if a "middle class" is considered to exist under capitalism. It is no longer acceptable, in making such calculations of class relations, to deal only with the domestic United States economy and labor force. As exploiter of every part of the globe where it has not been forcibly thrown out, United States imperialism counts among "its" workers a vast number of foreign proletariat, and less directly exploited peasants, who are inseparable from its total economy. If we are to worry over the "percentage" of polarization, therefore, we must add in these often forgotten working masses abroad. With this inclusion, the proportion of United States population in the professional and managerial petty bourgeoisie does not loom so large, for they are the "middle" of an international, not just domestic, economy.

On that basis their proportionate size is indeed smaller than United States-based percentages show, but their political role is enhanced by their strategic location "at the center."

In particular, an "aristocracy" of professionals serves to enforce the methods by which United States imperialism transfers billions of dollars annually to its corporate coffers from the exploitation of "low-wage" workers and cheap raw materials overseas. Some of this money--the

exact proportion, as Lenin says, is not important--finds its way either directly to private employees who are paid to maintain this system, or indirectly through government to achieve the same end. For example, in Chile, farmers crushed by the "free-market," monetarist policies of the fascistic Pinochet regime were forced to borrow dollars, but were paid in pesos, and faced heavy imports of United States wheat.

> Because many of the regime's economic officials were trained in the monetarist theories of Milton Friedman at the University of Chicago, the battle cry repeated by Eduardo Diaz, president of the National Association of Radio Broadcasters and of the local station here, had become "Ni Chicago, ni Moscu"--"Not Chicago, not Moscow."[26]

As usual the working class gets the worst of it for "unemployment is said to have reached almost 50 percent."[27] In the typical pecking order of professionalism, almost a decade later "Los Chicagos" of Chile are now globe-trotting to spread the gospel, so that

> a stream of professionals from the institute . . . and others who worked on Chile's economic transformation now travel to Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe, especially Eastern Europe.[28]

Thus do the professional aristocrats of the United States preside over an international hierarchy that keeps the world safe for "free-market" imperialist practices.

But their intervention in managing foreign workers is often even more direct. A further example is from the years when Ferdinand Marcos ruled the Philippines:

> Two experts from New York City's Office for Collective Bargaining are helping train Filipino

> arbitrators who will puerform [sic] a critical function in labor relations here. . . .
>
> Arbitration is written into the Philippines' new Labor Code as a substitute for strikes and lockouts, which are prohibited by the martial law regime. . . .
>
> The objective, as Secretary of Labor Blas F. Ople said in his opening address, is to create a corps of professional arbitrators who can "serve as a channel for settlements attained without bitterness and rancor."[29]

The sponsor is the Asian-American Free Labor Institute of the AFL-CIO. Thus do United States professionals roam half way around the world trying to teach "free labor" how to accept martial law, 50% unemployment, an end to the right to strike, and sub-minimal wages all in a spirit of petty bourgeois class "harmony." They do so in alliance with the "labor aristocracy" and as servants of the imperialists, spreading the gospel of capitalism and helping to strip the globe of superprofits and raw materials, and to open its markets to United States penetration. They also serve as the models for and trainers of professionals all over the world, the elite vanguard of an international network of "experts." It hardly needs saying that the managerial stratum also provides phalanxes of petty bourgeoisie to the corporate branches abroad.

Of course some of the professional superstars, such as Milton Friedman, more properly belong to the bourgeoisie itself, but they are backed up by phalanxes of petty bourgeoisie who do the necessary research, teach the theories, and carry the message abroad on the widest possible scale. Those so employed, therefore, are no

longer simply a "middle class" in the United States confronting the domestic proletariat, but are part of the "maintenance force" of its entire imperialist system, whether directly as in the case of those paid to work on defense contracts and "social planning" schemes for countries throughout the world, or indirectly as pacifiers of the "home front" to keep the working class here as a reliable base for empire. Of course the degree of this involvement varies with the specific person, occupation and industry, but no fields of professional endeavor are free of such connections at some level, and all are fed more or less by superprofits from United States imperialism, through the mediums of corporate endowments and governmental largesse.

The petty bourgeois professionals and managers therefore do not stand on the "outside" of imperialism, only to be corrupted and oppressed by it, any more than the class as a whole, as shown above, is "external" to capitalism as the representative of a non-exploitative era. The "new" strata, just like the "old," come into being both as a product of the development of capitalist practices, and of imperialist expansion, and as bearers and regenerators of that system, even if sometimes in conflict with it. To the traditional role of the petty bourgeoisie, therefore, is added an overlay of another function, specifically related to imperialism, and carried out in particular by its professional stratum. No longer simply

"between labor and capital," the modern members of this class also stand between the United States imperialists and the world they exploit, in both cases mediating these relationships and the conflicts they produce. The post-war generation of professionals and college students were, in particular, the "children" of both these strains in the development of the petty bourgeoisie, for they grew up at the height of United States imperialist power.

The various reformist political tendencies which arose within the United States capitalist system, therefore, such as Progressivism, "Welfare" Capitalism, the New Deal, the War on Poverty, and so on, and which were supported by and in turn stimulated the growth of the professions, were in large part and increasingly attempts to solidify the base of the imperialist center and prevent the uprising of the subjected nations from "coming home" to the domestic economy, and to the oppressed peoples and workers here. This duality was exemplified by the 1912 Progressive Party candidacy of Teddy Roosevelt who was both an archimperialist and a domestic "anti-monopoly reformer,"[30] and at a later date by Lyndon Johnson who conducted the "wars" on poverty and Vietnam simultaneously. As United States imperialism matured, however, it was not always sufficient to limit reform activities to the domestic scene alone, while a free hand was given to the ongoing exploitation of those abroad. Thus in some cases these two aspects were combined in a single effort, for example the

Peace Corps and the Alliance for Progress, which aimed at the "reformist 'improvement' of imperialism" which Lenin had already noted some fifty years earlier. Many idealistic petty bourgeois professionals and students joined such "causes," only to have their illusions shattered by the narrow purposes to which the imperialists tried to turn their efforts in other countries and by their direct observation of the exploitation practiced there. Such experiences typify the ability of United States imperialism to use even the best intentions of the "new" petty bourgeoisie for a goal of further world domination and continuation of the capitalist system.

Of course, there have always been a significant number of petty bourgeois professionals who have broken with this "fate" awaiting them and, joining in various radical movements, some even take up the cause of socialism and set out to try to make contact with the United States working class. As they approach the question of social activism, however, most do so in a way which reflects their "middle class" backgrounds. They can not help but bring with them, in fact, the political expressions of the world they leave behind, not one, but "two" such ideological streams. First they bring the views of the petty bourgeois class, that is, desire to "reform the system," to make it more "human" so that it is "non-exploitative," but without fundamental changes. Secondly, they bring with them the elitism and sense of self-importance that flow from the objective

circumstances of their position in the world, as the "aristocracy" of their class, the wealthiest, best educated, most secure part of the petty bourgeoisie to be found anywhere, the model for others to copy. Thus they try to cling to those privileges and leading roles to which life under United States imperialism has accustomed them.

Once within the socialist movement, these members of the professional petty bourgeoisie and ex-student strata could not but help in many cases to reproduce in exaggerated fashion not only every form of "middle class radicalism" known from before, but in addition, an extremely bad "case" of opportunism rooted in their experience under United States imperialist dominance. Thus they exhibited every type of political reformism and liberalism on the one hand, and on the other, an elitist revolutionary dogmatism and sectarianism, compounded by the ever-recurring strains of chauvinism in its various forms, a product of centuries of United States development. These attitudes are, naturally, particularly prevalent among whites and males. It is no wonder that many workers, people of color, and women faced by this form of "socialism" are repulsed instead of attracted, and turn their backs on those who advocate it.[31] But it merely repeats the exaggerated sense of self-importance of petty bourgeois professionals in the United States to believe that the class backgrounds and attitudes of the radicals are by themselves the main cause of most working-class

reactions. This kind of viewpoint, however, appears to be inevitable if imperialism is "domesticated" into mere "monopoly capital."

Translating this interpretation into political relations, the result is to picture ideological differences as arising mainly from the antagonism of these two classes, and "internally" to the movement. For instance the Ehrenreichs state:

> . . . add to the fact of working class hostility to the PMC two observations we have made already: 1) the historic association in the U.S. of socialist radicalism with the PMC; and 2) the PMC's proclivity for a technocratic vision of socialism in which the PMC would be the dominant class. The result is that there emerges in the working class another seemingly contradictory ideology, which we might call class conscious anti-communism. This working class anti-communism . . . is not created by right-wing demagoguery (or bad leadership, or ignorance, though all these help); it grows out of the objective antagonism between the working class and the PMC.[32]

So working-class opposition to socialism does not result from the material conditions of that class under imperialism, but rather from their antagonistic relation to the origins and actions of the professional and managerial strata of society, and especially the radicals drawn from their midst. It does no good that the Ehrenreichs in their "Rejoinder" at the end of the book later state that: "The possibility that imperialism could create a common interest between the bourgeoisie and elements of the working class is never even raised in these essays."[33] For they have not raised it any more than did their various critics.

In fact many proletariat in the United States are deeply scarred by the same imperialist methods and the same opportunist tendencies as are many members of the "middle class," and such attitudes continue throughout periods of relative inactivity on the part of the "left," as well as during its most radical activist phases. The opinions of most workers about socialism and communism grow out of the decades of repressions, bribery, and indoctrination they have experienced at the hand of the imperialists, not simply nor even primarily from their relations to the "middle class," nor certainly in most case as a result of their non-existent contacts with the "left." Of course, many proletarians and trade unionists struggle against the "labor aristocracy," just as many of the professionals and movement intellectuals work honestly to overcome their own class limits. But there are still sufficient grounds for more than one major contradiction between radicals from the petty bourgeoisie and the proletariat, each of whom may not only react directly to their own differences with the other, but are pressured, bribed and manipulated by imperialism to oppose radical movements arising from each other as well. Thus to the "original" attitudes of professionals toward the workers, and vice versa, are added the elitism and opportunism of the imperialist-minded petty bourgeoisie on the one hand, and the "labor-aristocracy"-bred resistance of workers to socialist revolution and "left" intellectuals on the other. Anyone with experience

in the working-class movement or the struggle for socialism knows that all of these limitations are present as barriers, and by no means only the immediate class relation of worker and professional.

In fact, were the goal to build a "bourgeois labor party" the task might then be relatively easy, for there might be plenty of workers and professionals willing to join. But when the goal is set as socialist revolution, the struggle must be based on a study of all objective difficulties as well as subjective ones, and success or failure cannot be simplistically reduced to one cause. In this there is a lesson from the analysis made by Lenin of why the Russian revolution succeeded where others had failed. For even in the days of greatest triumph, when he might have proclaimed that it was subjective leadership that was the primariy basis for victory, he never lost sight of the objective circumstances which underlay that success, and which limited the growth of revolutionary forces elsewhere. To the prediction of Marx and Engels that it would be in Western Europe that the first successful socialist revolution would occur, Lenin offered a new view, speaking only three months after the Bolshevik Revolution:

> Today we see a different combination of international socialist forces. We say that it is easier for the movement to start in the countries that are not among those exploiting countries which have opportunities for easy plunder and are able to bribe the upper sections of their workers. . . .
> Things have turned out differently from what Marx and Engels expected and we, the Russian working and

> exploited classes, have the honour of being the vanguard of the international socialist revolution; we can now see clearly how far the development of the revolution will go.[34]

It is necessary never to lose track of the underlying objective basis of the various classes and strata and of the roles which they play in society. Here this must begin with the full recognition of the imperialist nature of the United States, and the effect which this produces, both on the working class and on the petty bourgeoisie, and in particular professionals. Only in this way can the relation between the two be correctly grasped.

NOTES

1. Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capitalism, 251.

2. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 18.

3. Frederick Engels, Manchester, to Karl Marx, London, October 7, 1858, in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selected Correspondence (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1965), 110.

4. Frederick Engels, London, to K. Kautsky, September 12, 1882, in Marx and Engels, On Britain, 560.

5. V. I. Lenin, "Imperialism and the Split in Socialism," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 23, 112.

6. Ibid.

7. Frederick Engels, Helensburgh, Scotland, to Frederich Adolph Sorge, September 14, 1891, in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Letters to Americans 1848-1895, A Selection (New York: International Publishers, 1953), 236.

8. Engels, "The Condition of the Working-Class in England, Preface to the English Edition," 28. Engels is here quoting from his own article, "England in 1845 and in 1885," Commonweal (March 1, 1885).

9. Ibid., 31.

10. Lenin, "Imperialism and the Split in Socialism," 114-15.

11. V. I. Lenin, "The Collapse of the Second International," 257.

12. V. I. Lenin, "Third Congress of the Communist International, Report on the Tactics of the R.C.P., July 5," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 32, 484.

13. Lenin, "Imperialism and the Split in Socialism," 110.

14. Lenin, "The Collapse of the Second International," 244.

15. Ibid., 259.

16. Lenin, "Imperialism and the Split in Socialism," 117.

17. V. I. Lenin, "The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 28, 110.

18. Ibid., 283.

19. Ibid., 283-84.

20. Eric Foner, "No Promised Land," a review of Shane White, Somewhat More Independent: The End of Slavery in New York City, 1770-1810, in The Nation 252, no. 13 (April 8, 1991): 451.

21. Gavin Mackenzie, The Aristocracy of Labor: The Position of Skilled Craftsmen in the American Class Structure (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 171, citing Frederick Engels London, to K. Schluter, March 30, 1892, in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selected Correspondence 1846-1895 (London, 1934), 496-7.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid., 173.

24. V. I. Lenin, "'Left-Wing' Communism - An Infantile Disorder," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 31, 51-52.

25. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 18.

26. New York Times, December 12, 1982, 3.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid., October 8, 1990, D4.

29. Ibid., August 17, 1975, 11.

30. See Richard Hofstadter, "Theodore Roosevelt: the Conservative as Progressive," chap. 9 in The American Political Tradition (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1948), 206-37, and Howard K. Beale, Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power (New York: Collier Books, 1962). That the reforms which Roosevelt fought for were themselves less than radical does not undermine the

point being made here, that domestic reformism and imperialist expansionism can and do go very well together.

31. See Carter, "Class Conflict: The Human Dimension," 112-17 for "real life" examples of this reaction on the part of workers to "middle class" representatives of the "left."

32. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 43.

33. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "Rejoinder," 331, n. 12.

34. V. I. Lenin, "Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers and Peasants' Deputies," 471-72.

CHAPTER 16

PROLETARIANIZATION AND THE EFFECTS OF SEXUAL, RACIAL, OR NATIONAL OPPRESSION

According to the ancient Greeks: "Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad." In our own day, whom the bourgeoisie would destroy, they first convert to capitalism, a system of economic madness. The very aspects which, as have been seen, make the petty bourgeoisie an agent fully involved not simply in capitalist development, but in ties to imperialism as well, and cause its constant renewal as part of bourgeois society, at the same time contain those contradictions which hurl down the individual members of this class into the proletariat, and threaten it as a whole with extinction as a social grouping. The regeneration of capitalism from within the petty bourgeois element, as well as the pressure exerted by capitalists proper from "outside," as it were, always drive many more of its members into the working class than are raised up into the big bourgeoisie. So too, the expansion of the "new" strata of this class based on the needs of the imperialist bourgeoisie for masses of functionaries, paid in part out of the fund of superprofits extracted from workers and peasants abroad, makes them at the same time

hostages to the fortunes of United States imperialism, with the result that as the latter declines, so must their position in society. Thus the more it shows itself as capitalistic and imperialistic, the more the petty bourgeois class prepares the conditions for its own proletarianization.

In thus being hurled down from their former role as the "middle class" of the capitalist system, the petty bourgeoisie are but harbingers of the fate which awaits the capitalists themselves. For in the very process of increasing the numbers of the proletariat at the expense of the strata lying between the working class and the bourgeoisie, the latter expand as well the forces which execute their own demise, those who will make the socialist revolution. Though the petty bourgeoisie, like the capitalists, undertake any number of maneuvers to stave off this fate, they cannot in the long run escape from the inexorable working out of the contradictions inherent in their own earlier growth. Moreover, as the better situated members of the "middle classes" are driven out of their relatively privileged positions, they join the legions of those who, because they could never afford the investment necessary for "full" petty bourgeois status, or because they are subject to sexual, racial, and/or national oppression, are denied the usual rewards of membership in that class. The latter persons are, in turn, driven even

"lower," or "bumped" as it were, toward total proletarianization.

The development of professions increasingly into mass occupations and the proliferation of areas of specialization and expertise has brought in its wake the ability to convert these activities into more routinized or at times even mechanized form. These tendencies are closely related to two other basic factors: on the one hand, the relative "overproduction" of professionals in many fields which has led to greater competition for the available positions and a worsening of working conditions, and on the other, the growth in the capitalistic organization of professions and their exploitation by the bourgeoisie.

> The bureaucratization of work-settings adds, furthermore, another important factor of internal stratification: the overspecialization of individual professionals in a given firm becomes a factor of "trained incapacity" that ties them to the firm and compels them to accept blocked mobility, by reducing their value on the broader professional labor market.
>
> Overspecialization of the individual is, in this sense, an element of proletarianization and it should not be confused with the differentiation and carving of new specialties out of a profession's common trunk.[1]

Thus the capitalists are able both to exploit the specialization of professional training, and to inhibit mobility to escape it.

Moreover, as professionals have become less the private servants of the big bourgeoisie, and more their public representatives to society at large and the working class in particular, the political content of these

occupations has assumed added importance, making their close control by the capitalist class as a whole a matter of even more weight than it was before. Then too, the financial burden of the training and deployment of these masses of professional employees can no longer be borne out of individual family funds, but have taken on the aspect of social necessities paid for by taxes and the big corporate interests. Finally, as United States imperialism and its superprofits from abroad decline, the need to extract greater surplus-value from domestic workers rises, and the focus of capitalist employment of professionals shifts. Thus funding for social programs grows harder to obtain, while investment in repressive forces and exploitative technology grows.

Each of these developments has spurred the tendency to introduce into the professions the same methods of "scientific management," "cost accounting," and "time-study control" that have long prevailed in regard to the working class. The result has been the "proletarianization" of the professionals in greater and greater numbers, as the traditional rewards of investment in higher education are stripped from them, and their work comes increasingly to share the characteristics of manual proletarian labor. Accompanying this decline in the conditions of employment sometimes comes a lowering of income differentials between them and the working class proper. As the actual performance of work has been made in many cases more

subject to routine in the place of "self-activity," and as the training needed to carry out many professional functions has either lessened or been spread out among more and more recipients, it has been considered less valuable on the market. Moreover professionals have increasingly seen the application of such methods as the "speed-up," assertions of "managerial prerogatives," intensification of labor and lengthening of the work-day, piece-work and all the other techniques by which more work is extorted from employees, resulting in surplus-labor being performed over and above the equivalent value of income. The combined effect of these developments is to actually "lower" the class of these persons, so that their membership in the petty bourgeoisie becomes tenuous at best, or in many cases is lost entirely, marking stages on the road to complete proletarianization. A relative handful of persons rises, at the same time, into the bourgeoisie.

Employees may be exploited of surplus-value no matter how highly they are educated or are paid, if their labor is productive enough of value above the level of their income. Indeed industrial inventors may sometimes yield to an employer ideas worth millions, and many times over what they earn. Engineering firms, for one, obviously make a profit though much of their work is performed by highly paid professionals, and similar examples exist in other fields. Typical is the practice at large corporate law

offices, in which the working partners exploit the labor of young lawyers and other professionals.

> For these firms, a new era has dawned, one in which the practice of law has ceased to be a gentlemanly profession and instead has become an extremely competitive business.
>
> "It was a lot more fun in the old days," said Samuel Murphy, Jr., managing partner at Donovan Leisure. "It was more relaxed and gentlemanly. We all believed we were engaged in a profession that was a little different. In the last 10 years, the fundamental change is that what we're doing has become a business."
>
> Though no one knows how much of the nation's wealth is poured into legal services a year, the major law firms are evolving into big business. The dozen or so largest firms now have hundreds of high-paid attorneys, and a supporting cast of thousands--along with yearly billings of $40 million or more."[2]

These firms no longer bother much with time-consuming and less profitable legal problems of individual clients, but serve corporate interests almost exclusively, notably with bankruptcies and mergers. Such work in turn requires a large pool of readily available talent and has spurred a rapid consolidation of the law firms themselves--some have grown from a dozen or so lawyers in the 1950s and 1960s to hundreds today, with 50 partnerships by the early 1980s employing over 200 each, but with the number of failures also growing as competition intensified.[3]

Under such circumstances, even senior partners find themselves subject to management committees and cost accounting procedures. But what for them is just less "fun" in running a capitalistic business, is for the younger lawyers hired by the firm outright exploitation.

> At most law firms, law partners earn profits largely on hourly billings of salaried junior attorneys

> known as associates: the more associates per partner, the higher the profits. . . .
>
> The traditional rule is that associates should produce billings of about three times their salaries: A third goes to the associate, a third to overhead and a third to the firm's profits.[4]

Though highly paid themselves--at one firm in 1981-1982 young lawyers fresh from law school were hired at $43,000 yearly--the "associates" therefore must nevertheless perform a rather high rate of surplus-labor. Their activities are in fact usually billed in 6-minute units, with any personal business or other "wasted" time being subtracted, a method which belies the salary form and leads to long hours of intensive work. Thus while their income and education are typical of the petty bourgois class, they are in reality quite heavily exploited, with two or three associates on average supporting each partner, whose own exhorbitant fees only partially account for their very high salaries, and who with their large investments in the firm and corporate ties and functions may in many cases be properly considered big bourgeoisie.

On the other hand, in order to attract the "best and the brightest" of young graduates it is common for larger firms to promise that associates will have a chance to become partners in less than ten years. Thus in return for a relatively short period of "proletarianized" labor, the new law graduate in these largest corporate offices can look forward in normal times to advancement, not simply into the petty bourgeois class, but often even into the

lower ranks of the bourgeoisie itself. And the imperialist bourgeois classes at that. Many of the larger firms have foreign offices, staffed with lawyers brought over from the United States. Thus they follow abroad the corporations which they serve at home, so that their business is increasingly tied to imperialistic interests. Then there is the case of the Chicago-based law firm of Baker and McKenzie. Founded only in 1949, it was from the start internationally oriented:

> With more than 600 lawyers in 29 different offices scattered from Sao Paulo to Sydney to Singapore, Baker and McKenzie is the largest law firm in the world, the only truly global one. . . .
>
> Unlike most United States law firms, which staff their foreign offices with American lawyers, Baker and McKenzie has achieved much of its expansion over the past two decades by hiring foreign nationals. According to The American Lawyer Guide, more than half of the lawyers at Baker and McKenzie today are not United States citizens--and are not licensed to practice in the United States.[5]

Thus the proletarianization of associate lawyers has been tied to growth not only of capitalist firms in which employer-employee profit-making has replaced more traditional forms of professional relations, but to the expansion of these enterprises into direct imperialist exploiters themselves, not simply servants of others.

Opposite to this is a spread of franchise-type "no-frills" offices which provide cut-rate legal services, usually in less affluent areas. One such chain is Hyatt Legal Services, which is linked to H&R Block, the tax preparers, who provide offices, capital, and management

skills. "Instead of an extensive law library, Hyatt lawyers use only pre-printed forms variously headed 'Uncontested Divorce' of 'Simple Will..'"[6] They refer more complicated cases to traditional law firms, for a commission. Such routinized practices allow a high-volume business, but with less professional expertise and "self-activity" for the low-income lawyers. Thus at both the "top" and "bottom" of the profession "proletarianization" is spreading, as the petty bourgeois class typically polarizes through adopting profit-making interests itself and responding to capitalistic forces. Moreover, this process necessarily accelerates: as each new partner is added to a capitalist law firm, the demand for associate lawyers grows, with more attorneys drawn into exploitative relations to produce profits. Meanwhile, with twice as many lawyers as in the 1950s, competition by the late 1970s began to cut into the earnings even of established attorneys.[7]

A similar situation is developing among doctors, whose numbers were approaching "oversupply" in the U.S. in the 1980s, especially in many of the more esoteric specialties, and in the early 1990s has resulted in a growing number of "turf wars." This despite the lack of sufficient doctors in many communities and in low-income general family practice.[8] The rapid rise in the number of physicians and the resulting competition has made it more difficult for them to maintain a professional monopoly. Together with

soaring costs, in large part also the product of past monopolistic practices, the way has been opened for an entering wedge of more blatantly capitalistic and corporate forces in this profession. One form of this is the increase in corporations formed by doctors themselves, similar to the capitalist legal partnerships seen above. Another is the growing concentration of medical facilities, with regional or national organizations replacing the earlier local or individual institutions which were largely dominated by the physicians. But by far the most significant changes are occurring through a takeover by profit-making enterprises in the health field.

For each doctor there are now a quarter million dollars per year in support services, plus capital expenses.[9] Unable to meet such costs, especially in tax-exempt hospitals, communities are increasingly turning over facilities to private corporations, which treat them as profitable enterprises. Corporate chains appeared in the late 1960s, and by the early 1980s owned 11% of community hospitals and managed another 3%, with estimates the proportion would double again in a decade. They also owned 80% of nursing homes.[10] Such developments have led to talk of a new "medical-industrial complex" not unlike that for the military.[11] The consequences of the spread of "industrialized" health care

> would be a truly profound and shattering change. It would mean that physicians--the last of the independent professionals, ceaseless defenders of their dominance in hospitals, insurance companies and the Government

> itself--might lose their control over the markets for medical care. They might no longer define the sets of beliefs and standards of judgment by which medicine is evaluated. . . .
>
> . . . in the case of the profit-making corporation, it is the corporation itself that evaluates each doctor's performance on its own criteria: How many hospital admissions did the doctor generate, how many of the available beds were used every day, how many tests and procedures were ordered? These are hardly the standards of, say, an Albert Schweitzer, but if the corporation doesn't like the figures it cancels the doctor's lease, revokes the salary or guarantee and finds some other doctor who will be more cooperative--and more profitable.[12]

Clearly, the concept "that it was unethical for anyone except doctors to make a profit from personal medical services," has broken down.[13]

At the beginning of the 1980s, fears were expressed that "doctors will be pressured to adopt a corporate profit-making mentality."[14] A decade later, such a development is already well advanced. Under pressure from medical corporations, and the growing loss of monopolization due to the "oversupply" of doctors, "physicians are 'witnessing and indeed taking part in the creation of corporate health care systems.'"[15]

> There is already a sharp increase in the corporate organization of physicians: doctor-owned companies that contract to staff hospitals and emergency rooms or establish ambulatory surgical facilities or health maintenance organizations. There is a difference, though, between corporations that physicians control and corporations that control physicians, and it is over this difference that the most intense battles may be fought.[16]

The lines, however, get continually more blurred. By the early 1990s it was found that large numbers of doctors--8,500 out of 18,250 in one study in Florida--"have invested

in joint ventures to which they can refer patients."[17] This led to charges that

> clinics and laboratories in which doctors had invested had higher costs than businesses offering the same services but not owned by doctors. In addition . . . there was evidence that the doctor-owned joint ventures were used more frequently, used less-skilled workers and offered limited access to the poor.[18]

In Atlanta, doctors were said to expect to regain their invested capital in two years, and in one case in Texas, each investment of $500 generated $6,190 in the first year.[19]

Thus once again the methods of capitalism are internalized by the petty bourgeoisie, this time in the case of professionals. For those who succeed, there are nice profits to be made. But even their capitalization has an element of compulsion about it: "'The whole climate in medicine is becoming more commercial and competitive. . . . Its putting doctors in situations that force them to behave like entrepreneurs to survive.'"[20] Such practices bring with them the demands of creditors and corporate partners, and threats of increased government regulation, both of which limit the autonomy of the professionals themselves. Moreover, for every doctor who goes "up," others go "down." Radiologists, for instance, who often work by referrals from hospitals and other doctors, are being displaced by the "self-referral" system. In this way spreading capitalization leads naturally to a growing polarization of

the professions as well, in which those who make profits are "balanced out" by others who are proletarianized. But there is increasingly little choice, due to the growing role of corporate health-care providers interested only in profits.

Thus on both the largest scale and the level of individual work, many doctors are losing their professional autonomy and "self-activity." This "'efficiency-improving development'" naturally has similar repercussions for physicians as for lawyers, as was noted for example by Dr. Quentin Young, head of medicine at Cook County Hospital in Chicago:

> Young fears that the local community will lose control over its medical care. He is frankly alarmed that the U.S. will create a "corporate octopus," which will dominate the medical system, and turn hospitals into "medical-industrial" centers and physicians into "proletariat."[21]

The professionals often reveal a semi-Marxist understanding of the fate awaiting them once their traditional class roles are under pressure. This process is already considerably advanced in medicine. Even most of the remaining community hospitals are increasingly controlled by corporate trustees, not doctors, who hire the administrators, dominate the associated physicians, and assert "managerial prerogatives" over those who are on staff. For some groups of doctors these changes, combined with the financial pressures being experienced by most local governments, have produced very high rates of

proletarianization. Interns and residents in New York and other cities routinely worked 80 to 120 hours per week, subject to understaffing and "speed-up" which intensified their labor.[22] These training doctors can still look forward to eventual escape, however. But for many professionals in other fields, even this hope is lacking.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the very heartland of the "professional project," the institutions of higher education. As in so many areas of United States economic life, the fact of declining class among many college professors is revealed by the growing efforts to use "low-pay" labor to bypass the gains made by earlier generations of academics. Thus there has been an enormous growth in numbers of part-time teachers who, though they often have Ph.D.'s, have no tenure prospects, no faculty vote, and no fringe benefits. By 1980 such persons made up 32% of higher education instructors, not including graduate assistants, and they taught 40% of undergraduate courses. Their ranks grew 50% in 1972-1977 alone, compared to just a 9% increase in full-time professors. At the two-year community colleges they actually formed a bare majority, or 51%, while in four-year schools they accounted for 24%, with the percentage much higher at some institutions, such as the New York Institute of Technology, where two-thirds were part-time.[23]

As many as one-third of these faculty "are disfranchised academics, young Ph.D.'s unable to get full-

time professorships in a job market so tight they feel their doctorates have become as devalued as German marks in the Weimar Republic."[24]

> Such teachers are often excluded from the business of their institutions. They may be scorned by full-time colleagues, relegated to the tedium of teaching introductory courses and deprived of such basic amenities as an office.[25]

Many of them are "gypsy scholars" or "academic migrant workers," moving every year or two to a different institution, with as many as 15% to 30% of junior faculty, depending on rank, now in this category.[26] Paid by "piece-work", that is, per course, or even a straight hourly wage, the income of such faculty is usually from one-third to one-half the norm for a full-time professor, and is often less than $10,000 per year. The hiring of such persons raises cries of exploitation. Thus a representative of the American Federation of Teachers says: "This is a form of cheap labor, and it saves colleges enormous amounts of money. . . ," in fact as much as tens of millions of dollars annually.[27]

> If not tenured after the first few appointments, a professor no longer connected with a university becomes something of a nonperson in the academic world. Armies of talented young scholars with doctorates in hand are eager to take their places at lower salaries.[28]

Thus even these low incomes are increasingly under pressure, as a new crop of graduates is produced each year.

In the 1970s, according to the American Association of University Professors, salaries of college teachers declined by 21% in real terms, due in part to the relative

overproduction of new Ph.D.'s.[29] Under such pressures, even many full-time professors are now told from the start that they will never get tenure, while larger classes, the teaching of "overtime" courses, and a cutback in their professional privileges and amenities spread.[30] Senior faculty cannot escape the effects of this pool of "low-wage" professors, for even if tenured, their salaries may be held down by the ability of the university to hire junior members at a much lower rate. The result is sometimes a kind of class warfare within academic departments, a situation which lends itself to the further intervention of administrators who are able to play one side off against the other.

Once again, however, this general deterioration represents only one side of a polarization which at the same time sees a small number of professors rise to ever higher levels within the bourgeois class, as the forces of capitalism increasingly invade higher education itself. Many who hire out as consultants for major corporations can earn tens or even hundreds of thousands of dollars annually for their expertise, resulting in "bidding wars" and a "brain drain" out of the universities. Colleges which do not have professional schools of business, medicine, and so on, sometimes are unable even to acquire and hold teachers in these fields.[31] By the early 1980s, more than 50% of faculty members did some consulting, compared to just 13% in 1960.[32] In addition, in an ever larger number of cases,

a professor has actually become a stockholder, board member, or even the owner of a capitalist business, especially in the economic forecasting and "high-tech" scientific fields, using university-derived research. Some faculty now accept stock rather than cash for consulting work.[33] Increasingly, the colleges themselves are establishing ties to big corporations which provide funding in return for specific studies that focus on marketable products and result in exclusive patent rights. Such financing doubled from $100 to $200 million during 1975-1982, and was expected to triple again by the end of the decade.[34] By 1990, corporate contributions to universities had risen to over $2 billion, more than 20% of all private financing.[35] The effects are ever more pervasive, with some university laboratories even said to be the possible object of "takeover" bids by certain large corporations.[36]

In part to respond to such challenges, major academic institutions are setting up foundations that in turn own profit-making companies which utilize their research, and increasingly there is talk of colleges simply going into business for themselves, to exploit directly the value of their patentable discoveries. By 1991 Boston University had reached the point of sinking $80 million, one-third of its endowment, into a startup biotech firm developing a possible "miracle" drug.[37] Indeed the question of ownership and control of intellectual property and patents is at the heart of the new relations. On the one hand, corporations

which invest funds in university departments want new ideas and discoveries kept secret so that they can be monopolized and marketed, while academic professionalism is supposed to rest on openly shared knowledge.[38] The struggle over who controls patents is especially rough:

> Increasing numbers of universities, for example, have drawn up official patent policies, making it easier for them to capture the rewards from home-grown inventions that in the past often slipped away when the inventor left to commercialize the venture.[39]

Here a three-way struggle takes place, between corporations and universities on the one hand, and professors who want to "slip away" from both, to profit from their own ideas.

This is a perfect illustration of the way a single bit of knowledge, for instance a new gene-splicing technique, can become the basis for a class conflict of capitalists, "big" bourgeois administrators, and the professional petty bourgeoisie, over who owns and controls the means of mental production and its products. At stake too is the degree to which the professionals are exploited. Even when the lines are not so clearly drawn, the issue of what research is conducted, and to what end, becomes an arena of both collaboration and conflict in corporate and academic relations.[40] Thus the same developments in the United States economy which have led to the more or less permanent "proletarianization" of some faculty, have driven others in the academic world, and even entire departments, into the arms of the large corporations, and pushed leading universities toward a business role. While university

guidelines have been widely adopted to try to control the effects which such relations have on professional autonomy, and to control the worst kinds of abuses which may arise in these situations, it is evident that the long-term trend is toward ever greater direct penetration of the capitalist system into academia, with a loss of independence by the latter.

Under such circumstances, it is inevitable that not only ideas, but faculty as well would begin to be viewed in terms of capitalization. Thus a vice-president of MIT in charge of research states that: "'The universities have become much more aware of the value of intellectual property,'" while another professor notes that a school "'may be permitted to capitalize'" its own businesses "'if not with the equipment, then with the expertise that its faculty have acquired.'"[41] As market forces and capitalist profit considerations invade the academic world, a university president adds: "'There is a strain between things easily measured and those not so easily measured.'"[42] At a growing number of colleges, for the first time, widespread salary differences are becoming common between the "hard" sciences and business-related fields which are in corporate demand, and the "softer" humanities whose worth is harder to calculate, and whose faculty are less likely to be drawn off into entrepreneurial jobs.[43] At one pole, therefore, an elite of professors are treated as valuable capital, and even become capitalists themselves,

including millionaires,[44] while at the other extreme a growing mass of college teachers are being turned into cheap wage-labor, who together with students themselves can in some cases be directly exploited as a source of profit.[45]

These changes cannot occur without fundamentally affecting both the quality and value of education, the very foundations of professionalism. This is most apparent among part-time faculty. As one commentator notes: "Once this might have been considered a temporary stage one had to go through in order to enter the hierarchy of scholars; now it appears to be a final resting place for many of our best college teachers."[46] Studies suggest that the result is that "'an incentive exists for part-timers not to acquire or maintain' skills," and this "'may dilute the quality of higher education'"[47] But the students, largely denied contact with the teachers, may not know the difference anyway:

> Another impetus is a shift in enrollment toward part-time students who attend evening classes, often at off-campus sites. Such students are believed to be less likely to be aware of the tenuous ties that many part-time professors have with the institutions.[48]

Increasingly even advanced scholars find themselves forced to teach in areas outside their own specialties, with an inevitable loss of quality.[49]

In field after field, there is talk of growing "illiteracy" among college students, and not just in history and civic studies where cutbacks are widespread, but also in the more favored sciences and engineering,

where defection of professors to corporate employment compounds the problem.[50] Even at such exalted institutions as the Harvard Law School, there are protests that professors do so much "outside" work that they do not devote time to their students.[51] It is in part due to these conditions that those who are largely "illiterate" in terms of intellectual skills can be found at the most prestigious schools, while as one management-consultant firm head laments: "'Even going to college doesn't guarantee that they can read and write.'"[52] With the reduction or elimination of many liberal arts departments, and dismissal even of tenured faculty, "'intellectual ends are becoming subservient to utilitarian ends,'"[53] with the threat of turning some schools into career-oriented "'academic supermarkets.'"[54] Proletarianization is thus reproduced, and on an ever wider scale, among the students.

This development is compounded by the increasing rate at which knowledge loses its relative value in any given fields. A professor at the University of Southern California, Dr. Samuel Dubin, describes the "'length of usefulness of information'" in terms of its "'half-life'" using the measurement of nuclear physics which records the time in which radioactivity drops by half. Dubin estimates that in 1940 the "half-life of engineering knowledge" was 12 years, but that by 1970 it had dropped to only 5 years, a figure which also fits the training of a doctor in the internal medicine fields.[55] This means that such

professionals may need continuous study or periodic retraining. In some professions, particularly those in health and engineering, the latter is required, though the type of educational programs actually carried out is often very superficial.[56] Many other professionals either cannot afford to be retrained or lose their initiative as their careers progress, so that the actual value of their knowledge falls. By contrast, those who keep on advancing their education may end up in a rarefied world of their own that is virtually inaccessible even to the normal college graduates.

Knowledge itself increasingly becomes polarized along class lines. On the one hand, the "top" professionals specialize in ever more esoteric areas. At the other pole of the professional scale, education has become so common and widespread as to degrade its value through routinization and the competition which results from "oversupply." Large numbers of young people, even from the working-class, were swept into colleges in the late 1960s and during the 1970s, to meet the demands of the rapidly expanding economy,[57] only to be caught in the following contraction and a situation of "relative overproduction" later.[58] While there tends to be a certain cyclical aspect to such changes which affect the value of professional education, there are also downward pressures which are more fundamental. As Marx noted in regard to commercial workers, the educated employees of his own day:

> The commercial worker, in the strict sense of the term, belongs to the better-paid class of wage-workers--to those whose labour is classed as skilled and stands above average labour. Yet the wage tends to fall, even in relation to average labour, with the advance of the capitalist mode of production. This is due partly to the division of labour in the office, implying a one-sided development of the labour capacity. . . . Secondly, because the necessary training, knowledge of commercial practices, languages, etc., is more and more rapidly, easily, universally and cheaply reproduced with the progress of science and public education the more the capitalist mode of production directs teaching methods, etc., towards practical purposes. The universality of public education enables capitalists to recruit such labourers from classes that formerly had no access to such trades and were accustomed to a lower standard of living. Moreover, this increases supply, and hence competition. With few exceptions, the labour-power of these people is therefore devaluated with the progress of capitalist production. The capitalist increases the number of these labourers whenever he has more value and profits to realize. The increase of this labour is always a result, never a cause of more surplus-value.[59]

In the post-war period, the superprofits of the expanding United States empire provided just such a pool of surplus-value for the "increase of this labor."

Even graduate students now complain that administrators are intentionally "overproducing" their specialties to lower the value of training and to make it easier for the universities and business to hire them "cheap."[60] All of the above factors combine to cause a relative devaluation of professional education. In the late 1970s one study found that

> the rate of return on the college investment has fallen significantly. . . . According to one set of estimates, the return dropped from 11 to 12 per cent in 1969 to 7 to 8 per cent in 1974. A decrease of this magnitude is unprecedented."[61]

The economic advantage over those with only a high school education also fell by a considerable margin. Even professions which remain in general well-paid can therefore show signs of a gradual relative decline. As the imperial domination of the United States economy is increasingly challenged, the relative "overproduction" of highly trained persons which Marx had noted is compounded.

This is notably so as the loss of its imperialist economic superiority strikes at industries the United States long either monopolized or at least dominated. In such industrial fields as automobiles, even the professional and managerial petty bourgeois employees are being dismissed in growing numbers, along of course with even more production workers, while thousands suffer deep cuts in their salaries.

> Traditional assumptions are also called into question. "Whatever happened to working hard and getting ahead?" asks Eugene Von Steeg, 42, a former manager in a Chrysler air-pollution-control operation. "It was the blackest hour of my life," he says, when he learned the 14-year job he called a "career" was over. "What was a value is no longer a value," he says.[62]

Thus the petty bourgeois illusion of being secure under capitalism and their idealization of individual initiative is one of the first casualties of their proletarianization, as they come face to face with those very conditions which they have helped to impose on the working class they now fear they may join. Of course, in general, their retraining and alternative employment opportunities are greater, so that most avoid any immediate precipitation

into the proletariat, but the void into which they stare is indeed the vision of their own future. But education itself becomes a casualty of the same changes: the auto state of Michigan saw the first reductions in funding for its universities since the great Depression, with firing of tenured faculty, a pattern soon duplicated elsewhere.[63] By the end of the 1980s, slashing of state university budgets was widespread nationally.

Thus just as the expanding economy greatly increased the possibilities and pressures for the growing capitalization of the professions, its contraction in turn accelerates the inevitable proletarianization. A second aspect of petty bourgeois existence which under such conditions also rapidly wanes is the ability of the class to reproduce itself. There are simply not enough "places" to be filled which have the needed criteria. In the late 1970s one president of the American Bar Association was warning that "'unemployment and underemployment among young lawyers is a serious problem,'" and told those entering the field "that a law degree 'is not a guarantee of fortune and financial independence'"--that is, a normal petty bourgeois life.[64] At the same time, the Bureau of Labor Statistics was predicting that almost one-fourth of new law school graduates in the early 1980s would not be able to find jobs in the legal profession.[65]

> There may be particular frustration for those who have gained academic credentials--once a passport to stimulating work, and often status. College graduates may be squeezed out of professional and managerial

> pursuits and be forced to take clerical and perhaps blue-collar jobs. . . .
>
> Daniel E. Hecker, a labor economist at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, estimates that "about one graduate in four will have to enter nontraditional occupations or face unemployment. . . ."
>
> The prospects for new Ph.D. recipients are even less favorable than they are for those with undergraduate degrees. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that almost half the men and women obtaining doctorates in the 1980's will have to accept jobs neither sought nor filled by Ph.D.'s of the previous generation.[66]

In 1980 the widespread taking of cabdriving jobs in Minneapolis by professionals as a second source of income was reported. "Such moonlighting, a phenomenon formerly confined largely to lower-income or blue-collar workers, is rapidly permeating all segments of society."[67] While the economic recovery and "yuppie" boom of the 1980s revived the fortunes of many professionals, it did not reverse such long-term changes as the growth of corporate medical care and part-time faculty. In fact, with the stripping of governmental support for many of the centers of professional activity, the decade actually saw an acceleration of the polarization of the professions that was already underway, paralleling that of the society as a whole.

The proletarianization of the petty bourgeoisie does not take place in a vacuum, for there are already many millions of persons in the intermediate positions between that class and the proletariat proper. The first effect is to swell the ranks of these strata, but there is also a tendency to "bump" them even further down the class scale.

Thus as the petty bourgeoisie are themselves hurled down as individuals and also in entire groups toward proletarian status, they exacerbate the situation of those in the classes below them, who already experience these same forces in even more intense fashion. The vast majority of women professionals, most notably, do not attain "full" petty bourgeois status according to the criteria used above to delineate that class. The same holds true for many Blacks and Latinos, even within the top professions in which the petty bourgeoisie are most often to be found. Their status, therefore, cannot be considered apart from the forms of special oppression to which they are subjected, factors that either bring about their proletarianization or do not allow them to become professionals at all. The conditions which the largely white, male petty bourgeoisie are beginning to experience more and more, therefore, are the very ones which millions of women and oppressed peoples of color have long suffered even within the professions.

In 1987, year round full-time female professionals were paid just 68% of what professional males earned. Median earnings for all women were $16,909, in the professions $24,565, but for men the two figures were $26,008 and $36,098, respectively. Even more significant, professional women averaged $366 less than the income of male craftspersons, and only $3,744 more than operatives, that is, the occupational category I earlier used to mark

"simple labor," despite the much higher level of education of female professionals.[68] Even this is only a recent relative improvement, since as late as the 1970s women in professions were more poorly paid even than male machine operators, and only men who were laborers, farmworkers, service employees, and those in private household work earned less than female professionals.[69]

> The reason is not that women are less well educated. . . . "Women's educational levels are on average as high as men's, but women who have completed four years of college earn less than men who have completed the eighth grade."[70]

Investment in education, the bedrock of petty bourgeois professionalism, is thus devalued in their case, and their common share in social wealth is reduced to male proletarian levels. However, meaningful differences do exist among women, even within their generally greater exploitation. Based on the figures above, in 1987, a female professional on average earned 45% more than the median for all women, but among males the gap was only 39%. Thus higher education and a profession still do bring equal economic rewards.

Nevertheless, fewer women reach this level to begin with: in 1970, they constituted only, 28% of scientists, 15% of physicians, 13% of lawyers, and just 4% of engineers.[71] Part-time and part-year hiring, forced unemployment, and reduction to a "reserve army of labor," whether by less ability to leave the home or by fewer job offers, is itself a form of exploitation. Thus in 1970

professional women had a median of weeks worked of only 46.6, while the figure for male was over 50.[72] Even when employed in the professions, they generally have less seniority and security.

In 1979, women began to outnumber men at colleges in the United States.[73] At the same time, the successes of the Womens' Liberation Movement began to open up professions to them in ways never experienced before. In a situation similar to that in corporate life, however, female professionals are confronted with a kind of "glass ceiling" through which they can break only rarely if at all. Thus just 18% of women in academia were full professors in 1987, compared to 46% for men, and those holding tenure were 36% and 60% respectively, indicating that the overall decline of tenured positions over the decade had fallen heaviest on women proportionately. This might seem to be the consequence of later entry into their fields, but in fact the respective figures for tenure track positions were 58% and 74%, so that the discrepancy is continuing to be reproduced. So too with salaries, with female scientists earning only 76% the income of males in 1986, for engineers 83%.[74] Thus both exclusion from the top professions and assignment to the lower ranks if admitted, reflect a discriminatory division of labor that is clearly proletarianizing in its effects. In general, the above factors can be summarized as follows: 1) the effects of male supremacy tend to "lower" the class position of women,

even if only considered primarily in the economy; 2) in spite of this, class lines exist among them which might be considered to parallel those among men, but on a lower plane; 3) not all aspects of their exploitation can be reduced to such economic relations, so that other criteria must also be considered in any final class analysis of women.

Though underlying causes obviously differ in fundamental respects, essentially the same forms of proletarianization are produced in the case of whole peoples or nations subject to special exploitation. Here the most basic factor is historic exclusion from the higher educational process itself. As of 1978, only 7.2% of Blacks had completed 4 years of college or more, about equal for men and women, while Latino males had some 8.6%, and females 5.8%. By comparison, 12.6% of Anglo women, and 20.7% of men had at least a bachelors degree or some graduate work. So too, Blacks and Latinos are underrepresented in the professions in relation to their percentage in the population, with just 870,000 or so total in 1970, or only about 7.7% of all professionals. Male Blacks, for example, are largely absent from even those occupations dominated by men, with only some 1% of engineers in 1970, and about 2% of doctors. Among full-time professionals, Black males earned $3,226 less, Latino men $1,296 under the average for their sex, while the comparable figures for women were $352 and $139.[75]

In a kind of professional "last hired, first fired" phenomenon, again similar to that of corporations, economic recession, government cutbacks, and lessening commitments to racial equality mean that Blacks and Latinos usually feel the effects of contracting educational opportunities first and hardest.[76] The result is that earlier gains have tended to be reversed or at least to reach a plateau, so that "the black middle class remained a minority of the black population and was far less affluent than the white middle class, a 'second-class middle-class.'"[77] Nevertheless, professional Black and Latino men averaged some 49% and 56%, respectively, above the income levels of all male Blacks and Latinos, while for Black women the same differential was 105%, for Latino women 65%.[78] Thus it would appear that, generally speaking, the more oppressed a group is overall, the greater gap there is between its professional members and the rest of its population. By the early 1990s, a growing polarization within the Black community was evident, between the "middle-class and affluent" and "the poor."[79] White domination, like male supremacy, causes proletarianization, but its effects are very broadly felt and are distributed unevenly.

The process by which those belonging to the petty bourgeoisie come to share at least some of the conditions of the working class thus arises in various ways, and may take on different forms or pass through more than one stage. In a certain number of cases, even those with

relatively high incomes or education and the other attributes of the "middle class" may still be subject to exploitation and yield up surplus-value. In other situations, individuals or entire groups of petty bourgeoisie are precipitated "downward" toward the proletariat by changing relations of production and polarization of the capitalist system. In yet other instances, those who might be petty bourgeois are in fact kept from attaining this status by virtue of their sex, race, or nationality. These three main causes of proletarianization, as well as other similar and related conditions, may overlap and reinforce each other. One result is to "deprofessionalize" many who suffer these effects and to make them increasingly open to the forms of capitalist exploitation used on the working class itself.

Various efforts have been made to analyze theoretically the "proletarianizing" tendencies affecting the professionals and other "new" middle strata as they alter the relation of classes. Charles Derber draws a particularly useful differentiation.

> [The] two ways in which workers lose control of their work more broadly concern the means and ends of labor. The loss of control over the process of the work itself (the means), incurred whenever management subjects its workers to a technical plan of production and/or a rhythm or pace of work which they have no voice in creating, can be called <u>technical</u> proletarianization. . . .
>
> The loss of control over the product can be viewed broadly as the loss of control over the ends of one's work. Called here <u>ideological</u> proletarianization, it will refer to a loss of control over the goals and social purposes to which one's work is put.[40]

Derber notes that the proletariat generally is subject to both of these processes, but historically the loss of "ideological" control generally preceded and prepared the way for "technical" subordination. While the former was marked by the "putting-out" system, the latter required the total domination of the factory: "The intense rationalization and regimentation that emerges with the second stage of technical proletarianization has come to be synonymous with the concept of proletarianization itself."[81] Professionals may be in the early stages of a similar process:

> Like other workers, professionals have lost their opportunities for self-employment, and the need to sell their labor power has caused a more profound loss of independence, crystallized in the loss of the ability to define the ends to which their work is directed. Yet professionals, unlike industrial workers, have salvaged from their new dependence the core of their self-respect and unique status: their technical skills and control of highly specialized knowledge. Professionals thus retain the anomalous authority of craft and expertise, envied and unattainable by all other employees.[82]

Thus the professions are at most only partially proletarianized.

It is possible that, as in the case of the proletariat, professionals will gradually lose "technical" control as well:

> The differentiation of technical and ideological proletarianization provides a new basis for understanding the current position of salaried professionals. They have neither eluded proletarianization, as suggested by the postindustrial thesis, nor have they been subjected to its most advanced industrial form, as suggested by some theorists of proletarianization. Rather, they are currently subject to one form of proletarianization,

> predominantly ideological in character. They also may be increasingly vulnerable to technical proletarianization, but have not yet experienced the advanced form that has produced the deskilling of the industrial proletariat.[63]

For Derber, the effect on class position of these only partial changes is uncertain:

> This suggests a new stratum of semi-autonomous, highly credentialled and privileged technicians. The class position of such "professional-technicians" remains ambiguous, however, as their relative invulnerability to deskilling or knowledge erosion points to a subordination radically distinct from that of the industrial proletariat.[64]

Noting the various ways in which professionals have accommodated themselves to new forms of dependency, Derber believes that their "final" proletarianization may be unnecessary for capitalism.

While not dismissing the possibility of lost "technical" control:

> In the absence of such evidence, however, new theoretical interpretations would be required. The most interesting is that ideological proletarianization may be the foundation of a new system of labor process control in post-industrial capitalism that does not require technical proletarianization in order to subordinate workers effectively to capitalist production.[65]

In this case, professionals may accept a "Faustian pact" in which "salaried professionals have forfeited to their new employers the right to make such [ideological] decisions, wresting from them, however, unusual compensatory privileges of status and technical autonomy," with contradictory effects on their class position.[66]

Richard Sobel, in The White Collar Working Class: From Structure to Politics, uses a similar set of "proletarianizing" factors to analyze the changes in classes.[87] For him, "class proletarianization" is the loss of the "self-employment status" of the small owners and their conversion into "dependent employees."[88] The latter may in turn suffer an "intermediary" change. Thus: "The loss of the supervisory functions of capital constitutes part of proletarianization. In intermediary proletarianization, new middle class members, essentially supervisory labor and administrative personnel, lose their control function over (collective) labor."[89] Finally: "The most prominent theories of proletarianization concern the degradation of the labor process under monopoly capitalism, or what constitutes condition proletarianization."[90] This form corresponds more or less to what Derber called the loss of "technical" control over labor.

Sobel analyzes each of these "types of proletarianization" as a separate effect, and like Derber concludes that they may move in contradictory directions, even for a single group of employees. Thus he finds that "class proletarianization" has continued to spread among professionals, and even more rapidly for managers.[91] The "intermediary" form, or loss of supervisory activity, presents a mixed picture, with the probability of little or no change, or even "deproletarianization" in the 1970s, perhaps followed by a growth in proletarianization in the

1980s.[92] Similarly, the evidence regarding "condition proletarianization" points to possible deproletarianizing, or more likely a polarization, with contradictory effects on different parts of the work force.[93] This complexity accords with the findings of other analysts, such as Martin Oppenheimer, who notes that while some professions are going through "ideological proletarianization," others are experiencing a "horizontal segmentation" which allows its top echelons to maintain their autonomy, while the bulk of the lower ranks suffer proletarianization. As he correctly points out, however: "In either case, the whole notion of what professional life is supposedly about is being undermined."[94]

These analyses offer important theoretical differentiations as to the types of "proletarianization," and are able to utilize empirical evidence to clarify often contradictory tendencies. Their weaknesses for the purpose of class analysis, however, are rooted in their failure to advance an adequate theory of classes. Thus Derber, after reviewing various theories, concludes that:

> Marxist theory has not, however, developed a systematic or unified perspective on the class interests and functions of the professional worker. This remains one of the central problems of Marxist class theory which must be elaborated and clarified before any adequate macro-theory of professional proletarianization can be achieved.[95]

Yet Derber himself, as already seen in an earlier chapter, adopts a non-rigorous and agnostic attitude toward the class position of the professionals, which thus cannot be

clearly compared to that of the proletariat.[96] In particular, his failure to utilize the relation to production and appropriation of surplus-value as one of the criteria for the forms of proletarianization undermines the extent to which his theory can serve for class analysis.

For such purposes the work of Richard Sobel is even more inadequate. Unlike Derber, who at least maintains the class line which separates professionals and proletarians, however vaguely defined in theoretical terms, Sobel adopts a position similar to that of Charles Loren analyzed previously, in which members of the professions become "working class" simply by virtue of losing their status of independent "self-employment." In the theory advanced by Sobel, analysis of classes depends on "ownership."[97] But though he briefly refers to the concept of cultural capital,[98] when he reviews the "theories of white collar class," the one which presents the most serious challenge--that knowledge can be owned like any other means of production--is considered only in a footnote that does not adequately address the issues involved:

> The question of whether, in an exploitation based analysis of class, knowledge, skill, or credentials constitute productive forces that create wealth is an essential one. In a marxian sense, labor power can be considered as the minimal capital of the worker, and skilled labor power as greater capital. To the extent that technical knowledge and skills are productive and the owner of the knowledge can capture the returns, they constitute forms of wealth, and the producer is a small owner. In order to exploit this, however, the producer would typically have to be or become self-employed.[99]

This undefended and unjustified conclusion again rests, as in the case of Derber, on a general neglect by Sobel of the relation to surplus-value as a criterion for class analysis. Thus he states:

> Consumption or receipt of surplus income does not determine class. Tying income, and its consequences such as lifestyle, to class mistakes effects for causes. A class's income, however, is related to ownership.[100]

This confuses consumption of "income", which does indeed only determine "lifestyle," with "receipt of surplus," which is a class relation, and can derive only from exploitation.

Since, according to Sobel, "dependent employees" are by definition non-owners, and because the question of surplus-value is treated only as a derivative or "secondary" effect of ownership, its absence among employed professionals does not arise as a central issue in his analysis of classes. On this basis, his "class proletarianization" always results in being a member of the proletariat, while "intermediary" and "condition" proletarianizing only assigns strata within the working class.[101] Thus apart from the handful of professionals who are capitalists, and the "old" or independent petty bourgeoisie, all employees are proletarian, though they may be in a more "middle"-type stratum due to their supervisory or work relations. On the theoretical level of class analysis, such an approach is a regression from the significant work which has been done on the role of

knowledge as an ownable and capitalizable resource. It thus makes the issue of "proletarianization" even harder to treat rigorously, as it rests on an inadequate definition of the classes themselves.

In analyzing the question of whether professionals are being proletarianized, the first requirement is to draw a clear line between aspects of "professionalism" and those of "class" itself. Though the characteristics of the two overlap, they are not the same. Professionals are marked by autonomy, a "self-activity" which allows them to control their own work. Any loss of their capacity to act autonomously results in "deprofessionalization." However, while the change from "self-employment" to hired status tends to reduce autonomy, some highly privileged professional employees, as Derber notes, retain virtually total control over both the "ends" and "means" of their labor. He is nevertheless quite correct when he describes the effect of changes experienced by many in the professions as altering their status to "semi-autonomous, highly credentialled and privileged . . . 'professional-technicians.'" Any form of increasing control over their work, as a result of bureaucratization, state intervention, corporate involvement, or administration by non-professionals, tends to undermine the self-regulation of the professions. This can involve loss of "ideological" self-determination, which may lead to "technical" or "condition" subordination. As a result, their work comes

more and more to resemble that of technicians and managers, and of course the proletariat itself, who labor under the direct control of others. But deprofessionalization can arise from any change that affects the degree of autonomy, including when a professional moves "up" into an administrative or supervisory, but more organizationally regulated, position.

Thus Derber is equally correct when he describes the effect of these changes on class position as "ambiguous." The analysis of classes rests on criteria which are quite distinct from professionalism per se. In the example above, the professionals may move from a position in which they are paid the equivalent of their own labor value, to a highly-rewarded administrative post that rests on the exploitation of other employees. As the recipient of exploited surplus-value, the administrator is more fully capitalistic, though also less professional: here there is a link of deproletarianization and deprofessionalization. Of course, and presumably more commonly, the loss of professional status can also be linked with proletarianization, and the former change no doubt often prepares the way for the latter. However, there is a third transformation, in which deprofessionalization is, in effect, a "lateral" movement toward the less autonomous parts of the "middle class," as in the case of the "technical-professionals" described by Derber. Here there is a loss of professional autonomy, but not linked to a

"vertical" process of either rising or falling into other classes. In this case, the essential condition of the petty bourgeoisie is maintained, that of being relatively "neither exploiter nor exploited," but they lose their "class independence" from the capitalists. This occurs when professionals become more like technicians or managers, subject to increasingly direct capitalist control, but without any other change in their "middle-classness." Here deprofessionalization has no effect as such on class position.

The confusion which surrounds the "proletarianization" question arises as the result of the inadequate analysis of the classes of professionals and other "new" strata. As a result, "secondary" issues like professional autonomy tend to be substituted as criteria for the determination of their class. The autonomous self-regulation of the professions is similar to the relative independence from capitalist exploitation of the petty bourgeoisie. In fact, the autonomy of professionals is a primary defence which they use to maintain their "middle-class" status. But the two are not the same. Though they tend to move in tandem, one may change without a corresponding alteration in the other, and their transformations may even be contradictory. What must now be examined is the actual outcome of this proletarianization in class analysis terms, that is, to identify the categories or strata into which those pushed or kept out of the petty bourgeoisie first "fall."

NOTES

1. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 204.

2. New York Times, January 16, 1983, sec. 3, 1.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. New York Times, January 30, 1983, F21.

6. New York Times, February 9, 1982, A16.

7. New York Times, August 6, 1978, 30.

8. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, September 4, 1980, 58; New York Times, April 14, 1980, A16, and July 7, 1991, 5.

9. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, September 4, 1980, 58.

10. Jack Geiger, "An Overdose of Power and Money," a review of Paul Starr, The Social Transformation of American Medicine (New York: Basic Books, 1983), in New York Times, Book Review, January 9, 1983, 24, and May 29, 1983, sec. 3, 1. See also Hal Lancaster, "More Public Hospitals Are Sold to Firms Despite Objections From Poor and Aged," Wall Street Journal, November 11, 1980, 48.

11. Sylvia Porter, "Corporations Now Running Hospitals," Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, October 15, 1980, 59, and Geiger, "An Overdose of Power and Money," 1.

12. Geiger, "An Overdose of Power and Money," 24.

13. Ibid., 26.

14. New York Times, May 29, 1983, sec 3, 1.

15. Geiger, "An Overdose of Power and Money," 26, quoting Starr.

16. Ibid.

17. New York Times, August 9, 1991, A1.

18. Ibid.

19. New York Times, June 2, 1991, 30.

20. Ibid. The quote is from Dr. Arnold S. Relman, editor of The New England Journal of Medicine.

21. Sylvia Porter, "Corporations Now Running Hospitals," Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, October 15, 1980, 59.

22. This practice was reformed in the late 1980s due to several well-publicized cases of deaths at hospitals by those under the care of overworked interns.

23. New York Times, February 26, 1980, A12; March 8, 1982, A15; September 30, 1982, A30, Letter to the Editor by Ingrid Thompson.

24. New York Times, February 26, 1980, A12.

25. Ibid.

26. New York Times, Winter Survey of Education, sec. 13, January 10, 1982, 15.

27. Ibid. The quote is from Robert Nielsen of the American Federation of Teachers.

28. New York Times, Winter Survey of Education, sec. 13, January 10, 1982, 15.

29. Ibid., and New York Times, November 16, 1981, B11.

30. New York Times, March 8, 1982, A15.

31. New York Times, August 1, 1989, A1.

32. New York Times, June 12, 1982, 43.

33. New York Times, December 26, 1982, 40.

34. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, December 19, 1982, 42.

35. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, May 3, 1991, 42.

36. New York Times, October 17, 1982, 4.

37. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, August 11, 1991, 60.

38. New York Times, October 17, 1982, 4: A 1982 meeting of leading college presidents "agreed that corporate-university contracts should not be concluded in secret. They also concluded that whenever possible, university-held patents should be licensed on a non-exclusive basis, insuring that the fruits of academic research are not sold to the highest bidder. Most companies, however, make exclusive licensing a prerequisite to any agreement."

39. New York Times, Fall Survey of Education, sec. 12, November 16, 1980, 25.

40. Such issues can become particularly bitter when they involve the wider public. A long struggle has taken place over the forms of agricultural research conducted by the University of California. Sponsored by the powerful agribusiness interests of the state, researchers have promoted "labor-saving" techniques and new forms of pesticides which conflicted with the interests of the United Farm Workers, environmental groups, and even small farmers, all of whom suffered from the big corporate "farmers." See New York Times, December 3, 1980, D1.

41. New York Times, Fall Survey of Education, sec. 12, November 16, 1980, 25.

42. New York Times, March 8, 1982, A15. The quote is from Vincent O'Leary, president of the State University of New York at Albany.

43. New York Times, August 1, 1989, A1. See also December 13, 1982, A16: Thus the Princeton engineering school was allowed to "break ranks with the university's overall pay scale," so that by 1982 "'where the humanities departments might be able to offer a starting salary in the range of $18,000 to $20,000, we can offer $25,000 to $28,000.'"

44. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, February 13, 1983, 59: "The revolution in biological research popularly known as gene-splicing promises to make millionaires of some laboratory biologists and nervous wrecks of university administrators."

45. New York Times, October 4, 1981, 29: Thus Harvard adopted guidelines which, among other things, cite as a problem area "'situations in which a member directs students into a research area from which a member hopes to realize financial gain.'"

46. New York Times, September 30. 1982, A30, Ingrid Thompson, letter to the editor.

47. New York Times, February 26, 1980, A12. The quotes are from a study by the American Association of University Professors.

48. Ibid.

49. New York Times, March 16, 1981, 1.

50. Ibid. See also New York Times, October 23, 1980, A23, and Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, January 29, 1981, 50: "paradoxically . . . industry itself is rapidly devouring the nation's engineering seed corn. It is luring seasoned professors away from colleges with high salaries and making such attractive job offers to new engineering graduates that few young people are willing to stay on for the graduate training needed to produce new faculty members."

51. New York Times, May 7, 1983, 8.

52. New York Times, National Recruitment Survey, sec. 12, October 12, 1980, 16.

53. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, February 2, 1981, 4.

54. New York Times, November 27, 1981, B16. The term was used in a Carnegie Foundation report. See also New York Times, Spring Survey of Education, sec. 12, April 26, 1981, 42: "In particular, the trend of integrating career preparation with academic course work has accelerated greatly in the last two years. With the exception of elite institutions whose graduates face fewer difficulties in finding jobs, this phenomenon affects virtually every college and university with a liberal-arts program. . . ."

55. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, September 4, 1980, 71.

56. New York Times, Summer Survey of Education, sec. 12, August 22, 1982, 12.

57. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 35.

58. New York Times, Winter Survey of Education, January 10, 1982, sec. 13, p. 13: "'We are in a period when people will not have an easy time,' said Aaron Lemonick, dean of the faculty at Princeton and a former dean of the Princeton Graduate School. 'We overdrove the system, and we must now make adjustments.'"

59. Marx, Capital, vol. 3, 294-95.

60. New York Times, Winter Survey of Education, sec. 13, January 10, 1982, 15.

61. New York Times, August 14, 1975, 1, 29.

62. Wall Street Journal, May 9, 1980, 1.

63. New York Times, March 16, 1981, A10.

64. New York Times, August 8, 1978, 30.

65. Ibid.

66. New York Times, National Recruitment Survey, sec. 12, October 14, 1979, 8.

67. New York Times, October 12, 1980, 58.

68. Department of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1989, 408, table no. 668.

69. Department of Commerce, 1970 Census of the Population, Detailed Characteristics, 766-67, table no. 227; 772-73, table no. 228.

70. New York Times, October 26, 1979, A20. The quote is from Frances Hutner, an economist.

71. Department of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1989, 99, table no. 152; 178, table no. 303; 582, table no. 983.

72. Department of Commerce, 1970 Census of the Population, Occupational Characteristics, 1, table no. 1.

73. New York Times, March 21, 1983, A13.

74. New York Times, May 21, 1991, C12.

75. Department of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1979, 145, table no. 231; 1970 Census of the Population, Detailed Characteristics, 766-71, table no. 227; 772-77, table no. 228

76. New York Times, November 28, 1982, 1.

77. New York Times, December 19, 1982, 65. The quote is from John Reid, a sociologist at Howard University.

78. 1970 Census of the Population, Detailed Characteristics, 768-71, table no. 227; 774-77, table no. 228

79. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, August 9, 1991, 39.

80. Charles Derber, Professionals as Workers: Mental Labor in Advanced Capitalism (Boston: G.K. Hall and Co., 1982), 169.

81. Ibid., 171.

82. Ibid., 173.

83. Ibid., 172.

84. Ibid., 188.

85. Ibid., 189.

86. Ibid., 174.

87. Richard Sobel, The White Collar Working Class: From Structure to Politics (New York: Praeger, 1989).

88. Ibid., 69.

89. Ibid., 70.

90. Ibid., 71.

91. Ibid., 85.

92. Ibid., 114.

93. Ibid., 139.

94. Oppenheimer, White Collar Politics, 147.

95. Derber, Professionals as Workers, 32.

96. Ibid., 205-08.

97. Sobel, The White Collar Working Class, 5.

98. Ibid., 19.

99. Ibid., 38, note 6. The passage quoted here is only part of a lengthy note which focuses particularly on the work of Erik Olin Wright.

100. Ibid., 37, note 5.

101. Ibid., 66.

CHAPTER 17

THE SEMI-PROLETARIAT

I cannot leave with only the general observations of the last chapter the question of the partially proletarianized petty bourgeoisie, whom Judah Hill tells us some have suggested be put into "sort of an in-between class," lying between the petty bourgeois and working classes.[1] So too, the Ehrenreichs speak of "groups near the PMC-working-class borders," while for Wright these positions have been at times "semi-autonomous employees" or various categories of "semi- or uncredentialled managers" or "experts."[2] For Hill, this was a problem which arose first around the position of the "semi-professionals," but as already noted, a similar phenomenon occurs also among proletarianized small farmers who cannot exist without hiring themselves out for off-farm work as a supplementary occupation, or even as their primary labor in place of farming. Other small farmers or store owners are so subordinated to large capitalist interests, such as banks, as to be virtually working as employees, despite nominal independence. Thus there is a general question of where to fit into a class analysis those whose investment in the means of production is insufficient to fully free them from

the forms of exploitation suffered by the proletariat. The analysts above, and many others, have generally "gone beyond Marxism" on this question, just as they did in the case of the petty bourgoeisie.

Once again, however, there is in fact a historical group long recognized by Marxists as having just these characteristics. This is the semi-proletariat, which Lenin defines as follows:

> . . . the semi-proletarians or peasants who till tiny plots of land, i.e., those who obtain their livelihood partly as wage-labourers at agricultural and industrial capitalist enterprises and partly by working their own or rented plots of land, which provide their families only with part of their means of subsistence. This group of the rural working population is very numerous in all capitalist countries.[3]

Lenin complains that "its existence and special position are played down by the representatives of the bourgeoisie" and by the petty bourgeois "socialists" of the Second International, "partly by deliberately deceiving the workers and partly by blindly submitting to the routine of the petty bourgeois views and lumping together this group with the mass of the 'peasantry.'" The "lot of these semi-proletarians is a very hard one and they stand to gain enormously and immediately." from the proletarian revolution.[4] The role of this large potential ally of the proletariat has indeed been given short shrift, including in the United States. However, the correct evaluation of intermediate strata is the real art of making a complete

class analysis. Nowhere is this more clearly revealed than in the critical role historically of the semi-proletariat.

The problem that must first be addressed is to find the membership of these semi-proletarians in the present-day United States. To begin with there are remnants of the large semi-self-employed stratum. From earlier chapters it will be recalled that up to 1.2 million farms in 1974 had less than $10,000 in income, or were worked by part-time operators or tenants. By the early 1980s, fully 47% of all farmers reported more than 100 days of off-farm labor, and 65% of the operators of small farms did so, among whom 70% "list their occupation as something other than farmer," while many others had family members working in town or industry.[5] Between 1978-1982, the number of farms with under fifty acres grew sharply, which "'with very few exceptions, are so small they usually are operated by people who earn most of their income from non-farm sources.'"[6] :

> All indications are that the small family farm that supports the entire family is fast disappearing. In its stead comes a new type of small farm, where one or more family members combines farm work with wage labor, such as in a nearby factory of small business. The result is the rapid rise of a part-time farm class with a dual class character--as proletarians and as independent producers.[7]

Thus a semi-proletarian farming class is clearly growing.

In the modern period, the "old" semi-proletariat continues to have a mass base among those who are more urbanized and industrialized as well. There were some

300,000 persons in marginal or part-time manufacturing, retail trade, services, and so forth who did not gross $10,000 in 1972. In addition there were up to 200,000 professionals, especially women, who must be considered semi-proletarian small business owners, many of them free-lance persons in health, teaching, or artistic fields. Finally, 1.0 million or so "self-employed" craftspersons and transport operatives, whose investment in the means of production is little more than a set of tools, a cab, or a truck, should also be included here.[8] The above categories compose the "old" semi-proletariat in the early 1970s numbering about 2.7 million.

But just as the transformation of petty bourgeoisie from independent owners of property into subordinate managerial employees was noted above, and later into the professions as a third stage in their development, so too the semi-proletarians are transferred from "older" to "newer" strata as they join capitalist industry or acquire a little higher education. Often the first step for those escaping failing farms or tiny urban shops are the lower level occupations in management or in the professional fields. Thus the semi-proletariat occupies its own class position among managers: in 1970 there were some 4.2 million salaried persons in management or in the ranks of forepersons who did not fit "full" petty bourgeois criteria, having only part of the authority or income normal to the latter class.[9] For instance many of the

lower level managerial employees lack the right to hire and fire workers, a common attribute of the petty bourgeoisie, and they are themselves most likely exploited of surplus-labor, though less than proletarians. Within the state apparatus, similarly, there are lower level functions which correspond to semi-proletarian status, notably most police as well as non-commissioned officers in the military, together comprising some .5 million or more persons. In addition there are another 1.3 million "miscellaneous" employees, largely in clerical and sales, who have some slight college education and whose earnings lie between the proletariat and petty bourgeoisie.[10]

It is in the professions, however, that the modern semi-proletariat has found its greatest expansion. 'There are millions of professional employees who fail from the start to make the investment in education of a "full" petty bourgeoisie. They are only "semi-owners" in the means of mental production.

> For most of the men and women who strive to improve themselves or their children, getting some education, even some college degree, is seldom the door to prestigious, "socially productive," and "free" intellectual jobs. The educational "property" which they strive to acquire only brings them what seem like "second-rate" benefits, if one compares them to the ideal privileges of professional status.[11]

The entire system of higher education increasingly divides persons into distinct groups which play a differing role in the division of labor. More and more, therefore, such schooling no longer produces professionals who are

relatively autonomous and free to choose their own careers. Entire categories in the professions have on average only a year or two of college and thus receive only part of the attributes associated with the petty bourgeoisie. They are in general condemned to a more or less "permanent" intermediate role between the petty bourgeois and proletarian classes, and occupy their own specific place in class analysis. It is this large mass of persons who obtain only partial access to higher education, and thus to the benefits and autonomy which come with it, and who fill only certain restricted areas within professions, that gives the modern semi-professional stratum of the semi-proletariat its own specific characteristics.

There were in 1970 over 7.7 million professionals on wage and salary who did not fully have the various criteria of the petty bourgeois class. Half of these employees fall into two major groups. First were most of the 2.8 million primary and secondary teachers, more the two-thirds women, who despite schooling generally at a graduate level, lack the earnings or the other attributes usually associated with the petty bourgeoisie. This occupation is perhaps the clearest example of a situation in which investment in education does not bring with it the "normal" rewards, in this case primarily because of discrimination against female employees. Secondly are virtually all 1.2 million nurses and health technicians, in the vast majority also women, who average only a year or two of college. Other

major categories are 1.0 million engineering and other technical assistants who are mostly male, .8 million writers and artists, .5 million religious, social, and recreational employees, with the rest spread out over the remaining professions. Most lacked a full college education, with many just past high school. Altogether some 4.2 million professional semi-proletarians are women, and another .3 million are Black or Latino males, so that these two groups make up more than 58% of the total.[12]

These "semi-professionals" outnumber those who achieve "full" petty bourgeois professional status 7.7 to 2.7 million, or almost 3 to 1. For those in this category entrance into the petty bourgeoisie is usually closed, yet they fear to fall down into the proletariat from which they have escaped or into which they constantly seem about to be precipitated. Especially as imperialism declines, many semi-proletarian professionals are in fact being "bumped" even further down the class scale. However, millions more spend their entire lives in the same intermediate position. Such semi-proletarians form the firmest basis of their class, and assert its interests in relation to both those "above" and "below" them. In addition, some one-half of all college students, or 4.2 million, can be added to the semi-proletariat due to their working-class backgrounds or because they attend 2-year institutions or are only in school part-time.[13] Under these circumstances most achieve

only some of the class autonomy and the income and other rewards that are typical of the petty bourgeois class.

To the extent that semi-proletarian conditions have spread among the ranks of managers and professionals in the modern period, therefore, this too is an "old class in new form," and like the petty bourgeoisie, it passes through three major stages. Figures for the early 1970's are given in Table 8.

Table 8.--Size of Semi-Proletariat Class and Strata: 1970

Stratum	Total Numbers (in millions)
Independent Stratum	2.7
Managerial Stratum	4.2
Professional Stratum	7.7
Miscellaneous Salaried Employees	1.3
Police and Non-Commissioned Officers	.5
Students in Higher Education	4.2
Total Semi-Proletariat Class	20.6

Sources: Department of Commerce, 1972 Census of Manufactures, Subject and Special Statistics, xvii; xxxii; 68, table no. 8; 1972 Census of Retail Trade, Summary and Subject Statistics, 1-8, table no. 1a; 1-37, table no. 1b; 1-66, table no. 2a; 1972 Census of Selected Services, Summary and Subject Statistics, 1-7, table no. 1a; 1-41, table no. 1b; 1-74, table no. 2a; 1974 Census of Agriculture, Summary and State Data, 1-2, table nos. 3, 4; Occupational Characteristics, 193-96, table no. 6; 476-503, table no. 24; Detailed Characterstics, 766-77, table nos. 227, 228; Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1972, 129, table no. 202; 237, table no. 379.

Semi-proletarians accounted for 14.7% of the adult population, 19.1% of the work force, and some 18.6% of all employees on wages and salaries. The semi-proletariat is

just under one-third larger than the petty bourgeoisie, and among "self-employed," managers, and professionals alone, one-half bigger. This does not take into account "middle-class" housewives who share some semi-proletarian aspects, or the highly paid employees who are similarly proletarianized though their income is typical of the petty bourgeoisie, situations to which it is much harder to give a statistically based size. Over all these categories stands, in addition, the inflationary and other proletarianizing pressures noted above. The former has probably tipled the income limits which mark off the petty bourgeoisie, so that at the start of the 1980s the range would be closer to $30,000-$45,000 at the "bottom" and $75,000-$80,000 at the "top."[14] Many petty bourgeois persons left behind in this inflation are now more exploited relative to their incomes than they were in 1970, and have thus slipped toward semi-proletarian status over the past two decades.

Thus certain "semi-professions" have their own distinct character and composition, which is maintained and developed over long periods of time. However, these occupational divisions and in particular their "membership" have been determined through class struggles, as well as sexual and/or racial or ethnic oppressions. The classical example is that of the suppression of the working-class and community-based health care provided mainly by women,

under a male-dominated medical profession, relegating the former healers to a subordinate category as nurses.

> The question is not so much how women got "left out" of medicine and left with nursing, but how did these categories arise at all? To put it another way: How did one particular set of healers, who happened to be male, white and middle class, manage to oust all the competing folk healers, midwives and other practitioners who had dominated the American medical scene in the early 1800's? . . .
>
> . . . It's part of the 19th century's long story of class and sex struggles of power in all areas of life. When women had a place in medicine, it was in a people's medicine. When that people's medicine was destroyed, there was no place for women--except in the subservient role of nurses. The set of healers who became the medical profession was distinguished not so much by its association with modern science as by its associations with the emerging American business establishment.[15]

More was involved, however, than simply suppressing women healers and ghettoizing them into nursing. The latter field itself had to be transformed and "feminized," to make it into a separate stratum in the medical hierarchy and a specific occupation that could be assigned almost without exception to women.[16] Similarly:

> The reform based on the feminization of schoolteaching logically reserved the better-paid and higher-level positions in the system to males. Within the emergent school bureaucracies, male administrators were in a favorable position to capture most of the benefits of reform, while seeking the legitimation of expertise.[17]

In the schools, a later "layer" of race would also be added.

A somewhat different route to "semi-professional" status is seen for technicians who work within large corporate enterprises:

> The professionally trained workers, that is those with four years or more of college, have become the

> low-level supervisors in the technologically advanced industries. They direct operations and maintenance work within the limits set by managers and high-echelon scientists and engineers. . . . in effect, they are simply more skilled operatives. Their position is determined by their technical knowledge. But like the production and maintenance workers, they neither control the production process, whose object, specifications, and methods are determined from above, nor their own work, which is defined rigidly within the occupational hierarchy.
>
> The labor of the engineer or scientist who functions as a technician within advanced industry rarely corresponds to the extent of knowledge acquired in college. He has become the new front-line production worker. Typically his work is so rationalized that its routine character is preponderant, although fragments of creative judgment may be required from time to time.[18]

Thus in part, such technicians represent "the proletarianization of the professions . . . the transformation of technical labor from independence to dependence."[19]

But in the process, such roles have become semi-permanent resting places for large numbers of employees, who have made the educational investment that usually brings petty bourgeois status, but without being able to fully achieve it.

> The obstacles to mobility are revealed by salary patterns for engineers and other professionals. Typically a graduate of a professional school with an engineering or scientific degree may earn a starting salary of about $12,000 a year--considerably higher than most teachers and social workers. But the top salaries after ten years experience stabilize at about $18,000 a year, hardly more than the salaries of many skilled workers and a growing number of teachers and social workers as well. Only when the industrial professional has moved into sales and middle management do these maximum salaries increase. For the most part, those who stay in production or research for more than five years find their work repetitive, their

> responsibility narrowed rather than enlarged, and their salary scale relatively stable.[20]

Nevertheless, their semi-supervisory role and credentialling as "professionals," plus at least a minimal salary advantage, have been generally sufficient to give such technicians an ideological commitment more to the "company" than to the working class. "Thus the ideology of professionalism has become more powerful in inverse proportion to the proletarianization of technical workers."[21]

The capitalists and bourgeois administrators of "non-profit" institutions, of course, know how to play on this:

> Engineering professional associations were convinced by management to abandon their former sponsorship of collective bargaining: "The societies now argue for commitment to a professionalism that excludes any kind of collective bargaining. By stressing the differences between professionals and workers and by urging management to emphasize and respect these differences, they have tried to make engineering unions unnecessary."[22]

This clearly indicates the subordinate nature of the professional status of such employees, which can only be purchased at a price. In fact, "unionization leads to the negotiation of items that many professionals would prefer left to individual decision making."[23] Nevertheless:

> A seemingly endless stream of professional occupations became involved in unions in the 1970s. Although the proportion of the labor force that was unionized declined between 1960 and 1980, the proportion of professionals in unions increased. In places where the quasi-union tactics of professional organizations did not seem sufficient, there were formal moves into unions.[24]

As part of the same process, and in some cases to meet the challenge of the unions, even "traditional" organizations of professionals adopted more militant tactics, signing contracts and conducting strikes that would have earlier been anathema. Despite this, the professional desire to avoid the "taint" of proletarianization limits the move toward full unionization.

In his preface to a study of the "semi-professions," Amitai Etzioni notes that, given such contradictions, the professional status of many groups "is neither fully established nor fully desired":

> Their training is shorter, their status is less legitimated, their right to privileged communication less established, there is less of a specialized body of knowledge, and they have less autonomy from supervision or societal control than "the" professions.[25]

What Etzioni argues is that these semi-professions are generally unable or unfitted for advancement to "full" professionalism:

> The policy recommendation which obviously emerges is for these middle-status groups to acknowledge their position, to seek to improve their status rather than to try to pass for another. . . . The main point is that the membership must realize that there is a distinct middle ground from which these groupings neither can nor need to break out. . . . Once it is recognized that there is a middle ground, inauthentic aspirations and positions are more likely to be renounced and the dysfunctional consequences of attempts to pass will tend to disappear. The semi-professions will be able to be themselves.[26]

Typical here is the situation of nurses, who

> are not located on a continuum with doctors: there is no hierarchical pattern with a gradual approach to and fusion with the highest status, that of physician. Instead, the caste-like system puts an unscalable wall

> between the physician and the semi-professionals in the hospital.[27]

Within this relation, however, there is a degree of occupational distinctiveness and even autonomy, that cannot be reduced simply to a subordinate role to the doctors. Nevertheless, efforts at fuller professionalization persist. "Few professionals talk as much about being professionals as those whose professional stature is in doubt."[28] Demands for recognition as "managers of patient care,"[29] for example, generate "considerable antagonism between physicians who want dependable, servile nurses and nurses who want professional dignity and autonomy."[30]

Thus the semi-proletariat is important for other reasons than its size. For the signifance of the course which it takes is precisely that it lies between the petty bourgeoisie and the proletariat. On the one hand, it has its own unique role in this position, where it asserts certain specific interests of its own. However, as seen above, Marx and Engels stated that the petty bourgeois class is revolutionary only to the degree to which it asserts its future interests, or its looming proletarianization. But the semi-proletariat itself represents that "future," or rather, the early stages of it, and it is therefore the main battleground where the two possible tendencies inherent in the "middle classes" of capitalism are first fought out. As Lenin described it:

> Great and inevitable as may be their petty-bourgeois vacillations and their tendency to go back to bourgeois "order", under the "wing" of the bourgeoisie,

> the non-proletarian and semi-proletarian mass of the working population cannot but recognize the moral and political authority of the proletariat, who are not only overthrowing the exploiters and suppressing their resistance, but are building a new and higher social bond, a social discipline, the discipline of a class-conscious and united working people.[31]

On the one hand, the members of the intermediate classes of capitalist society can cling to their present positions, and even try to roll back the clock, for instance asserting the prerogatives of "professionalism" against both their own increasingly proletarianized reality and the proletariat itself. On the other hand, their future can be clearly recognized and embraced, which requires rejecting phony appeals to professional status, particularly among those who have already lost most of the attributes of that social grouping, and being willing to give up the role of a social elite and their position as regulators of the working class and the maintenance crew of capitalist society.

Of course, in the absence of a strong socialist movement among the proletariat, and under the pressures of the capitalist system which restricts their actions, the opportunities for the "middle classes" to adopt the latter course are limited. Nevertheless, there constantly arise situations which test their intentions. Since the semi-proletariat is itself undergoing even more thorough and rapid proletarianization than the petty bourgeoisie, or at least has largely been blocked from joining their ranks, it is natural that it is in this class that is found the

greatest tension between these contradictory tendencies. These opposing directions show up sharply in its unions, for it is especially among the semi-proletarians that unionization in the professions occurs, notably in the case of teachers, nurses, and others in its "hard core." In fact, it is among these groups that the union movement has found some of its most rapid expansion in recent years. Such organization has strengthened the relations of the professional semi-proletariat to the working class. Moreover, the semi-proletarians have helped to serve as the opening wedge to the organizing of the "higher" ranks among the professionals, such as professors who, despite their generally even more conservative approach, are thus drawn into the orbit of the proletariat. But unionism alone, of course, not only is not necessarily "socialist," it may be the very center of "working-class anti-communism," as seen above. It is in fact the case that the unionization of the semi-proletariat can tend to dilute the proletarian base of the union movement and reinforce the role of the "labor aristocracy" as long as it is unchallenged from any other quarter.

Without a class-conscious organization among the workers, there is more than a likelihood that the new unions of the semi-proletariat will at least in part serve to merely strengthen its more "professionalist" tendencies. In the Woody Allen movie "Sleeper," World War III is said to have started due to the actions of Albert Shanker, then

president of the New York United Federation of Teachers, later of the national union. Behind the comedy form of such nonsense, lies the reality that in their desperation to avoid proletarianization, parts of the semi-proletariat will stop at almost nothing to remain "professional." These elements have in fact had few if any more dedicated spokespersons than Shanker. The background for this is the proletarianization of teachers, which has perhaps been more rapid than in any other professional occupation. Many factors have contributed to this, but above all there has been a deterioration in hiring and work conditions as the number of positions has shrunk and the load per teacher has increased, a development which rests ultimately on the general decline of the United States economy. New York City teachers are now assigned to their jobs in a procedure that they refer to disparagingly as a "'meat market'" or "'cattle call,'" often being forced to teach in schools or subjects unrelated to their specialties: "'It's almost like the old waterfront shape-up,' said an accounting teacher with 16 years' experience. He said his department at Grover Cleveland High School in Ridgewood, Queens, had been 'nearly wiped out--they called it the "July Massacre."'"[32]

The response of increasing numbers of teachers is to treat teaching as just another "job," refusing to volunteer for extracurricular events, going to work as routinely as possible to minimize the growing stresses, turning a blind eye to the deteriorating conditions within schools.[33] Such

attitudes add subjective force to the objective fact of proletarianization. But if the semi-proletariat is proletarianized more rapidly than the petty bourgeoisie, its situation is in turn but a mild counterpart to the devastation visited on much of the working class itself. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the educational holocaust in the major cities, and the related genocide by poverty, unemployment and drugs which is inseparable from the racist education systems there. By the late 1970s, New York City high schools had chronic absenteeism of 35%,[34] and a dropout rate of 45%, compared to "just" 36% when measured in 1961. The result is "an implicit 'triage system,' whereby staff and administrators 'tend to put their energies in the direction of helping students who have a reasonable chance of 'making it' rather than helping those who do not."[35] While standard learning test scores also showed a long-term drop, a fundamental polarization takes place in which some can get higher education and the rest are "tracked" into the kinds of jobs in which even basic literacy and math may be expendable. Clearly the proletarianization of the petty bourgeoisie and semi-proletariat in the academic world is itself related to the even more rapid "deskilling" of much of the proletariat, which inevitably spreads "upward" to other classes.

As in so many other aspects of United States life, these developments were imposed first and most harshly on the Black and Latino communities, and it is there that the

earliest reaction against them came, going back to 1968. The struggle over community control of the schools that year in Ocean Hill-Brownsville in New York City pitted the United Federation of Teachers against a local Black area which had determined to put an end to the de-education of its children. Taking power in their schools under an elected board, the parents introduced new and innovative educational ideas and dismissed certain teachers who they felt were not responsive to their plans or were unqualified. The UFT responded with a series of three strikes, ostensibly focused around demands for the reinstatement of the teachers, though it was apparent that the true goal of Shanker was to put an end to real community control. Behind a screen of union rights and charges of Black Anti-Semitism, however, lay a different concern. Shanker expressed the view that teachers were no longer willing to be supervised by people who have less professional competence than they did. Professionalism, in other words, was to rule supreme, and was not to be subordinated to parents, Blacks, workers, or other extraneous groups.[36] The UFT won, and went on itself to dominate most of the newly decentralized but weakened community boards.[37] By 1980, in a city where 60% of the children were reading below the national average, it was District 23 in Ocean Hill-Brownsville that ranked lowest, with 79% reading under that norm, and chronic absenteeism in its high schools reaching rates of 54%.[38]

Professionalism did not stop Shanker, however, from going back "under the 'wing' of the bourgeoisie": "He now calls for a 'new alliance' with the banks and the Chamber of Commerce."[39] There is in fact no "middle way" by which teachers and others can escape being "supervised by people who have less professional competence than they do": if not the working class and oppressed communities, then the bourgeoisie. Having clung to "professionalism," the UFT found that without working-class support the semi-proletariat are ultimately helpless against the capitalist class and its government. As New York City approached the edge of bankruptcy, committees of bankers and corporate executives took control and dictated massive layoffs and more "production" per teacher. Following the pattern long ago established by such "labor aristocrat" unions as the United Mineworkers and the United Steel Workers, Shanker reluctantly backed a strike in 1975, and then accepted devastating cut-backs while insisting on strict seniority as the means of protecting his base among the older, white teachers.[40] Blacks and Hispanics, meanwhile, were largely ghettoized into 20,000 "paraprofessional" teaching positions, under union domination, forming a kind of semi-semi-proletariat.[41] In a system over 70% Black and Hispanic, few from those communities were able to rise in the system or take advantage of the decentralized boards.[42] While this situation gradually changed as Blacks and Hispanics moved up in seniority, and as power in the city

has shifted, culminating in the election of the Dinkins Administration, the educational devastation in the city largely remains, compounded in the 1990s by renewal of an extremely grave fiscal crisis.

Attempts to remain aloof as professionals thus fails in the face of the basic contradictions of the capitalist economic and political system, and the rapid proletarianization of "semi-professionals" will increase along with worker oppression. The growing tendency toward moonlighting, the penetration of schools by business through packaged "learning" plans, and calls for productivity measurements and merit pay, coming from the White House itself, indicate the future awaiting most teachers.[43] By the early 1980s more than 11% of teachers nationwide moonlighted, up from 6% just a little over a decade earlier.[44] There are times, however, in which semi-proletarian professionals have shown an understanding of the "moral and political authority of the proletariat" and the need for alliance with the Black and Latino masses.

Sometimes they even do so partly in the name of "professionalism" itself. Interns and residents in New York City, for instance, struck in 1978 against their 120-hour work weeks. In 1981 they again walked out to demand an improvement in the level of support staffs and facilities. Those striking had to overcome the threat from supervising doctors who ordered them back to work, and the problem that "a number of senior physicians consider a

strike unethical."[45] Moreover, they were often met by scorn from those "labor aristocrat" unions who see a strike over professional issues as violating the goal of "bread and butter" unionism.

> In the view of some observers, the committee has weakened its position in the last two strikes by *engaging more in a class struggle than in routine* labor-management confrontations. In these actions, they took up the cause of minorities and the poor, who they said were being denied the kind of medical care which government and society had promised.
>
> For example, much of the energy in the most recent strike was provided by interns and residents in Harlem Hospital Center, the facility black New Yorkers rely on most. Even when it was clear that they could not win, Harlem's doctors demanded that the strike continue. In contrast the doctors at Bellevue Hospital Center, which is regarded as the city's flagship hospital, declined to strike at all.[46]

Despite such difficulties, many of the interns and residents did try to link up with the masses of proletarians and oppressed peoples, even at the risk of being denied future accreditation as full doctors. Thus the semi-proletarian professionals divide between those who lean toward the petty bourgeoisie and those who move toward the proletariat.

In entire professions there is a struggle between these two trends. In nursing, for instance, deterioration of hospitals, lack of supplies, and staff cuts often undermine professional standards, and lead even to assignments to clean floors, and so on.[47] Moreover, the oppression of female nurses restricts their opportunities to "rise" in class and pits them against mainly male petty-bourgeois doctors and administrators who exploit them both

as employees and as women. The response has been that certain nursing groups have become members of predominantly proletarian unions like District Council 1199 and have placed their alliance with the working class above their claims to "professionalism" per se. But others, organized in professional associations, have scorned not only direct ties to the proletariat, but even its indirect support, often with disastrous results when either nurses or workers go on strike.

As the Women's Liberation Movement increasingly won the right to work in "male" occupations, nurses became scarce, while the situation of those who remain kept on deteriorating. One result was increased militancy, "bolstered by the spirit of feminism"[48]:

> 'The older nurses seem to have been more influenced by the women's movement, more concerned with a decent income and are often head of a household and less easily intimidated.'[49]

Though some nurses have gained "joint practice" programs with doctors, in other cases a major struggle looms over which classes will dominate various areas of medical services.[50] Some in nursing have also sought increased professional authority through additional schooling.[51] Already facing an "oversupply" in their own ranks, physicians have resisted the efforts of nurses to expand their medical practice to new fields, even where these meet shortages, as in rural areas, which are not being met.[52] Here the semi-proletariat comes out in its own class

interests, fighting "upper class" administrators and doctors on the one hand, fearful of any proletarian taint on the other.

The world of the professions and pre-professional students is therefore divided into three different classes: a small but powerful bourgeois element, the mass of petty bourgeoisie who form the "heart" of professionalism, and finally the even more numerous semi-proletarians. As usual, nowhere is this three-part division more evident than in the universities, where it has led at times to very sharp class struggles. In the 1960s, for instance, the initial impulse for campus conflicts came from the opposition of largely petty bourgeois students, and some faculty, to the "selling out" of the university to capitalist interests, notably in the form of corporate research and defense spending, funding which went largely to enhance the role of the academic bourgeoisie. But:

> At the same time that many students of PMC origin and destiny were becoming disenchanted with their own class and its institutions, they began to find themselves challenged by the previously alien working class. For one thing, as the university struggled to keep pace with the booming growth in PMC jobs, the characteristics of students were changing. Unable to meet the demand for engineers, teachers, social workers, etc. with sons and daughters of existing PMC alone, the colleges were increasingly filled with sons and daughters of the working class. As the student rebellion spread from elite PMC training grounds such as Berkeley, Columbia, and Harvard to the much less elite Kent State, Penn State, and San Francisco State, the class background of the activists shifted as well.[33]

Actually the shift analyzed here was mainly to the semi-proletarians, who raised the level of militancy and

suffered the most brutal suppression. In fact since the early 1970s, struggle on the campuses has been largely carried out by students drawn from the ranks of the semi-proletariat, led in particular by Blacks, Latinos, and women, who united with faculty and community members in anti-war and anti-cutback fights, and so on.

Two things stand out from these examples. First, semi-proletarians can only maintain their progressive role as the allies of the proletariat and of the movements of oppressed people, but the latter must neither dismiss them as merely "petty bourgeois" nor try to force them into an arbitrary working-class mold. Secondly, the semi-proletariat is much more likely to ally with the workers and with militant community members if it is subject to forms of oppression which limit its petty bourgeois tendencies, so that it does not tail along behind the "upper classes." But regardless of their stand, organizations of the semi-proletarians create what are in effect "formal" areas where a struggle over the direction they take can be fought out. Without such organized forms, debate over their social role is largely reduced to isolated, individual views. The resistance which semi-proletarian unions offer to capitalism also helps serve to heighten its ever-less-manageable contradictions, the result being to further weaken its hold over all the population. In addition it is on the whole to the advantage of the working class to have all elements of the

society organized so positions of classes are as clearly exposed as possible. In the United States in particular, the low level of organization by class has greatly weakened the proletarian struggle, and every step which may contribute to putting an end to this murkiness is ultimately to be welcomed. The question remains, however, whether the semi-proletariat in the professions can play a similar role in the struggle for socialism as its "old" strata did at other times.

Here it is necessary to look at the history of this class, for in the making of socialist revolution the role of the semi-proletariat has been second only to the proletariat itself, and which on a global scale took in such vast numbers that it may have constituted, before the Russian and Chinese revolutions, not only the largest of the classes in modern society, but quite conceivably the bulk of world inhabitants. As Lenin noted, "in backward capitalist countries, like Russia, the majority of the population consists of semi-proletarians."[54] And

> only a revolutionary dictatorship supported by the vast majority of the people can be at all durable (not absolutely, of course, but relatively). The Russian proletariat, however, is at present a minority of the population in Russia. It can become the great, overwhelming majority only if it combines with the mass of semi-proletarians, semi-proprietors, i.e., with the mass of the petty-bourgeois urban and rural poor.[55]

This prophecy from the revolutionary year 1905 came to pass during the revolution of 1917, except that as the struggle went over from its bourgeois-democratic to its socialist

stage, the role of the semi-proletarians became even more basic. As Lenin again put it:

> The second stage was one which is fundamental for all socialists and without which socialists are not socialists, namely, to single out the proletarian and semi-proletarian elements in the rural districts and to ally them to the urban proletariat in order to wage the struggle against the bourgeoisie in the countryside.[56]

The semi-proletariat, not all "peasants" or "petty bourgeoisie" were the real allies of the proletariat in the socialist revolution.

However, Lenin did not stop here, stressing in 1917 that

> our Party, in all our decisions, programmes and appeals to the people declares: "We are the party of wage-workers and poor peasants; it is their interests we are out to protect; it is through them, and through them alone, through those classes, that mankind can escape the horrors into which the capitalists' war has plunged it."[57]

Thus Lenin spoke openly of the Bolsheviks as the party not only of the working class proper, but of the semi-proletariat as well, "classes" in the plural. This relation extended to the new revolutionary government:

> For the first time, the people are grappling, on a scale involving one hundred million, with the problem of implementing the dictatorship of the proletariat and semi-proletariat--a problem which, if not solved, makes socialism <u>out of the question</u>.[58]

The semi-proletarians were therefore to share not only the party of the proletariat, but its dictatorship as well, in the socialist revolution. This is important not only for its own direct meaning, but as an answer to the recurrent accusations later leveled against Mao in China that he had

deviated from the Leninist program by basing the revolution so largely on the poor peasants, a charge which was at any rate always exaggerated given the presence of workers both as leading cadre and as mass participants in that struggle.

Several specific aspects of the role of the semi-proletariat should be noted, because they apply in any country where this class element is a significant one. In the first place, Lenin stated the need to woo the semi-proletarians away from the capitalists and petty bourgeoisie, which was to be accomplished in part by the setting up of institutions, including trade unions, linking them to workers in both the country and the city:

> In all its work in the countryside the R.C.P. will continue to rely on the proletarian and semi-proletarian sections of the rural population, first organising them into an independent force, setting up Poor Peasants' Committees, Party cells in the villages, a specific type of trade union for rural proletarians and semi-proletarians, etc., exerting every effort to bring them closer to the urban proletariat and wresting them from the influence of the rural bourgeoisie and petty-property interests."[59]

But this in turn was to lead to a second step, in which the "Soviets of hired labourers and semi-proletarians," would have "become consolidated enough to influence (and later to incorporate) the small peasants."[60] In other words, having initially been satisfied with mere "neutrality" from the smallest middle peasantry, there was to be another stage in which their active allegiance to socialism was sought, attracted to the Soviets through the example and guidance of the poor peasants. The semi-proletariat, therefore, was

seen as a link in the chain which could help win over to the proletarian cause those "higher" up on the class spectrum.

Of even greater relevance to the discussion here, the same role was conceived for urban centers as well, though here the expropriation of the largest firms by the proletariat was the central consideration, overshadowing all others. But specifically in the conversion of these enterprises from relatively chaotic capitalist methods to socialist planning, Lenin saw the ability to call forth also an alliance of the proletariat and semi-proletariat, just as in the rural areas.

> We can "lay hold of" and "set in motion" this "state apparatus" (which is not fully a state apparatus under capitalism, but which will be so with us, under socialism) at one stroke, by a single decree, because the actual work of book-keeping, control, registering, accounting and counting is performed by employees, the majority of whom themselves lead a proletarian or semi-proletarian existence.
>
> By a single decree of the proletarian government these employees can and must be transferred to the status of state employees. . . . We shall need many more state employees of this kind, and more can be obtained, because capitalism has simplified the work of accounting and control, has reduced it to a comparatively simply system of book-keeping, which any literate person can do.[61]

Thus Lenin clearly identified the lower stratum of professional employees in the capitalist firms as "semi-proletarian," who together with outright proletarian clericals, do the book-keeping and so on, noting at the same time, as we have seen also above, that the work they perform is becoming increasingly simplified and routinized.

The position of the semi-proletariat in China was, if anything, even more central to the revolutionary process, for the Chinese proletariat was smaller in proportion to the total population than it had been in Russia, though the participation of industrial workers even in the rural movement was much more constant and politically crucial than is often recognized or given due credit. Mao provides us with a definition:

> The semi-proletariat. What is here called the semi-proletariat consists of five categories: (1) the overwhelming majority of the semi-owner peasants, (2) the poor peasants, (3) the small handicraftsmen, (4) the shop assistants, and (5) the pedlars. The overwhelming majority of the semi-owner peasants together with the poor peasants constitute a very large part of the rural masses. The peasant problem is essentially their problem.[62]

Mao then goes on to distinguish these semi-proletarian peasantry and the small handicraftsmen from the owner-peasants and master craftsmen, whom he had already placed in the petty bourgeoisie. What marks the poor peasants and semi-owners is that "every year they are short of about half the food they need, and have to make up this deficit by renting land from others, selling part of their labour power, or engaging in petty trading."[63] Mao divided even these most impoverished peasantry into several strata, noting that those with the lowest incomes and suffering the most exploitation were more revolutionary.

The poor peasants constituted the majority of the population of rural China, and quite possibly of the country as a whole. In 1930 in the Soviet areas of the

southeast, a survey conducted by Mao found 70% of the peasantry to be "poor," 20% "middle," and 10% "rich."[64] In 1948, in the village in the north-central part of the country that formed the basis for his book Fanshen, William Hinton estimated the poor peasants and hired laborers at 62% of the total, but noted that middle peasants were unusually numerous there.[65] In Ten Mile Inn, the name of another north China village, Isabel and David Crook a year earlier had found the "poor and hired" to have made up 57% of the population before the land reforms, if not even higher.[66] These peasants were the mass base of the revolution in the Chinese countryside, as it followed closely the steps laid out earlier in Russia by Lenin, using the rural poor as the most politically reliable base for peasant organizations, which were gradually built up to include the "higher" strata of peasantry too. But to their political and economic role had been added a military one in the Red Army.

> What is the social basis of this army? Mao Tse-tung told me, "The social origin of the army is made up mainly of poor peasants, and partly of rural and city proletarians. We have no percentage estimates of this, but there are not so many landless peasants and rural proletarians as poor peasants. . . . Poor peasants who have not land enough to support themselves are regarded as semiproletarian."[67]

In the First Front Red Army, 58% were peasants, 38% were mostly rural proletariat, plus "industrial workers from city factories, mines, pottery works, etc.," and 4% were

petty bourgeoisie, "usually the younger sons of small landlords, merchants, intellectuals, and such."[68]

My purpose in presenting this brief historical review is not, of course, to suggest that the semi-proletariat will play a comparable role in the United States. The proletariat in this country forms the great majority class, nor are there geographic regions, like the rural districts of Russia or China, where semi-proletarians predominate, as they did in those areas in pre-revolutionary days. Nevertheless the semi-proletariat is a significant element in the United States both because of its relatively large numbers, and as a sometime ally of the proletariat historically in struggles for both trade unionism and socialism. In fact, less than a half century ago, a class element virtually identical to the Chinese and Russian poor peasants still was in existence in this country and predominated over much of the South. In the 1940s, more than a one-third of all United States farms were worked by tenants, but in Southern states the figure was close to one-half, and among Blacks almost three-fourths. There was a whole spectrum of forms of tenantry, from those who rented for cash at the top to a million and a half or so extremely proletarianized sharecroppers at the bottom. Two-thirds of the latter were Blacks as early as 1910 when Lenin noted "that there is a startling similarity in the economic status of the Negroes in America and the peasants in the heart of Russia who '<u>were formerly landowners'</u>

serfs.'"[69] Among white farmers, some 39% were tenants, compared to 75% for blacks. "The typical white farmer in America is an owner, the typical Negro farmer is a tenant."[70] However, there were more than a half million "croppers" on farms in the North and West, and in the South itself the proportion who were white grew, notably during the Depression.

Most were forced to seek wage-work for at least part of the year. The proletarianization of these sharecroppers was particularly clear on the plantations, which were patrolled by overseers, "'the tenants being subjected to a degree of supervision more or less similar to that which hired farm labourers are subjected to in the North.'"[71] In fact sharecropping had its origins in the attempt to keep Black labor on the plantation lands at the end of the Civil War, and was enforced by a system not far removed from slavery itself. Lenin noted of them that:

> These are not even tenants in the European, civilised, modern-capitalist sense of the word. They are chiefly semi-feudal or--which is the same thing in economic terms--semi-slave sharecroppers.[72]

Thus the vast majority of Black farmers were prevented from ever rising into the petty bourgeoisie, and were driven back toward slave conditions. Unlike whites for whom vast tracts of Western land had been opened up for homesteading, Blacks after the Civil War had been denied "forty acres and a mule," the possibility of an independent petty bourgeois

existence. They became instead the hard-core, the foundation of semi-proletarian tenantry.

But just as this system was not limited to Blacks or the South, so too other categories of semi-proletariat were found in the cities as well. Especially among the immigrant population, such as the Jews on the Lower East Side of New York City, the one-cart pedlars and those in tenements who owned a sewing machine or a few hand tools were a common phenomenon, running either a tiny independent business or as appendages to the factories. Such home-work, extremely exploitative, was very prevalent among women in particular. Thus the semi-proletariat in the United States had a large mass base historically, just as in Europe, Asia, and elsewhere, into which the proletarianized members of the petty bourgeoisie continued to fall.

In fact in the 1930s, in an historical example cited above, one major segment of the semi-proletariat proved its willingness to follow the leadership of the working class and its most revolutionary elements. In the United States South, tenant farmers were being rapidly proletarianized, and the aspirations which many of them undoubtedly had to become land-owning farmers and petty bourgeoisie were for most frustrated by their brutal exploitation, which blunted their attraction to the pole of that class. They fought back through two primary organizations, the Sharecroppers Union, formed under Communist Party leadership in Alabama

and mostly Black, and the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, led by the Socialist Party in Arkansas, and which was a more integrated movement of both races. Each of these rural unions led strikes and struggles against evictions, uniting various levels of tenants as well as plantation day-workers. The Sharecroppers Union, for instance, was at first more successful among Black tenants who were somewhat better off.[73] From this union, cadre were recruited into the Young Communist League. The STFU similarly drew much of its basic strength from the semi-proletariat. For instance, during the second of its major strikes, that of 1936: "'White farmers who owned their tiny farms but who, during the cotton chopping and picking seasons went to the plantations to work for wages . . . took the lead in the strike.'"[74]

Nevertheless, both these movements were in large measure liberation struggles of the Black sharecroppers, for whom even the obtaining of the most basic personal liberties required a complete revolutionary change. Thus a very radical militancy, in which calls for turning plantations into cooperatives were raised and armed battles to protect the farmers and their rights occurred, and for which "guerrilla" tactics and loose organization were a necessity, were a part of these two movements. In the end they were defeated by outright terrorism and by a decline in tenantry, but also by the opportunism and mistakes of the working-class leadership with which they had attempted

to build an ongoing alliance. The STFU eventually joined the CIO and came under Communist Party sway. Like the Sharecroppers Union, it was therefore caught in the reformism into which that party slipped under the New Deal, as well as by the new tendencies toward "labor aristocrat" bureaucratization in the CIO itself. As a result neither of the latter bodies were prepared to deal with the special needs of the tenant farmers, and the "specific type of trade union for rural proletarians and semi-proletarians" which Lenin had called for and which the Sharecroppers Union and the STFU represented, came in time to be seen as a hindrance by the Communist and CIO leaders. Though this 1930s alliance in the end failed, it nevertheless left an historical record of relations between the semi-proletariat and working class of a quite advanced character, showing its potential if led by a proletarian movement committed to socialist revolution.

It should be noted that when the Civil Rights movement began, it also drew much of its leadership from the semi-proletariat, whether in the form of college students from working-class and sharecropping backgrounds, owners of marginal businesses, lower-level professionals, or self-supporting rural ministers. By this time, however, the semi-proletarian tenant farmers had been all but eliminated, and the Black communities, North and South, were overwhelmingly proletarian, with a new generation of working-class leaders, such as Fannie Lou Hamer. The most

revolutionary segments of the Black liberation struggle have continued to develop largely on the alliance of these two classes. Today the situation also contains new elements, for the semi-proletarian professionals are predominantly made up of women, who as a whole suffer particular oppression. Like the Black semi-proletarians, they must fight not only an exploitative economic system, but also a liberation struggle for their right to personal independence and political self-determination, to have equal power with men. Moreover, the most revolutionary wing of the Women's Liberation Movement is in large measure made up of and led by semi-proletariat. The majority of semi-proletarian women is made more militant by these factors, and this in turn strengthens the likelihood of an alliance of this class with the proletariat, rather than its tailing after the petty bourgeoisie. The semi-proletariat, therefore, has its own contradictions, and only if these are correctly grasped can socialists and the working-class movement relate to the real conditions of its struggle and give it actual leadership and support.

Proletarianization, then, is not necessarily or even usually a sudden and irresistible "hurling down" into the proletariat, though such does indeed occur. For millions the process is more gradual, and often involves a longer or shorter "stay" in the semi-proletariat. In fact, like the petty bourgeoisie, the semi-proletarians may pass their class from generation to generation, and even from one

stratum to the "next." Some manage to rise into the petty bourgeois ranks, but for many others semi-proletarian status is the "top" position obtained, from which they gradually slip back into the proletariat from which they have come. The "falling" semi-proletariat meet the "rising" labor aristocracy in the "lower middle class," but each has its own dynamic and its own potential. However the vast majority of both these class bodies must eventually fall into the mainstream of the proletariat proper as United States imperialism declines. The instability of the position of the semi-proletarians leaves many of them in a virtual "declassed" state which is politically very unsteady. In general, they must look to alliances with either the working class or the "upper classes" in order to gain any strength in their own interests. But the semi-proletarians, with their mass base among the millions of those with only the smallest investment in the means of production, may in some instances put forward their own program as a class, separate from both the petty bourgeoisie "above" them and the proletarians "below."

In fact, the semi-proletariat is sufficiently clearly defined to give rise to its own ideological expression, which may be referred to as "working-classism," or as it is sometimes known from the French term, "ouvrierisme." This tendency stresses that the semi-proletarians are "closer" to the proletariat, and "understand it better," than do the

members of the bourgeois class or the petty bourgeoisie, and thus can claim to be spokespersons for the working class. The element of reality in this assertion is too often lost, however, in dogmatic attacks on all more educated leadership as "upper class." In the worst cases, this degenerates into outright anti-intellectualism and attempts to lead the "anti-leader" forces. Such efforts serve to blur rather than resolve real class contradictions. Instead of a truly objective analysis of the role in the movement of the intellectuals drawn from the "educated classes," "working-classism" falls into a highly subjective mix of envy and anger.

Crucial to this ideology is that it obscures the distinctions between the proletariat proper and those semi-proletarians who have "risen" above it and who in the course of their upward mobility have themselves taken on new class attitudes. The "working-classists" deny their own growing isolation from the workers. This is a double betrayal of the proletarians, for it places them under representatives of another class who refuse to admit their own position, and because it isolates workers from the intellectuals needed to help lead their struggle. The consequence is either to place the working class under the regime of a semi-proletarian "nouveau intelligentsia," or to dissolve the movement in anarchistic "anti-elitism." Each of these two tendencies have been exhibited historically, at times with very grave consequences, as

will be seen below. Here, however, it is enough to note that the semi-proletariat, like the petty bourgeoisie, has its own particular ideological expressions.

NOTES

1. Hill, Class Analysis, 53.

2. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 13, and Wright, Classes, 46, 88.

3. V. I. Lenin, "Preliminary Draft Thesis on the Agrarian Question, For the Second Congress of the Communist International," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 33, 153-54.

4. Ibid.

5. New York Times, December 16, 1981, A31.

6. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, September 4, 1984, 42.

7. Roger Burbach and Patricia Flynn, Agribusiness in the Americas (New York: Monthly Review Press and North American Congress on Latin America, 1980), 34. These authors are among the few who employ the term semi-proletarian in class analysis.

8. Department of Commerce, 1972 Census of Manufactures, Subject and Special Statistics, xvii; xxxii; 68, table no. 8; 1972 Census of Retail Trade, Summary and Subject Statistics, 1-8, table no. 1a; 1-37, table no. 1b; 1-66, table no. 2a; 1972 Census of Selected Services, Summary and Subject Statistics, 1-7, table no. 1a; 1-41, table no. 1b; 1-74, table no. 2a; 1974 Census of Agriculture, Summary and State Data, 1-2, table nos. 3, 4; Occupational Characteristics, 193-96, table no. 6; Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1972, 237, table no. 379.

9. Department of Commerce, 1970 Census of the Population, Occupational Characteristics, 478-79, 492-93, table no. 24.

10. Ibid., 476-503, table 24.

11. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 242.

12. Department of Commerce, 1970 Census of the Population, Detailed Characterstics, 766-77, table nos. 227, 228.

13. Department of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1972, 129, table no. 202.

14. Ibid., 462, table no. 748.

15. Ehrenreich and English, Witches, Midwives and Nurses: A History of Women Healers, 21-22.

16. Ibid., 34-38.

17. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 184.

18. Stanley Aronowitz, False Promises (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973), 305.

19. Ibid., 306.

20. Ibid., 307.

21. Ibid., 308.

22. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 294, n. 77. The quote is from Thomas S. Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 93, italics added by Larson.

23. Oppenheimer, White Collar Politics, 174.

24. Ibid., 172.

25. Amitai Etzioni, "Preface," in Amitai Etzioni ed., The Semi-Professions and Their Organization: Teachers, Nurses, Social Workers (New York: The Free Press, MacMillan Publishing Co., 1969), v.

26. Ibid., vii.

27. Fred E. Katz, "Nurses," chap. in Etzioni, The Semi-Professions, 69.

28. Ibid., 71.

29. Ibid., 73.

30. Ibid., 74.

31. Lenin, "A Great Beginning," 422-23.

32. New York Times, September 5, 1980, B3.

33. New York Times, October 14, 1980, B1.

34. New York Times, January 9, 1983, 1.

35. New York Times, October 17, 1979, 1.

36. See Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 188: In fact, ". . . hostility toward the client may be the norm. . . . In the central cities, many sectors of professionalizing occupations and professions seek political strength and apply open political pressure to exclude minorities from participating in the definition of service organizations. This conflict was probably never illustrated more dramatically than in the New York City teachers' strike over decentralization and control of the schools."

37. New York Times, June 26, 1980, B1.

38. Ibid., B6.

39. Lois Weiner, "Teachers Convention Ducks Discussion of Record Layoffs Expected This Fall," Labor Notes 42 (July 21, 1982): 3.

40. Ibid. A fight over seniority, which served to protect the older white teachers and made Blacks and Hispanics bear the brunt of the cut-backs was still raging in both the union convention and the courts as late as the recession in 1982. See also "Cutbacks in N.Y.C.: What They Mean and How To Fight Them" 16-21, 31-34, and New York Times, September 9-14, 1975.

41. New York Times, June 6, 1980, B6.

42. New York Times, June 27, 1980, B3.

43. See Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 183: Efforts to "'determine the efficiency of instruction along scientific lines'" go back at least to early in the 20th century, when they helped lay the basis for the profession of school administration.

44. New York Times, June 4, 1983, 7.

45. New York Times, March 26, 1981, B3.

46. New York Times, May 10, 1981, E8.

47. Parade Magazine, March 21, 1981, 21.

48. New York Times, December 27, 1981, E16.

49. New York Times, December 11, 1980, B6.

50. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, January 16, 1983, 34: Also called "collaborative practice," new arrangements allow nurses to make certain medical and care decisions themselves that were traditionally determined only by doctors.

51. Poughkeepsie (NY) Journal, December 13, 1981, B1.

52. New York Times, June 4, 1981, 1.

53. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 34-35.

54. Lenin, "A Great Beginning", 422.

55. V. I. Lenin, "Social-Democracy and the Provisional Revolutionary Government," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 8, 291.

56. V. I. Lenin, "Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.), March 18-23, 1919, Report on Work in the Countryside, March 23," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 29, 203.

57. V. I. Lenin, "First All-Russia Congress of Peasants' Deputies, May 4-28 (May 17-June 10), 1917, Speech on the Agrarian Question, May 22 (June 4), 1917," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 24, 492.

58. V. I. Lenin, "Letter to American Workers," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 28, 72.

59. V. I. Lenin, "Draft Programme of the R.C.P.(B.), Agrarian Section of the Programme," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 29, 140.

60. Lenin, "Preliminary Draft Thesis on the Agrarian Question," 164.

61. V. I. Lenin, "Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?", in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 26, 106-07.

62. Mao, Selected Works, vol. 1, 16.

63. Ibid.

64. Agnes Smedley, The Great Road: The Life and Times of Chu Teh, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1956), 270.

65. Hinton, Fanshen, 28.

66. Crook and Crook, Ten Mile Inn: Mass Movement in a Chinese Village, 62.

67. Helen Foster Snow (Nym Wales), Inside Red China (New York: Da Capo Press, 1979), 56.

68. Ibid.

69. Lenin, "New Data on the Laws Governing the Development of Capitalism in Agriculture," 27.

70. Ibid., 25.

71. Ibid., 26.

72. Ibid., 25.

73. "Farm Labor Organizing 1905-1967: A Brief History," foreword by Steve Allen, (New York: National Advisory Committee on Farm Labor, 1967), 25.

CHAPTER 18

GOVERNMENT AS THE LAST RESORT OF THE PETTY BOURGEOISIE

Just as the petty bourgeoisie is often wrongly said to lie "outside" the capitalist economic system, so too it is many times simplistically identified as an enemy of "big government," which along with "big labor" and "big business" are thus considered to make up the trinity of forces threatening it as a class.[1] Petty bourgeois elements, and particularly those who appeal in demogogic fashion to their interests, such as Ronald Reagan, promote this image. The observation of Marx 140 years ago that: "When the French peasant paints the devil, he paints him in the guise of a tax collector,"[2] has its echo in the present "middle class revolt" to cut the costs of government and simplify its workings. In the United States in particular this has an almost hallowed appeal, harking back to the romantic idyll of Jeffersonian Democracy based on a community of small farms in which government serves as little more than simply a paternal, benevolent arbiter. As in so many other aspects of petty bourgeois life, however, reality and the contradictions of its actual position differ from its ideal in this case also. Neither in its origins, nor in its attempts to maintain itself as a class,

is the petty bourgeoisie truly "anti-big government," especially in the United States today.

On the contrary, in their desperation to avoid proletarianization, both "old" and "new" petty bourgeois strata resort to the support of the state, and in so doing attempt to shift onto the other classes of society and particularly the proletariat, both the direct and indirect costs of their own maintenance. Indeed, it is safe to say that no class is now more dependent on the government for its existence and more entangled in the web of state bureaucracy than the petty bourgeoisie, a condition which is the result of its objective situation within capitalist society. For alone of the three main classes of the modern period, the petty bourgeois elements have virtually no economic power of their own with which to enforce their interests. This can lead them to look on the state as a final barrier to proletarianization, the ultimate solution to their difficulties, a force which alone can restrain the two main classes of bourgeois society between which they are slowly being crushed. While all classes under capitalism therefore contend for political power and a share in governmental influence, with the bourgeois class in overall control, the petty bourgeoisie has particular impetus to view the state as its only hope. Its drive for "simple government" thus turns easily into its opposite, a search for simplistic statist solutions to the contradictions of capitalist society.

Such political regressiveness by the petty bourgeoisie, however, no more saves it from the opposing pressures of capitalism than does it efforts to restore small commodity production in the place of monopoly capital. Rather, just as petty producers are a firm base for capitalism, as has been seen, so too the maneuvers in politics of this class are turned to the advantage of the bourgeoisie, which exploits them in its struggle with the proletariat. Just as in economic life the larger capitalists often leave the less reliable or profitable areas of the economy in the hands of small business, using the latter as a "reserve" of capitalism to be expanded or contracted as is needed, so too the capitalist class uses the petty bourgeoisie as a buffer against the working class politically, supporting the drives to "cut spending" when a retrenchment of the gains won by proletarian struggles is deemed in order and hiding behind the image of the small owner to advance its own real interests.[3]

The strivings of the petty bourgeois class in politics, therefore, as long as they are isolated from and in opposition to the proletariat, do not strengthen it in relation to the capitalists, but rather deliver it more firmly to control by the latter, just as "petty capitalism" helps build the capitalist economy that serves over the long run to expand the forces which destroy small business. In reality, of course, these two processes are not really separate, since it is above all in defense of its economic

interests that the petty bourgeoisie appeals to the state, thereby strengthening the hand of the capitalists who rule over it. In other respects too, the petty bourgeois class serves as a support and breeding ground for capitalist political power, notably by running the bulk of local and, to a large extent, state governments, where in most cases they loyally maintain the authority of capital in both economics and politics. As C Wright Mills in 1946 noted of "middle-sized cities,"

> the small businessmen, especially in cities dominated by a few large industrial firms, are quite often "fronts" for the larger business powers. They are, civically, out in front busily accomplishing all sorts of minor projects and taking a lot of praise and blame from the rank and file citizenry.
> . . . The upper-class businessman knows the actual power setup; if he and his clique are using small businessmen for some project, he may shower public prestige on them, but he does not "accept" them and he allows them only such "power" as he can retain in his control.[4]

For all these reasons, the capitalists are by no means loathe to use the state, up to a point of course, to "save" the petty bourgeoisie as a class.

As in so many other aspects of petty bourgeois life, these positions are most sharply revealed in agriculture, never more clearly than in the United States today. However, the ambivalent relation of "family farmers" to government are not a product of recent decades, rather emerging virtually simultaneously with the nation. As early as the 1780s, small farmers were raising the twin appeals which have marked the duality of their political

strategy down to the present. On the one hand, they demanded tax relief, in this case through issuance of paper money which could be used to settle debts in the place of specie; at the same time they asked government intervention to prevent foreclosures of mortgages, an attempt to escape the pressures of big finance and merchant capitalists.[5] The contradiction between the call for smaller governmental burdens and a need for state protection against the workings of capitalism have not and can not be resolved by the petty bourgeoisie, which thereby leaves itself open to an exploitation of its political goals in the interests of the bourgeois class.

Nowhere was this more apparent than in the opening of the West, in which the supposed apostle of simple government, Jefferson, played such an active role.[6] The clamor of the aspiring farmers for more land at cheaper prices was to form a constant political theme for decades, and the result was that in this country to an extent rarely if ever found elsewhere, the state was the direct agent in the creation of millions of petty bourgeois farms. Though the ideological defense of expansionism rested heavily on the need for room for a growing population, and in particular for small farmers, and on the values of "frontier democracy,"[7] in reality the takeover of an entire continent could not be accomplished except through large-scale payments from the federal treasury and a century of genocidal military operations against the Indian nations,

as well as the outright imperialist war which took half of the territory of Mexico. As in the case of imperialism abroad later on, these actions served as a means of expanding the executive authority of the bourgeois state itself.

In office Jefferson himself promoted his policies in alliance with the first example of "monopoly capital" of significance in the United States, that of the monopolized fur trade of John Jacob Astor, whose colony "Astoria" on the Columbia River the former looked to as the main hope for the imperialist expansion into the whole Pacific Northwest.[8] In fact, in opening the newly acquired lands to small farmers, the government at the same time created an even more firm base for the expansion of large-scale capitalist enterprise. To cite but one of many examples, the same Lincoln Administration which many electors had helped put into office with the cry "Vote Yourself a Farm," and that in 1862 passes the first Homestead Act, in the same year granted 30 million acres of land to the builders of the transcontinental railroad, though farmers were already agitated over the monopoly power of the rail owners and merchants to set prices and transport rates that robbed them of much of the value of their crops.[9] Indeed, nowhere have the aspiration of the petty bourgeoisie been turned to capitalist advantage more clearly than in the opening of the United States West, where they literally "cleared the ground" for capital and expanded the home market. Not the

self-government of the frontier, but the "big government" of Washington and the various states was the main instrument in carrying out these policies.

By the 1930s United States agriculture had reached a crisis situation, and with the frontier closed for fifty years, emphasis shifted to "saving" the existing farms. As the Depression drove living standards down, plunging more small farm owners into bankruptcy and into the ranks of tenant semi-proletarians, competition grew worse for the remaining resources. When "relief" came in the form of the Agricultural Adjustment Act, it merely increased the pressure, by giving big landowners an incentive to cut production and throw more tenants off the land to avoid sharing with them the payment of governmental assistance funds. Thus the law favored the largest farmers, causing the immediate elimination of thousands of the weaker farms and sharecroppers, the latter in particular being even further proletarianized into day-laborers. It was the double calamity of the Depression and New Deal agricultural programs that actually led to the formation of the various sharecropper and tenant union organizations. But even if the governmental policies were geared mainly to the needs of more viable large farms, on paper they tried to strengthen at least temporarily a farming "middle class" and, under great pressure, even a tiny fraction of tenant farmers were given help in buying their own land. The Roosevelt Administration used such efforts to give

ideological cover to policies that benefitted the largest farm operators above all.

The programs adopted, variously called "price support," "parity," and so on, had as their goal maintaining farm income in relation to other parts of the economy by removing agricultural products from competitive market pressures. At bottom, they constituted in reality a vast and government-sponsored monopoly, including the intentional non-planting of crops. Under such land-retirement programs:

> Here in central Iowa, in one of the greatest grain producing areas in the world, nearly 70 percent of the farmers are committed to not planting some portion of the acres on which they usually grow corn. In the rich winter-planted wheat areas of Kansas, 29 percent of the land that is normally devoted to this crop will not be harvested. In the cotton belts of Texas and the South, 44 percent of the cotton land won't be planted this spring.[10]

Produce was also withdrawn from market, and stockpiled as surpluses. By 1981, more than one billion pounds of dairy products were in government storage. "The surplus is the result of an elaborate dairy price-support system that sets a price for milk nationwide without regard for the forces of supply and demand, much as prices are fixed in socialist economies."[11] In fiscal year 1982, "the total cost of buying, transporting, and storing surplus dairy products exceeded $3.94 billion" on the part of the United States government.[12] The most immediate result of these programs was higher prices for food and other farm goods. But it also meant billions of tax dollars spent annually, which

were equivalent to several thousands in direct cash payments per farmer.

Yet even this was but the tip of the iceberg in a comprehensive system that included tax credits, loans, the subsidizing of irrigation and land improvements, export programs, research in land-grant colleges, and so on. Included here too must be food stamps and similar programs to help workers buy agricultural productes they could not otherwise afford, assistance now needed by millions of persons. By 1970, these various operations had led to the creation on the federal level alone, in the Agriculture Department, with over 100,000 employees, a bureaucracy next in size only to that of defense, veterans affairs, and the postal service. Considering that there are little more than 1 million full-time farms, it is evident that farmers today represent not the mythical "independence " of the small owners, but the highest degree of dependency on "big government."

Though farm organizations carefully promote the image of opposition to any governmental intervention, particularly in such "sensitive" areas as their treatment of farmworkers, the reality is much more contradictory. As an American Farm Bureau Federation president, Robert Delano, put it,

> the idea that his organization does not want government in agriculture at all is a misconception.
> "There is a role for government in agriculture," Delano said. "That role is for a support-type program."[13]

In fact, though the agricultural policies of the state are defended as plans to save the "family farm," it is the larger farmers like those in the Farm Bureau that benefit most. According to one study, "50 percent of the subsidy benefits go to the largest 15 percent of dairy farmers, while only 6 percent go to the smallest 45 percent of farmers."[14] Thus

> in the long run, government-supported high prices do little to solve the structural problems of the family farmers. They simply encourage further efforts to expand output and recreate the dilemma of overproduction and overinvestment on a larger scale. Meanwhile, the initiative continues to pass to the capitalist farm operators, who stand to benefit as much or more than their smaller competitors from high prices and government payments.[15]

Nor have these programs actually "saved" the small farmers, who continue year after year to disappear by the tens of thousands.

But the danger lies within as well, because even those farmers who remain nominally "independent" are polarizing into either farmer-capitalists or the semi-proletariat.

> Those who are likely to survive the crisis are not necessarily large agribusiness corporations, but a new breed of farmers, a prosperous agrarian bourgeoisie with roots in the traditional family farm. This new capitalist class will become more and more dependent upon wage labor and their farms will increasingly resemble factories in the fields. A different kind of survivor is the growing part-time farmer class which combines wage work in nearby towns and cities with farm work on its own land in an effort to hold off bankruptcy . . . a large number of part-time farmers, or semi-proletarians. . . .[16]

"In between lie the remaining family farmers who are rapidly decreasing in numbers."[17] Thus capitalist forces

once again arise both from within and outside the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie itself, and today government policies actually contribute to the expansion of the semi-proletariat and the bourgeoisie at the expense of that class.

The Farmers Home Administration in the early 1970s pushed farmers to invest in land and machinery, only to stand by as enormous numbers of farms were foreclosed, including by the government, in the downturn a few years later.[18] What farmers demonstrating and "striking" in the late 1970s wanted, "is enough money from Washington to justify their enthusiasm for land investment in the mid-70's," and they called for "$23 billion a year in subsidies."[19] However, having encouraged rapid expansion and heavy borrowing in earlier, more prosperous years, the Farmers Home Administration, faced with a 25% delinquency rate on its loans, joined with private banks in forcing over-extended small farmers off the land.[20] Therefore it would be most accurate to view the government, not as preserving the smaller farms, but as planning their gradual elimination, as the ability of agribusiness to absorb them grows, and as they produce more "agrarian bourgeoisie" from out of their own ranks. Thus having helped bring the agricultural petty bourgeoisie into existence, the state now assists in the conversion of these same farm owners to a higher stage in the development of capitalist society.

But to conclude that the small farmers are therefore the antagonists of "big government" overlooks their own innumerable ties to support by the state, and their appeals to it to save them from extinction at the hands of "big" capital. In Nebraska, a "Family Farm Preservation Act would help insure the survival of the traditional family farm by barring foreigners and large corporations from accumulating blocks of land in the state."[21] In fact,

> farmers in recent months have turned increasingly to both the courts and to their elected officials in an effort to stall farm foreclosures and ease financial pressures. Legislation proposing an enforced moratorium on farm foreclosures will be introduced in Bismark, N.D., next week.
>
> Legislators here and in other farm states also plan to introduce minimum price laws for commodities produced in their states. The effort has been described by some as an attempt to rig commodity prices by forging a regional cartel.

Even "radical" farm groups, such as the American Agricultural Movement, have generally limited themselves to demanding ever greater protection from the government to help them survive. As one analysis put it:

> It is this sector that is currently feeling the most intense economic pressure, which is why the middle-sized family farmer represents the most significant contingent of the American Agricultural Movement . . . The AAM's demand for higher support prices is the only course which many medium-sized farmers see left open to them. They have been forced into this sort of collective action by their inability to seek alternative, individual solutions.[22]

It is to these ends that their "tractorcades" rolled into Washington. But to little avail. The "shakeout" of farming not only continued into the 1980s, but many of the support programs were eliminated by the Reagan

administration as well. By the time farming revived somewhat in mid-decade, tens of thousands had lost their farms, and those who were left increasingly filled the ranks of the capitalistic "agrarian bourgeoisie." But even these changes have not weakened the appeals for government aid.

Such positions are by no means limited to farmers. C. Wright Mills found it to be equally true of the small urban businesspersons that: "Toward government, the attitude is resentment at its regulation and at the same time many pleas for economic aid and political comfort."[23] For example,

> the small retailer, the largest element in small business, has sought refuge from competition in the national brands of big manufacturers and advertisers, and has demanded and got such strategems as "fair trade" legislation, under which all retailers of a product must sell at a uniform price. Legislation of this sort means that such competition as exists goes on among various manufacturers, in whose field monopoly is great, rather than among retailers, among whom monopoly is less well developed.[24]

Here again the petty bourgeoisie fronts for the big capitalists, helping monopoly capital to flourish in the name of "saving" the small owners. This is however the tip of the iceberg of government support, which on the local scale includes urban renewal and "gentrification" plans that clear the way for petty bourgeois interests, and on the federal level the Small Business Administration, which grants loans and other forms of support. Like the smaller farmers, nevertheless, the petty bourgeoisie in retailing

and other more urbanized businesses are finding that their preservation is only a governmental objective so long as they are useful to the largest capitalists. In the 1980s they too found themselves caught between the forces of economic decline and reductions in public support, for instance cutbacks in the Small Business Adminstration, as the bourgeoisie turns to its own advantage "anti-big government" drives and "tax revolts" which the petty bourgeois class so largely helped to create.

The historical development of the professional stratum of the petty bourgeoisie is going through a similar cycle, in which government first assisted in the creation of millions of members of this class when capitalist expansion and maintenance required them, today shifting to a policy of stabilization and controlled elimination as the imperialist system begins to rapidly contract. Though in general this "curve" of growth and decline in the professions began later than that of the "old" petty bourgeois elements, there are important overlaps. For instance, among the most persistent demands of the farmers before the Civil War was for agricultural colleges that would teach scientific farming methods and provide education to the children of farm families, a goal finally achieved in 1862 in the Morrill Land Grant Act, which donated federal public lands for this purpose. The land-grant schools quickly became the leading centers in the development of new techniques in agriculture such as

mechanized farming and the application of chemicals, usually to the detriment of farmworkers above all. To this day they have remained the focus of the drive to convert United States farms into modern "agribusinesses" on the largest scale. But they also broke the earlier monopolization of higher education by the old Eastern colleges and in time led to an enormous expansion of both the professional and student strata of the petty bourgeoisie.

Among other things, the land-grant institutions facilitated that transferral from "old" to "new" petty bourgeois strata which was noted in earlier chapters. They also carried to the level of higher education that broadening of schooling and the directing of "teaching methods . . . toward practical purposes" which Marx had shown capitalism brings about.

> The Morrill Acts--establishing land grants for colleges that would provide agricultural and mechanical instruction--deliberately promoted the vocational orientation of the university. This typical emphasis explains in part the wide diffusion of professionalization as a model for the collective improvement of social status. It also merges with the central role that the American University would come to play as an agency of individual social mobility, democratically dispensing its badges of status superiority to broad segments of the public.[25]

Enrollment in public universities and colleges continued to increase proportionately for over a century, so that by the 1970s the relation to private schools was three or four to one. The main period of growth of governmental support for the petty bourgeois professionals, however, and of their

conversion to the practical needs of the capitalists, came more at the turn of the century. This began with the provision of more human working and living conditions in response to demands of the proletariat and the growing impact of industrialization on the entire society, leading to such occupations as factory and mine inspectors and health officials, and the slow but steady growth of public schools and services, requiring teachers and social workers.

In all these governmental efforts large numbers of professionals were employed to carry out the needed reforms. These developments were greatly accelerated by the need in the 1920s to mold a more stable and unified basis for United States imperialism, and to forestall "imported" Bolshevism after the Russian revolution. This led to a drastic shutting off of immigration after World War I, to stepped up programs to bring about the assimilation of European-born workers, and to new forms of "welfare capitalism" introduced particularly from the 1920s onward. When the Depression threatened to overwhelm these attempts at class "harmony" with a revolutionary surge, the New Deal stepped in to provide governmental assistance in a massive degree. The 1930s saw an explosion of publically-funded programs in which professionals played a leading role both as planners and as direct agents.

But events continued to render insufficient even the welfare policies of the New Deal, and by the 1960s two new

threats arose which created another crisis. On the one hand, the launching of Sputnik by the Russians demonstrated that a socialist country could in fact overtake and surpass the main capitalist one in science and technology and in the educational base needed to develop them. The response was almost immediate, resulting in an enormous infusion of public funds into the education system and into research of all kinds, including much direct funding of private industry to carry out its own development projects. Almost simultaneously, the Civil Rights movement, followed by Black urban uprisings, created a "domestic Sputnik," which made clear that the empire had "come home." To the foreign threat was now added what was perceived as an internal one, with a similar response on the part of the government, in the form of an extremely rapid growth of social programs and educational opportunities to head off the spread of radical forces and liberation movements, and opposition undermining the Vietnam war effort. The result was to produce in the "social work" and "liberal arts" segments of the professional petty bourgeoisie a situation akin to that in the sciences.

The petty bourgeois professionals have been dependent historically on the government for more than just their numerical expansion, however, for the state has also been the main source of occupational licensing and of educational accreditation that underlie the "professional project." Like the "old" stratum of the petty bourgeoisie,

the professions have in turn sought through public regulation the monopolization of certain areas of the economy, guaranteeing the value of their investment in education.

> Professional entrepreneurs, not unlike their counterparts in industry, were therefore bound to solicit state protection and state-enforced penalties against unlicensed competitors--that is to say, those producers of services whose training and entry into the market they had not controlled.[26]

As each new profession came "on stream," as it were, it has sought to achieve a similar guarantee, which carries also an increase in status. Thus,

> because the standardization of professional services is bound to the production of producers--that is to say, to education--it depends upon inducing recruits to accept the economic and social sacrifices of training. Hence, at least a moderate guarantee that the recruits' educational investment would be protected had to be sought from the beginning. In a market situation, the guarantee against risks incurred tends to take the form of monopoly, or at least of special protection by the public authorities. In this case, the nature of the products and the state of their markets were such that only the state, as the supreme legitimizing and enforcing institution, could sanction the modern professions' monopolistic claims to superiority for their "commodities." The attitude of the state toward education and toward monopolies of competence is thus a crucial variable in the development of the professional project.[27]

The state not only promoted the monopolization of the profession, but within it as well. Until recently most professional advertising that would promote competition was also forbidden.

A detailed review of the financial ties of professionals today to government is unnecessary here. A few of the more general facts are, however, in order to

suggest the degree of involvement of the state in various segments of the professions. In 1985, the percentage of government funding of the current income of institutions of higher education was about 40%. In addition, loans or grants on the federal level alone in direct support of the students in colleges came to $14.2 billion or so more, equivalent to 65% of tuition expenses. Of $54 billions in research and development funds in the United States in 1979, 48% came from the federal government, including 61% of that in universities and colleges and 35% of that in industry. The vast majority of scientists and engineers have long worked either for governments or on public-supported projects, and today virtually no area of scientific and engineering activity is untouched by a substantial government assist, without which it would rapidly deteriorate. Similar relations exist in medicine and of course in social services of all kinds.[28]

It is impossible to measure with any precision the totals for petty bourgeoisie in the professions who thus depend wholly or in part on governmental funding. But:

> In the professions which typically render services to individuals, the state or non-profit organizations sponsor the service, acting as employers or "buyers" - otherwise, the cost of professional services tends to restrict them to the middle and upper middle classes.[29]

Like the small farmers or urban businesspersons who rely on a "credit line" from one or another governmental agency, today for vast numbers of professionals a similar role is played by the "grant line" in applications for funding.

For most of the others the same relationship occurs less directly in the form of the various resources and protections which public bodies have granted them and which underlie their economic power. For example, as a "scandal" in 1990 revealed, universities have apparently been "padding" their research bills to the federal government. In the 1980s Stanford alone may have gained as much as $200 million by this means, while Harvard Medical School took back claims of $500,000 that it had submitted for reimbursement.[30]

As with defense contractors, these "abuses" are merely the peak of a relationship in which billions of dollars of state funds are transferred from the public to support specific class interests. Thus just as in the case of the "old" petty bourgeoisie, so with the "new," millions in this stratum are secured as members of that class by actions of the state. No other classes are more dependent on the government for their very existence than the petty bourgeoisie, in the sense of the immediate funding of its functions. Nothing today so threatens the petty bourgeois class as a whole than that it will be thrown on the mercies of the private economy, without public support. Nowhere is the inclusion of the petty bourgeoisie "within" capitalism revealed more starkly than in its dependence on the apparatus of the bourgeois state.

All the contradictions of the petty bourgeois class in a capitalist society are therefore present in its relations

to government, and indeed most sharply. For even as it struggles to maintain its life-line to the state, it must by the same process place itself ever more firmly under control of the capitalists. The consequences of this have a two-fold and related character for the professional petty bourgeoisie. On the one hand, petty bourgeois professionals find themselves under increasingly intense pressure to carry out the direct orders of the capitalist class, as they are forced into objective alignment with the goals of the latter, despite their attempts to continue to assert professional autonomy. This was most apparent in the university-defense tie of the Vietnam War era, but as the reaction to that relationship demonstrated, such collusion brings parts of the professional stratum of the petty bourgeoisie into constant conflicts with the governmental apparatus on which it depends, or more specifically with the capitalist interests which dominate the state. On the other hand, the growing reliance of petty bourgeois professionals on the government accelerates the proletarianization of this same stratum, for the state now has direct influence over the activities of the professions. The growing element of governmental control facilitates denial of the autonomy or "self-activity" of the professionals, and makes it easier to bring about their being "hurled down" toward the proletariat. This is implemented through demands for production and speed-up, through the lowering of educational standards and

professional barriers, and by cut-backs in support programs.

Several developments highlighted the conflicting tendencies discussed above. One such effort was an attempt by government to require those in universities to account for their time and for their usage of public funding. This issue flared up particularly sharply over Circular A-21 of the United States Office of Management and Budget, as revised in 1980, under which researchers were to report the percentage of their activity that went into various aspects of their work, such as lab-time, study, teaching, administration, and so on, and to do so on a detailed personal basis. Among those objecting most vociferously to these requirements was A. Bartlett Giamatti, the president of Yale, who viewed the new reporting procedures as an attack on the entire university system and on the autonomy of the academics. "'A radical skepticism bordering on open contempt for our centers of learning surfaces again," he said. In fact:

> The "independent integrity" of the university is a central issue in the Circular A-21 debate, Mr. Giamatti told the alumni. It is independence and integrity in research that some professors see as the ultimate victim of increased government regulations.[31]

The spokespersons of the petty bourgeois professionals thus resist the attempts to force them more under the cost-accounting methods and the productivity standards of capitalism as carried out by the state. This resistance is nevertheless directed at the hand that feeds them--the year

before Giamatti spoke Yale received $68 million in federal funds[32]--and the basic contradiction in such a relationship looms much larger than the immediate issue of detailed "personnel activity reports" or the time spent on each aspect of a specific project.

The deeper connection is precisely what kind of activities the state sponsors: it is the latter which really shapes the directions of research and development in the United States, especially in the universities, and not the exact uses of time and skills, which represent merely a further step in the general influence over such activities by the government. However, for professionals there is indeed a critical point here, for it is their own immediate "self-activity" on a daily basis that appears at stake. It is this which makes the resistance of the petty bourgeoisie to government rules especially forceful. All recipients of public funds seek as high a degree of freedom from state control as possible, whether they are workers on unemployment or corporations being "bailed out" by governmental aid. What makes the battle over such regulation so crucial for petty bourgeois professionals is that loss of control over their own activities actually forms a step in their being declassed, in their being "hurled down" into the proletariat. Cost-accounting and productivity standards are only a step removed form that open exploitation which marks the position of the working

class itself, and the struggle against them is therefore vital to the petty bourgeoisie as a class.

It is indeed particularly around education that the class lines between the petty bourgeoisie and the proletariat are fought over most fiercely, and this has led in recent years to battles over control of government aid for college students, which had grown greatly since 1965. At stake is the very ability of the petty bourgeois class to reproduce itself:

> It begins with a feeling of injustice, expressed this way by a former teacher: "The thing that got me," she said, "was when a bright, interested middle-class student didn't get a scholarship to college, but another student did just because he was from a lower-income family." It is a variation on a middle-class theme: The middle class is denied financial help, especially from the Federal Government.[33]

The Middle Income Student Assistance Act of 1978 began the process of the shifting of a considerable portion of federal student funding from the most needy of the working-class families, to "middle class" and even "upper class" children. Largely as a result of these changes, the student loan program rose from $331 million in 1977 to $2.2 billion just four years later,[34] in the process changing from a program to overcome class and racial barriers to one which tends to maintain or even widen them, for instance by weighting payments to the actual costs of given schools, thus favoring those at more expensive colleges.[35]

What was sought was not just government assistance, but the state reinforcement of differences between classes.

In the difficult years at the end of the 1970s, the petty bourgeoisie and aspirants to that class feared proletarianization:

> According to Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York, whether the middle class had in fact lost ground relative to the lower class was not as important as its perception that it had. "It has to do with the transfer of their status onto their children," Moynihan said, "And, by God, they want it."[36]

By the early 1980s the federal government was helping to finance the education of nearly half of all college students.[37] Nor were such efforts limited to education: in one region north of San Francisco, at the end of 1982, programs were going into effect to give subsidized mortgages to families earning up to $58,000 a year for houses which could cost as much as $160,000--all in the name of helping "a specific group of 'needy' people in Marin County: the middle class. . . . People who make $30,000 to $40,000 are really behind it. The demand's enormous."[38] These developments were taking place in precisely the years in which the "tax revolt" of the "middle class" was spreading.

First bearing fruit in California in Proposition 13, tax-cutting pressure was to culminate in the election and programs of Ronald Reagan.

> A Rand Corporation study notes that in 1978, when Proposition 13 was passed, taxes had increased steeply and more of the increased revenues were being spent on programs designed specifically for low-income groups rather than for general purposes such as roads and police that benefit the middle class as much as if not more than everyone else.[39]

Not the state itself, but governmental support of competing classes is the real bête noire of the petty bourgeoisie, which avidly pursues it own goals of public largesse or monopolization in both the creation and maintenance of its class, even while calling for "smaller government." In doing so, however, they again merely end up serving the interests of the capitalists, who use them to further suppress the proletariat itself. To their dismay, many petty bourgeoisie have found that Proposition 13 and the Reagan Administrations, first in California and then for the United States as a whole, have meant serious reductions in programs which were beneficial to themselves.

But the consequences have, of course, fallen heaviest on those who had made gains in the preceding years. Indeed, the capitalists have used the "tax revolt" to ravage above all those policies which over decades the working class, people of color, and women won through hard struggle to protect and expand their rights. Thus: "In California, when Proposition 13, the property tax initiative, hit the schools, remedial programs for potential dropouts were among the first services to be cut."[40] Similarly, the federal cuts of the early 1980s at first spared the most important "middle class" programs, those not based on financial need, and "actually targeted on the 'needy'--Medicaid, legal services, food stamps."[41] In particular, the Reagan Administration helped to drive down the proletariat in pursuit of two overriding goals: to

assist capitalist corporations in forcing concessions and productivity gains on workers, and to shift wealth to the massive build-up of armaments needed to help prop up a dying imperialism threatened on all sides. At the same time, it carried out a general redistribution of income toward the wealthiest members of the capitalist class, and it played openly on racist and male chauvinist attitudes to reverse the gains of the movements of the 1960s-1970s, themes George Bush has continued with a vengeance.

These policies were felt with brutal harshness in the higher education system. With billions of dollars of support funds eliminated, the Reagan budget cuts led to predictions that they would defund one-third to one-half of M.A. or Ph.D. students "and discourage all but the very rich from attending graduate or professional schools."[42] The results were in reality truly shattering: many colleges abandoned a decades-long policy of admissions regardless of the ability to pay, meeting the needs of poor students through scholarships or loans. Even those still holding to this approach could no longer guarantee funds.[43] Instead, segregation according to class once again became rampant, and the effects were felt with startling suddenness:

> A survey of the National Institute of Independent Colleges and Universities found a 39 percent decline over the last two years in the number of students enrolled in private schools whose families had a yearly income of $6,000 to $24,000.[44]

In 1982, when the above was written, $24,000 would have been very close to the figure representing the "bottom" income level of the petty bourgeoisie.

The devastating cuts in financial aid for college students introduced by the Reagan Administration were in theory part of its "philosophical tenet that education is first and foremost a state and local affair."[45] The goal was also said to be the reduction of aid to middle- and high-income students, not the poor.[46] Between 1980 and 1987, the percentage of entering college students receiving federal aid either stabilized or fell in every category, often to below levels of 1975. Those who received state aid remained at the same 16%, down from the 1975 level of 19%. Only direct college assistance rose, but only slightly.[47] In fact, these same years saw growing economic strains on state governments, which began to restrain their own higher education costs. Thus the federal cut-backs were not compensated for by the states, and even the "privatization" of aid only made up for the loss in small part. This, however, only gives one small part of the picture, for as federal assistance to state governments in general was slashed, combined with stagnation and recession in many parts of the economy, states were also forced to cut back on all forms of aid to higher education. Thus even those middle-class students who sought refuge from soaring costs and falling assistance in less expensive state schools were hurt, while for vast numbers of working-

class families college once more became totally out of reach, or could be achieved only by taking on so much debt as to ransom its value for a lifetime.

The result has been a growing polarization of higher education, in which the "middle class" was gradually being squeezed out:

> This raises the possibility that the entire system could become polarized, with wealthy students, along with a few subsidized poor ones, filling the best institutions of both the private and public sectors, and the overwhelming majority of disadvantaged students being relegated to lesser public institutions."

In fact, far from freeing the petty bourgeoisie from "big government," the reduced levels of federal support for higher education are throwing large numbers of "middle class" students back on the public colleges at the very time that funding for these institutions is falling. Large numbers of middle-income students were being forced into four-year state universities, and even two-year community colleges instead of private schools.[49] Of course, the cutbacks have the worst effect on proletarian families, and above all on women, Blacks, Latinos, and others suffering discrimination and least able to support themselves.

These changes play a particular role in the division of labor, by "tracking" the masses of students into the labor needed by capitalism. Thus Clifton R. Wharton, Chancellor of the State University of New York was quoted in 1979 as extolling community and junior colleges as "'the wave of the future,'" especially for adult education.

Despite his claims that they "'provide a definite opportunity for an individual who wants to learn, to progress out of lowly surroundings and become a useful, productive member of society,'" what Wharton really praised to his Chamber of Commerce audience was that two-year colleges are "'responsible to both local industrial and economic needs, and the wants and desires of the individual person.'"[50] Behind the mask of "upward mobility" which Wharton so condescendingly used was thus in reality a plan for lowering the educational standards for the mass of college students and restricting their employment opportunities to the goals of nearby capitalist businesses. Wharton pointed out that 2-year college numbers went from 1.6 to 4.0 million, an increase of 148%. Such changes merely reflect at the local level policies by the federal government, such as shifts by the National Science Foundation of funding from the "soft" to the "hard" sciences.[51] Thus as Marx noted, capitalism expands "practical education," which is increasingly geared to meet immediate capitalist needs.

As long as the struggles of the proletariat, Blacks, women, and so on meant an expansion of state-financed education and jobs for the professional petty bourgeoisie, programs for them were held in some favor. With increasing competition between classes for shrinking governmental levels of support, the reproduction of "professionalism" becomes more and more in contradiction to state

contributions to the working class and all oppressed groups. The defense of professional standards, in combination with the fear of the petty bourgeoisie and the "labor aristocracy" that they will have to join the mainstream of the proletariat, and the decline in public funding, lead to active forms of resistance to working-class advancement, such as ending open admissions policies at many state universities, and in new rules enforced by the government through court decisions, and revised federal regulations nullifying affirmative action programs. It is however often too late by the time students reach college age to maintain class, race, and sex lines, and there is now a growing chorus of petty bourgeois professionals who are calling for driving the less successful or desirable proletarian children even out of high school.

> A movement to lower the maximum age for compulsory education is gaining ground among many educators and critics. Professor Roger Sipher at the State University of New York has gone even further, arguing that "The solution to the schools' problem is simple: abolish compulsory attendance laws and allow only those who are committed to getting an education to attend."[52]

Simple or simple-minded, the effect is the same. Nevertheless, Sipher exalts the "educational mission" of schooling and claims that "public esteem for schools would increase" under his plan.

There is obviously a contradiction here between the driving of students out of school and the "educational mission," between throwing more children onto the streets and restoring "esteem" to teacher ranks. But these are

difficulties and irrationalities that the professor, along with many others like him, either does not notice or chooses to ignore. In this blind pursuit of "professionalismn" and class preservation the petty bourgeoisie carries out ever more ruthlessly the de-education of a growing number of proletarian children for whom the capitalists have no jobs, whether educated or unskilled. The education programs of such professionals are thus a perfect cover for larger capitalist purposes, now being to reintroduce a strict and less "mobile" division of labor, consigning vast numbers of workers "to a growing 'under-economy' that requires little schooling. . . . This new posture fits with the new drift of policy, for it permits the quest for excellence for some while dismissing the rest."[53] In fact, there is a growing proliferation of special programs for the "gifted and talented," which largely translates into more funds and training for those from the capitalist class and from the petty bourgeoisie. This is in turn but one aspect of a larger trend which sees the wealthy and the white "middle class" put their children either into private or specially designed and largely segregated public education, while the working-class and heavily Black and Latino urban schools are more and more denied necessary funding and on occasion have closed down.[54] This is now being codified in the Bush Administration proposals for education "vouchers" which could be used at public and parochial schools.

Just as on the level of the universities, the spread of a polarized school system in the secondary and even primary grades, serves the needs of capitalists for an economically and politically divided labor force.

> All employment forecasts for what Herman Kahn has called "The Sobering 80s" indicate that the American economy will require a core of highly-skilled young people with the ability to handle complex systems and help the country maintain its technological edge.
>
> But most future jobs, which will be in the service sector, will not demand much education or skill. Automation at the supermarket already makes it unnecessary for checkers to know how to add and multiply. At some fast-food restaurants, employees do not even have to read: they punch cash register buttons marked with pictures of hamburgers, shakes, and fries.[55]

To achieve this, a select few are "tracked" toward the most skilled jobs, while the rest are programmed for "unskilled" labor or for unemployment. Selection of those destined for higher education is made at an ever more early age. These divisions, however, extend beyond the economy itself, for they involve the entire intellectual development of the proletariat:

> A sizeable contingent of educators thinks less history is just fine. "If you're a thinker, history is good for you. If you're going to go and operate a drill press, then you don't need history," says Paul Johnson, who oversees history and social studies programs in Nebraska public schools.[56]

Thus the petty bourgeois professionals try to strip the proletariat not only of its economic skills, but of all political and ideological tools. The petty bourgeoisie cannot preserve itself in this fashion at worker expense, however, and such appeals to the state to maintain it as a class while denying the proletarians an education can only

become more reactionary and repressive as the contradictions of capitalist society deepen.

It must be remembered that the struggle over education is one for control of the "means of mental production" of the professional petty bourgeoisie. Just as, once the frontier was "closed," there was no longer room for the millions of those without land who still dreamed of becoming farmers, and the existing farms in turn became more and more concentrated in fewer hands, so the reaching of the historical limits of the education system as a means of escaping from working-class oppression not only leaves millions still relatively uneducated, but is followed as well by an increasingly rapid contraction of the means of mental production as proletarianization occurs among the highly educated. The struggle to preserve possessions already won thus replaces expansionism as the guiding ideology, and the focus of state support is shifted accordingly. The class "independence" of the petty bourgeoisie can henceforth be defended only at the cost of denying the same possibility to the proletariat. Individualism, the right to "self-activity," and career choices emerge once again as being the prerogatives of the big and petty bourgeoisie, not of the proletariat. This class division over the means of production, including education, becomes literally a matter of life and death under certain circumstances, as during the Vietnam War, when those in college largely escaped induction, while

workers fought and died, or in the Persian Gulf where the "New Volunteer Army" was built up with promises of education for those who could not otherwise afford it, by recruiters who "forgot" to mention that the "students" might die.

Thus because it does not have the economic power to enforce its own interests under capitalism, the petty bourgeoisie becomes ever more dependent on the government. This takes two closely related forms: it demands the overall support of public funds and backing, while at the same time trying to maintain its own narrow "independence" in the most immediate sense, and it actively seeks the aid of the government against proletarianization and the proletariat. But in contradiction, it adopts these methods while constantly railing against "big government." Since the overall power in the state apparatus remains under the control of the capitalists, however, these contradictory policies of the petty bourgeoisie in effect serve even more to reinforce the overriding aims of the capitalists. The appeals of the petty bourgeois class in pursuit of its own narrow and self-serving vision are easily turned by the capitalist state into directions that are of assistance to them in the struggle with the proletariat, which remains the primary contradiction of the system, and are then used on the "middle classes" as well. That the petty bourgeoisie is forced increasingly to turn to government as its last resort, far from freeing it from the

contradictions within capitalism, instead merely delivers it further under capitalist control, and in the process develops the statist power of the bourgeoisie over society as a whole, including the ability to increasingly "hurl down" members of this class itself into the proletariat. Thus its appeals to the state to save it only speed its destruction.

NOTES

1. Mills, White Collar, 53: "Big government, organized labor, big business, as well as immediate competitors, prepare the soil of anxiety for small business; the ideological growth of this anxiety is thus deeply rooted in fears, which, though often misplaced, are not without foundation."

2. Marx, "The Class Struggles in France 1848-1850," 213.

3. Mills, White Collar, 53: "Small business's attitude toward government, as toward labor, plays into the hands of big-business ideology. In both connections, small businesses are shock troops in the battle against labor uions and government controls."

4. C. Wright Mills, "The Middle Classes in Middle-Sized Cities: The Stratification and Political Position of Small Business and White Collar Strata," American Sociological Review 11, no. 5 (October, 1946): 523-24.

5. Hofstadter, Miller, and Aaron, The American Republic, vol. 1, To 1865, 222-23.

6. Hofstadter, The Age of Reform, 29: "The Jeffersonians, moreover, made the agrarian myth the basis of a strategy of continental developmment."

7. See Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 106: "Even at the level of the polity, the Jeffersonian ideal tended to present the state as an instrument that would destroy the artificial and inequitable laws of the colony and restore a free society to its spontaneity, ordered by natural law and protected against inequity by the limitless supply of land."

8. Hofstadter, Miller, and Aaron, The American Republic, vol. 1, To 1865, 367.

9. Ibid., 653.

10. New York Times, May 1, 1983, E5.

11. New York Times, February 16, 1981, A1.

12. New York Times, January 19, 1983, D24.

13. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, September 23, 1982, 83.

14. New York Times, February 16, 1981, D4.

15. Burbach and Flynn, Agribusiness in the Americas, 40.

16. Ibid., 22.

17. Ibid., 33.

18. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, January 7, 1982, 67.

19. New York Times, December 17, 1977, 32.

20. New York Times, March 4, 1983, D2.

21. New York Times, September 23, 1982, B27.

22. Burbach and Flynn, Agribusiness in the Americas, 34-35.

23. Mills, "The Middle Class in Middle-Sized Cities," 525.

24. Mills, White Collar, 27. See also 37-38.

25. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 150.

26. Ibid., 14.

27. Ibid., 14-15.

28. Department of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1989, 148, table no. 247; 154, table no. 259; 577, table. no. 972.

29. Ibid., 200.

30. New York Times, November 7, 1990, B4; April 10, 1991, A22; Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, March 10, 1991, 30.

31. New York Times, October 19, 1980, 52.

32. Ibid.

33. William Severini Kowinski, "The Squeeze on the Middle Class," New York Times Magazine, July 13, 1980, 29.

34. New York Times, January 29, 1981, A20.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

37. New York Times, March 11, 1983, A13.

38. New York Times, December 5, 1982, 46.

39. Kowinski, "The Squeeze on the Middle Class," 49, 59.

40. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, November 29, 1979, 83.

41. Peter G. Peterson, "No More Free Lunch for the Middle Class," New York Times Magazine, January 17. 1982, 56.

42. New York Times, February 10, 1982, B4.

43. New York Times, April 25, 1983, 1; February 9, 1982, B1.

44. New York Times, September 6, 1982, 20.

45. New York Times, January 29, 1981, A1.

46. New York Times, March 22, 1981, 31.

47. Department of Commerce, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1989, 150, table 251.

48. New York Times, October 27, 1982, B5.

49. Ibid.

50. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, October 18, 1979, 50.

51. New York Times, February 9, 1981, A16.

52. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, November 29, 1979, 83.

53. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, November 29, 1979, 83.

54. New York Times, September 7, 1981, B3.

55. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, November 29, 1979, 83.

56. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, November 13, 1980, 70. See also New York Times, August 12, 1975, 1.

CHAPTER 19

CONTRADICTION AND UNITY IN THE POLITICS AND IDEOLOGY OF THE PETTY BOURGEOIS CLASS

The relations of the petty bourgeoisie to the state are further shaped by the degree of their ability, or rather their general inability, to organize themselves as a class under the conditions of capitalism. This weakness, which is most evident in the political and ideological realms, parallels the lack of power which they experience in their attempts to assert their common economic interests. Just as the latter drives the petty bourgeoisie to turn to government as its last resort against the threat of proletarianization, so its lack of organization either politically or ideologically gives its relations to the state a special twist. To understand this the contradictions and unity of the petty bourgeois class as a whole must be examined. Up to now I have generally stressed those elements which provide the petty bourgeoisie with common interests, despite the great differences between the various groups that make it up, a commonality derived from their sharing in relatively "autonomous" relations to the capitalist system, and a degree of self-regulation in their work, which are in turn available to

them through small-scale investments in the means of production.

It is now necessary to look more closely first at the aspects which divide this class, not only in the relationships of the different strata to each other, but also internally within each stratum. I will then examine those conditions under which these contradictions can be overcome, not merely in the sense of the petty bourgeoisie having interests in common or acting similarly under given circumstances, but by actually uniting to act in concert, or at least to produce their own leadership. It has already been noted that the petty bourgeois class loses its ability to act as an "independent section of modern society" at a relatively early point, as its subordination to the capitalists becomes ever more complete. What I must now try to establish is whether and under what conditions this independence of action can be restored, and where the leadership for such a resurgence of purpose and unity can come from. For the question of the degree to which the petty bourgeoisie actually acts as a class in history can only be answered by the specifics of its behavior under differing circumstances, and not, as is sometimes done, by an attempt to measure abstractly its "classness." Finally, I will analyze the unifying aspects of petty bourgeois political and ideological expressions, the common thread which runs beneath the surface of their extremely varied and even contradictory manifestations.

The internal weaknesses which plague the petty bourgeoisie as a class are readily apparent, but they are worth reviewing briefly nonetheless. In contrast to the capitalists who are small in numbers but highly organized by virtue of their command of the means of production and their leading role in bourgeois society, and to the proletariat which is very large but possessed of a concentrated base in modern industry, the petty bourgeoisie combines being one of the "mass" classes having numerous members, with the weakness of relatively isolated and small-scale forms of production. Historically the small farms were almost completely self-contained units, operating alone, with only occasional and local contact with each other for social or trade reasons. The specific form of United States farming exacerbated this aspect:

> The predominance in American agriculture of the isolated farmstead standing in the midst of great acreage, the frequent movements, the absence of village life, deprived the farmer and his family of the advantages of community, lowered the chances of association and co-operation, and encouraged that rampant, suspicious, and almost suicidal individualism for which the American farmer was long noted and which organizations like the Grange tried to combat.[1]

The artisan and shopkeeper elements of the petty bourgeois class were similarly scattered both within and between many different cities and towns, and usually had little direct links with the farmers, except perhaps locally. Thus there has continued to be a certain typical culture of small towns in the United States, but though this has produced

its own literary flowering, there has only sporadically been a flourishing of petty bourgeois political or ideological expressions which might form the basis for an organizing force in the life of this class, much less of society as a whole.

As capitalism increased the division between town and country, the two "old" segments of the petty bourgeoisie, farmers and tradespeople, tended to draw even further apart. Under such conditions, class unity was very difficult to achieve. In addition, the urban petty bourgeoisie, while sometimes better educated and with greater access to "higher" culture, have generally been under the domination of the "big" bourgeoisie both ideologically and politically, though they try to deny this:

> The ideology of small businessmen rests upon their identification with business as such. They are well organized, but "their" organizations are pretty well under the thumb of larger businesses and the banks. . . . The small businessmen, nevertheless, cling to the identity: "business is business." They do not typically see, nor try to act upon, such differences as may exist between the interests of big and little business.[2]

Their subordination to large-scale capitalism, their denial of interests separate from that of "business" as a whole, and their relatively few overall numbers militate against any role as the unifiers and leaders of their class. They are also the source of a nationalistic patriotism identified with their own way of life, which further blurs their identity as a separate social grouping.

> "Small business . . . what is it?" asks the manager of a small business trade association. "It is American Business . . . it is the reason we have an American Way." Such phrases as "the little businessman who has built up, by sweat, tears and smiles, a business..." underline the importance placed by this stratum on its own virtue. The ideology of and for small business thus carries self-idealization to the point of making it the content of nationalism.[3]

It is in this sense that Lenin notes that:

> Patriotism is a sentiment bound up with the economic conditions of life of precisely the small proprietors. The bourgeoisie is more international than the small proprietors.[4]

Such sentiments generally pervade the "old" petty bourgeois stratum, which has difficulty separating out its own class interests from those of other classes or even the entire nation.

The emergence of the managerial and professional strata as mass segments of the petty bourgeoisie has served to exacerbate these earlier tendencies. As C. Wright Mills noted:

> Insofar as political and civic strength rests upon organized economic power, the white-collar workers can only derive such strength from "business" or from "labor." Within the whole structure of power, they are dependent variables. They have no self-starting motor moving them to form organizations with which to increase their power in the civic constellation.[5]

As direct servants of the capitalist class, the managers serve as the agents of the power of capital which threatens the very existence of the "old" petty bourgeois owners, often bringing these two strata into quite sharp conflicts, or at least separating their immediate interests into diverging directions. As long as agriculture remained a

largely isolated and "backward" area of the economy, there were obvious differences in culture and ideology as well, with the managerial stratum representing the point of view of "modernism" and expansion, which challenged the more set ways on which the farming communities were based. As noted above, this sometimes even produces generational conflicts, with the children of "old" petty bourgeoisie, now in "new" managerial positions, pitted against their parents.

These divisions were in some respects even greater in the case of the petty bourgeois professionals, whose education set them virtually in a world apart from the "older" stratum of that class, a gulf across which there was often mutual contempt and distrust that has by no means been obliterated down to this day. Moreover, the professionals were also divided from managers, not only by similar even if less clear-cut educational differences, but also by their relatively greater degree of work autonomy and their conflicting roles in relation to production. To those in the professions, the managerial element often appears as nothing more than an extension of the capitalists themselves, having abandoned all true forms of their own "self-activity" in abject service and surrender to the interests of the dominant class. This attitude is reciprocated by a view of professional petty bourgeoisie as useless daydreamers who are indeed "independent," but only in the sense of having lost any real connection to the

productive base of society as a whole. These differences are further intensified by the forms of organization adopted by the professional employees. For to the extent that they unite around specifically economic goals, and not "professionalism" in general, the petty bourgeois professionals have followed the semi-proletarian lead and formed unions, that is, they have leaned toward the "labor" side. Thus organization has spread to doctors, professors, salaried employees in corporations, and so on, which has pitted them against the managers and administrators within their class, who carry out the policies of big bourgeois interests in business, the "non-profit" sector, and the state.

To the extent that managerial and professional duties overlap, it can even work against petty bourgeois organization: a court in 1980 ruled that professors at Yeshiva University were "managers," and therefore not entitled to union recognition under the National Labor Relations Act.[6] This not only intensified the clashes between college administrators and faculty, but also made organization of professionals themselves more difficult. Thus the general loss of "autonomy" suffered by the petty bourgeoisie is merely compounded by its increasing entanglement with the bourgeois state, and this in turn can further its disorganization and internal divisions as a class. In particular, both the "old" petty bourgeois stratum and the professional and student elements depend

more directly on public funding for financing their activities than do the managers, and this is yet another source of division, separating those oriented primarily toward the government and those who see the corporations as the main support for their work. In the case of many professionals, this distinction is even greater, because so many of them are now directly employed by governmental agencies and institutions, or depend on them indirectly through grants. This can lead to direct conflicts between the petty bourgeois strata. Thus to cite only one of the more blatant examples, the government under pressure from the working class and the liberation movements pays professionals to run "poverty" programs, provide legal services, enforce health and safety standards, uphold housing codes, and so forth, actions often resisted by other petty bourgeoisie, such as small employers and landlords, or those in corporate management.

Finally, the narrow focus on their own disciplines by many in the professions produces substantial barriers even among themselves, notably in the well-known division of the "hard" sciences and engineering from the "liberal arts." This dividing line alone creates considerable struggle between the more technological and humanist visions of society, within the overall range of professionalism. Nor does the "craft" spirit of such intellectual disciplines stop at the level of these major differences, but pervades each specific area of the professions, to the extent that

even within a single field of study there are numerous specialities which have little direct relation to each other or communication between them. Many academic fields, and even individual university departments, are rent by such fault lines, across which relations often turn quite bitterly hostile. These divisions have now been heightened by new tensions. As women, Blacks, Latinos, and other oppressed groups struggle for professional advancement they come into conflict with the largely white, male petty bourgeoisie who dominate the professions. Such struggles are often quite bitter and lead to state intervention and loss of autonomy by the professions. Court cases, for instance, have even limited the right to secrecy in faculty balloting in tenure cases, as this can hide discrimination.[7]

Economic competition may also lead to "unprofessional" forms of conduct and battles between professions. One president of the American Medical Association, in a speech to an American Bar Association convention, "...called on doctors and lawyers...to stop the 'bare-faced shouting match over quacks and shysters' in which each blamed the other for the medical malpractice insurance crises," and to instead "join forces."

> Otherwise, he warned, both the medical profession and the legal profession might lose some of their traditional "freedoms," including "the broad self-regulatory powers bestowed on us by society."[8]

With doctors "striking" to protest high medical insurance costs, disunity threatens the very foundations of professionalism, and divides even the two "classical" professional representatives of the petty bourgeois class. Thus the petty bourgeoisie are caught up in the larger economic contradictions and forces of capitalist society, which tear the various strata apart both in relation to each other and within themselves. The most typical form of organization of the petty bourgeoisie, therefore, is a trade or professional body which may be local, regional, or national in scope, and which may exert considerable power politically or form a significant cultural unit, but which nevertheless cannot be considered to represent the class as a whole. Chambers of Commerce, agricultural associations, academic societies, and organizations of the various professions, all serve to give voice to the interests of parts of the petty bourgeois strata. Each alone may be quite powerful, but none speaks for them all.

Because each of the three main petty bourgeois strata has a differing yet similar function in the system of capitalism, this often pits them against the others, despite the underlying unity of their class characteristics, especially in relation to the proletariat. The small farmers and storeowners are the most direct employers and exploiters of proletarian labor; the managers are the most open servants of the big bourgeoisie and are the immediate oppressors of the majority of workers; and

the professionals, even if more indirectly, service or regulate the working class as a whole, within the overall framework of the capitalist system, and are the most dependent in their reliance on the bourgeois state for funding and accreditation. Though within these various functions each stratum seeks to maximize its own forms of petty bourgeois power and autonomy, their immediate relations to each other and to both the capitalists and the working class are often at odds. Thus each of the segments of the petty bourgeoisie has to depend in certain ways on the capitalists and the bourgeois state for support, while resisting their encroachments, or those of the proletariat. As the number of petty bourgeois strata and sub-strata multiplies, and as they take on a more mass and developed character, these conflicting relations become more and more complicated, and there is produced a growing internal lack of unity within the class as a whole. As they are forced to serve in various ways the interests of the bourgeoisie, while resisting elimination at its hands, or as they help to exploit the workers, while having to respond directly or indirectly to pressures from the proletariat and the fear that they will themselves suffer proletarianization, they are thus set against each other in ever more complex fashion.

This is in turn but a further development of the general weakness of this class, which historically is atomized into numerous and isolated fragments by the very

nature of its individualistic and small-scale role in the system of social production. Their own ambivalences toward the capitalist system and the bourgeois state tend to reinforce these basic divisions. Nevertheless, similarities of situation and ideology might serve as a unifying factor, were the petty bourgeoisie really in a position to make policy in either the economic or the political realm. Lacking that ability they are forced to carry out the overall goals of the capitalist class, to compete for influence, and to preserve their own personal positions even if it means working against each other. As Larson notes of the professions:

> The individual freedom and control which professionals enjoy in and out of work is in part a mask: for themselves as well as for less privileged others, it helps to conceal collective powerlessness, subordination, and complicity.[9]

In fact, their pervasive individualism, pursuit of a maximum degree of autonomy, and goal of personal advancement, in essence the only truly unifying ideology of the petty bourgeoisie, can only serve to drive its members away from unified action on the level of a class. Such lack of relations compounds its intrinsic divisiveness, which cannot be overcome as long as it remains subordinated to the capitalist system, and subject to all the contradictions and polarizing forces of the latter.

However, though the petty bourgeois class remains internally divided and largely unorganized, there are significant areas in which political unity is achieved in

practice, even if no formal link exists which ties together all of its different strata. It is once again in the rural areas and small towns that these relations are most obvious, as small business owners, managers in corporate enterprises, and the professional establishment combine to dominate local governments and school boards. This role is often a very class-conscious one, in which the interests of the petty bourgeoisie are clearly promoted and defended, both positively in such crucial matters as tax rates and zoning laws, and negatively through forms of educational discrimination or "tracking" directed primarily against working-class children, by efforts to limit welfare payments to proletarian families, in campaigns to "clean up" and gentrify the towns and present an image of prosperity by suppressing "undesirables," and so on. Much of this effort goes toward commercial promotion, the attempt to attract capitalist investment and public projects on which the petty bourgeois businesses, landowners, lawyers, and so forth "feed." Indeed, in most cases the "big" bourgeoisie have few more loyal supporters than these local magnates, who serve to open the door to the capitalist penetration of the rural areas and smaller communities as rapidly as can be managed.

On occasion, however, the same combination of petty bourgeois interests can be found in a situation of resistance to big capital, particularly where a local "way of life" is threatened by large-scale investments, for

example where many of the small businesses or the "life-style" of professionals depends on a relatively unspoiled natural environment.[10] Moreover, the romantic image of the small-town lawyer, doctor, and so on, still provides a cultural link with the farming and rural store-owning stratum of the petty bourgeoisie, a historical tie that many young professionals are renewing. The same kinds of class unity actually are also quite common in larger cities and suburbs, where the "middle class" creates enclaves from which it strives to keep out the "lower classes," especially Blacks and Hispanics, or where chic store owners and the "yuppie" professional element team up to gentrify working-class neighborhoods, create private schools for their children, and so on. Overall, however, the petty bourgeoisie are somewhat less obvious and have relatively smaller impact in urban situations, due to the domination of big capital and the presence of organized workers. Power, therefore, must almost always be shared, with the petty bourgeois element most often in a subordinate position to capitalists and unions.

Historically, the political assertions of the petty bourgeoisie have thus in general been sporadic, intuitive, and lacking in self-consciousness as a class. Mostly they tail behind either the bourgeoisie proper or the proletariat, depending on which one seems to have the upper hand, or appears to be the greater threat, reflecting once again their economic and social weakness, even where they

appear temporarily to be acting as a unified and strong force. Such was their role in the bourgeois democratic and socialist revolutions in Europe, where they threw their weight alternately to one side or the other, but were never able to solidify around any unique political or ideological plan, due to their inability to find a "third way" between capitalists and workers. Their efforts to do so, as was seen above in the critique which Marx made of Proudhon, only gave expression in politics and ideology to the contradictory economic position of their class, an instability inherent in their material situation as both property owners and laborers.

In the United States, there has been a constant recurrence of such tendencies, in programs of the various farmer movements, the People's Party of the late 19th century, within the Farmer-Labor parties and the right wing of the Socialist Party in the early 20th century, and even in proposals for a "worker and farmer alliance" today. Each such effort at populist political organization has rested heavily on enrollment of the petty bourgeoisie, the primary differences occurring around the degree of alliance which a given party or movement also struck with the working class, the extent to which socialistic goals were openly proclaimed or merely implicit, and whether its leadership was in the hands of those expressing exclusively the class interests of the petty bourgeois owners or had a more or less proletarian "admixture" in its political

orientation. In varying degrees, these populist forces called for nationalization of big capital, especially transport and utilities, anti-monopoly measures to safeguard small farms and businesses, the use of government to support "middle class" interests, especially the prices of agricultural produce, and the formation of cooperatives. But they always left to the petty bourgeoisie itself the right not only to own private property, but to carry on capitalist exploitation of workers.[11]

In fact, this is typical of all petty bourgeois theories and parties, which do not aim at eliminating small ownership. They thereby maintain the essential barrier between themselves and the working class. The swings of the petty bourgeoisie are thus the result of its changing circumstances, sometimes toward its "pole" as laborers, but at other times revealing its capitalist nature.

> When times were persistently bad, the farmer tended to reject his business role and its failures to withdraw into the role of the injured little yeoman. This made the differences between his situation and that of any other victim of exploitation seem unimportant to him. As a Southern journalist wrote of the situation in the cotton country: "The landowner was so poor and distressed that he forgot that he was a capitalist . . . so weary of hand and sick of spirit that he imagined himself in precisely the same plight as the hired man. . . ."
>
> The American farmer thus had a dual character, and one way of understanding our agrarian movements is to observe which aspect of the farmer's double personality is uppermost at a given time. It is my contention that both the Populist rhetoric and the modern liberal's indulgent view of the farmers' revolt have been derived from the "soft" side of the farmer's existence--that is, the agrarian "radicalism" and agrarian ideology--while most farm organizations since the decline of the Populists have been based primarily upon the "hard"

> side, upon agricultural improvement, business methods, and pressure politics.[12]

"Hired hands," however, were unlikely to imagine themselves "in precisely the same plight" as their petty bourgeois employers. It is for such reasons that, for example, the Socialist Labor Party denounced the People's Party for its

> appeals to the wage workers for the support it needs in order to save it from an early fall into the ranks of that very proletariat which it has heretofore exploited and will continue to exploit as long as it is permitted to protract its wretched existence.[13]

The problem, as the socialists pointed out, was that even the poor and tenuous farmer was also a potential "capitalist," who could and, given a little prosperity, would exploit workers.

The illusions of the petty bourgeoisie about their own position in the relations of classes, and their constant swings between their "pole" as laborers and that of capitalists, in itself further weakens their organizations, which are constantly torn in opposite directions. Anything approaching the formal union of this class on a national level is therefore extremely difficult to achieve. This lack of organization in itself becomes a fundamental factor in the role which the petty bourgeoisie plays in politics and in its relations to the state. Thus in analyzing petty bourgeois participation in the class struggles of the nineteenth century in Europe, notably France, Marx examined its degree of unity and the political consequences this produced. The following passage has been widely used to

discuss what he meant by "class" in general, a debate often bordering on metaphysical abstraction. But what is of interest here are the specific conclusions he drew from the peculiar character of the petty bourgeoisie as it affected the state.

> In so far as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence that separate their mode of life, their interests and their culture from those of the other classes, and put them in hostile opposition to the latter, they form a class. In so far as there is merely a local interconnection among these small-holding peasants, and the identity of their interests begets no community, no national bond and no political organisation among them, they do not form a class. They are consequently incapable of enforcing their class interests in their own name, whether through a parliament or through a convention. They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented. Their representative must at the same time appear as their master, as an authority over them, as an unlimited governmental power that protects them against the other classes and sends them rain and sunshine from above. The political influence of the small-holding peasants, therefore, finds its final expression in the executive power subordinating society to itself.[14]

The petty bourgeois peasants thus become a basis for executive authority not so much through their organization as by their disorganization, and by the desire to escape the contradictions of capitalism by crushing them beneath the state, a power from which, at the same time, they anticipate receiving active support, in the way of tax relief and governmental aid.

Though Marx delineated special factors which plagued rural France, the particular topic of the above quote, such as the "bad means of communication," and the lack of an "application of science" by the peasantry, even where these

conditions are not as apparent, the underlying weakness of the petty bourgeoisie still is exhibited. Thus, despite similarities in the basic interests of its members, there remains an absence of those specific and essential features--community, a national bond, and a political organization--which bind a class closely together in its overall life and relation to others. This very weakness reinforces the petty bourgeois tendency to see itself as being "above" classes, representing "populist" forces which are essentially classless, because its own material position is a "living contradiction." Thus

> the democrat, because he represents the petty bourgeoisie, that is, a transition class, in which the interests of two classes are simultaneously mutually blunted, imagines himself elevated above class antagonism generally. The democrats concede that a privileged class confronts them, but they, along with the rest of the nation, form the people. What they represent is the people's rights; what interests them is the people's interest. Accordingly, when a struggle is impending they do not need to examine the interests and position of the different classes. They do not need to weigh their own resources too critically. They have merely to give the signal and the people, with all its inexhaustible resources, will fall upon the oppressors.[15]

Thus the regime of Louis Bonaparte which Marx analyzed as "representing" the scattered and unorganized peasants not only raised the executive power to new heights, but did so in a manner which appeared to be "classless," that is, to dissolve class differences before the authority it exercised, to erect a national unity on the powerlessness of all classes.

But Marx understood that this apparent reality was a sham, behind which stood the actual interests of a particular class, for whom the dissolution of other centers of power was necessary as a way to guarantee its ability to survive. The peasants wanted all classes to be reduced to their own state of weakness.

> The struggle seems to be settled in such a way that all classes, equally impotent and equally mute, fall on their knees before the rifle butt. . . .
>
> Only under the second Bonaparte does the state seem to have made itself completely independent. As against civil society, the state machine has consolidated its position. . . .
>
> And yet the state power is not suspended in mid air. Bonaparte represents a class, the small-holding [Parzellen] peasants.[16]

Yet only one aspect of the petty bourgeoisie was represented, that which tries to cling to their ever more tenuous property:

> But let there be no misunderstanding. The Bonaparte dynasty represents not the revolutionary, but the conservative peasant; not the peasant that strikes out beyond the conditions of his social existence, the small holding, but rather the peasant who wants to consolidate this holding, not the country folk who, linked up with the towns, want to overthrow the old order through their own energies, but on the contrary those who, in stupified seclusion within this old order, want to see themselves and their small holdings saved and favoured by the ghost of the empire. It represents not the enlightenment, but the superstition of the peasant; not his judgment, but his prejudice; not his future, but his past; not his modern Cevennes, but his modern Vendee.[17]

Such reactionary hopes by the small-holding stratum are merely "the hallucinations of its death struggle."[18]

The dreams of the peasants for the restoration of Napoleonic glory therefore reflected their class basis, but

in these goals the French petty bourgeois peasantry was to be frustrated by the puffed-up farce that was Louis Bonaparte. Having betrayed the proletariat in the revolution of 1848, the petty bourgeoisie was itself powerless after 1851 to prevent its own betrayal in turn by its "leader," Napoleon III. Faced with the coup which the new Emperor had already carried out, as Marx noted, "the bourgeoisie had now no choice but to elect Bonaparte," who thereby reciprocated by viewing it "to be his mission to safeguard 'bourgeois order.'"[19] Marx continues:

> But the strength of this bourgeois order lies in the middle class. He looks on himself, therefore, as the representative of the middle class and issues decrees in this sense. Nevertheless, he is somebody solely due to the fact that he has broken the political power of this middle class and daily breaks it anew. Consequently, he looks on himself as the adversary of the political and literary middle class. But by protecting its material power, he generates its political power anew. The cause must accordingly be kept alive; but the effect, where it manifests itself, must be done away with.[20]

The petty bourgeoisie were thus both the basis, and the victims, of the imperial regime which they had so eagerly supported.

In spite of its middle class "cover," it was in fact the big capitalists, not the petty bourgeoisie, who were to profit most of all from this concentration of state power under Napoleon III:

> Louis Bonaparte took the political power from the capitalists under the pretext of protecting them, the bourgeois, from the workers, and on the other hand the workers from them; but in return his rule encouraged speculation and industrial activity--in a word, the

> upsurgence and enrichment of the whole bourgeoisie to an extent hitherto unknown.[21]

Or as another student of the same era notes:

> Above all, the Second Empire was a great period of accumulation of capital, an expansionist though speculative financing. The most important writer of the time, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, called it an epoch of 'industrial feudalism'. The Banks were the motor of industrial expansion. . . .
>
> . . . In France, both then and now, capitalism depended considerably on help and support from the State, which often undertook projects that private speculators were too timid to develop.[22]

Thus the petty bourgeois reaction of the 1850s led only to an increase in the power of the capitalists, including the wildest speculation, supported in every way by the state, a development denounced even by its archtypical representative, Proudhon. Its dreams of glory died with defeat by Germany in the war of 1870.

One consequence of this was a resurgence of proletarian revolution, and indeed to heights never before reached, in the Paris Commune of 1871, in which the working class formed a government backed by armed workers. The Second Empire had thus increased, not eliminated, capitalist contradictions. But as the crisis of capitalism deepens, the bourgeoisie know well how to use the ever-recurring reactionary yearnings of the petty bourgeoisie for a "classless" state, its dreams of a patriotic nation and renewed empire, its willingness to turn against the proletariat whenever there seem to be gains to be made from alliance with the capitalists. With its own power increasingly challenged by the working class, and with

crises of unprecedented proportion weakening its hold on society as a whole, big capital itself sought the protection of an all-powerful "executive authority." The proto-fascist aspects of the Second Empire in France, which reflected the weakness and disorganization of the peasant farmers, in turn give way to the full-blown terror of fascism, as the bourgeoisie itself stepped in to help finance and organize the most reactionary and economically threatened petty bourgeois elements. This is made all the easier by the growing dependence of the petty bourgeoisie on the capitalist state, developments which were accelerating by the turn of the century.

Though arising at first out of the spontaneous drive of the petty bourgeois class for relief from the crises of capitalism and the growing power of the proletariat, fascism is everywhere converted at an early stage into an arm of the big capitalists, the representatives of rural reactionary bourgeois landowning and of financial and industrial monopoly, who bankroll it and provide it with "respectable" cover.

> Petty-bourgeois, ex-servicemen's and other movements spring up. The bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie no longer can tolerate the existing regime; they want to change it.
>
> This is the ground on which fascism arises.
>
> When is this movement among the petty bourgeoisie transformed into a unified movement? . . . It is transformed when a new factor intervenes; when the most reactionary forces of the bourgeoisie intervene as an organizing factor.[23]

The petty bourgeois fascists who hope to escape the "vice" of capitalist contradictions by helping to crush the proletariat and its revolutionary forces thereby find themselves once more in the power of the bankers and largest industrialists, who use them against the working class and socialist movements, solidifying economic control with terroristic state power.

> "The ultimate succcess of national socialism," A.R.L. Gurland, O. Kirchheimer, and F. Neumann have recalled, "was due to a large extent to its ability to use the frustrations of [small-business] groups for its own purposes. Small business wanted to retain its independence and have an adequate income. But it was not allowed to do this. The Nazis directed the resentment of small businessmen against labor and against the Wiemar Republic, which appeared to be, and to some extent was, the creation of the German labor movement . . . the frustrations of small businessmen, created primarily by the process of concentration, were not directed against the industrial and financial monopolies, but against those groups that appeared to have attained more security at the expense of small business. . . ."[24]

Thus the focus of the fascistic movement is diverted from the monopoly capitalist and imperialist forces which are crushing the petty bourgeoisie, and turn it instead against the proletariat.

The inevitable consequence is the purging of any petty bourgeois forces which are initially opposed to big capital, the remnants of the "anti-capitalist" or "socialistic" side of the fascist or "national socialist" movements, such as the "plebeian forces" which were purged in Italy in the 1920s, and the Storm Troopers led by Ernst Roehm, crushed by Hitler in June, 1934.[25] The biggest

bourgeoisie therefore move behind a screen of "middle class" reaction to impose a fascistic terror which attempts to crush the rising forces of working-class revolution and renew the possibility of capitalist expansionism. The petty bourgeoisie gain no real power in this process, in spite of partial and temporary material gains in some cases, and in time they find themselves ever more heavily oppressed under the "executive authority" and its costly military preparations, while big capital enriches itself even faster at their expense.

The fascistic hallucination, which at first seems a way to lift the pressure of rapid proletarianization, thus ends as a nightmare for the petty bourgeoisie themselves. Instead of dominating capitalism and bringing it under control, it is rendered powerless as the lesser faction in an unequal and fatal "alliance" from which it gains release only in the defeat of civil or imperialist war. For fascism is an outgrowth of the era of imperialism, in which capitalism is increasingly moribund and can no longer save itself by means of constant growth. This phenomenon arises first in those capitalist countries excluded from full membership in the imperialist "club," in which the contradictions of failing capitalism therefore reach an early peak, in which proletarianization of the petty bourgeoisie is more rapid, and in which the hope for national renewal in a purifying patriotism as the basis for

economic expansionism is most evident. Thus in the country where fascism was born:

> Italian big business had still another reason to subsidize the fascist gangs. The youthful Italian imperialism had arrived too late in a world where all the best places were already preempted. It had been lucky to get a crumb from the feast--the sandy deserts of Tripoli.[26]

Denied the territories which it had been promised for its joining in the anti-German coalition of World War I, Italian capitalism supported the fascists as a base for its own imperialist claims.

In this process, fascism feeds on the narrow nationalism of the petty bourgeoisie:

> Fascism's game is to call itself anti-capitalist without seriously attacking capitalism. It first endeavors to transmute the anti-capitalism of the masses into nationalism. An easy task! In all periods, as we have seen, the hostility of the middle classes towards big capital is accompanied by a tenacious attachment to the idea of the nation. . . . Hence fascism has no difficulty in shielding its financial backers from popular anger by diverting anti-capitalism of the masses to the "international plutocracy."[27]

The specific product of fascism is therefore that genocidal nationalism directed at all those who are perceived as "diluting" or foreign to the national body, or who represent those aspects of cosmopolitanism or internationalism believed to weaken the total patriotic will. In the resulting holocaust, the petty bourgeoisie must also end up suffering. The memory of petty bourgeois reactionaries is short, however, in part due to the very disorganization of their class which leaves them largely

incapable of transferring from generation to generation or country to country their own history.

Thus as the frustration of imperialist ambitions and the contradictions of "late capitalism" bring the petty bourgeoisie ever more rapidly face to face with the threat of massive proletarianization, fascist tendencies appear in one nation after another. In fact, fascism may be considered a special product of those petty bourgeoisie who are suffering from or threatened with proletarianization and pauperization, which makes them more semi-proletarian, at least in their ideological orientation, than truly "middle class," though it may also express the desire for imperialist expansion among those who believe they should move "up" toward big capitalist status.[28] Except that it must be added that where imperialism has previously "succeeded" temporarily, they may now be joined by a portion of the "aristocrats of labor," who seek in the same fascistic state control the illusion of lasting security. Thus:

> From <u>above</u>, fascism recruited from those known as the "aristocracy of labor." It succeeded in attracting a certain number of those who already considered themselves above their class. . . . In Germany, especially, National Socialism gathered in those formerly privileged wage earners who blamed the Social Democracy and the unions for not having been able to achieve their petty-bourgeois ideal.[29]

The capitalists and their state representatives, of course, know very well how to manipulate such sentiments.

Thus as even the most powerful imperialisms lose their unchallenged economic dominance, proving incapable of meeting domestic needs for jobs and social welfare, while clinging to militarism and exploitation of the Third World, it is possible for fascism to arise in any capitalist nation. The dream of a "classless" state under which the contradictions of late capitalism and imperialism will be suppressed, of a paternalistic power protecting them from elimination, of that patriotic and militaristic aggressiveness which can acquire wealth from foreign lands, all find easy acceptance among many petty bourgeoisie, semi-proletarians, and labor aristocrats in their desperation and unrealized hopes. Of course in most cases the majority of these classes do not turn in a formal way to fascism, though in the extremes of Depression large numbers may do so. But because of the inherent weakness of the "middle classes" under capitalism, they remain a fertile breeding ground for such ideologies, while their very lack of any clear alternative political program makes them susceptible to the most reactionary positions.

With the relative loss of economic preeminance suffered by United States imperialism over the last decades, and as Black, Latino, and womens' liberation movements challenge the power of whites and males for power, it is not surprising that fascistic elements such as the white supremacist organizations are growing in size and violence, and even gaining legitimacy as elected

representatives, among those who are facing or have already experienced partial proletarianization, and who see their positions further deteriorating. The capitalists and their state representatives, from the Oval Office on down, fan such sentiments with racist demagoguery at home, and imperialist wars against Third World nations abroad, complete with the demonization of their leaders, as affirmations of "Americanism" and to prove that the United States is still "Number One."

Fascism and proto-fascist views, however, can only bring temporary unity to just a part of the petty bourgeoisie, who are not even capable of retaining control of this movement, losing it to their own self-proclaimed heroes and the domination of big capital. Moreover, there are always substantial segments of the petty bourgeois strata who resist subordination to "executive authority" and who struggle courageously against the reactionary members in their own ranks. Indeed, among the first acts of all such movements is the destruction of the more liberal or radical petty bourgeoisie, as the class divides and "cannibalizes" itself. The suppression of the republican professionals and defenders of parliamentary democracy among the "educated classes" and artisans by Louis Bonaparte, was but a harbinger of the vast slaughter of progressives and revolutionaries by the fascists. The movements of the petty bourgeois reactionaries thus end up by weakening the class as a whole, one of the reasons why

they yield power to big capital. In fact, nothing so marks the petty bourgeoisie as its ability to simultaneously support the most varied and even contradictory ideological positions, as its many segments choose opposite poles in the shifting struggle between the workers and capitalists, or as they seek escape altogether in utopian and anarchistic political schemes.

Thus the "middle" path of the petty bourgeoisie takes many forms politically, as it tries to defend its interests against the encroachments of both the big bourgeoisie and proletariat, and of the state as the instrument of class rule. One of the earliest political and ideological battles fought by Marx was against the Russian anarchist, Mikhail Bakhunin, whose views Engels later characterized as

> a medley of Proudhonism and communism, the chief point of which is, in the first place, that he does not regard capital--therefore the class antagonism between capitalists and wage-workers which has arisen through social development--but the <u>state</u> as the main evil to be abolished.[30]

Here anti-statism replaces dependence on the statist "executive authority" as central, but in either case focus on the state seems to provide an escape from the contradictions of capitalism, without confronting the real basis of its system of classes, between which the petty bourgeoisie is being crushed. Thus the attitude of the anarchists toward the state is closely related to their "stand for disconnected small production" in the economic

sphere,[31] once again expressed in their politics and ideology.

More typical of the petty bourgeoisie, however, are its attempts to use the parliamentary institutions of the bourgeois democratic government as a means of reconciling class conflicts and avoiding being crushed between the two main classes of capitalist society. Thus: "democratic-republican institutions are demanded as a means, not of doing away with two extremes, capital and wage labour, but of weakening their antagonism and transforming it into harmony."[32] Once again, the state is seen as an essentially classless institution which can serve "democratic" ends, abstracted from the content of the class system of society. Not only is the underlying exploitation of the proletariat left entirely in place by such an approach, regardless of how much it may be ameliorated by various "welfare" reforms, but the effect of capitalist domination upon the parliamentary process itself is either entirely ignored or treated as merely a regrettable "flaw," which can be corrected by adjustments in the electoral process.

As the capitalist crises deepens, however, and particularly where the proletariat is able to mount a revolutionary challenge for control of the entire society, the petty bourgeoisie find it necessary to take sides, and in such circumstances it is even possible for them to put forth "socialist" aims. The "socialism" of the petty bourgeois strata, however, is stamped by their own class

character. That is, it is aimed primarily at relieving the pressure of big capital, rather than a complete restructuring of society in socialist form. Its hallmark is the protection or even expansion of small-scale individualistic forms of ownership, programs of gradual economic reform, a "united front" of anti-monopoly forces, and reliance on support by the state. This "socialism" does not rise above the concept, on the whole, of a federation of small owners, though it favors public control or nationalization of the big institutions of capital, such as banks, transportation systems, and so on. As Marx and Engels put it: "Its last words are: corporate guilds for manufacture, patriarchal relations in agriculture."[33] To which must be added: paternalism in government.

Such socialists generally advance the idea of a "classless" state, as Lenin noted in criticizing Karl Kautsky, typical of "the petty bourgeois who believes that 'after all is said and done' the state is something outside classes or above classes."[34] The proletariat asks "which class the 'state' serves," while the petty bourgeoisie treats it as "classless" and thus leaves it intact, in the belief that it can be used as a "neutral" instrument to protect small property from extinction.

> The petty bourgeois, at times, gets "furious" with capital, but as soon as the fit of anger is over he goes back to his old faith in the capitalists, to the hopes placed in the "state" . . . of the capitalists![35]

It is in this light that the calls of the petty bourgeoisie either for a liberal democratic parliament, without regard for the division of classes in society, or for a socialist "'people's labour state' . . . a phrase which substitutes non-class concepts for class concepts,"[36] abstracts the forms of political democracy from the content of exploitation. The ultimate such "classless" abstraction is the "nation" itself, and thus it was the petty bourgeois socialists who, despite earlier pledges, opted for "Defense of the Fatherland" in the imperialist World War I and, with few exceptions, joined the parliamentarian representatives of their class in leading "their" workers into mutual slaughter, under the banners of "national" capitalists. Thus the petty bourgeois vision of "classlessness" extends to all kinds of political and ideological categories which are turned into abstractions removed from their actual class context, and cover over the real division of classes and the economic exploitation and political oppression suffered by the proletariat, which exist even within formally democratic processes.

Theories of the "classless" state keep reviving, however, today focused on the role of "new social movements" such as feminism and ecology. Expressions of this ideological position are to be found in such works as Class and Civil Society, by Jean Cohen. Here the essential argument is that the democratic institutions of modern political life have a validity apart from the capitalist

system, that they are, in other words, not simply "bourgeois." Thus:

> Marx collapsed two quite distinct dynamics of modernity--capitalist rationalization and the countervailing process of democratization initiated through social movements. The birth of civil society was understood by Marx to entail the depoliticization of society and the monopoly of political life by the state. But the birth of society also entailed the emergence of new forms of association and of public life (bourgeois offentlichkeit) that were institutionalized in democratic constitutions as sets of rights, parliaments, due process, and publicity.[37]

Thus the protection of plurality comes through institutionalizing relations between social movements in a democratic state, rather than by a working-class struggle which aims at eliminating not only capitalism, but all classes, and thus the need for statist forms. In this theory, the proletariat is in fact reduced simply to one more element in a pluralistic society, and only requires the extension of democratic reforms to its own realm. Thus:

> Surely the <u>continued</u> importance of the workers' movement must be understood as an attempt to introduce the elements of civil society into the last untouched bastion of ascribed privilege and power--the economy.[38]

Elimination of "exploitation" simply does not make it on to this list of reforms necessary to put an end to "economic power."

Yet Cohen herself does not offer a theoretical analysis for how even these "non-class" transformations can be brought about. Despite the title of her book, it is

precisely on its key concept that she fails to provide a systematic basis for a "new" theory:

> It is of course not possible to provide a theory of civil society in the space of this conclusion. But I would argue that such a theory is indispensable to a critical stratification theory.[39]

Indeed, it is, if it has pretensions to replace Marxism and class as the basis for a programmatic transformation of modern society. But Cohen herself does not offer one. Instead she concludes:

> Today this critique must be transcended by a theory that explores the institutional domain that Marxism confused with the capitalist economy and identified as bourgeois/capitalist society. For the possibility of a modern but postcapitalist democratic society can be made plausible only if, beyond the analysis of systematic dysfunctioning and of the new normative potentials of social movements, we are able to show that the implicit dynamism of the institutions of civil society, of democratic political cultures do not exclude the possibility of a socialist and pluralist civil society.[40]

This reference to "socialism" is a virtual throw-away, for Cohen has not discussed in any systematic way the elimination of the bases of capitalist "power," first and foremost exploitation. She has failed to heed her own warning to the social movements, that they should not simply "renounce the institutional dimension of society" because: "The sovereign power of the state and the coercive power of the capitalist economy they hope to bypass have the nasty habit of returning to frustrate their projects."[41] But her own theory offers no guidelines to how capitalism and its institutionalized statist powers can be overcome, since it treats the capitalist economy as just another

problem of "democracy," rather than an arena of irreconcilable class struggle.

An historical critique puts in context the theoretical basis and political content of these concepts of democracy based on "new" social movements. As Ellen Meiksins Wood shows in The Retreat from Class: A New 'True' Socialism, such expressions of politics and ideology go back 150 years, and they were analyzed even then by the founding Marxists in terms relevant to today:

> In the 1840's Marx and Engels directed some of their most eloquent polemics against an intellectual current described as 'true' socialism. The 'true' socialists, they wrote in The German Ideology, 'innocently take on trust the illusion . . . that it is a question of the "most reasonable" social order and not the needs of a particular class and a particular time.'[42]

For Wood, the essential aspects of this critique apply equally to modern theories:

> In the 1980's, we seem to be witnessing a revival of 'true' socialism. The new 'true' socialism (NTS), which prides itself on a rejection of Marxist 'economism' and 'class-reductionism', has virtually excised class and class struggle from the socialist project. . . . Instead, a socialist movement can be constructed by ideological and political means which are relatively (absolutely?) autonomous from economic class conditions, motivated not by the crude material interests of class but by the rational appeal of 'universal human goods' and the reasonableness of the socialist order. These theoretical devices effectively expel the working class from the centre of the socialist project and displace class antagonisms by cleavages of ideology or 'discourse'.[43]

Such an ideology constitutes a "new revisionism," which despite internal differences, has "certain shared political principles."

Among the latter are, "most notably the rejection of the primacy of class politics in favour of 'democratic struggles' especially as they are conducted by the 'new social movements.'"[44] "In fact, it may even be possible to replace the concept of socialism with the notion of 'radical democracy".[45] This yields:

> The idea that capitalist democracy need only be 'extended' to produce socialism, or that socialism represents a higher ideal of life capable of appealing to all right-minded people irrespective of class. . . .[46]

On this basis: "the NTS project necessarily ascribes to intellectuals a predominant role in the socialist project, insofar as it relies on them to carry out no less a task than the construction of 'social agents' by means of ideology or discourse."[47] The proletariat, with its crude material needs and economistic interests, may be less suited to the task. "At the very least, the NTS all have one premise in common: the working class has no privileged position in the struggle for socialism, in that its class situation does not give rise to socialist politics any more naturally or readily than does any other."[48]

In such theories, capitalism has in effect already been superceded, or so transformed that it no longer represents the sole, or even the main, foundation of social oppression. But:

> The point is simply that none of these alternatives has been supported by a systematic reassessment of the social forces that constitute capitalism and its critical strategic targets. The typical mode of these alternative visions is voluntaristic utopia or counsel of despair--or, as is often the case, both at once: a

> vision of a transformed society without real hope for a process of transformation.[49]

According to these theories, in "late capitalism," the primary social struggle has shifted from class to other dimensions or axes:

> More particularly, their strategy is based on the conviction that, in the 'monopoly phase' of capitalism, a new opposition has emerged alongside--and even overtaking--the old class opposition between exploiters and exploited, capital and labour. In 'state monopoly capitalism', there is a new opposition between monopolistic forces, united and organized by the state, and the 'people' or 'popular masses'.[50]

The political implication is therefore the call for a

> "'popular alliance', a cross-class alliance based on the assumption that a substantial majority of the population including the petty bourgeoisie and even elements of the bourgeoisie, not just the traditional working class, can be won over to the cause of socialism. It is precisely this new reality that makes possible a 'peaceful and democratic' transition to socialism.[51]

Wood notes that the very ability to flourish where the working-class struggle has met with defeat, "their unity and popular appeal depend upon <u>abstracting</u> the issues of peace or ecology from the prevailing social order and the conflicting social interests that comprise it."[52] Thus their present predominance

> may be available to the new social movements only as long as they maintain their distance from the central core, the 'decisive relations,' of the economy only as long as these social issues are made to appear sufficiently distant from the centre of the capitalist order not to challenge it in any fundamental way--which may account for the 'active and substantial ' presence of the new movements in 'almost every area of life except' the economy."[53]

Were such movements to challenge the "heart" of capitalism, they might soon find "peaceful transition" to be very much in doubt.

The combination of her historical references to the criticism of "true" socialism made by Marx and Engels, together with her own "classical" Marxist defense of the role of the proletariat, makes it all the more amazing that Wood herself fails to make a clear identification of the class nature of the ideology she opposes. Thus she suggests only that:

> It would be interesting to speculate about the historical and sociological reasons for this curious detachment from reality--for example, about whether it is the ideological representation of a specific social interest in its own right; at any rate, we can at least expose its faulty theoretical foundations.[54]

In terms of class analysis, however, her "speculation" ends here. Yet immediately following the lines quoted by Wood above from The German Ideology, Marx and Engels stated that:

> It [true socialism] turns as a result not to the proletarians but to the two most numerous classes of men in Germany, to the petty bourgeoisie with its philanthropic illusions and to the ideologists of this very same petty bourgeoisie: the philsophers and their disciples; it turns, in general, to that "common", or uncommon, consciousness which at present rules in Germany.[55]

In the section from the Manifesto, entitled "German, or 'True,' Socialism," which Wood also quotes, Marx and Engels elaborate on this "common consciousness which at present rules in Germany," making clear its class base:

> While this "True" Socialism thus served the governments as a weapon for fighting the German

> bourgeoisie, it, at the same time, directly represented a reactionary interest, the interest of the German Philistines. In Germany the petty-bourgeois class, a relic of the sixteenth century, and since then constantly cropping up again under various forms, is the real social basis of the existing state of things.
>
> To preserve this class is to preserve the existing state of things in Germany. The industrial and political supremacy of the bourgeoisie threatens it with certain destruction; on the one hand, from the concentration of capital; on the other, from the rise of a revolutionary proletariat. "True" Socialism appeared to kill these two birds with one stone. It spread like an epidemic.[56]

The "new true" socialism, like the "old," is petty bourgeois.

Wood fails to make a specific identification of the class basis of this ideological trend she opposes. But the essence of the Marxist analysis of classes is just such specificity. To "forget" to mention that "true" socialism is petty bourgeois, to reject that clarity, is to reproduce the very obscurantism Wood denounces. It is, in fact, her own "retreat from class." She is thus correct when she notes that the "new social movements" can raise certain universalistic interests, but that they are unable to carry them through to full fruition. What she fails to show is that this has always been the "role" of the petty bourgeoisie. Marx recognized that it is the function of the undifferentiated mass of "the people," led by the "middle class," including its own "socialists," to give voice to universal goals, but they remain utopian as long as they are only petty bourgeois. Their idealist expressions thus may "run ahead" of the proletarian

socialist movement, in part because they can be more fully the pure creations of the mind, without reference to "hard reality."

This is one of the senses in which the "new" strata make up, as Gouldner called it, a "flawed universal class," for they do seem to represent the initial goals toward which even the working class itself is striving: a rewarding self-activity to their work, relatively full return on the value of their labor, and the ability to participate freely in a democratic social process. The "only" problem is that "you can't get there from here." For not only does the "new class" have its own narrow self-interests that prevent it, despite its "popular" cover, from universalizing the characteristics of its own relations, but it cannot even hold on to the gains that it has made when the inevitable capitalist counterattacks come. Today we see the "new social movements" in deep trouble, and most vulnerable at just those points where they have failed to address adequately the issues of class. Thus the right to an abortion is attacked where government must pay for the medical care of poor women, while the environmental movement loses ground when its claims collide with the harsh reality that under capitalism ecology often means loss of jobs, and the local autonomy groups find that they are the recipients of a "pass the buck" policy in which the federal and state governments are

in fact passing the absence of "bucks" onto their communities.

There are innumerable schools of this petty bourgeois socialism, but the differences between them tend to be ones of detail rather than basic content. In Europe, under Proudhonist and Owenite influence, they have tended toward tax reform, credit unions, and labor cooperatives. In the United States, as always, land questions played a decisive role as well. One of the earliest flowerings of petty bourgeois socialism in America was therefore based on the "universal" distribution of farms to the impoverished masses. In 1846 Herman Kriege, an associate of Marx, put forward such a program, based on "inalienable common property" in the 1.4 billion undistributed acres of land, to be parcelled out in 160 acre lots to individual farmers, free of any future commercial transactions, and worked by those who possessed it. By this, Kriege announced, "'an end will be put to poverty in America at one stroke.'"[57]

> "Every poor man," wrote Kriege, "will become a useful member of human society as soon as he is given an opportunity to engage in productive work. He will be assured such an opportunity for all time if society gives him a piece of land on which he can keep himself and his family."[58]

Marx denounced the Utopian naivete of this concept, calculating that there would in fact be only enough land for 8.75 million farmers, hardly enough to free "'the whole of mankind'" from impoverishment and exploitation, but

instead a basis merely to restore petty bourgeois monopoly to a few.

Moreover, it was not the working class that would primarily benefit from such schemes:

> "And who are the Europeans whose 'dreams' would thus come true? Not the communist workers, but bankrupt shopkeepers and handicraftsmen, or ruined cottars, who yearn for the good fortune of once again becoming petty bourgeois and peasants in America. And what is the 'dream' that is to be fulfilled by means of these 1,400,000,000 acres? No other than that all men be converted into private owners, a dream that is as unrealisable and as communistic as the dream to convert all men into emperors, kings, and popes."[59]

In fact, as Marx noted, the spread of landholding by the petty bourgeoisie would inevitably lead in turn to commercial exchange, if not in land, then in its products, to the hiring of labor, and thus to capitalism. Marx actually advocated support of this movement, even though "instead of fraternity, you will get petty bourgeois exclusiveness," not because it would raise all workers up into the "middle class," but precisely because it would strengthen the basis for capitalist expansion and therefore of the proletariat![60] In this sense: "He recognizes the petty-bourgeois movement as a peculiar initial form of the proletarian, communist movement."[61] But it is so only because it reflects in idealistic terms the goals which the proletariat must achieve through class struggle. Lenin thus characterized Kriege and his plans as "the petty-bourgeois theory of this quasi-socialism."[62]

Such theories also have their modern counterparts, now directed at the "new" professionals, who are trying to save themselves from the looming prospect of proletarianization. In Fear of Falling: The Inner Life of the Middle Class, Barbara Ehrenreich analyzes the pressures and polarizations which the petty bourgeois class is undergoing, and the defenses which have been raised ideologically around it. Here the central theme is "the retreat from liberalism and the rise, in the professional middle class, of a meaner, more selfish outlook, hostile to the aspirations of those less fortunate."[63] This change has been shaped by two main developments, the discovery of their "middleness" by certain strata, in relation to the "others" of the working class and the "poor," and internal polarization and external changes which threaten this middle with extinction and thus drive it toward a defensive selfishness. Most notable is the "yuppie strategy," which led its striving practitioners to "renounce the usual perquisites of middle-class life--an interesting, prestigious profession at a middling income--for quick money."[64]

> The costs of heightened consumption demand still longer hours of empty labor--which must, in turn, be compensated with more consumption. Hence the addictive frenzy of the "yuppie strategy." Hence, too, one more source of momentum for the forces of polarization and deepening class inequality.[65]

Thus the professional "middle" threatens its own existence from within, by a polarizing search for "quick money."

Such an analysis demolishes the "myth of classlessness," and focuses on those contradictions which are today rending the professional and other "new" strata, and their struggles with the other classes of modern society. However "the way out does not lie through a simple revival of professionalism":

> But if we start with what needs to be done, we can see that the middle class's anxious sense of scarcity is in no small part self-imposed. There is potentially no limit to the demand for skilled, creative, and caring people, no limit to the problems to be solved, the needs to be met by human craft and agency.[66]

The problem, therefore, is for professionals to overcome the "mentality of scarcity," for "it has no place in the realm of conscious, responsible, effort and achievement."[67]

> In an egalitarian future, there would be enough work to go around, and work pleasurable enough so that all will want it. This is not a matter of "lowering standards," but of opening doors: removing artificial barriers and expanding educational opportunity to all comers. . . .
>
> This, very simply, should be the program of the professional middle class and the agenda it brings to any broader movement for equality and social justice: to expand the class, welcoming everyone, until there remains no other class.[68]

"Very simply," in other words, the professional middle class response to the challenges which threaten it with elimination should be--the expansion of the professional middle class. If everyone could get a good education like them, then everyone would have a chance to live like them. Capitalism and its basis in the exploitation of the proletariat simply dissolves in the infinitely expanding

"middle," whose members takes the lead in "raising up" the workers and other oppressed groups.

In the process, of course, the professionals save themselves and "their" class.

> This is, in fact, almost the defining dream of the American left: that discontented members of the middle class might join the working-class majority in a political effort to redistribute both power and wealth downward, to those who need them most. As the dream unfolds into the future, class ceases to be a meaningful dimension of human variety. The steep gradients of wealth and poverty, power and helplessness, are abolished, and genuine democracy can take root, at last, in level ground.
>
> For the point of discussing class is ultimately to abolish it. Tax the rich and enrich the poor until both groups are absorbed into some broad and truly universal middle class. The details are subject to debate: You can emphasize better jobs and wages or you can offer a guaranteed income that circumvents the labor market. Or you can emphasize services (such as education, health care, housing, child care) that improve the lives of everyone and widen the opportunities of those in need. Probably all of these things should be done, in some considered combination, until America truly begins to resemble what it once believed itself to be: a classless, even-tempered society where the most pressing problems have to do with the "quality of life" rather than the quantity of human misery.[69]

In this "democratic dream of the American left," "socialism" is not even mentioned as one of the goals. The "classless, even-tempered society" is to be achieved directly, without the messy necessity of passing through the stages of class struggle, much less of socialist revolution.

But even such reformism is a pious utopianism in an era when schools in the United States are in a state of scandalous crisis, with vast numbers of working-class

children being denied the most elementary education, the result of deep contradictions within capitalism which can hardly be solved by "middle class" altruism and the universal spreading of professionalism. The "details" are indeed debatable. It is the strategy, however, that is at issue in this "tax the rich" and "spread the education" road to classlessness. Not only the solution, but the very language, is a throwback to Kreige, and is as utopian for the "new" petty bourgeoisie as it was for the "old." In this "peculiar initial form" of the proletarian movement, the advance which Ehrenreich makes in rejecting the "myth of classlessness" turns into its opposite and takes on its own form of "classless" utopianism, just as the earlier essay by the Ehrenreichs on the "PMC" turned a brilliant historical review into an ahistorical theory by its attack on "Orthodox" Marxism and its lack of any serious examination of the petty bourgeoisie.

Despite their opposing politics, the petty bourgeois socialists share certain underlying concepts with the other members of their class who adopt parliamentary or right-wing ideologies. The political expressions of the petty bourgeoisie therefore have a basic underlying similarity regardless of whether they are anarchist or statist, or are found in right-wing, centrist, or left-wing form, are the yearning of the small businesspersons for a return to "simple" ways or are an expression of a modernist professionalism. The fundamental characteristics are:

reformist opposition to big capital, usually in the form of "anti-monopoly" resistance to the threat of proletarianization; belief in the ability to absorb others into the "middle class" as a way of avoiding the conflicts of classes; and faith in their ability to create a "classless" alternative to the contradictions of capitalism, especially through the state, without going through the cataclysm of class struggle.

Though these basic similarities run through all petty bourgeois political life, they do not easily lead to unity within the class, for they take opposing forms which express the particular circumstances of various strata. Thus the "older" elements are in general more inclined to look backward to the days of their forebearers who built up their small patrimony "independently," the managers are usually more content with parliamentary "neutralism," while the professionals are more forward looking, since their livelihoods depends in general of "problem solving" and in devising modern means to "harmonize" existing class conflicts. These divisions often parallel those of the "right," "center," and "left." The underlying striving for a classless "autonomy," however, while refusing to abandon opportunities to benefit from the bourgeois order of society, marks all the different strata of the petty bourgeoisie, and provide a basis for unity under all its many manifestations.

Divisions hinder its ability to play an independent class role, but it pursues a common goal historically nonetheless, one which challenges the capitalists, but refuses to dismantle the basic exploitative relations of capitalism in a systematic manner. In general, of course, none of the different political alternatives advanced by this class is able to win the allegiance of the petty bourgeoisie as a whole, and the majority are usually involved primarily in more limited defenses of their immediate "autonomy." As long as there is room for them to maneuver between the two main classes of capitalist society, they generally will seek the path of least resistance and try to avoid taking a definitive stand on the basic class contradictions. To give ideological cover to this political stance, they cling desperately to the belief that they are themselves in essence "classless." This denial of the contradictory nature of their own class position, and their faith that they can therefore somehow escape the conflict of classes, is what really provides the petty bourgeoisie with their most fundamental unity.

NOTES

1. Hofstadter, The Age of Reform, 45-46.

2. Mills, "The Middle Classes in Middle-Sized Cities," 524.

3. Ibid., 525.

4. Lenin, "Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.), 148.

5. Mills, "The Middle Classes in Middle-Sized Cities," 528.

6. New York Times, Fall Survey of Education, sec. 12, November 16, 1980, 35.

7. New York Times, Winter Survey of Education, sec. 12, January 9, 1983, 17-18.

8. New York Times, August 8, 1975, 25. The quotes are from Dr. Max H. Parrott.

9. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 243.

10. Not infrequently, however, these two groups split, with the "old" petty bourgeoisie welcoming big capitalist investment, while professionals, who will generally not gain directly from "development," and will see their quality of life deteriorate, oppose it.

11. See Nathan Fine, Labor and Farmer Parties in the United States, 1828-1928 (New York: Russell & Russell, 1961).

12. Hofstadter, The Age of Reform, 47.

13. Ibid. 155.

14. Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," 334.

15. Ibid., 278.

16. Ibid., 332-33.

17. Ibid., 335.

18. Ibid., 340.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., 340-41.

21. Frederick Engels, "Introduction" to Karl Marx, "The Civil War in France," in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 1, 476.

22. Stewart Edwards, The Paris Commune 1871 (New York: Quadrangle/The New York Times Book Co., 1971), 3.

23. Palmiro Togliatti, Lectures on Fascism (New York: International Publishers, 1976), 11.

24. Mills, White Collar, 53-54. No further citation is given for the quotation from Gurland et al.

25. See Daniel Guerin, Fascism and Big Business, trans. Frances Merrill and Mason Merrill (New York: Monad Press, distributed by Pathfinder Press, 1973), chap. 6, "The Rise and Fall of the Fascist Plebeians," 130-56.

26. Ibid., 29.

27. Ibid., 77-78.

28. Ibid., 42-43.

29. Ibid., 60.

30. Frederick Engels, London, to T. Cuno, January 24, 1872, in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 2, 467.

31. V. I. Lenin, "Letters from Afar, Third Letter, Concerning a Proletarian Militia," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 23, 325.

32. Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," 275.

33. Marx and Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," 57.

34. Lenin, "The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky," 261.

35. V. I. Lenin, "The Petty-Bourgeois Stand on the Question of Economic Organisation," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 24, 562.

36. Lenin, "The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky," 325.

37. Cohen, Class and Civil Society, 226.

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid., 224.

40. Ibid., 228.

41. Ibid., 227.

42. Wood, The Retreat from Class, 1.

43. Ibid., 1-2.

44. Ibid., 2.

45. Ibid., 4.

46. Ibid., 7.

47. Ibid., 6.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid., 15.

50. Ibid., 19.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid., 176.

53. Ibid., 172.

54. Ibid., 186.

55. Marx and Engels, The German Ideology, 483.

56. Marx and Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," 59.

57. V. I. Lenin, "Marx on the American 'General Redistribution,'" in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 8, 324.

58. Ibid., 324.

59. Ibid., 327. Lenin is here quoting Marx.

60. Ibid., 328.

61. Ibid.

62. V. I. Lenin, "The Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, 1905-1907," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 13, 276.

63. Barbara Ehrenreich, Fear of Falling: The Inner Life of the Middle Class (New York: Pantheon Books, 1989), 3.

64. Ibid., 240.

65. Ibid., 262.

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid.

68. Ibid., 262-63.

69. Ibid., 256-57.

CHAPTER 20

THE SPECIAL FUNCTION AND PROGRAM OF THE PROFESSIONAL PETTY BOURGEOISIE

Despite their general characteristics as members of the same class, each stratum of the petty bourgeoisie carries out its own historical function in the development of bourgeois society and capitalism, and in relation to the working class. These functions are contradictory in nature, temporarily strengthening the position of each part of the petty bourgeois class, while at the same time preparing an historic advance that increases the power of the proletariat. The "traditional" petty bourgeoisie, the "self-employed" owners of small businesses, contribute toward bringing the working class into existence by developing the forces of capitalism that polarize the "middle classes" into big owners on the one hand and a much larger number of propertyless workers on the other. Of course, in this process they are junior partners, since it is the largest capitalists who take the lead in expropriating all other classes and driving vast numbers of formerly independent petty bourgeoisie into the proletariat.

Once created, the working class comes under the immediate control of another section of the petty bourgeois class, the managers, who help to concentrate the proletariat and to convert it into a disciplined body. Here too, their actions work primarily to the benefit of the capitalists, for it enables the latter to command the productive power of the workers at will, and to expand the output of their labor at a rate previously unimaginable. But in so doing, the bourgeoisie, with the assistance of the managerial petty bourgeoisie, also brings into being the class which will overthrow them both. The unification and concentration of the proletariat in large-scale industry lays the basis for its emergence as the leading element in the overthrow of capitalist society, for it alone is thoroughly "socialized" and capable of seizing from the hands of the capitalists the private property which they anachronistically control. Thus the small business section of the petty bourgeoisie serves to help bring the proletariat into existence, while the managerial stratum helps to mold it into the united and disciplined class that is the basis for socialist society.

For the working class to assume the leading role in social development, however, it must have more than mere physical existence and concentration, more than the discipline of the workplace itself. It must also achieve class consciousness, a unification based on the understanding of its own interests, and the ability to lead

all other progressive classes. For this, it must be educated not only in the nature of its own position, but in that of every other class, and not just in production but in all relations of society, so that it becomes the leader in every aspect of the social order. It must thus develop its own capabilities, not simply in the craft skills of industry, but in the management of production, in culture, in the tasks of administration, and in government. Without such abilities, the working class can serve as the instrument of the overthrow of the capitalists, but it will be unable itself to replace the leadership of the bourgeoisie with that of its own proletarian forces. Instead, power will of necessity pass to those who do have the necessary skills in the productive, administrative, cultural, and governmental tasks of society as a whole. Indeed, the proletariat will not even be able to unite as a class except in the narrowest relation to its immediate employment situations, unless it is able also to come together around issues which involve it in the entire social order and express its politics, ideology, and culture in contrast to that of all other classes.

Just as the working class must be concentrated in industry in order to focus its otherwise scattered forces, so too those internal barriers which divide various segments of the proletariat must be overcome if it is to realize its goal of unity across the lines of local communities, nationality, racial and sexual divisions, and

so on. It is in this sense that the professional petty bourgeoisie serve a special function in the development of bourgeois society, and of the working class. Just as the managerial stratum of the petty bourgeois class helps concentrate and discipline the proletariat in the workplace, the professionals play the same role in society at large, forcibly breaking down the remnants of local culture and community, subordinating the workers in their social life to the capitalist class, and submitting them to the intervention of the bourgeois state. The immediate results of this process are as devastating to the character of the working-class communities as the degredation of work is in the "shops." There nevertheless results a class which is potentially more powerful, with what remains of isolation, narrowness, and parochialism having been dissolved, and regionalism overcome, just as craft divisions have died out in industry, a proletariat which has become conversant with the culture and politics of the rest of society.

The role of the professional petty bourgeoisie therefore has a dual or contradictory nature, on the one hand helping to force upon the proletariat the standards of bourgeois culture and politics, but at the same time being an agent of the social unification of the working class and of its education in the cultural and political realms previously limited to the bourgeoisie and the "middle classes." Unless both of these aspects of the function of

the professionals is grasped, it will be impossible to accurately analyze their effect on the proletariat. Specifically, neither the "negative" nor "positive" aspect of the professions must be emphasized to the exclusion of the other, but rather the dialectical unity of these two must be studied in order to understand their relationship. Certain students of the professionals have laid particular stress on the way in which the latter expropriate the cultural and technical skills of workers, monopolize them for their own benefit, exclude participation by the proletariat in these fields, and subordinate its interests to those of capitalism. This has been an important point contributed by the Ehrenreichs among others, who have shown how the professions serve to "de-skill" the entire working class. To cite again one example which I have already noted above, the development of modern medical techniques often meant both the suppression and appropriation of skills, such as midwifery, which were indigenous to the proletariat in its own communities. In this case the skill was also de-feminized in favor of male "experts," and the professional attack was in fact based on the exploitation of both class and sexual forms of oppression.

Such examples call proper attention to the loss of previous skills suffered by the working class as it is increasingly subordinated in bourgeois society. Of similar significance is the process, also studied by the Ehrenreichs and cited earlier, in which the remnant

productive capacity of the proletarian community is lost to it, to be replaced by the "consumerism" of industrially-supplied commodities. These losses in production and services are compounded, moreover, by cultural alienation, in which the unity and integrity of working-class community life is shattered, and supplanted by the imposed values of the bourgeois classes and the denigration of everything which is associated with proletarian existence. Though each of these changes is directed primarily by the capitalist class, it is the petty bourgeois professionals who are the most immediate agents in the break-up of working-class communities and the appropriation of their skills. It is the professions that are also the most direct beneficiaries of this process, as their numbers swell to fill the void left by worker "de-skilling," and as they claim the right to monopolize the knowledge lost to the proletariat.

The professional petty bourgeoisie therefore plays a third and critical function in the development of the working class within bourgeois society. Just as the "traditional" petty bourgeois owners help bring that class into being and constantly provide it with new members, and as the managerial stratum concentrates the workers and disciplines them within the productive workplace, so the professionals establish a similar relation in the cultural, political, and ideological spheres. It is they who attempt to rob the proletarians of their remaining areas of

autonomous expertise, or their ability to act as an independent community. This is a function at least as important as the other two in completing the oppression of the working class and overcoming its resistance to capitalism. It is a role which has particular relevance outside the workplace, though it is also performed within the latter, in the more professional approach to labor relations by personnel offices, and in the contribution of engineers to the routinization of work.

The Ehrenreichs note that in regard to the increases in government education, social welfare guarantees, and public health measures which were largely carried out by the growing ranks of professionals: "These developments were of course progressive (both in the specific historical as well as the judgmental sense of the word). But they also represented a politically motivated penetration of working-class community life. . . ."[1] Later they summarize: "The net effect of this drive to reorganize and reshape working-class life was the social atomization of the working class. . . ."[2] Though the use of the mathematical and accounting term "net" implies that this is the conclusive result of the process being examined, it cannot be "summed up" so. The characteristics which the Ehrenreichs so correctly describe, such as the imposition of "American" values on immigrant workers, the privatization and individualization of proletarian goals, the decline of the forms of internal mutual aid and support

in working-class communities, and the "mass culture" based on commodity consumption, are only one part of the picture. If the analysis is left only at this point, it is one-sided and imcomplete.

Every class has, as it were, two "lives." One of them appears on the surface, as its position in the functioning of the social order, including those attributes which its members claim as their particular "domain." The other is the actual historical character of each class, the contradictory aspects which it produces in the very carrying out of its role in society. The bourgeoisie or capitalists, for instance, emerge as the dominant organizers of the market economy, commodity production, and large-scale industry, and see themselves as the bearer of freedom from feudalistic authority and medieval culture, which they replace with their own forms of social control, political practice, and cultural life. To them this is a "natural" development, and their rule appears to them to be permanent. However, in reality, the capitalists serve historically to bring into being the modern proletariat, which increases both in numbers and strength, becomes international in scale, and begins to achieve class consciousness and unity. In the process the "middle classes" are in great numbers proletarianized, and the way is therefore prepared for the working class to assume social power. The "permanence" of the bourgeois order turns out to be illusive, as revolutionary socialism

challenges it in one country after another, much more rapidly and globally than was the case with the age of feudalism, which lasted without challenge for centuries and required extremely protracted struggle to overcome, and which has by no means been completely eliminated to this day.

The apparent "life" of petty bourgeois professionals similarly contrasts with their actual historical role in the development of the class struggle. On the surface, the professions emerge from under feudal tutelage as part of the new bourgeois order, and expand rapidly as the latter grows in power. They seem to serve two main functions: first, through science and engineering, they help to multiply enormously the processes of production, both quantitatively and qualitatively, so that labor becomes capable of a productivity hitherto undreamed of, and with the result that in society as a whole the mass of commodities swells to a peak historic level. Secondly, and more crucial to the professionals as such, particularly in their own self-image, the professions fulfill the function of "serving" the community, meeting its needs as required by industrialization and urbanized life, notably in the massive provision of medical care, social welfare, education, and communication, among others. These two roles combine to give the professionals the aura of being the most progressive stratum in the bourgeois social order, since they represent both a productive function and a

service ideal, and appear to be capable of leading society forward by the expansion of material goods as well as by meeting the goals of welfarism. In comparison both to the reaction of feudalism and the narrow profit orientation of the capitalists, this apparent position has a certain reality.

But here too this surface appearance hides an underlying contradictory role. For like the big bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeois professionals strengthen the proletariat even as they are advancing their own "middle class" interests. In the first instance, the progress represented by the increases in education, social welfare, health care, and so on have only been won by the proletariat through decades of struggle, and are not simply invasive services imposed upon them. Thus the crucial result of the "penetration" of the professions into the working-class communities has been to make the provisions of health care, education, and so on previously reserved to the rich and middle class available to workers as well, and in fact expected by them as a right. This represents a great shift in the relations between classes, and though the actual quality of all such activities remains unequal for the proletariat, the latter is no longer excluded as it once was from whole areas of social services and culture. This is so throughout the range of professional activity, notably in the field of education, which despite its many horrors has produced in the United States an extremely

literate working class by comparison to the historic standards in other times and regions. In area after area of the professions, the workers have been drawn into the mainstream of social life where previously they stood outside, supplied only by their own inadequate forms of services and communications.

To cite one further but crucial example: the development of the mass media like television contributed to the destruction of community activities, which in an earlier and "simpler" day brought together working-class families and which provided a chance for workers to share their most immediate concerns. Anyone who has attempted to organize in proletarian communities knows what a loss is suffered when such communal sources of unity are largely broken down. Yet the same media which has helped to undermine working-class culture has at the same time brought the entire world into virtually every worker household. Of course the news which is thereby fed to workers is distorted by the worst forms of bourgeois propagandizing, and the cultural values which are taught are largely despicable in their violence and coarseness. But knowledge of the outside world, not excluding the struggles of workers throughout the globe, is nevertheless in some form brought to the working class, and this education awaits only its necessary "conversion" under proper conditions for its value to be realized, replacing its reactionary content with a class-conscious proletarian

one, with the potential for the worldwide unity of this form of knowledge.

The appropriation of the culture of the workers, and of oppressed people in general, by petty bourgeois professionals, and its change into forms which dampen the struggle of the former while promoting the image which the professions hold of themselves, is also evident in TV. Thus there was a glut of programs that flow from the previous struggles of the "movement," but which turn them into their opposite or divert them into "harmless" and degrading channels. For instance, the urban uprisings of Blacks and the organized anti-police campaign of the Black Panthers, led to a virtual torrent of "cop" programs that idolized the "blue knights" as defenders of society. By contrast, the actual struggles of workers, Blacks, women, and so forth have been turned almost invariably into "situation comedies," in which the foibles of these less valuable but uppity social elements can be mined for laughs. "All in the Family," "Sanford and Son," "The Jeffersons," and their many successors, represent this approach. The latter must, in turn, be compared with those programs which focus on the situation of professionals such as the medical coroner "Quincy," or journalists like "Lou Grant," which despite their comic aspects, treat seriously the actual conditions and problems encountered in the work of those in professions. These are shown suffering, not primarily the consequences of their own prejudices, as is

generally the case with those programs devoted to workers, Blacks, and so on, but rather from the "real life" difficulties of a professional field, even including, of course, token portrayals of "struggles" with the bosses and administrators, that is, with the big bourgeoisie.

Thus the petty bourgeois professionals promote their own desires for autonomy, even as they serve the interests of the capitalists by directing the proletarian and other movements into reformist channels and disparaging their goals. Even these developments, however, only begin to capture the full impact of the "penetration" of the professions into the working-class community. For precisely because, as the analysis of the Ehrenreichs noted, that intervention served a political purpose, and was largely implemented through governmental actions, it has also had the result of drawing the workers into the realm of politics. Of course, here too the effect takes place only within the confines of a smothering petty bourgeois professionalism and overall capitalist goals. In pursuing their own interests, professionals therefore can in general only lead the working class into reformist acceptance of "the system," which from the standpoint of the capitalists is the major reason why the professional "penetration" of proletarian life is promoted in the first place. Nevertheless, the bourgeoisie cannot intervene politically in every aspect of the life of the proletariat without at the same time "politicizing" its relations to

that class, not incidentally, but in each area of social activity.

No longer do the capitalists oppress the working class in political ways primarily through legislation, the police, and the courts alone, where their domination was starkly revealed. Now in every realm of social activity the two classes are enmeshed politically, with the petty bourgeois professionals serving as the main intermediaries. Today even the "lowliest" working-class family on unemployment or welfare is drawn into a daily political struggle to obtain its minimal means of existence, in which it is introduced to all the intricacies of the social security and public assistance administrations, and to the legal system, through means of "fair hearings" and appeal processes, in which the decisions of every level of government have an immediate impact on its life. Despite the efforts of many professionals to keep the "rules" of such activities secret as a way to preserve their own monopoly of power and the workings of "the system," in reality the knowledge of these matters spreads rapidly through the communities of the working class and provides a significant basis for their organization. In the widest range of their relations, to schools, welfare and social security agencies, medical facilities, and so forth, each in turn becomes the battleground in a political class struggle, in which proletarians are "educated" in the

workings of the society, and made aware of their relationship to all the other classes which oppress them.

It is for this reason among others that the "net" impact of the professionals on the working class cannot be simplistically described as "atomization." If that result does indeed occur on certain levels of proletarian life, there is produced at the same time other forms of unification of the class as a whole. This is demonstrable from the actual history of the United States labor movement. For instance, early attempts at organization of trade unions among the mass of industrial workers ran into opposition not only from the craft spirit of the old A.F.L., but also from the exclusion of immigrants, Blacks, and women and other oppressed groups which accompanied it. Even those, such as the Industrial Workers of the World, or "Wobblies," who did commit themselves to union organizing in the basic industries ran headlong against the divisions in the working class which made any such unification hard. In the 1912 textile strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts, for example, fully 25 nationalities speaking 45 languages were present, leaflets had to be put out for all the major groups separately, and the strike committee resembled a small United Nations. Despite the most heroic and temporarily successful efforts of the Wobbly organizers to overcome such difficulties, there were from the beginning deep divisions between the various groups of workers, in which the native-born or the English-speaking among the

older immigrant elements, and the most recent arrivals, each tended to pursue their own interests, generally more conservative in the former cases and more militant in the latter groups.

Such barriers did not prevent the strike from ending in victory, but much of what was gained was later lost, due in part to the ability of the employers to play off one nationality against another, a pattern which was followed in Paterson, New Jersey, the next year with even more immediate and dire results.[3] These events occurred during the period that the Ehrenreichs identify as the formative one for their "Professional-Managerial Class" and therefore when its influence was comparatively weak in relation to its later impact on the working class. It is therefore important to note that it was in the late 1930s and early 1940s, when "Americanization" of the United States proletariat was well along, and when the regionalism and isolation of even such areas as Appalachia was partly dissolved by the shifting of many young workers to the newer auto and electrical industries, that the C.I.O. was able to sweep through the working class with relative ease. Not only the expansion of the proletariat, and its concentration in industry, brought about this new possibility, but also the cultural "homogenization" of the working class, the very dissolution of its older autonomous communities. Thus the impact of the professions was not simply one of atomization, but of a resulting ability of

the proletariat to unite on an even higher plane and larger scale. Of course, this was an unintended result on the part of the professionals who, as the Ehrenreichs point out, were correctly perceived as anti-working class, as pursuing their own interests and expanding the overall control by bourgeois society over the working class.

Finally, it must be stressed that any "autonomous working-class culture" was in reality always, even at its best, heavily circumscribed and very relative. The communities which seemed most thoroughly to exhibit such characteristics, like the textile towns of Lawrence and Paterson, the Appalachian coal fields, the Western mining camps, the steel and railroad centers, and so on, were at the same time the most oppressively controlled by the capitalists, being either company towns or closely resembling that pattern in practice. Like the slave culture of the Southern plantations, that of the proletariat in the environment of these industrial regions was the result of rigidly enforced isolation, concentration, and brutal repression. The skills, both productive and cultural, which continued to flourish under these conditions were largely ones of pure survival, reflecting the degree in which all political, economic, and social authority was denied the workers. To the extent, therefore, that the modern professionals intervened in the culture of communities like these, they exposed them to the "light," challenging the authoritarian paternalism which

the big bourgeoisie exercised over them. Despite the general disappearance of the company town per se, this role has continued in many respects, with the professions appearing to intervene from "outside" the workplace and working-class community, as an alternative to or escape from the worst ravages of capitalist exploitation, offering education as a means to "upward mobility," social services to ameliorate poverty, and a "liberating" culture not tied to the conditions of production, though introducing a new paternalist professionalism.

Of course, some of these same functions have come to be exercised primarily through the trade union movement, rather than by the professions per se, but in the process many of the unionists have themselves been "professionalized" and have assumed most of the characteristics, not excluding college training, which are the hallmark of the professionals and the basis of their control. In addition, they have hired large numbers of "experts."[4] Indeed trade union leadership has itself become a kind of sub-profession, and one which is increasingly based on "higher learning," with its own class divisions. Thus a semi-proletarian organizer, just one step above the workers, and in many cases drawn from the ranks, is followed "up" the scale by the manager of a union office or the business agent, who have all the characteristics of the petty bourgeois professional, including those of "serving, "advocating" and "speaking

for" the actual proletarians, who are often excluded from any real control or even participation. Finally, there are the top union leaders, notably the heads of "international" unions, who are truly bourgeois, with their salaries at times in the $100,000 and higher range, and not infrequently with personal side-investments in financial instruments and regular business enterprises which bring in considerable sums of interest and profits derived from exploitation of the working class. These unionists in particular generally hob-nob with the capitalists themselves, though usually as junior partners.[5]

These are truly the "labor lieutenants" of the bourgeoisie, running their own "business unions," with their own class self-interests, not unlike other small capitalists who are quite content with the "system," only resisting if they are stepped on.

> The union perspective approaches the determination of the price of labor as a conflict between antagonistic and opposing class interests; this, indeed, is one of the dimensions of class consciousness. The institutionalization of business unionism depoliticizes this conflict approach and narrows it down to limited goals and limited institutional settings.[6]

Nevertheless, despite the existence of truly bourgeois trade union leaders, as in other fields it is the mass of middle-rank petty bourgeoisie who make up the base of this "profession," who express its special needs, and who supply its upper levels. Without them the role of this "professional unionism" would collapse, with the potential

for the revival of a more radical struggle of classes. The capitalists fear just this development, and have over the last several decades worked hard to help spawn an intermediate class stratum of professional trade unionists who appear to be "autonomous" but are really their loyal servants. A combination of carrot and stick, of rewards to "good" union leaders, and brutal repression of those who "cause trouble," helps swell their ranks. In part due to such policies, nowhere are the methods and purposes of "professionalism" more clear in relation to the proletariat than in trade union organizations, with their ideology of "service" to workers, and leadership over them, without fundamentally challenging the capitalist system.

By spreading their influence in the working class, the professionals do not simply increase numerically, but also win greater autonomy in their work. Service not only to the "community at large," but also to such "constituencies" as the labor unions, allows them to build a base free from their earlier virtually total dependence on the patronage of a feudal or capitalist elite. In this way the proletariat is used to balance the power of the bourgeoisie. This "in between" position also enhances the image of neutrality and of objectivity on which much of the petty bourgeois professional mystique rests in relation to other classes. It is this relationship which allows the modern professionals in the petty bourgeoisie to advance their "own" social program, not only in contrast to those

of the capitalist class and the proletariat, but even differing in certain respects from the programs of the small business and managerial petty bourgeois strata. It is thus necessary to review briefly the forms that these last two take.

In the period when the bourgeoisie taken as a whole are attempting to break the power of feudalism, the small independent owners stand forth as the most radical bourgeois segment and can even in certain circumstances lead the revolution. But once the power of capitalism is established, the big bourgeoisie emerge as the clear rulers of society, and the proletariat is strong enough to put forth its own socialist program, the political goals of the "old" segment of the petty bourgeois class almost always become anachronistic. Resisting the encroachments of large-scale capitalism, not in the name of the further advancement of the social forces of production, but rather in an effort to restore their own lost independence, this stratum of petty bourgeoisie becomes reactionary, in the sense both that it reacts to what others do, and does so negatively.

In contrast to this position, the petty bourgeois managers at first seem to hold out the potential of a progressive outlook, since they represent the forward thrust of industry and are not afraid of its ever larger development. It was their claim to be the "pure" representatives of rational organization and advances in

productivity, in fact, that was the basis of early attempts on their part to develop their own social goals. In the first bloom of "scientific management," the developers of this concept such as Frederick W. Taylor put forth what Larson calls an "ideology of efficiency," to which both proletariat and capitalists were supposed to submit equally. However, though they anticipated both a "'managerial revolution' and the waning of class,"[7] the reforms of the scientific managers greatly increased the exploitation of workers, and yet for themselves gained neither equality nor independence vis-à-vis the capitalist owners:

> The corporate business leadership, while it was sympathetic to Taylor's rationalization and strict control of labor, was not about to share control of the enterprise with an independent group, no matter how expert and how scientific its orientations.[8]

In fact, the appeals of these scientific managers were doubly flawed, first because their incipient tendency to independence could not be sustained in the face of their actual employment as the agents of the capitalists, and second because they offered no alternative to the working class except continued, and indeed increased, oppression. Such theories thus quickly gave way to reality, and the vast majority of managerial personnel reverted to corporate service, devoid of social goals.

It was left to elements of the professional petty bourgeosie, then, to express the conscious interests of their class in ways which could not only appear

progressive, and in the service of the larger community, but which hold out to the working class the possibility of a reduction of or even liberation from capitalist exploitation. Their ability to do so rested on two characteristics: that in pursuit of "autonomy" in their own labor, the petty bourgeois professions strive for a limited degree of independence within the capitalist system, and can thus even seem to be "anti-capitalist," especially in the battle against the increasing control of monopoly capital. Secondly, because they are in large part positioned outside the immediate "point of production" of capitalism and, as has been shown above, reflect the larger interests of bourgeois culture, they can put themselves forth as opposed to the most brutal and narrow ravages of the capitalist system and therefore as the class which truly has the "welfare" of workers at heart. Of course, because of the general lack of unity even among the various parts of the professional petty bourgeois stratum, they cannot on the whole advance their social program in any coherent manner, or challenge the capitalists overall. But in innumerable situations, certain segments of the professions do put themselves forward as the defenders of the workers against "the system" and as the best available hope for parts of the working class, and especially its individual members, to escape their fate.

This takes its most obvious form in the social service agencies and the concept of "advocacy," where instead of

organizing workers in their own interests, professionals speak "for" their clients, today supported by what are often largely hand-picked boards of community representatives, which have some real power, but also provide the necessary proletarian "front."

> Client participation aims at the direct involvement of the public. This can be a deliberate policy used by bureaucratic agencies to manipulate their clients.
> . . .
> . . . Thus, in a marginal and recently emergent area of professionalization, child-care specialists are often compelled by federal regulations to incorporate the patents of their ward as auxiliaries. There is a tendency to maintain these auxiliaries in hierarchical subordination, while seeking among them and among other parents support for the professionalization efforts.[9]

In rare instances, professionals actually become "partisans" of their clients, helping them to build organizations for collective action, and to "deprofessionalize" their relationships, but given the overall system, such efforts face severe limitations.[10]

Liberal capitalists, of course, encourage the image of these petty bourgeois professions as offering a real alternative to the working class, while reactionaries lend them cover by attacking them as if they were actually a threat. Certainly it is not just the minor troubles such activities cause some owners that so inspires the hatred of a segment of the bourgeoisie, but rather the fear that even this level of worker politicization is dangerous, forgetting that such forms of professional paternalism were from the beginning meant to head off much more radical or even revolutionary actions. Progressive professionals are

also attacked from the right as a "new class" seeking power for itself at the expense of capital, particularly through state power.[11] Nevertheless, most such "advocacy" serves capitalism very well, despite surface conflicts. Thus at the turn of the century:

> Focusing on the environmental roots of poverty and personal degradation, the new secular brand of urban reformers actively organized campaigns for protective labor legislation and minimum living standards. They were still inspired, however, by a Christian ideal of universal brotherhood and individual uplift. Although sympathetic to the broader demands of the labor movement, they refused to recognize the necessity of class conflict or to accept the reality of class struggle.[12]

Such reformism serves the overall interests of the capitalists.

These types of reformist professionalism, however, not only prove to be inadequate for the working class itself, both in general and in most specific instances, but they also fail to protect the interests of the professional petty bourgeoisie, much less those of other strata of this class, because they primarily serve to strengthen the overall power of the capitalist class.

> In fact, the central themes of progressivism--"moral uplift" for the masses, based on the formal expansion of political participation and on economic growth--are typcial of an optimistic ideology, seeking the conciliation of irreconcilable interests. In a phase of transition, reformers who stressed individual effort and individual mobility could genuinely see more social fluidity and openness than the class system actually permitted. Espousing the promise of economic growth and efficient management, significant fractions of the intermediate class could promote, in the service of reform, the interests of the new industrial and financial magnates.[13]

Instead of the class struggle, individualism and "trickle down" theories of economic growth and managerial efficiency, along with a formal political equality that hides exploitation, are offered to the working class, to "conciliate irreconcilable interests."

The same "progressive" corporate and political forces that sponsored, and the same universities that produced, the forward thrust of the "welfare state" were also the main leaders and research centers for the most modern forms of technological exploitation, domestic repression, and imperialist intervention.[14] Caught in the web of this contradiction, the vast majority of professionals eagerly accepted the opportunities for their careers which the rising power of United States monopoly capitalism and imperialism offered, but in the process many found themselves losing the autonomy they so cherished, becoming merely the servants of the capitalist class. Increasingly, then, the ideology of the professions began to raise the cry of freeing their expertise from the profiteering of capitalism, from the confines of the big corporations, from service to the imperialists, instead employing the rationalized methods of industry throughout society, and particularly in political spheres, for the good of the "whole community." Thus:

> Leaders in the established professions, and in the new applied specialties that were emerging within the expanded structure of governmental and public services, actively promoted rationalization on the corporate model. . . . For many of these men, the application of the corporate model to public affairs was a means of

> establishing the independence of their professions from the private corporations and their "predatory wealth." The paradox is only apparent.[15]

Indeed, for these members of the professions, the corporation was to be escaped by the "corporatization" of all society, which in turn, "reinforced scientific expertise as a transcendent principle and as a potential basis of professional autonomy.[16]

Moreover, the development of capitalism, which originally creates a more diverse petty bourgeois class, in time produces tendencies toward greater unity. The spread of highly mechanized and technological farming and the elimination of the weaker farm units, generates an agricultural element that is more and more in touch with modern scientific advances, with financial management and "business" operations, and increasingly takes part in actual advanced education as well. As a New York Times job survey noted it no longer "seems sensible to become a farmer without an agriculture degree and a family that owns land and equipment."[17] If this may be overstated as far as educational requirements are concerned, the tendency is definitely moving in the direction of farmers who have invested in mental as well as in agricultural means of production. Even the urban petty bourgeois business owner is increasingly likely to be an ex-student or at least to be putting children through college and no longer isolated from the world of professional life in the way earlier generations of this stratum were. In corporations there

have long been similar tendencies in the growth of "scientific management" and in the move toward "personnel relations" in place of more rugged labor practices. Today even a supervisor on the shop floor is quite frequently a college graduate who is considered a candidate for higher management levels, not merely a link to the workers drawn from their own ranks. The role of academics in business and government, the use of corporate managers or of practicing professionals as teachers and consultants by colleges, and the spread of education programs within corporations all increase intra-class ties among the various petty bourgeois strata.

Technological and social engineering and the education needed to carry them out, therefore, have increasingly become the unifying bond of the modern petty bourgeoisie, reinforced by the common cultural links of present-day communications, which sees television in farm houses and tape decks even on tractors. In many cases these technical relations are quite direct, such as in the provision of scientific and professional services like those of Cooperative Extension to even the smallest farms. Indeed, the educated member of a profession is now commonly the ideal toward which other strata of the petty bourgeoisie, or at least their children, strive. This allows the technocratic vision of society, in which "experts" benignly administer, to emerge as a somewhat more unified ideology for the entire petty bourgeois class than was the case

earlier on, when its applicaion was more limited to the industrial workplace and the academic arena.

> Economic growth and productivity--due in large part to applied science--began to be felt at the level of the average standard of living; in this manner, they gave concrete support to the decisive affirmation of science as the predominant and indisputable system of cognitive and ideological validation. Expressed in the emergence of scientific managements and in the notion of a transpolitical state, the shift in dominant ideology legitimized the status of the expert and exalted his role.
>
> . . . Professional aspirations were henceforth supported, and to a large extent shared, by expanding urban middle classes whose identity was founded on the educational system and on their occupation in modern and typically bureaucratized work settings.[18]

The winning over of farmers to "modern" agriculture converted the remaining remnants of a conservative and isolated "middle-class" to a technological view of production and social relations.

The managerial, and particularly the professional petty bourgeois strata thereby offer a more advanced or updated version of the search for class "independence," as representives of the "modern," "progressive," "technical" approach to society, in contrast to the efforts of the small owners to turn the clock back. While serious barriers still block any real advance of this ideology as a unifying one for the petty bourgeoisie as a whole, it comes closest to providing a common class denominator. Thus the professionals stepped forward as representatives of technological advancement, of progress for its own sake, of public welfare through ever more vast projects, of freedom from narrow concern with the profit motive, and of social

programs that would benefit the working class. They reasserted the claim to an independent role for the "middle class," distinct from that of both proletariat and capitalists.

For the professionals to revive the former independence of the petty bourgeoisie, however, required that they update the ideology which had marked that class in earlier days, when its "old" stratum predominated. Larson shows the basis for this intra-class transferral, raising in "new" form the idea of "classless" social institutions:

> In capitalist society, the central function of ideology is to conceal the existence of class and the basic structure of exploitation. In the United States, the bourgeois society par excellence, the concealment of class emphasizes individualism and individual solutions; it typically takes one sector of the intermediate class as exemplar and as propagator. In the Progressive Era, a new sector or stratum became the focus of the ideology of classlessness, as a relay to the bypassed farmers and small entrepreneurs: not coincidentally, this stratum found its main opportunities of advancement in apparently classless organizations, in an apparently neutral State, and in apparently classless knowledge.[19]

The old petty bourgeois dream of escaping the contradictions of capitalism was reborn in the professionals, who confronted both workers and capitalists with the concept of building a rational "classless" bourgeois society. Indeed it was the ultimate claim of the New Class that their system of technocratic collectivism would end social discord. "The common submission of <u>both</u> workers and employers to the 'objective' laws of science"

heralded a "'managerial revolution' and the waning of class."[20] These hopes were to be disappointed, however, as both the proletariat and the capitalists resisted the subordinate positions assigned to them.

> Because the struggle between capital and labor was perceived by early New-Class thinkers as a dominant social problem of their day, they resolved to mitigate its impact and even ultimately end it through the ministrations of their expertise. The difficulties they encountered in the exercise of their knowledge stemmed from their contradictory location, from which they managed not to pacify but to threaten capital and labor. . . . Labor resented the discipline, and managers resisted the usurping of their determinant function.[21]

The "managerial revolution" stalled against such opposition.

The place assigned to the proletariat in such programs remained clearly subordinate:

> The social intellectuals had previously identified labor as a prime but untapped source for the incitement to social change; to win labor over the the cause of social reform they had even proposed a division of tasks wherein labor would provide the social pressure for the laws and programs which the social intellectuals devised.[22]

Moreover, the "bargain" offered necessitated that workers give up any independent right to pursue their own class interests.

> Included in their systems of technocratic collectivism was a distinct slot for labor, with high wages and steady work. But in return for security labor had to drop the pursuit of its own separate interests. Trust us, the experts advised labor, and we will ensure your economic interests are taken care of.[23]

Even proposals for "industrial democracy," which would allow workers greater participation in the running of

factories, and even in election of managers, rested on the assumption that the "experts" would continue to fill these administrative slots.[24]

Thus as always, the apparent "classlessness" of the program of the professionals served their own class interests, whether its focus was on the point of production or society as a whole.

> A reform movement which appeared to confront the power of the new ruling class without denouncing the class system--a movement which, furthermore, implicitly gave a badge of moral superiority to middle class reformers with regard to both the "plutocracy" and the lower classes--could indeed attract a wide array of social forces.[25]

Indeed, in the tradition of the petty bourgeoisie, the professionals now claimed the mantle of leadership of the "people's interests" which, as was seen above, Marx long ago attributed to that class as its special ideological form. 'Almost every movement of the Progressive Era subscribed to the concept of the "people" and believed that its demands sprang from them.'"[26] In this way too, Progressivism continued the social tendencies of the earlier petty bourgeoisie.

Such dedication to "the people" did not prevent the rise of a bureaucratized professionalism resistant to popular democratic control. In fact, as Larson shows, the modern professions expanded this relationship: "For one of the more perceptive students of the period, 'the heart of progressivism was the ambition of the new middle class to fulfill its destiny by bureaucratic means.'"[27] Many

professionals found a natural home in the bureaucracy: they had carried over from the corporations the bureaucratic forms of "scientific management," now applied to the entire body politic.

> At the core, the emergent conception of authority appeals to the rationality of science--science as a method and as a world view, more than as a body of knowledge--and to the rationality of scientifically oriented experts who act in the bureaucratized institutions of the new social order.[28]

For the capitalist corporation itself had proven an inadequate center for such activities, first because it limited the role of the professions themselves in subordination to the bourgeoisie, secondly because its social scope was not sufficiently broad.

Public service became the "fastest growing employer" of the professions, and a most important source of class privilege, identity, and unity. Only the "classless" state offered the opportunity both to escape from direct big bourgeois control, as was the case in the corporations, and to enforce professional domination of society, to do "good" for the whole community in a way which would at the same time dissolve the contradictions of capitalism. Under this "transpolitical" state democracy and political participation must be strictly limited, for they allow the masses to interfere with professionalism. Even electoral politics were to be dominated by "the expert":[29] "It is a distinctive characteristic of the technobureaucratic ideology that it should make depoliticization of the

citizenry into a major connotation of the 'rule by experts.'"[30]

These themes were expanded upon by Thorstein Veblen, writing in 1919. Veblen asserted that capitalist--or in his words "absentee"--ownership itself was an anachronism and a threat to production, since it restrained output to keep profits high.[31] As Stabile notes: "College-trained engineers pursued technical efficiency regardless of the costs involved and often found their plans vetoed by their business supervisors."[32] For Veblen, only "engineers" and "technicians," trained at community cost and sharing in the "joint stock of knowledge," had both the industrial expertise and freedom from self-interest to manage society in a "competent" way.[33]

> In short, so far as regards the technical requirements of the case, the situation is ready for a self-selected, but inclusive, Soviet of technicians to take over the economic affairs of the country and to allow and disallow what they may agree on; provided always that they live within the requirements of that state of the industrial arts whose keepers they are, and provided that their pretensions continue to have the support of the industrial rank and file; which comes near saying that their Soviet must consistently and effectually take care of the material welfare of the underlying population.[34]

This Soviet of technicians would arise by means of a general strike of engineers and other members of what he called the "General Staff of that industrial system"[35] "By themselves alone, the technicians can, in a few weeks, effectually incapacitate the country's productive industry sufficiently for the purpose."[36] This essentially peaceful

takeover, he believed, would be "primarily a technical affair," giving the technicians a "free hand, unhampered by commercial considerations"--or by political ones.[37] As to the working class, they were either too narrowly self-interested or disorganized to serve as an alternative to the capitalist class. The "aggressive support of the trained working force" in transportation and the "great primary industries" would, nevertheless, be a necessity, requiring "the working-out of a common understanding and a solidarity of sentiment" between them and the technicians.[38] As Veblen, however, was forced to concede, the majority of engineers, though increasingly "class-conscious," were too "harmless and docile . . . well fed on the whole," to carry out his revolutionary concept.[39]

One later theorist went further, stressing that it was the "administrative professions" which would lead the newly united professional ranks, other "middle class" strata, and all of society beyond narrow capitalist goals. The professions, in fact, were even better trained and situated to design efficient methods for the entire society, since that was their province, compared to the limited realms of business, or production, of the capitalists, or engineers and technicians, respectively.

> In 1939, T. H. Marshall welcomed a trend which he thought was associated with the welfare state: "The professions," he wrote, "are being socialized and the social and public services are being professionalized. The professions are learning, not merely to recognized their obligations to society as a whole as well as those to individual clients, but also to break down the traditional isolation which separated them from one

> another. They are ready to work as a team." In his view, the administrative professions were not only a most representative sector of the new middle class: they were also a natural reservoir of leadership for the intermediate classes, weaned by their form of employment from the competitive "motives and incentives which are reputed to make capitalism work." To this "socialized" professionalism, Marshall assigned the function of defining and working for "social efficiency, as distinct from both business efficiency and mechanical efficiency."[40]

As Larson notes, the actual result of this program was often that members of the professions "expect their clients to conform with the standards of the dominant culture, marked as they are by class inequality and racism." Nevertheless: "T. H. Marshall is in fact suggesting that the new forms of public delivery of professional and paraprofessional services operate to free the ideal of service to the collectivity from the market pressures of the old professional model (though not from the pressures of collective status defense)."[41]

Here then are the basic elements of the ideology of the modern professions insofar as they put forward their own unique social program. There is first the concept of service to "the whole society," and notably to the workers, whose conditions can be alleviated, and for whom the professionals can even serve as advocates, and from some of whom in return they hope to gain "aggressive support." Secondly, the autonomy of the professions is now established through "classless" administrative, and largely bureaucratic institutions, reaching their pinnacle in the state itself, in a new "Soviet of technicians." Finally,

professionals have themselves become "socialized," no longer focused on private gain or individual clients, but united collectively for the "public delivery" of their services, free from the commercial interests and the market pressures which mark the capitalist economy. They are distinguished not only from small business owners, but from the "mechanical" technicians, and even the "old" professional stratum. With their broader social scope, the modern or "new" professionals bid to constitute themselves as the leaders of all the "intermediate classes" and challenge the capitalists for control over the society. There is here an incipient anti-capitalism, without actually breaking with the class structure and monopolistic practices of the bourgeois order, nor with its denial of political power to the proletariat.

The professional petty bourgeoisie thus seem to offer a more updated and progressive version of the search for "independence" for their class, in contrast to the efforts of the small owners to turn the clock back, and to the subservient relation to the capitalists or narrowly technocratic approach of the managerial stratum. But this vision has two main weaknesses as a means of unifying all the petty bourgeois strata. In the first place serious contradictions remain between the various petty bourgeois strata, the "new" and "old" elements, those who benefit directly from the growth of governmental employment and those who pay for it, and so on. Moreover, no matter how

powerful they may become within certain of the institutions of bourgeois society, the professional petty bourgeoisie are unable to break the larger domination of these same institutional centers of power by the capitalist class as a whole. In particular, though they may come to have at least partial control over universities, hospitals, and so forth, the state itself remains firmly in the grasp of the largest capitalists. Even if the professional stratum thus opens the way to a rebirth of "independence" for the petty bourgeoisie, it cannot fully realize this potential, nor implement its own special program, under capitalist control.

Petty bourgeois unity and independent action therefore tend to be much more in evidence where indigenous capital is weak or where the "middle class" can pose as the representative of nationalist interests. Even in those cases where, as in some Third World countries, the petty bourgeoisie has gained power, led by their professional elements, their ability to escape from overall capitalist domination, specifically from neo-colonialism and the sway of the largest imperialist corporations, is usually very limited, and their regimes prove short-lived and unstable, generally falling back under the sway of "big" capital within the domestic economy and imperialism internationally. This is particularly so for the numerous military regimes, frequently led by middle-level officers, which try to lead the petty bourgeoisie as a whole to

political power while still maintaining a capitalist economy. Such regimes constantly regenerate big bourgeois elements from within and, despite nationalistic rhetoric, usually play a comprador role. They almost inevitably drift toward repression and reactionary policies, as the only way by which the "middle class" can be protected from the forces of the workers and poor peasants whose basic goals remain frustrated.

The professionals in fact prove incapable of enforcing their own interests without assistance from the proletariat and semi-proletariat. Yet the professional program fails to address in any fundamental way the position of the workers, who are seen as continuing in their role as the drones of the industrial system. That the working class will not passively accept this position without asserting their own long-term interests is the primary factor overlooked by such "modern" schools of petty bourgeois ideology as that advanced by Veblen, which assumes the continued domination of the "educated classes" even if the capitalists are overthrown. Therefore the contradiction with the proletariat is in no way resolved. Moreover, such contradictions come to be heightened dramatically in periods of economic crisis or imperialist decline. In these eras, significant portions of the professional petty bourgeoisie, and particularly the semi-proletarian members of the professions and students, break with the goals of "pure" professionalism and begin to seek support from the

working class as a counterbalance to the capitalists. Thus in hard times some professionals stress not their superiority to workers, but rather their close ties and allegiance to them. For the majority of those in professions in the United States, this rarely goes beyond the point that unionism spreads more rapidly.

Even where an apparently more decisive break with the bourgeoisie takes place, the "socialist" commitment of petty bourgeois professionals frequently turns out to be little more than a reassertion of their own autonomy, offering themselves to the working class as its natural leaders, but without any pretense of allowing the working class to assume the leading role. The socialist program of the professional petty bourgeoisie is thus often little more than a formula for their own continued "independence," not only from capitalists but from, and indeed over, the proletariat. The Ehrenreichs note that: "The strongest expression of PMC anti-capitalist ideology was to be found in explicitly socialist politics--which in the early twentieth-century United States meant the Socialist Party."[42] The party recruited heavily from the "middle classes," however, out of proportion to their percentage of the population, and most of its top leaders were drawn from the petty bourgeoisie, especially the professions.

Even when they seemed most dynamic, therefore, the forces advocating socialism in the United States were to a large extent drawing on its appeal to the "middle classes."

> "The Socialist movement," Foner writes, "was running at flood tide but a considerable portion of the new memebership came from outside the working-class--lawyers, doctors, dentists, preachers, educators, small manufacturers and business men and an occasional millionaire. Being persuasive speakers and excellent parliamentarians they quickly rose to leadership in the Party and came to control its policies, pushing the working-class members into the background. As one socialist put it they were 'soft and shifty stuff for Socialism to build on.'"[43]

This orientation became a major source of struggle between the "left" and "right" wings of the party, but the issue and the class backgrounds of the leaders on both sides were sufficiently blurred that "the words 'middle class' and 'intellectual' became cuss words, and both sides competed violently in the effort to emphasize their working-class social origins and allegiances."[44]

Nevertheless, the right wing of the party explicitly looked to the professional stratum to recruit its leaders, so that

> [Morris] Hillquit asserted that the liberal professions--physicians, lawyers, clergy and journalists--represented a more likely source for socialist leadership [than managers and technicians]. They retained no ideological connection to capitalism, for they owned no property and did not sell their labor power.[45]

This relationship extended beyond personnel, for there was a close parallel in ideology to the theories of "expert" rule:

> Certainly the ideas of Charles B. P. Steinmetz, the prominent socialist/engineer cited by the right wing as their paradigm, contained a plead for technologists' retention of responsibility for determining productive methods.[46]

The result was a socialist program that itself drew heavily on the concepts of technocracy developed by the social engineers:

> In fact, socialism, as articulated by the pre-World-War I Socialist Party, was frequently not far from the PMC's technocratic vision. Socialism means government of the ownership of the means of production (which would still be administered by experts) and expansion of governmental social services (which would still be supplied by professionals--or "intellectual proletarians," as Hillquit called them).
>
> Socialism in this version formed a continuum with non-socialist Progressivism . . . On the right wing of the Party, even such traditional socialist notions as class struggle were considered too radical and were replaced by Progressive ideals of class conciliation.[47]

Even the left wing of the party was influenced by these concepts, seeing in the engineers and other professional groups potential allies in the struggle for socialism, without clearly recognizing the threat which they offered to control of the working-class movement.[48] These attempts at class alliance, whether "left" or "right," indicated that only by adopting the political and economic goals of socialism, and appealing openly for support among the working class, and indeed acting in its name, could the professional petty bourgeoisie actually challenge the capitalists for control of the society.

NOTES

1. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 15.

2. Ibid., 16.

3. See Kornbluh, Rebel Voices, chaps. 6 and 7, and Melvin Dubofsky, We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World (New York:Quandrangle/The New York Times Book Co., 1969), chaps. 10 and 11.

4. For an analysis of the role of the latter, see Harold L. Wilensky, Intellectuals in Labor Unions: Organizational Pressures on Professional Roles (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1956).

5. See Joseph C. Goulden, Meany (New York: Atheneum, 1972), 267: "The differences [with Walter Reuther, head first of the United Auto Workers and later the C.I.O.] extended to life style as well. Once he could afford it, Meany managed well the transition from trencherman of corned beef and cabbage to gourmet of fine French foods and wines. Meany relished the amenities of office--the leisurely midwinter executive council meeting spread over a week in luxury Miami Beach hotels, with ample time for golf and the beach; four-star restaurants and hotels on the Continent. (C. L Sulzberger [of the New York Times], who lunched with Meany in Paris in November 1951, wrote in his diary, 'I must say that although Mr. and Mrs. Meany still talk like a plumber and his wife, they look and dress more like big business. She was wearing a mink cape.')" Even so, ". . . Meany was not lavishly paid in comparison with presidents of big international unions. . . ."

6. See Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 157.

7. Ibid., 199-200.

8. Ibid., 141.

9. Ibid., 187-88.

10. Ibid., 188.

11. Jeane L. Kirkpatrick, "Politics and the New Class," and Aaron Wildavsky, "Using Public Funds to Serve Private Interests: The Politics of the New Class," in The New Class?, ed. B. Bruce-Briggs (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1979), chap. 3, 33-48, chap. 11, 147-54.

12. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 147.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid., 140.

15. Ibid., 140.

16. Ibid.

17. New York Times, National Recruitment Survey, sec. 12, October 12, 1980, 1.

18. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 200.

19. Ibid., 156.

20. Ibid., 141.

21. Donald Stabile, Prophets of Order: The Rise of the New Class, Technocracy and Socialism in America (Boston: South End Press, 1984), 12.

22. Ibid., 91.

23. Ibid., 15.

24. Ibid., 69, 90, 100-1.

25. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 147.

26. Ibid., 138.

27. Ibid., 137. The quote is from Robert H. Wiebe, The Search for Order: 1877-20 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), 166. See also in general Chapter 11, "Professions and Bureaucracy," 178-207.

28. Ibid., 137.

29. Ibid., 148, 243.

30. Ibid., 189.

31. Thorstein Veblen, The Engineers and the Price System (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1963), 8.

32. Stabile, Prophets of Order, 37

33. Veblen, The Engineers and the Price System, 68-69.

34. Ibid., 166.

35. Ibid., 135, 166-67.

36. Ibid., 167.

37. Ibid., 69-70, 89.

38. Ibid., 167-68.

39. Ibid., 71, 135.

40. Larson, The Rise of Professionalism, 187.

41. Ibid.

42. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 24.

43. Daniel Bell, Marxian Socialism in the United States (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), 83. The quote is from Philip S. Foner, ed., Jack London, American Rebel (New York, 1947), 64-65.

44. Ibid., 82. See also 72-73.

45. Stabile, Prophets of Order, 159.

46. Ibid., 172.

47. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 25.

48. Stabile, Prophets of Order, 173-77.

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OLD CLASS IN NEW FORM

THE MODERN PROFESSIONAL PETTY BOURGEOISIE

by

ROBERT WEIL

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PART IV

CHAPTER 21

THE EDUCATION OF PROFESSIONAL REVOLUTIONARIES

Every revolution is a great educational process. It is, of course, much more than this. But a revolutionary movement that does not educate must fail, will in fact never achieve the status of a "movement" at all, but will remain merely the internal dialogue of small groups of cadre, however dedicated they may be. Even if the education which accompanies a revolution--together with other necessary factors--is sufficient to allow it to succeed, however, the manner in which this is carried out, the thoroughness with which it is pursued, and the permanence it achieves as part of the new revolutionary order will help determine how deeply the changes will go, who will dominate the post-revolutionary social system, and whether there is continuation toward a truly classless society, or a frustration of that goal. It is therefore necessary to examine the role of educational relations, and control of the means of mental production, in the socialist revolution, particularly as this applies to the petty-bourgeois professionals. Such an examination must begin by

looking at the special part played by "professional revolutionaries," who are drawn to a large extent from the petty bourgeois professionals, and from among the students who are training for the professions.

Specifically, it must be asked in what manner and to what extent highly trained revolutionary professionals participate in the education of the proletariat in the socialist movement, by what method and to what degree they are in turn educated by the working class, and whether this mutual educating tends primarily to convert the professional cadre into a more proletarianized force, or whether it instead serves mainly to lift some who are of more proletarian origin into the ranks of the "educated classes." In other words, we must try to establish whether the result of education in the revolution is to move toward a communist society in which all are "workers," or whether it at least temporarily increases the power and size of the sub-stratum of petty-bourgeois professionals who participate in leading the revolutionary forces, and therefore can actually result in the reinforcing of the class divisions that have to be overcome. This will require taking up from somewhat new directions the old problem of "bureaucracy," which is the most common form in which this question is found. Lastly I must examine the extent to which a part of the educated revolutionary element within the professional petty bourgeoisie is able to assert leadership not only over that strata, and the

class as a whole, but over the entire social structure and the state under socialism. Such a development leads to a renewal, and in heightened form, of the struggle between the "middle classes" and the proletariat, which can only be brought to an end in the final demise of the petty-bourgeois professionals.

At the beginning of their elaboration of scientific socialism, Marx and Engels examined the relation of political leadership to the class that it represents, and the role of the "educated classes" in relation to the workers. Much has been made of the presence of persons of non-proletarian origin in the working-class socialist movement, and indeed commonly as the leading revolutionary cadre. But Marx made clear at an early point that this relationship is not unique to the proletarian class. As he explained in "The Eighteenth Brumaire":

> Just as little must one imagine that the democratic representatives are all shopkeepers or enthusiastic champions of shopkeepers. According to their education and their individual position they may be as far apart as heaven from earth. What makes them representatives of the petty bourgeoisie is the fact that in their minds they do not get beyond the limits which the latter do not get beyond in life, that they are consequently driven, theoretically, to the same problems and solutions to which material interest and social position drive the latter practically. This is, in general, the relationship between the <u>political</u> and <u>literary</u> representatives of a class and the class they represent.[1]

Thus the ability of certain persons to serve as political representatives of a class is not limited to those who share directly and absolutely its material origins, as long

as they set themselves the same "problems and solutions" as must also arise to those whom they help to lead and organize.

Of course, this cannot simply be achieved arbitrarily, but is itself the result of a long process of assimilating themselves to the actual conditions and struggles of the class they represent.

> Just as the economists are the scientific representatives of the bourgeois class, so the Socialists and Communists are the theroeticians of the proletarian class.[2]

"So long as the proletariat is not sufficiently developed to constitute itself as a class," and its "struggle . . . has not yet assumed a political character," socialism remains utopian, and its theoreticians "improvise systems and go in search of a regenerating science." Once its struggles have developed, however, "they no longer need to seek science in their minds; they have only to take note of what is happening before their eyes and to become its mouthpiece."[3]

Marx and Engels elaborated on this relation as it arises with regard to the proletariat:

> . . . a class is called forth which has to bear all the burdens of society without enjoying its advantages, which is ousted from society and forced into the sharpest contradiction to all other classes; a class which forms the majority of all members of society, and from which emanates the consciousness of the necessity of a fundamental revolution, the communist consciousness, which may, of course, arise among the other classes too through the contemplation of the situation of this class.[4]

Only the conditions of the working class, therefore, give rise to communist consciousness, but this may be grasped by members of other classes through the "contemplation" of the proletarian situation. Indeed, because of the stripping away of knowledge and the denial of education in science to the proletariat as a whole, the conception of scientific socialism does not come spontaneously from that class, but instead is developed historically by members of the "educated classes." In this they are the bearers of the means of mental production, just as in any other field of "higher learning." In this instance, however, they can not proceed beyond the limitations of the various forms of petty-bourgeois socialism unless they truly root themselves in the study of working-class conditions and actually participate in the struggles of the proletariat, learning in turn from the workers themselves. Without this educational discipline and practical involvement, without accepting their role as uneducated students as well as teachers, of being led as well as leaders, they can at most serve as representatives of the petty bourgeoisie itself, whether inside or outside the movement of the working class.

The presence, indeed the necessity, of those with more advanced education within the proletarian party was therefore recognized by Marx and Engels, but they set out very specific guidelines for the role of such persons, arguing against those who wanted a broader movement "under

the guidance of educated, philanthropic bourgeois" and petty bourgeois:

> It is an inevitable phenomenon, rooted in the course of development, that people from what have hitherto been the ruling classes should also join the militant proletariat and supply it with educative elements. We clearly stated this in the Manifesto. But here two points are to be noted.
>
> First, in order to be of use to the proletarian movement these people must bring real educative elements into it. But with the great majority of the German bourgeois converts that is not the case. . . . Here there is an absolute lack of real education material, whether factual or theoretical. In its place there are attempts to bring superficially mastered socialist ideas into harmony with the exceedingly varied theoretical standpoints which these gentlemen have brought with them from the university or elsewhere. . . . Instead of thoroughly studying the new science themselves to begin with, each of them preferred to trim it to fit the point of view he already had brought along, made himself forthwith a private science of his own and at once came forward with the pretension of wanting to teach it. Hence, there are about as many points of view among these gentry as there are heads; instead of producing clarity in a single case they have only produced desperate confusion--fortunately almost exclusively among themselves. Educative elements whose first principle is to teach what they have not learnt can very well be dispensed with by the Party.[5]

The only "excuse" for the presence of such professionals within the proletarian socialist movement, therefore, is if they really bring into it educative elements which are not otherwise available, and if they not do so in the spirit of private monopolization and the imposition of self-derived theories.

But Marx and Engels continue with a second, and even more crucial point:

> Secondly. If people of this kind from other classes join the proletarian movement, the first condition must be that they should not bring any remnants of bourgeois, petty-bourgeois, etc.,

> prejudices with them but should whole-heartedly adopt the proletarian outlook. But these gentlemen, as has been proved, are chock full of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideas. In such a petty-bourgeois country as Germany these ideas certainly have their justification. But only outside the Social-Democratic Workers' Party. If these gentlemen constitute themselves into a Social-Democratic petty-bourgeois party they have a perfect right to do so; one could then negotiate with them, form a bloc according to circumstances, etc. But in a workers' party they are an adulterating element . . . if even the leadership of the Party should fall more or less into the hands of such people, the Party would simply be castrated and there would be an end of proletarian snap.[6]

Here the requirement goes beyond educational seriousness and theoretical openness, to abandonment of attitudes derived from other class origins, to be replaced by "the proletarian outlook."

This remains the classical description of the pseudo-scientific practitioners of socialism drawn from the petty bourgeoisie, still all too prevalent today. Except that in place of those who have not thoroughly studied the "new science," we have those who have not bothered to study carefully what is now the "old" theory of scientific socialism. Two further points are also of particular note here: first, the tendency of those from the "educated classes" to turn these socialist ideas into their own "private science." Second, the danger that if their views should prevail, the working-class party would then actually be deproletarianized, would in fact be converted into one representing the interests of the petty bourgeoisie or even bourgeoisie. Thus there is the possibility of socialist ideology, the "means of mental production" of the

proletarian revolution itself, becoming in effect the property of the professionals, to be turned to their own class ends. These aspects will be taken up in more depth later. What is of greater concern here, however, is the prescription that Marx and Engels give for the participation of members of the "ruling classes," including the petty bourgeoisie, within the socialist working-class movement.

The guidelines which they lay down are indeed stringent ones, which must at first appear to contain a most difficult contradiction: for on the one hand, the "educative elements" must bring with them "real education," that is, they must have developed to a high degree their systematic understanding of "facts and theory," and yet at the same time they are enjoined to drop their earlier class "prejudices," the very attitudes and assumptions that are absorbed and enhanced in the process of acquiring their intellectual tools, and which they must now free themselves from even while raising their skills to new heights. For to be valuable, proletarian revolutionary theory and practice must be more profound, more scientific, than the utopian models. The process of educating professional revolutionaries therefore contains within it a danger of creating in its own special form the qualities of "expertise" and mystique, the sense of a secret knowledge open only to the elect, which is one of the basic characteristics of "professionalism." In fact, the more

completely revolution is practiced as a profession, the more this inherent possibility may emerge, and the basis be laid for the growth of new petty-bourgeois elements within the movement, based on the specialized knowledge which they possess of the revolutionary process itself. The corrective to this is the rapid dispersal of the educational achievements of the revolutionaries among the masses, the constant education of the leadership itself by the working class and other elements of the "people," and participation by revolutionary cadre in the actual, daily, life and practical work of the proletarian struggle.

The Chinese describe this duality of role in the term "red and expert." This does indeed capture the two basic elements which any "professional revolutionary" must have. However, the very concept of specialization and expertise carries with it an underlying contradictoriness with the fundamental communist goal of putting an end to the basic division of labor which isolates and alienates all workers. Moreover, even where the initial barriers which separate "educative elements" from the working class are dissolved, the possibility that those schooled in the process of revolution will again become separated from the masses as an elite, and thereby reassert the "prejudices" of their class position, still remains. While the presence of such persons in the proletarian revolutionary movement therefore may be "inevitable," their participation neither proves the elimination of all basic differences, nor guarantees

against an educational "restoration," in which members of the old ruling classes, joined or even led by those who have been raised from the ranks of the working class, once again take power. The education of professional revolutionaries, and the relations of those who have received such training, to the proletariat in general and to the socialist movement in particular, thus constitute a special case of "professionalism," and one which has the most profound impact on the course of the class struggle. It is not surprising, therefore, that this can create a most serious barrier to the development of proletarian movements, one which historically has proven extremely difficult to remove, both before and after a revolution.

In the light of revolutionary hindsight it is often imagined that such difficulties were easily overcome in earlier revolutions, or even that they are somehow "new" or unique to our own time or country. In her Reminiscences of Lenin, his wife, N. K. Krupskaya, makes clear that no such easy solution existed to the relation in the movement of the "educated classes" and workers even in the highly revolutionary situation of late 19th-century Russia, but rather that Lenin found the way to develop it only through hard effort and a correct educational approach.

> Vladimir Ilyich was interested in every little detail that could help him to piece together a picture of the life and conditions of the workers, to find some sort of avenue of approach to them in the matter of revolutionary propaganda. Most of the intellectuals those days did not know the workers well. An intellectual would come to one of the study-circles and read the workers a kind of lecture . . . Vladimir

> Ilyich read Marx's Capital to the workers and explained it to them. He devoted the second half of the lesson to questioning the workers about their work and conditions of labour, showing them the bearing which their life had on the whole structure of society, and telling them in what way the existing order could be changed. This linking of theory with practice was a feature of Vladimir Ilyich's work in the study-circles. Gradually other members of our circle adopted the same method.[7]

It was the ability of Lenin to go beyond the limits of theoretical work, to learn from the workers themselves, to integrate these two forms of knowledge, to translate this into education for the masses on a higher plane, and to link all such efforts to practical actions that really set him apart and made him the central force in creating a revolutionary movement and party.

Even so, the practice of his policies by others was often difficult: there is an "amusing" episode related by Krupskaya, all too contemporary in tone, in which she and another cadre, "with shawls over our heads to make us look like mill workers" go to make their own investigation of a worker hostel.[8] Overcoming the barriers between intellectuals and workers, especially in the conditions of Tsarist Russia, was indeed a difficult matter then as now. This was evident in the party in 1905:

> The organizations in Russia definitely existed already in the shape of illegal local committees, which were obliged to work under extremely difficult conditions of secrecy. As a result, these committees everywhere practically had no workers among their membership, although they had great influence on the workers' movement. The committees' leaflets and instructions reflected the mood of the working-class masses, who felt that they now had a leadership. The committees therefore were very popular with them, and for most of the workers their activities were cloaked in a veil of

> mystery. The workers often got together on their own apart from the intellectuals to discuss the fundamental issues of the movement. The Third Congress received a statement by fifty Odessa workers setting forth the main points of difference between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks, and mentioning that not a single intellectual had been present at the meeting where this question was discussed.[9]

Indeed Krupskaya noted that as of 1905, on the eve of the first Russian revolution: "There were no workers at the Third Congress--at least, none of any mark."[10] This situation in the party challenged the committee members who were intellectuals in ways that many were not prepared to respond to:

> I remember a girl coming from Odessa who complained that "The workers are demanding the impossible of the local committee--they want us to give them propaganda. How can we? We can only give them agitation!"[11]

The workers themselves, in other words, demanded a higher level of education, especially that comprehensive scientific knowledge that only "propoganda" imparts, a demand that some educated party members could not or would not meet.

It was only under pressure from Lenin and others that the move began toward a more "popular literature, a popular newspaper, literature for the peasants and for the non-Russian nationalities," in response to the new revolutionary upsurge, responding to the calls from the masses themselves for such materials. Such education would go beyond "verbal propaganda and even agitation as a whole," which had become no longer adequate.[12] In general, Lenin fought to strip all "mystery" from both the

theoretical and practical aspects of the work of the revolution, and to turn over to the proletariat itself the necessary tools to conduct its struggle and to organize society. Thus virtually from the beginning of the Russian revolutionary movement there was a division over both the nature and control of education, over whether it was to be paternalistically "doled out" from outside the working class, or was to involve workers themselves, not only as "students," but as "teachers" also, whether it was meant to merely "stir up" the proletariat, or put it in power, whether it was to be agitation only, or propaganda which imparted theoretical knowledge. This became a question not only of educational content and learning from the workers, but also a practical issue of the make-up of the party itself.

A long struggle was in fact necessary, both in theory and practice, to put into effect the two aspects of the role that Marx and Engels had indicated for those from the "educated classes" within the proletarian movement. Over several years, Lenin had to fight for the concept of a party which would do broad political education, not only that related primarily to the economic struggle, and which would unite the advanced workers and the socialist intellectuals in a body of "professional revolutionaries." He noted the great desire for knowledge, including the ideas of socialism, among the workers, and that they were constantly studying, becoming a "the working-class

intelligentsia." Such education could only come from a party which rose above the level of trade unionism to include both workers and intellectuals, with the latter providing the scientific element which, like all training in science, had been denied to the working class itself.

> "Of course, socialism, as a doctrine, has its roots in modern economic relationships just as the class struggle of the proletariat has, and, like the latter, emerges from the struggle against the capitalist-created poverty and misery of the masses. But socialism and the class struggle arise side by side and not one out of the other; each arises under different conditions. Modern socialist consciousness can arise only on the basis of profound scientific knowledge. Indeed, modern economic science is as much a condition for socialist production as, say, modern technology, and the proletariat can create neither the one nor the other, no matter how much it may desire to do so; both arise out of the modern social process. The vehicle of science is not the proletariat, but the <u>bourgeois intelligentsi</u> . . . : it was in the minds of individual members of this stratum that modern socialism originated, and it was they who communicate it to the more intellectually developed proletarians who, in their turn, introduce it into the proletariat class struggle where conditions allow that to be done. Thus, socialist consciousness is something introduced into the proletarian class struggle from without . . . and not something that arose within it spontaneously."[13]

To isolate the workers from the intellectuals, therefore, as the so-called "economists" wanted to do, and to lower the level of the movement to that of the "spontaneous" working-class program, was to deprive the proletariat of the "real educative elements" needed for socialist revolution.

A scientific analysis of class and the theory of socialism was therefore a necessity in the development of the proletarian revolution, just as science was also needed

in production. Both were the product of bourgeois intellectuals, because they were the stratum which received the necessary training for this kind mental activity, which not only was denied to the workers but, as was seen above, had been systematically stripped from them. However, just as scientific knowledge in production could be utilized either to heighten the ability of the capitalists to exploit the workers, or could be converted under proletarian control to the benefit of the working class, so too the science of socialist revolution contained the potential to be used by different classes to their own ends. Thus even scientific socialism could be turned into a "private theory" of the intellectuals, to control the course of the movement and to protect their own class interests, or it could be the basis for a truly revolutionary transformation of society by the proletariat itself armed with theoretical knowledge. Like the science of production, therefore, the scientific theory of the struggle of classes was neither "neutral" nor the property of only one class, but was itself a field of contention. The resolution of the contradictory tendencies it contained, and in particular whether it would take a petty-bourgeois or proletarian form, could not be decided abstractly, but would only be resolved in the course of the revolutionary struggles of the working class for socialism.

Moreover, even when understanding of the necessity of "real educative elements" for the proletariat won a

majority in the movement, its practical application was difficult. Professional revolutionaries who came from the ranks of the "bourgeois" intellectuals could not but bring with them the attitudes of their own class backgrounds, and if they were needed partly to help train the "working-class intelligentsia," they also often blocked the advances to which this inevitably led. Thus many members of the committees drawn from the "educated classes" not only found it difficult to carry out propaganda among the workers, they also resisted the pressure to include proletarians in their party branches:

> The "committeeman" was usually a rather self-assured person. He saw what a tremendous influence the work of the committee had on the masses, and as a rule he recognized no inner-Party democracy. "Inner-party democracy leads to trouble with the police. We are connected with the movement as it is," the "committeeman" would say. Inwardly they rather despised the Party workers abroad, who, in their opinion, had nothing better to do than squabble among themselves--"they ought to be made to work under Russian conditions." The "committeeman" objected to the overruling influence of the Centre abroad. At the same time they did not want innovations. They were neither desirous nor capable of adjusting themselves to the quickly changing conditions.[14]

One of the "innovations" they fought against was that of "drawing workers into the committees." In fact, the committee members formed a kind of "middle" group within the party, resistant both to the top leadership which had largely gone abroad, and to the proletariat as well. They tended to set higher standards for participation by workers in the party organs than they did for themselves, but they argued against a Congress vote on the question since "one

could not very well carry a resolution to the effect that workers were not to be drawn into the committees!"[15]

Thus the attitudes of the committee members, though rooted in the difficulties of underground work, were reinforced by other interests reflecting their class, which they were not eager to have exposed openly to proletarian and public observation. This led to serious conflicts, for the party, Lenin said, "should particularly see to it that as many workers as possible become fully class-conscious and professional revolutionaries and members of the committee," which "should, therefore, include as far as possible, all the principal leaders of the working-class movement from among the workers themselves."[16] He and others called for a clear policy decision on worker involvement.

> "I think we ought to take a wider view of the matter. Drawing workers into the committees is not only a pedagogical but a political task. The workers have a class instinct, and given a little political experience they fairly quickly become staunch Social-Democrats. I would be strongly in favour of having eight workers on our committees to every two intellectuals. . . ."[17]

Though his call for a "clear and definite directive of the congress" failed, Lenin did not despair, knowing that the growing revolution itself would break down the isolation and stuffiness of the old party committees, as proved true. But though this temporary barrier was overcome, the deeper nature of the problem had been revealed: there were within the party, even among those who had clearly adopted the

proletarian cause as their own, "educated elements" who resisted not only "a pedagogical but a political task" of accepting workers as equals and of promoting the latter as rapidly as possible into leading roles.

The ex-students and professionals who largely composed the old committees had in fact clung to the "prejudices" of their class, and despite accepting the "problems and solutions" of the proletariat, were unwilling themselves to be fully proletarianized if this meant abandoning their old methods of work and their own "self-activity." Therefore the proletarianization of the party, which was one of the most fundamental of the accomplishments which Lenin brought, was not simply a matter or including workers or giving them a leading part in all its activities. It involved as well a struggle over what role those from the "educated classes" were to play, of the very nature of the class interests they were to uphold. Lenin had pointed the way to how the "new science" could be taught to the workers, but it remained to be established whether this was to be done only from "outside" the working class, by professional socialist "educators," or whether the latter were themselves to be educated by the workers as a first step to being proletarianized. For that to happen, the "monopoly" of the intellectuals over revolutionary theory and the machinery of its practice had to be broken. Only this could prevent those who in their earlier life had trained to join the ranks of the professions, from turning

into "professional communists" who would guard the petty-bourgeois interests such training generated, a new sub-stratum of that class imbedded within the proletarian movement itself.

As widespread and fundamental to the process of the revolution as education was in Russia, it paled beside the vast educational activities of the Chinese. The length of the struggle in China, and the ability of the Communist Party there to actually govern millions of people even before winning national control in 1949, allowed it to carry out revolutionary education on unprecedented scales. Indeed, this was the key instrument employed by Mao and the other leaders of the revolution to mold a fighting force out of mainly illiterate peasants who were full of revolutionary fervor but lacked even the rudiments of schooling. In the semi-feudal conditions of China a peasant, especially one from a poor family, could obtain an education only by the collective efforts of many others. Chu Teh, co-founder with Mao of the Red Army and later its Commander-in-Chief, exemplifies under the special conditions of China the "transference" between various strata which was analazed previously above, that is, the development from "old" peasantry, to "new" educated stratum, and finally to revolution as a "profession." At an early age Chu Teh, born to illiterate poor peasant parents, was chosen to become a scholar as part of an effort to recover ancestral lands his family had lost.[18]

> "In my childhood, conditions had become so bad that education was a life necessity for the peasants. A whole clan would pool its resources to educate one son who could talk back to the tax collectors and soldiers, and keep accounts."[19]

But Chu Teh turned to the "new" Western sciences and to the despised military, where he became an officer, before becoming a full-time revolutionary.

This development did not allow him to fulfill the expectations of his family, but it did help him to understand the need to collectively educate the peasantry from which he had come and to bring them needed intellectual skills.

> Above all, his years of studies with Chinese Communists in Germany had given him an explanation of why past Chinese revolutions had been aborted and how the present revolution could be saved. The alliance of the revolutionary intellectuals with the masses of workers and peasants was the key to China's future victory.[20]

To reach the point where he could understand the need for this new "alliance," it was necessary for Chu Teh to have rejected the traditional attributes of the Chinese scholar, which his own family had tried to impose on him by refusing to let him do manual work after he graduated from school, and also to have overcome the temptations of the professional officers who sold their "expertise" to whoever would pay them the highest. Thus when Chu Teh, along with Mao and the other leaders of the movement, began to carry out revolutionary education, they did so with a keen sense of both the role this must serve in liberating the nation, and the resistance to "professionalism" which must

accompany it. Only in this way could the masses recover the land and be free of "tax collectors and other officials" while preventing the creation of a "new" ruling class based on the military, political, and ideological skills necessary to help lead the revolution, and that at first had to come almost entirely from a relatively small number of intellectuals.

Under the guidance of leaders like Mao and Chu Teh, millions of workers and peasants were educated, both in general, and in the political training needed for revolution, and hundreds of thousands became full-time revolutionaries. Helen Foster Snow described the situation which she found during 1937:

> Being able to read and write seemed to raise the Red Army soldiers to a different plane of thinking. The people of China are all pathetically eager to grasp at any straw of education. To send his son to school, a farmer will make almost any sacrifice. This is one reason for the popularity of the Communists. Though they had little personnel to spare for school teaching and little time between battles, the first thing they did in every district was to start primary schools for adults and children, trying to educate enough teachers quickly to disseminate all available knowledge as widely as possible.
>
> In Yen-an there were night schools everywhere. Bricklayers and apprentices, merchants' sons and poor farmers sat at their desks eagerly learning to read and write after their day of hard exhausting labor.[21]

In Yenan in particular, cultural institutions as well as primary, cadre, and military training schools sprang up, and Mao and Chu Teh along with others of the leading revolutionaries were constantly delivering lectures in addition to their other duties. Hundreds of university

students and even faculty flocked to the revolutionary areas, to enter this rather unusual form of "higher education," from which they graduated to service within the organizations of revolution.

Chu Teh earlier related to Agnes Smedley the effect wrought by the capture of Kuomintang printing equipment in 1930, which allowed the first issuance of educational materials on a mass scale, vastly expanding the resources available for learning. At the same time, he made clear the special role which the Red Army played in the education process.

> Thus began what General Chu called "the greatest study movement in Chinese history," a movement reflected in slogans painted on walls, cliffs, and even the trunks of trees: "Learn, learn, and learn again! . . . Study until the light fails! . . . Study as you plow! . . . Study by the reflected light of snow!"
>
> Memories of that hungry search of the "oppressed and injured" for knowledge filled General Chu with both pride and melancholy. In those days, he recalled, the army had to do almost everything. Every man in its ranks able to impart knowledge spent any leisure moment he might have in teaching the peasants what he knew of common and political knowledge. Teachers were few and far between. . . .[22]

In the absence of other personnel to carry it out, the process of mass education was centered in the army itself. Indeed so intense was this educational atmosphere that Chu Teh in one of his cryptic field notes observed: "Young land laborer thinks himself too humble to join Red Army because Army is 'book learning' army."[23]

It was in the Red Army in fact that perhaps the most profound effect of this education was felt, particularly

when compared with the role of armies throughout Chinese history as mercenary oppressors of the masses. These changes had begun as far back as the period when the Kuomintang Party was still a revolutionary force and had Communists in its ranks. Thus

> the Chinese regimental political officer had an educative function. He was a descendant of the "Party representative" attached to units of the KMT National Revolutionary Army at the time of the Northern Expedition (1926)..."These officers took up the task of organizing the soldiers into political cells, educating them politically, teaching them to read and write, and acting as guardians and spokesmen for the underprivileged soldiers. . . ."[24]

This relationship reached a remarkable height of development within the Red Army itself, with an egalitarianism which was a living process of mutual and constant education.

Chu Teh described how after each battle a meeting would be held to discuss the accomplishments and errors of the army, in which any soldier was free to make criticism against even the top officers without fear of suffering reprisals. This sharing of knowledge and analysis produced an exceptional level of unity:

> It is easy to see how the army keeps itself informed of everything, just by tuning in on each other. This is the reason, I suppose, for their extraordinary high political consciousness and the spread of education. What any one man knows is promptly relayed to all the others. After further experience I decided that the whole Red Army seemed to have developed that mass interest which guides a flock of birds or bees--they took action together spontaneously without any apparent signals. . . . They seem to be a kind of self-mesmerizing and self-educating body.[25]

Despite this somewhat overblown "mass psychology" description, what stands out here is this sense that: "What any one man [sic] knows is promptly relayed to all the others."

This education was not just aimed at giving to the ranks a general level of training, nor with simply turning them into disciplined fighters, but was meant to promote their self-sufficiency and leadership. It included the very specific goal of producing soldiers who could, even individually if need be, themselves organize new forces to carry on the guerrilla struggle at any time.

> "We educated each Red Army fighter so that, in case of defeat in battle, he could raise up a new army and continue the revolution. Each of our men was a precious revolutionary asset."
>
> . . . Sick or wounded, they had been left with the peasants to recover. . . . Each such man had been given his rifle and a few rounds of ammunition and told upon recovery, to organize and lead the peasants in partisan warfare.
>
> Those who survived had done so. Contacting one another, they had organized a small regiment which was modeled on the parent body, even to the political workers in each squad.[26]

Thus not only was each soldier given the necessary skills with which to restart the struggle if necessary, but they had themselves carried on the tradition of revolutionary education within the army even when isolated from the rest. Moreover, if every fighter was meant to have the ability to lead, so the top officers were expected to share the life of the ranks. This went beyond the absence of insignia and saluting, to sharing in the hard work of production, in which Chu Teh, like the common soldiers, worked in the

fields to help make the army virtually self-sufficient. Even on the Long March he often walked, allowing his horse to be used by those in greater need, and after the Second World War he was still described as an "'unpaid, ill-clothed revolutionary whose rank is equivalent to that of a five-star American General."[27]

Such behavior broke decisively with the "professionalism" and mercenary ways of the old Chinese armies and, as with the Communist Party in both Russia and China, made of the Red Army a revolutionary proletarian force in which those drawn from all classes were melded. Helen Foster Snow again makes this point clear:

> It is not one class but a whole <u>people</u> fighting for life. That is why, during the past decade since 1927, it has been led by a young <u>Communist soldier</u>, who may have been either a student, a peasant, a worker, or the son of a bankrupt mandarin, but was transformed by education and organization into a revolutionary rifleman by profession.
>
> The fact is that the Chinese Red Army is not a purely <u>peasant</u> army, nor does it have the so-called peasant ideology. The nature of this army is the same as the complex nature of the Chinese Revolution itself, which is still in the stage of being a bourgeois-democratic revolution but aims to transform into a Socialist revolution later on. The peasant partisan in the Soviets fought for the land, yes; that was his particular task. But his son, the regular Red soldier, has not been fighting for land alone but for the revolution as a <u>whole</u>, for the agrarian <u>and</u> all other stages of the revolution. . . .[28]

Thus the Red Army, like the party, created professional revolutionaries who at one and the same time brought "real educative elements" to the masses, but were also able to give up those "prejudices" drawn from the peasantry or from the "educated classes" from which they largely came.

Of course, all this was not accomplished easily and without difficulties. Many of the barriers did not break down until the suffering of the Long March: "'But during this time the fraternity between classes became very close, because under such hardships we all co-operated with a single heart.'"[29] However, this unifying process was also one of selecting out, not always in a voluntary way. The woman who made the above remark to Helen Foster Snow was one of only 50 who began the Long March together with 100,000 men. The excuse given for this disproportion was that the women were not "strong enough," and yet of the 30 women leaders who made the march, many of them wives of leading male cadre, all survived. Moreover, two thousand "Little Devils" or young boys who served as nurses and orderlies were allowed to go along, though hundreds were lost on the way. The survivors often rose later in the ranks of the Red Army, but scores of women revolutionaries left behind in the Soviet areas were wiped out. Since participation in the Long March became a leading claim to future position in the army and party, this resulted in a permanent loss to female representation within the ruling bodies of the revolution as a whole. In general, women were not allowed to serve in the Red Army until much later, though many fought in partisan forces and a regiment of female soldiers had been organized in Szechuan.[30]

The very process of educating revolutionary fighters had therefore an exclusive as well as an inclusive side,

and this was to gain further importance as the "professionalism" of the party and army grew. Moreover, the duality of the respect for learning was always present. The same emphasis on education that played such an important role in "raising up" the masses, also helped to maintain traditional attitudes that reinforced class divisions:

> It was interesting to find that the Red Army kept the same old reverence for the literati as has been the Chinese tradition ever since the wise old literati themselves designed such Chinese puzzles for characters . . . thereby making themselves high priests over all. The Red soldiers showed the gravest respect to all the students who came, and were delighted to have them join their revolution. It was somehow pathetic to see a hero of the Long March looking at these students as if they were gods just because they could read and write fluently. But it was good capital for Demmy-erh, the intellectual.[31]

Clearly there was in the dual role of the intellectuals who joined the revolution the potential for a renewal of the old domination which they had practiced in Chinese society, to now include, as Snow termed it, "capitalization" of their knowledge.

Moreover, the need for "learning from the masses" and accepting criticism from those the professional revolutionaries were helping to guide in the struggle had constantly to be renewed and strengthened. As studies such as Fanshen by William Hinton and Ten Mile Inn by the Crooks have so carefully documented, the party members drawn from the "educated classes," and even the cadre and mass leaders from among the peasantry themselves, had great difficulty

in overcoming the "prejudices" with which their petty-bourgeois and semi-proletarian class backgrounds had imbued them. Even while actively educating and leading the masses in the revolutionary struggle, they had themselves to be "remolded" at the same time, in an ongoing process of proletarianization that was often extremely trying. The guiding principle for this policy was laid down by Mao:

> In all the practical work of our Party, all correct leadership is necessarily "from the masses, to the masses". This means: take the ideas of the masses (scattered and unsystematic ideas) and concentrate them (through study turn them into concentrated and systematic ideas), then go to the masses and propagate and explain these ideas until the masses embrace them as their own, hold fast to them and translate them into action, and test the correctness of these ideas in such action. Then once again concentrate ideas from the masses and once again go to the masses so that the ideas are persevered in and carried through. And so on, over and over again in an endless spiral, with the ideas becoming more correct, more vital and richer each time. Such is the Marxist theory of knowledge.[32]

It was one thing, however, to accept this policy in theory, another to practice it: the more intellectual cadre continually tended to slip back into the attitude that knowledge came only from themselves, and that they therefore did not have to "learn from the masses."

For instance, the Communist Party work-team which the Crooks observed and reported on in Ten Mile Inn was predominantly made up of intellectuals, only the head of the group and two of the others being of peasant origin, and they were cadre and party officials. The other ten members of the team were journalists, and a single

researcher. Thus every one of them was a "professional" by trade or through party work.

> The majority of its members were intellectuals, which in China meant any person having enough education to read and write with facility. At this time such people numbered only about 5 million in an estimated population of 400 million. The Communist Party considered these people exceedingly precious, but at the same time very much in need of remolding. Although in most cases their educational attainments were modest, in general their sense of superiority to the illiterate peasants created a gulf between them and the peasantry. Thus the ideological remolding of intellectuals was an integral part of the campaign.
>
> In a summary written in the middle of March, Zhang said that the chief defect of the Ten Mile Inn team was "the working style of the intelligentsia." On some occasions, he pointed out, team members launched "like learned professors" into theoretical discussions which to the villagers had no direct bearing on their problems. At other times they explained things over and over "like kindergarten teachers," fearing that the masses would not be able to understand.[33]

Thus the Chinese encountered the same kinds of behavior by intellectuals which Lenin had had to overcome when he first organized the working class in St. Petersburg.

The "solution" was also the same: careful study of the concrete conditions of the workers and peasants, sharing with them all knowledge, accepting education from the masses and engaging in honest self-criticism, participating in the practice of the struggle and production, promoting working-class and peasant leadership, and being guided by it. Though the living style of the work-team intellectuals was simple and their dedication to the revolutionary cause complete, this alone, "could not solve the ideological problems they had brought with them from the old society."[34] For this a change of attitude itself was required, a re-

education to the ways of thinking and forthright methods of work of the working class and poor peasants themselves. Mao himself gave a description of the process of his own proletarianization, which included his prescription for such changes by all intellectuals.

> If you want the masses to understand you, if you want to be one with the masses, you must make up your mind to undergo a long and even painful process of tempering. Here I might mention the experience of how my own feelings changed. I began life as a student and at school acquired the ways of a student; I then used to feel it undignified to do even a little manual labour. . . . But after I became a revolutionary and lived with workers and peasants and with soldiers of the revolutionary army, I gradually came to know them well, and they gradually came to know me well too. It was then, and only then, that I fundamentally changed the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois feelings implanted in me in the bourgeois schools. I came to feel that compared with the workers and peasants the unremolded intellectuals were not clean and that, in the last analysis, the workers and peasants were the cleanest people and, even though their hands were soiled and their feet smeared with cow-dung, they were really cleaner than the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois intellectuals. That is what is meant by a change in feelings, a change from one class to another.[35]

Thus, according to Mao, nothing less than an actual "change of class" was involved in "learning from the masses" and adopting a proletarian world outlook.

But it was not only the remnants of their backgrounds which had to be discarded by these revolutionaries. The very training they had received in the course of the revolution, and the nature of the party and Red Army, produced its own tendencies toward "professionalism." For it is as true of the professional revolutionaries as of all other professionals that they share certain common basic

characteristics. Thus they have a "calling," based on a faith in revolutionary progress, and with its own form of "higher education" and specialized knowledge. The revolutionaries have devoted themselves to this "career" by choice. In general, they must practice their profession directly as individuals, and despite the overall discipline of the party or army, they can do so with a high degree of "self-activity," exemplified by the wounded Red Army soldiers left to recover and to restart the struggle by themselves. Their work is clearly social in form, and in the course of it they in many cases, without otherwise changing their role, assume authority over the activities of a small number of others, either lower-ranking party or army personnel, or even workers and peasants among the masses. Each of these relationships carried with it the potential that the power of the professional revolutionaries would be used in exploitative ways. The basic attributes of the professionals were thus present in the party and army of the revolutionary struggle, and it was therefore possible that they could blossom into the petty-bourgeois class attitudes associated with that role among the cadre who lead the proletarian movement.

In the professional revolutionaries, in fact, are reached both the highest stage of development and the potential negation of professionalism. The first because they break down all the narrow specializations and barriers which divide the individual professions, instead taking the

entire society as their province and indeed even assuming the role of leadership over it. Despite the insistence by Lenin especially on a high level of expertise and on strict division of labor in the revolutionary movement, this was never meant to promote professional monopolization and careers per se. Quite the contrary, it was needed in the underground to most widely and rapidly disseminate to the masses the knowledge of the socialist cadre. Thus the professional revolutionaries were to strive above all to negate the domination of the "educated classes," instead giving the working class itself the knowledge necessary for it to assume leadership of society. In the contradiction between professionalism and proletarian revolution, they must accept the latter as primary, and base their actions not on individual bourgeois and petty-bourgeois interests, but on those of the proletariat. In the process, these revolutionaries are "remolded," that is, they do not cling to the "prejudices" of their class, but strive to drop them. Thus in the very act of carrying professionalism to new heights, such revolutionaries were to overcome it, helping to lead all of society, not by their own isolated and "neutral" theories, but by direct involvement in the struggles of the working class, which itself was to assume control.

Lenin was very clear about the way the old monopoly of socialist knowledge was to be broken. What must happen was that the party would educate the masses of workers, who in

turn put forward more and more of their own intelligentsia and professional revolutionaries, joining and increasingly replacing those drawn from the "educated classes." Proletarians themselves were to become "teachers" and assume leadership.

> By educating the workers' party, Marxism educates the vanguard of the proletariat, capable of assuming power and leading the whole people to socialism, of directing and organizing the new system, of being the teacher, the guide, the leader of all the working and exploited people in organising their social life without the bourgeoisie and against the bourgeoisie.[36]

The party, according to Lenin, was "a vanguard that has absorbed the revolutionary energy of the class." But it was not enough to do this theoretically, it must also do so literally, that is, it "absorbs the vanguard of the proletariat, and this vanguard exercises the dictatorship of the proletariat."[37] In the process, however, both the party and the most advanced members of the working class itself must change. Lenin spoke of the development of "worker-professionals," who were replacing intellectuals. Thus even as the party or army cadre from the "educated classes" were being proletarianized, or leaving altogether, certain workers were partly "professionalized," creating a new form of leader, the "worker-professional," whose "higher education" was often only that gained in the revolutionary struggle.

The parties and Red Armies were voluntary associations in which the members developed certain knowledge and skills, and had unique collective experiences, such as the

Long March, not common to others. While this served to unite all those who dedicated their lives to the revolution, it also created special circumstances which could not be shared or duplicated entirely by the masses, however close the revolutionaries might be to them. These institutions thus became the most concentrated form of the new "alliance of revolutionary intellectuals with the workers and peasants," in which previous class distinctions were dropped. Thus,

> the organisation of the revolutionaries must consist first and foremost of people who make revolutionary activity their profession...In view of this common characteristic of the members of such an organisation, all distinctions as between workers and intellectuals, not to speak of disctinctions of trade and profession, in both categories, must be effaced.[38]

But by the same token the proletarians and peasantry who joined these bodies were to some extent lifted above their own backgrounds, having chosen a revolutionary "career" which the masses as a whole could not participate in equally, and were made part of an institution which was the representative of new forms of relations within the old society.

From this arose in part that exhilirating sense of uniqueness and of liberation of the revolutionary forces, but it also contained within it the seeds of narrow self-interest, the desire for professional autonomy and expertise, and renewed independence of the petty bourgeois class, compounded by the concept of a vanguard, with its own special scientific education, and class attitudes that

remained among those who joined the proletariat from "outside." Thus the danger remained that, as Marx and Engels had warned years ago, socialism would again become the "private science" of the professionals who, if they could seize control, would deproletarianize the party, "and there would be an end of proletarian snap."

NOTES

1. Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," 275.

2. Karl Marx, The Poverty of Philosophy: Answer to the "Philosophy of Poverty" of M. Proudhon (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1955), 109.

3. Ibid.

4. Marx and Engels, The German Ideology, 60.

5. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, London, to A. Bebel, W. Liebknecht, W. Bracke and Others ("Circular Letter"), September 17-18, 1879, in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 2, 484.

6. Ibid., 484-85.

7. N. K. Krupskaya, Reminiscences of Lenin (New York: International Publishers, 1960), 18.

8. Ibid., 24-25.

9. Ibid., 124.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid., 127.

12. Ibid.

13. V. I. Lenin, "What Is To Be Done?: Burning Questions of Our Movement," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 5, 383-84. The quote is from Karl Kautsky, Neue Zeit, 1901-02, XX, I, no. 3, 79.

14. Krupskaya, Reminiscences of Lenin, 124-25.

15. Ibid., 126.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. Smedley, The Great Road, xvii, 13, 36.

19. Ibid., 36.

20. Ibid., 165.

21. Snow, Inside Red China, 143-44.

22. Smedley, The Great Road, 271.

23. Ibid., 316.

24. Chalmers A. Johnson, Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power: The Emergence of Revolutionary China 1937-1945 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962), 79-80. The quote is from F. F. Liu (Liu Chih-pu), A military history of Modern China, 1924-1949 (Princeton, NJ, 1956), 19-20.

25. Snow, Inside Red China, 37.

26. Smedley, The Great Road, 267.

27. Ibid., 436.

28. Snow, Inside Red China, 51-52.

29. Ibid., 28.

30. Ibid., 29, 103-5, 173-75.

31. Ibid., 94.

32. Mao Tse-Tung, "Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership," in Mao, Selected Works, vol. 3, 119.

33. Crook and Crook, Ten Mile Inn, 150.

34. Ibid., 153.

35. Mao Tse-Tung, "Talks at the Yenan Forum on Literature and Art: Introduction," in Mao, Selected Works, vol. 3, 73.

36. Lenin, "The State and Revolution," 409.

37. V. I. Lenin, "The Trade Unions, the Present Situation, and Trotsky's Mistakes," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 32, 20-21.

38. Lenin, "What Is To Be Done?", 452.

CHAPTER 22

BUREAUCRATIZATION: THE PROBLEM WITHOUT A "CLASS" NAME

From the time of Lenin on, it had been generally if not universally recognized that the Soviet Union had "bureaucratic distortions."[1] Lenin made continual reference to this problem as the new society developed after the Revolution, stressing the need to combat the emergence of a bureaucracy within the party and state. The existence of bureaucratic practices was widely acknowledged, and in fact there was no period of Soviet history free from these manifestations. But beyond such basic agreement that the problem exists, all unanimity ends. Instead, there are the most varied and opposing interpretations as to what bureaucratization is, and particularly what class structure emerged from this form of "distortion." Virtually every imaginable solution to this question has been proposed, from the bureaucracy as a mere "caste" of the proletariat at one pole, to its growth into a "state bourgeoisie" which had "restored capitalism," even within the shell of "actually existing socialism," at the other extreme. Writing as late as 1936, Trotsky put forth the former viewpoint, in which "the plenipotentiaries of the working class became bureaucratized, and the

bureaucracy rises above the new society," to become the "ruling stratum" of a "degenerated workers' state." This process had developed so far that, "from being a 'distortion,' it has become a system of administration." But, while Trotsky indicated that this might in time lead to new class elements or even to capitalist restoration, "to speak of that now is at least premature."[2] The second position, that of a "state bourgeoisie" and "capitalist restoration" has been widely asserted in varying forms by such Marxists as Charles Bettelheim, by certain segments of the "new Communist" movement in the United States, and in China.[3]

Any full review of these schools of thought, or the numerous points lying along the spectrum between them, is both impossible and unnecessary here. We have, however, encountered a similar situation earlier in this study, in which the Marxist theorists analyzing the class position of professionals showed the same total disunity, advancing every possible, and often completely opposing, "solutions" to the problem. A closer examination in that case revealed, nevertheless, that there was one common thread which ran between them, belying their apparent irreconcilability. This was their dismissal of the petty bourgeoisie as a "remnant" class lying "outside" capitalism, leaving a void that each student of the question filled with their own, usually "new" construction to account for the role of modern professionals. If we

look beneath the conflicting interpretations of "bureaucracy" and of the structure of classes which emerges from its "distortion" of socialist society, we find a similar element of unity underlying the apparently opposing tendencies. Here again, it is the manner in which the petty bourgeoisie is dealt with, or more precisely not dealt with, which unites these various schools of thought. In effect, the general tendency in these analyses has been to treat the petty bourgeois owners as lying "outside" socialist society, paralleling their earlier dismissal as an active element in capitalist relations, and for identical reasons. If Marxist theory is viewed primarily as a "two-class polarity" in which the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, capitalism and socialism, are the poles, then it is easy to dismiss the petty bourgeoisie as a "residual" formation which has no role in socialist society.

This tendency to remove the petty bourgeois strata from consideration takes two primary forms. On the one hand are those who stress emergence of a bureaucratic elite in the Soviet Union and other "socialist bloc" countries, theories in which the bureaucracy itself, or sometimes the intellectuals, or the professional-managerial element, are simply labeled a "new" class which now rules these societies. These theorists, of whom the Yugoslav Milovan Djilas was an early and leading representative, are generally strong in their analysis of the internal nature of the segment they are examining, in particular its own

drive for power, but they are weak in their isolating of this phenomenon from earlier class history. In their theories, the socialist era either generates a "new class," or it puts in power one which was produced during "monopoly capitalism." Thus, for example, Djilas speaks of: "This new class, the bureaucracy, or more accurately the political bureaucracy. . . ."[4] The Ehrenreichs, in turn, warn of the possibility of a "dictatorship of the PMC," adding:

> At the risk of considerable over-simplification, we would suggest that this is in a sense what happened in the USSR: a "new class" of technocrats - government and party bureaucrats, industrial managers, professional ideologues, etc. - has come to preside over a society in which more or less capitalist relations of production persist, despite the absence of a capitalist class. . . . Similarly, "Arab socialism," "African socialism," and "military socialism" (e.g., pre-1975 Peru) can also best be understood not as "petty bourgeois socialism" but as "PMC socialism," based on the rising of civilian and military government mental workers.[5]

The petty bourgeoisie plays little or no part in such schema, being at most one of the actors in the revolution along with the proletariat, together with whom it is later oppressed by the bureaucratic "new class."

The second grouping of analysts does put main stress on the "old" classes out of which bureaucratic elements rose, and may even accord to petty bourgeois strata an important or leading part in this aspect of the socialist era. However, it tends not to examine as closely the internal dynamic which drives the petty bourgeoisie itself in this role, instead subordinating this class mainly to an

analysis of the struggle of the proletariat and bourgeoisie, specifically focusing on the question of whether the Soviet Union was capitalist or socialist. A gain in historical perspective is therefore made at the expense of a lack in explaining the internal contradictions which determine the course of the "new" bureaucratic strata in and of themselves. Thus Charles Bettleheim can claim in regard to the "independent" bureaucracy centered in the state:

> The class effects of this process whereby the state machinery acquired independence were a weakening of the proletariat's leading role in its own state machinery and, correlatively, a strengthening of the bourgeoisie. It was therefore a process of class struggle.[6]

In this view, rather than the basis of a "new class," the bureaucracy primarily revives the struggle of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. In particular, the petty bourgeoisie in this latter approach tends to be seen either as a "restraint" or "distortion" on the proletarian goal of socialism, or as the partial cause of the "restoration of capitalism," but in neither case as a class setting a course for itself within the development of bureaucratic forces after the revolution.

Lenin constantly warned against both of the tendencies described above. On the one hand, he stressed the presence of petty bourgeoisie within the society inherited by the revolution, in fact as a majority class insofar as the peasantry, with their interests in small-holding private property, were as a whole "petty bourgeois."[7] But Lenin

always went beyond mere numbers and percentages to examine what the likely consequences would be of the existence of such massive non-proletarian elements as part of the social order which was now to be transformed to socialism. In particular, he stressed the internal contradictions which would drive the petty bourgeoisie now toward, now away from, the socialist goal, and refused to treat them merely as a passive factor, a "drag" on the working class, nor as simply the bearer of "bourgeois relations" within the new society. Though never underestimating these two aspects of its role, Lenin also pointed to those developments which would strengthen the petty bourgeois class in pursuit of its own special interests, separate from those of the proletariat or big bourgeoisie. This, of course, simply continued what had been one of his principal contributions before the revolution: the analysis of the various strata and tendencies that were present in the peasantry, allowing the working class to win to its side large numbers of poor peasants, while combatting the desire of the "middle peasant" petty bourgeoisie to assert their "independence."

As early as April, 1917, Lenin found it necessary to warn against simplistic views of the future revolutionary state. When Trotsky talked of a "worker's government," Lenin objected: "This is wrong. A petty bourgeoisie exists, and it cannot be dismissed. But it is in two parts. The poorer of the two is with the working class."[8] Indeed, from December 1917 to February 1918 the new

government was a coalition of the Bolshevik Party and Left Socialist Revolutionaries who were based mainly on the peasantry, an alliance which dissolved over the "patriotic" opposition of the latter party against the peace treaty with Germany and because of their defense of the kulaks, or rich peasants. More than three years later, Lenin was to return to this question in a struggle with Trotsky, Bukharin, and others over the trade unions. Describing the government as "not actually a workers' state but a workers' and peasants' state,"[9] he was challenged by Bukharin, and later corrected himself:

> I went back to the report of that discussion and found that I was wrong and Comrade Bukharin was right. What I should have said is: "A workers' state is an abstraction. What we actually have is a workers' state, with this peculiarity, firstly, that it is not the working class but the peasant population that predominates in the country, and, secondly that it is a workers' state with bureaucratic distortions." Anyone who reads the whole of my speech will see that this correction makes no difference to my reasoning and conclusions.[10]

"A workers' state is an abstraction" and the correction "makes no difference" because what concerned Lenin was not a semantic label but the reality that in a country with a peasant majority it was impossible for the proletariat to be in power without in effect striking an alliance with part of the peasantry.

To maintain otherwise was to quarrel over words without substantive meaning. The criticism of Lenin was directed at those who attempted to ignore this necessity, to act as though the working class alone ruled over the

masses of the peasants. Moreover, and more to the immediate issue here, the two qualifications which he made to the "workers' state," a peasant majority and bureaucratization, were in essence the same, or rather two aspects of a single phenomenon, for the problem of "bureaucratic distortions" arose from the petty bourgeoisie. Thus Lenin noted that the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party in 1919 "spoke forthrightly of '<u>a partial revival of bureaucracy within the Soviet system</u>'":

> Two years later, in the spring of 1921, after the Eighth Congress of Soviets (December 1920), which discussed the evils of bureaucracy, . . . we find <u>them</u> even more distinct and sinister. What are their economic roots? They are mostly of a dual character: on the one hand, a developed bourgeoisie needs a bureaucratic apparatus, primarily a military apparatus and then a judiciary, etc., to use against the revolutionary movement of the workers (and partly of the peasants). That is something we have not got. Ours are class courts directed against the bourgeoisie. Ours is a class army directed against the bourgeoisie. The evils of bureaucracy are not in the army, but in the institutions serving it. In our country bureaucratic practices have different economic roots, namely, the atomised and scattered state of the small producer with his poverty, illiteracy, lack of culture, and absence of roads and <u>exchange</u> between agriculture and industry, the absence of connection and interaction between them. This is largely the result of the Civil War.[11]

For Lenin then, bureaucracy itself is neither a "neutral" institution nor some "new" class of society, but has different origins and characteristics in each instance, depending on which classes it serves and which compose its membership, in this case rooted in the petty bourgeoisie.

In making this analysis, Lenin harked back to Marx himself, who had noted that, under Napoleon III: "By its very nature, small-holding property forms a suitable basis for an all-powerful and innumerable bureaucracy. . . ." The Bonapartist state employed some half million bureaucrats, most of them "middle class," for whom "the maintenance of his regime becomes a bread-and-butter question."[12] In fact, as the petty bourgeoisie itself turns to government as its last resort, it carries out a further intra-class "transference," as its sub-stratum in the state bureaucracy grows at the expense of all others. Lenin, in turn, had shown that even the "radical" petty bourgeois professionals were not immune to this bureaucratic attraction, even though they were repulsed by many of the specific actions undertaken by the state:

> Educated people, and the 'intelligentsia' generally, cannot but revolt against the savage police tyranny of the autocracy, which hunts down thought and knowledge, but the material interests of this intelligentsia bind it to the autocracy and to the bourgeoisie, compel it to be inconsistent, to compromise, to sell its oppositional and revolutionary ardour for an official salary, or a share of profits or dividends.
>
> . . . all these strata (bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie, the "intelligentsia" in general) have some ties with the bureaucracy, because all these strata are kith and kin of the Russian bureaucracy. Who does not know how easy it is in Holy Russia for a radical intellectual, or socialist intellectual, to turn into an official of the Imperial Government, an official who takes comfort from the thought that he does "good" within the limits of office routine, an official who pleads this "good" in justification of his political indifference, his servility toward the government of the knout and the whip?[13]

Thus both indirectly and directly the petty bourgeoisie breed bureaucratization, with "educated people" occupying the positions thus created, being both compelled and attracted into them.

However, the "atomised and scattered state of the small producer" was not simply the underlying condition from which bureaucracy arose. For due in particular to the low level of education among the workers and their exhaustion during the Civil War, the Soviet regime was forced to use the remnants of a governmental apparatus it had inherited, and this in turn meant utilizing the petty bourgeoisie who had become bureaucrats:

> The development, perfection and strengthening of the bureaucratic and military apparatus proceeded during all the numerous bourgeois revolutions which Europe has witnessed since the fall of feudalism. In particular, it is the petty bourgeoisie who are attracted to the side of the big bourgeoisie and are largely subordinated to them through this apparatus, which provides the upper sections of the peasant, small artisans, tradesmen and the like with comparatively comfortable, quiet and respectable jobs raising their holders <u>above</u> the people.[14]

These origins meant that numerous ties remained between the ranks of the lower bureaucracy and the petty bourgeoisie from which they sprang, notably in the rural areas where the revolution was slowest to spread its influence. To the extent, therefore, that the Soviet regime had to use the bureaucratic apparatus inherited from Tsarism and the bourgeoisie, the result was to strengthen the role of the petty bourgeois class.

The administration recruited especially from among the professionals.

> Some of our comrades, [Lenin] said, express indignation at the fact that former officers and others who served the tsar are at the head of the Red Army. "Naturally, in organising the Red Army this question acquires special significance and success in this work depends on its correct presentation. But the question of specialists must be discussed on a broader scale. We must make use of them in all spheres of organisation, wherever we, lacking the experience and scientific training of the old bourgeois specialists, are ourselves naturally unable to cope with our tasks. We are not utopians who think that socialist Russia must be built up by men of a new type; we must utilise the material we have inherited from the old capitalist world. We are placing people of the old type in new conditions, keeping them under proper control, under the vigilant supervision of the proletariat, and making them do the work we need. This is the only way we can build. . . .'"[15]

Nevertheless, Lenin in the same year found it necessary to take note that: "sabotage was started by the intelligentsia and the government officials, the bulk of whom are bourgeois and petty bourgeoisie."[16] As of 1919, therefore, when he made these remarks, the petty bourgeoisie largely made up the rank and file of the government, the military, and the industrial specialists, and it was common for them to use these positions to frustrate the drive toward socialism.

Before going on, we must look more closely at the specific nature of the practices of these "bourgeois" specialists, intelligentsia, and even army officers, and the manner in which they "sabotaged" the socialist endeavor. Basic to this phenomenon was the manner in which they used their education and knowledge. Lenin pointed out

how under the old society, "the schools were turned into nothing but an instrument of the class rule of the bourgeoisie. They were thoroughly imbued with the bourgeois caste spirit. Their purpose was to supply the capitalists with obedient lackeys and able workers."[17] Therefore:

> We say that our work in the sphere of education is part of the struggle for overthrowing the bourgeoisie. We publicly declare that education divorced from life and politics is lies and hypocrisy. What was the meaning of the sabotage resorted to by the best educated representatives of the old bourgeois culture? This sabotage showed better than any agitator, better than all our speeches, better than thousands of pamphlets that these people regard learning as their monopoly and have turned it into an instrument of their rule over the so-called common people. They used their education to frustrate the work of socialist construction, and came out openly against the working people.[18]

Thus the source of the power of these "educated representatives of the old bourgeois culture" was monopolization of education and knowledge, "learning" itself, which they attempted to continue within the society which emerged after the socialist revolution.

Though Lenin valued the expertise these persons had, and generally insisted that they must be well-treated to win their voluntary cooperation with the new government, he nevertheless made clear that their power must be broken:

> New state forms have been created, which make it possible to suppress the exploiters, to overcome the resistance of this insignificant handful who are still strong because of yesterday's money-bags and yesterday's store of knowledge. They--the professors, teachers and engineers--transform their knowledge into an instrument for the exploitation of the working people, saying they want their knowledge to serve the bourgeoisie, otherwise they refuse to work. But their power has been broken by the workers' and peasants'

> revolution, and a state is rising against them in which the people themselves freely elect their own representatives.[19]

In doing so they did not fear "the reproaches of the 'educated' people, or rather of the uneducated supporters of the bourgeoisie who were trading in the remnants of their knowledge."[20] The petty bourgeoisie were a major repository of higher education, and this made them a powerful force which might be used to fight the working class. Thus Lenin equated "yesterday's money-bags and yesterday's store of knowledge" as the two different forms of bourgeois accumulation which socialism must overcome. But after the Revolution, these were held in particular by the petty bourgeoisie.

The immediate steps taken toward the specialists, while successful in helping to attract them away from the bourgeoisie, nevertheless had the effect of strengthening the petty bourgeois basis of the bureaucracy. The vast Russian illiteracy, still at 70% or more when the revolution came, made of each literate person a valuable social asset, and gave the remaining professionals who did not go into exile the ability to command high wages and positions of authority, sometimes exceeding those they held in the old society. However the general policy compared to pre-revolution days was to pay them "a lower, but higher than average, salary."[21]

> . . . such specialists are needed and we say that at the moment we cannot introduce equalitarian wages, and are in favour of paying more than three thousand. Even if we pay several million a year in wages it will not

> be too much as long as we learn to work well with their help. We do not see any other way of arranging things so that they do not work under the lash, and as long as there are few specialists we are compelled to retain high wages. . . . formerly, under capitalism, the wages of an unskilled worker were 25 rubles a month and those of a good specialist not less than 500 rubles, a ratio of 20 to 1; now the lowest wages amount to 600 rubles and the specialists get 3,000, a ratio of 5 to 1. We have, therefore, done a lot to equalise low and high wages and we shall continue in the same vein. At the moment we cannot equalise wages and as long as there are few specialists we shall not refuse to raise their wages. We say that it is better to pay out an extra million or a thousand million as long as we can employ all the specialists, for what they will teach our workers and peasants is worth more than that thousand million.[22]

More insidiously, wage rates began to lose meaning as they were increasingly supplemented with "payments in kind," foodstuffs, other products, better housing, and so on, which fed the black market and were to become institutionalized in Soviet society.[23]

Nevertheless, overall, as Bettelheim notes, "the bourgeois intelligentsia (doctors, academicians, lawyers, engineers, technical specialists, teachers, etc.,) . . . mostly lived very modestly, having lost almost everything except their 'professional income' (and even some of that too)."[24] Thus even most bourgeois professionals were reduced to petty bourgeois levels. The continued role and even strengthening of the petty bourgeoisie within Soviet society, and the rise of "bureaucratic distortions," were therefore tied together, with the former underlying the latter. The small producers were not simply the "background" for bureaucratization, rooted in their

economic conditions, poverty, illiteracy, and isolation. From "above" and "below" the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie grew, and expanded both the base for and the actual membership of the bureaucracy. The class itself increased in size. Property seized from landlords, capitalists, and kulaks often served to convert a formerly impoverished poor peasant into a fully petty bourgeois member of the middle peasantry.

Thus Bettelheim notes that: "The revolution changed a section of the former poor peasants into middle peasants and improved their relative position," so that by 1922, "In the main . . . the Russian peasantry of this period belonged to the petty bourgeoisie."[25] Thus, despite a relative decline in the ranks of the kulaks, overall the "upper sections of the peasants, small artisans, and tradesmen," many of whom rose "above the people" and eagerly joined the lower levels of the bureaucracy, swelled in size. At the same time, professional petty bourgeoisie not only occupied the abandoned posts of the Tsarist bureaucrats, but their numbers were also increased by the "petty bourgeoisification" of bourgeois specialists. Thus both the "old" and "new" petty bourgeois strata grew, and came to exploit the opportunity opened by the defeat of the landlords and capitalists, actually strengthening their own class temporarily, from which many then found "comfortable, quiet, respectable jobs" in the bureaucracy.

To a remarkable degree, the analysis made by the Soviet leaders recognized in very "modern" terms the nature of the professional stratum with whom they were contending, and the danger that it represented. Trotsky, for instance, "said that the 'technicians, engineers, doctors, teachers, ex-officiers constitute, just like the inanimate machines, national capital belonging to the people which it is our duty to take stock of, organise and adopt if we are to solve the vital problems facing us.'"[26] Bukharin went even further, and "outlined with remarkable precision the possibility of a restoration of bourgeois power in Soviet Russia under cover of the 'monopoly of knowledge' that the bourgeoisie and its intelligentsia were supposed to possess."[27]

> "The working class can mechanically subjugate its opponent . . . it can take physical possession of all that exists, and yet it can at the same time be absorbed by the enemy's cultural forces. . . . This danger inevitably threatens every working class which seizes state power. If it were to happen, we should be transformed into a new class made up of the new technical intelligentsia, a part of the new bourgeoisie . . . because we should have become cut off, without noticing it but absolutely, from our general proletarian base, and in this way we should be transformed into a new social formation."[28]

Working-class origins were not sufficient to prevent this, because "it was perfectly possible to imagine a situation in which a part of the working class became separated from the working masses, acquiring a monopolistic position and transforming itself into a new class."[29]

Up to this point the class nature of the "bureaucratic distortions" of early Soviet society seems to present no major difficulties: both in its "economic roots" and in the actual "membership" of the bureaucracy the problem was primarily attributable to the petty bourgeoisie, who formed the mass both of the population at large and of the administrative officers of government. Since each of the petty bourgeois segments which had entered into the bureaucracy were known from pre-revolutionary times, an analysis of their role and the danger they represented to the building of socialism was not difficult, at least from a theoretical standpoint. Yet as noted above, there is complete disunity in the interpretations made of the process of bureaucratization of the Soviet Union, and of its class character. It is apparent, therefore, that this confusion must come mainly from another source. This can only be the difficulty in analyzing those "new" bureaucratic elements which arose after socialism was already initiated, especially from within the working class and the party itself, and the changed status which accrued to these bureaucrats because of the altered nature of property relations under the Soviet regime, in particular the "ownership" of means of production exercised by the state, and the "official" role of trade unions as a form of "vanguard" responsible for educating the workers in administrative tasks.[30] Despite efforts such as those by Bukharin, a precise class analysis of these "new" elements

was left uncompleted, and yet as he had warned, it was from here that the greatest danger was likely to come.

Let us begin by examining how certain persons in the Bolshevik Party were themselves raised "above the people," a development against which Lenin warned, in remarks to members of Political Education Departments:

> Political educationalists must not understand their job as that of functionaries, as often seems to be the case. . . . Excuse me for saying so, but I do not think you should be appointed to any office; you should do your job as ordinary citizens. When you are appointed to some office you become bureaucrats; . . . At present bribery surrounds us on all sides. You will be asked what must be done to abolish bribery, to prevent so-and-so on the Executive Committee from taking bribes. You will be asked to reach people how to put a stop to it. And if a political educationalist replies that it does not come within the functions of his department, or that pamphlets have been published and proclamations made on the subject, the people will say that he is a bad Party member. True, this does not come within the functions of your department, . . . but are you not members of the Party? You have adopted the title of political educationalists. When you were about to adopt that title you were warned not to choose such a pretentious one, to choose something more modest. But you wanted the title of political educationalists, and that title implies a great deal. You did not take the title of general educationalists, but of political educationalists.[31]

The conversion of party members into functionaries, office-seekers, those practicing bureaucratic departmentalization, choosing pompous titles, accepting bribes--these were the forms of bureaucratization which overtook many revolutionaries who were, as Lenin put it, "politically better educated" than the masses of workers and peasants. In essence, these "professionals," like the other "specialists," began to treat their political education,

the accumulated practice and knowledge of the revolution, as their own private property, their monopoly, to be "traded in" for personal gain.

Lenin protested that many such an official, despite some exalted title, did not even try to learn how "to impart political knowledge," but instead resorted to issuing decrees to "solve all his problems." Thus he warned that "communist conceit" must take its place next to illiteracy and bribery as the three main enemies facing the political educationalists. As against these threats, he raised the standard of "practical results . . . teaching the people how to achieve these results, setting an example to others, not as members of an Executive Committee but as ordinary citizens. . . ," methods of work which required no exalted titles or positions.[32] The struggle over knowledge had therefore come up within the party once again. The process whereby some professional revolutionaries were claiming control over these "means of political education" as their private science, their personal or group possession, paralleled developments taking place throughout the society, as peasants and "specialists" and other segments of the petty bourgeoisie found new strength. The accumulation of "yesterday's store of knowledge," including that of the political workings of the revolutionary movement itself and of the administration, was but a part of the social wealth which had now to be redistributed among the masses, and this opened the door to opportunity

upward in many directions. By the same token, the ending of bourgeois control over the state presented the members of the forces of revolution with innumerable positions to be filled, so that both the numbers and status of those who assumed such positions increased rapidly in the period immediately following the takeover.

Lack of training and illiteracy among the masses meant that they were in large measure still dependent on those who had acquired political and administrative skills, to which were often added the power and benefits, and the greater access to paid government posts, of those holding party membership. Thus many workers and peasants, as well as "old" revolutionaries, who had lived in straitened circumstances, and at times even conditions of near-starvation under the Tsarist regime or in exile abroad, found themselves as it were overnight occupying positions of authority, with a possibility of "feathering their nests" from salaries and other means. It is particularly instructive to examine these changes in the rural area:

> The fact that membership of the Party could bring with it additional income, or other advantages, immediately set in motion a process with which we are already familiar, and brought about a change in the social condition of the peasant, with the improvement in his opportunities, small though this might be. The poor began to turn into serednyaks [middle peasants], and the serednyaks rose higher in the social scale, a process which was described in the Party at this time as obrastanie ("going to seed"), or, more strongly, as pererozhdenie (degeneration).[33]

In this manner a poor peasant activist, even if a party member, often changed "'from a favourable class position to

a hostile one'. . . with astonishing ease, . . . and soon began to 'slip' into a new set of political attitudes which were more in keeping with his improved condition."[34]

These officials not infrequently were themselves employers of workers. This bourgeoisification, in fact, was in general even more rapid inside than outside the party in the rural areas, leading not only to creation of a petty bourgeoisie, but of those who were considered to be "kulaks."

> The peasant-communists tended to employ more paid help than the other peasants, often because they were busy with their official duties, but many did so simply in order to enrich themselves. Whatever their motives for employing labour, the results were more or less the same.[35]

This in turn often led to a voluntary reduction in official duties to attend to "business," or else a purge by higher authorities, but the process tended to repeat itself. M. Lewin summarizes the class changes:

> Thus, we have the economic advancement of the peasant who grows more comfortably-off and turns into an entrepreneur, a similar tendency in the case of the official who was still connected with a farm, the influences which each exerted upon the other by reason of the many contacts and interests which they had in common, and the solidarity, both at local and at <u>raion</u> [district] level, of officials and indeed entire administrations with the upper stratum of the rural population. Such was the process in which the members of the Party in the countryside found themselves involved.[36]

Thus a petty bourgeoisie developed simultaneously both inside and outside the party, based not only on economic power but on political position as well, a process in which, however, it was the official "bureaucrats" who were

favored, often combining ownership of farms with administrative skills and authority derived from the government. Such indeed "was the outcome of the 'corrosive and corrupting' influence . . . of a petty-bourgeois environment and a market economy upon the Party."[37]

The Bolsheviks in the years just after the revolution went to great lengths to try to ensure that the special political skills of the cadre and their generally better education in relation to the masses of workers and peasants did not harden into "new" class divisions in the forces of the revolution. Thus: "In 1919 the Eighth Congress stipulated that worker-members engaged in full-time administrative work must go back to their factories for at least one month in four," though the policy later tended to be "forgotten."[38] High salaries and bribery constituted a particular threat, which went beyond the mere ability to corrupt political behavior, for it undermined one of the most basic principles which had been set out as early as the Paris Commune in 1871 as to the manner in which the representatives of the proletariat should be rewarded.[39] This was the practice of paying members of the working-class government only the wages of the laboring people themselves, and particularly, in the case of the Bolshevik Party, salaries no higher than that of the most skilled workers. This class differentiation is made evident in the different schedules of payment for persons with equal skills or responsibilities drawn from the ranks of non-

party specialists and those who were party members. The loyalty of the former, or at least their respectable performance, required a continuation of something approximating their pre-revolutionary salaries, while those in the party were expected to do their duties without the "bait" of high wage scales. Their top pay was more than average, but below other "professionals." Attempts to bypass this rule via bribery, non-wage benefits, and so on thus constituted an actual deproletarianization of these party members, by raising them above the level of the workers to a petty bourgeois standard of living.[40]

The primary transformation which overtook many of the "professional revolutionaries" was their attempt to capitalize on their expertise in the revolutionary process and their general political knowledge in the same manner that other professionals held their educational attainments up for ransom, demanding high payment before they would use their monopolized skills. Lenin noted how this tendency spilled over from "bourgeois specialists" in the state administration to affect the members of the Bolshevik Party:

> It was only to be expected that red tape in the Soviet apparatus would penetrate into the party apparatus, for these apparatuses are interwoven most intimately.[41]

And again:

> It is natural that the bureaucratic methods that have reappeared in Soviet institutions were bound to have a pernicious effect even on Party organisations, since the upper ranks of the Party are at the same time the upper ranks of the state apparatus; they are one

> and the same thing. Since we recognize that the evil consists in the old bureaucratic methods which have been able to appear in the Party apparatus, it is obvious and natural that all the symptoms of this evil have revealed themselves in the Party organisations.[42]

Thus the effects of bureaucratization spread from state to party, and then downward to all the organized bodies of the latter.

Even Stalin, in turn, stressed that it was just this penetration of bureaucracy into the party structure which represented the greatest threat, because it was the most difficult to expose and lay closest to the center of power:

> If it were only a question of the old bureaucrats, the fight against bureaucracy would be very easy. The trouble is that it is not a matter of the old bureaucrats. It is a matter of the new bureaucrats, bureaucrats who sympathise with the Soviet Government, and finally, communist bureaucrats. The communist bureaucrat is the most dangerous type of bureaucrat. Why? Because he masks his bureaucracy with the title of Party member. And, unfortunately, we have quite a number of such communist bureaucrats.[43]

But the spread of "bureaucracy" into the party itself, and therefore into the most powerful position of control over the society as a whole, changes nothing as far as the basic class analysis that must be made of this phenomenon. The same process of the monopolization of "yesterday's store of knowledge" in politics and administration occurs regardless of the specific institution through which it is exercised or the particular individuals who claim it as their personal and collective property.

To the extent that the Bolsheviks continued to truly represent the proletariat and to have a largely working-

class membership, they were in a position to combat "bureaucratization" of the society, including the state and party. Many workers, peasants, and revolutionary cadre did in fact join the administration while still resisting most of the "distorting" aspects which are meant by this term. Thus Bettelheim notes:

> Communist workers worked alongside many officials taken over from the old regime, to whose ideological influence they gradually succumbed, a process referred to as "bureaucratization," though it would be more correct to call it "bourgeoisification." During the civil war and immediately after, however, the class struggle was too intense for the Communist workers holding responsible posts to be "bourgeoisified" on any large scale by the functions they were carrying out. By their numbers, energy, and devotion they constituted one of the safeguards of the dictatorship of the proletariat.[4]

But such barriers tended to fall as the white heat of the period of revolution and civil war cooled. To the degree, moreover, that the party itself was "bureaucratized," it became in turn the main center of that phenomenon and reinforced this aspect throughout all areas of the new socialist structures. Put another way, we can say that the Bolshevik Party had been the leading element of the proletariat, but that those of its members who after coming to power took on the characteristics of bureaucratization, became instead the most important segment of "middle class" professionals.

As the vanguard body of the victorious class, the party after the revolution of necessity became the main force in the state administration. The two in fact, as has

been seen, in some measure merged, a relationship which deepened with the later recruitment of many persons in government, as well as managerial personnel, by the Bolsheviks. A class struggle therefore of necessity took place within both the party and in the governmental administration, reflecting in each case those same classes that continued to exist and compete for power within the society at large. Thus we cannot analyze the class nature of either of these two institutions simply by reference to the other, and neither does it do us any good to merely take the most obvious characteristics of the "bureaucrats" and turn them into "new" classes.

It has been common to approach the question of the Soviet bureaucracy from the standpoint of its control over the means of production, whether, in other words, it has in effect come to "own" the social wealth of the country.[45] On the answer to this question, and those productive relations which flow from it, a debate raged over whether Russia had a "capitalist" or "socialist" economy and over the nature of the classes which dominated it. The difficulty with such attempts to "solve" the problem of bureaucratization is that they tend to look "outside" the bureaucrats themselves for a solution, without first adequately exploring the class basis of the members of the state and party. For many of these officials and administrators, "politics" itself was the area of knowledge they tried to monopolize and possess, another form of property in the

"means of mental production," a professional specialty like all others to be "taught" by experts, toward which the proletariat would play a passive role as students and "clients." Thus it is the "internal" nature and origins of their class background from which we must begin in analyzing the "bureaucrats," and only then proceed to discuss the further control over productive resources and the laboring mass which this gave them. All such extensions, and any increases in ownership of the means of production which flow from this, merely serve to heighten the power already seized by those professional revolutionaries and others in the party or the state who appropriated "yesterday's store of knowledge," the means of mental production accumulated in the proletarian struggle, for their own private ends.

It may be safe to say that virtually any institution can exhibit tendencies of the process whereby some persons gain a somewhat exalted status over the masses from whom they come or whom they represent, forms of organization that many theorists insist is not only a possibility but a necessity. But even among those who reject such structuralist theories of the "inevitable" deterioration of all social institutions into organs of oppression, it is possible to differ over what exactly this kind of development actually means. In its simplest form it may indeed be best described by the word "bureaucracy." Beyond a certain point, however, we cannot accept such terminology

as adequate, and must make an analysis on the basis of class characteristics. If we do so in this case, it is apparent that all three of the criteria which normally mark the petty bourgeoisie have been fulfilled. That is, the appropriation of their "means of mental production" as a form of private property, to be monopolized for purposes of personal profiteering, has the same class import for political cadre as it does for all other professionals. When this accumulation of revolutionary knowledge in turn becomes the basis for their assuming official positions, then they have also taken over a specialized function in the division of labor. When the latter then becomes a route, not to extreme wealth, but to freedom from the manual labor of the workers and to a standard of living roughly equal to the levels of their own "production," as measured by equivalent work elsewhere in the society, then we are justified in determining that these persons have indeed joined the petty bourgeoisie.[46]

Their independence from the bourgeoisie is in this case ensured by the gains of the revolution itself, but in rising "above the people" they also win an important degree of autonomy from workers and poor peasants. A society is thereby created which, in effect, has a "bottom" and a "middle," but no "top," with qualifications which I will have to return to later on. In the process of performing, willingly or unwillingly, the tasks which undermine the power of the capitalists, these petty- bourgeous political

cadre at the same time consolidate their elements of monopoly in the party and state. The result is to remove the "bureaucracy" from the control and criticism of the masses, to compartmentalize operations so that the proletariat can no longer comprehend the workings of the administration as a whole, but are forced to deal with an endless series of "bourgeoisified" institutions in which their own class power has been diluted, with a "new" substratum of professionals, who are "politically better educated," in command. In the era of socialism, therefore, some professional political cadre join earlier strata of the petty bourgeoisie and form its "newest" segment, one which is, moreover, destined to play in general the leading role in the assertion of its class independence.

Before proceeding further to analyze these aspects of the matter, however, we must first try to determine why it was that recognition of a petty bourgeois professionalism among the bureaucratic party and state cadre was not clearly stated by Lenin, despite his generally pointing to that "solution" to the question. Though he stressed, for instance, that there was a petty bourgeois tendency to transform the members of the Soviets into "parliamentarians," or else into bureaucrats, he did not make a precise analysis of the classes in these institutions, particularly when dealing with those who had newly risen from the ranks. Various elements may have had an influence on this, one of which was presumably the lack

of experience with a massive professional stratum of the petty bourgeoisie, such as developed in the West, and which advanced its own claims to administer the society based on its expertise, as we have seen. Though the early aspects of this development were not unknown to Lenin, who not only was aware of but in some respects endorsed the technical methods of "Taylorism" in industry, more direct relations with that modern professionalism which interposes itself "between labor and capital" was limited in Russia. It may therefore have been more difficult to discern the exact nature of this same stratum when it began to crop up within the proletarian party and the Soviets themselves.

A second factor limiting recognition of these "new" class elements may have been the conditions under which they arose. The period of the Civil War and "War Communism," when many of the abuses of careerism and commandism got their start, saw such general and total disruption that it was easy to attribute many of the "distortions" to the necessities of the moment or to the breakdown of proletarian discipline in a situation where the working class itself was being decimated by losses at the front, the reduction of industry, and the return of many recently recruited workers to their peasant villages. Thus Lenin in 1921 gave the following grim account of the status of the

> industrial proletariat, which in our country, owing to the war and to the desperate poverty and ruin, has become declassed, i.e., dislodged from its class groove, and has ceased to exist as a proletariat. The

> proletariat is the class which is engaged in the production of material values in large-scale capitalist industry. Since large-scale capitalist industry has been destroyed, since the factories are at a standstill, the proletariat has disappeared. It has sometimes figured in statistics, but it has not been held together economically.[47]

But if the proletariat was itself "declassed," it follows that its party must also to some extent have been "dislodged from its class groove." Though this helped create the climate in which "bureaucratic distortions" were common, it may also have tended to obscure the class relationships which were "newly" developing. The decline of proletarian values and the old discipline in the party could more easily be perceived in negative terms too, as a "declassing," than as a process caused by the actual growth of a new sub-stratum of petty bourgeoisie.

There is, moreover, a further element which was probably a decisive one. Lenin expressed deep concern over the influx of non-proletarian elements into the post-revolution party, as its size increased rapidly. Thus the threat the petty bourgeoisie offered was perceived on the whole as coming from "outside," by their infiltration into its ranks, leading Lenin to call for a long probation period for all new members except those workers who had actually labored in large industry for ten years or more.

> There is no doubt that we constantly regard as workers people who have not had the slightest real experience of large-scale industry. There has been case after case of petty bourgeois, who have become workers by chance and only for a very short time, being classes as workers. All shrewd white-guards are very definitely banking on the fact that the alleged proletarian character of our Party does not in the least safeguard

> it against the small-proprietor elements gaining predominance in it, and very rapidly too.[48]

This shows that Lenin recognized that a change could take place in the nature of the party to make it petty bourgeois. However, this was seen primarily as a danger arising from the actual taking in of large numbers of non-proletarianized petty bourgeoisie, thereby diluting its worker base.

Important as this factor was, it failed to account sufficiently for the changes that were occuring within the party as a result of its coming to power, alterations that extended beyond the class origins of its newest membership. Thus as Bettelheim puts it:

> While the class origin of the members of the state bourgeoisie played at first an important role in the formation of the class, this was not so later on. When the state bourgeoisie became consolidated, the class origin of its members ceased to be significant: thereafter, what was decisive was the place occupied by this new class in relation to the means of production, its role in the social division of labor, the share of the wealth produced that it took and the class practices it developed.[49]

The problem was to analyze very carefully the effects on the "professional revolutionaries" and vanguard workers and poor peasants of assuming social control. This required more clearly identifying the class nature of the "bureaucratic" forces who were challenging the proletariat for its leadership of the party and state, and in particular the changes could even "bourgeoisify the world view of party members who were of proletarian origin."[50]

Because of his early death, the inability of the main revolutionary leader to fully identify the makeup of the "new" elements developing in the Soviet bureaucracy left a gap into which others have eagerly plunged, with the already-noted result that a plethora of opposing theories were produced. What has been common to them is the tendency to ignore or downplay the petty bourgeoisie, and thereby to actually take a step backward from what Lenin had already indicated to be the main class basis of bureaucratization in post-revolutionary Russia. One school, as I briefly described above, essentially drops all real consideration of the petty bourgeois class in the socialist era, except as a "remnant" of the pre-revolutionary classes, and generally limited primarily to the peasantry. For these analysts, such as Milovan Djilas, as seen above, the bureaucracy itself becomes the basis for a "new class," which takes the form primarily of the party ruling as an elite unit which "owns" the means of production and exercises all control. These theories "solve" the dilemma of which class dominates society and the party in the socialist period by making such parties themselves, or their "bureaucracy" and that of the state, into "new" classes, thus dissolving any difficulties by putting the label of "class" onto those who are being examined.

Djilas, for instance, turns Marxism and historical materialism on its head when he states: "The party makes

the class, but the class grows as a result and uses the party as its basis. The class grows stronger while the party grows weaker. . . ."[51] He admits:

> It seems unusual that a political party could be the beginning of a new class. Parties are generally the product of classes and strata which have become intellectually and economically strong.[52]

This may seem to be a new form of class analysis, but it is actually a method for "declassing" the entire question. Thus the first step is to render the bureaucracy itself "classless," in comparison with which the ruling party can then be identified as having "class," as a "new class."

> Although state and other bureaucrats in non-Communist systems form a special stratum, they do not exercise authority as the Communists do. Bureaucrats in a non-Communist state have political masters, usually elected, or owners over them, while Communists have neither masters nor owners over them. The bureaucrats in a non-Communist state are officials in a modern capitalist economy, while the Communists are something different and new: a new class.[53]

The class analysis of the bureaucracy itself therefore simply vanishes, and the petty bourgeoisie forming the mass of bureaucrats disappears from history.

In a more sophisticated version, George Konrád and Ivan Szelényi in their Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power, or Alvin W. Gouldner in his The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class, have substituted intellectuals or the technical intelligentsia as the basis of the "new class," but with the focus once more on the ruling parties under socialism as the

embodiment of its domination. Thus Konrád and Szelényi note:

> We say "intellectual class" even though the functions of central redistribution in the strict sense are carried out not by the intelligentsia as a whole but by a narrower segment of it--the state and party bureaucracy, which we shall call the ruling or governing elite, since the criteria for admission to it are those of a status-group rather than a class.[54]

Intellectuals thus form a "new" class, of which an elite rules. But there is also an echo here of the "party produces the class" theory of Djilas, at least regarding the effect on workers:

> In our view the ruling Communist Parties have a dual class base: They are at one and the same time mass parties of the intellectual class and cadre parties of the working class.
>
> . . . The party, in other words, is the prime channel of upward mobility for the workers and educated children of workers; once drawn into the party bureaucracy they become intellectuals.[55]

Similarly, Gouldner also links the party and his "New Class":

> The "vanguard" party expresses the <u>modernizing</u> and elite ambitions of the New Class as well as an effort to overcome its political limitations. . . .
>
> Rather than viewing the New Class as if it were composed of just technicians or engineers, the effort that follows moves toward a <u>general</u> theory of the New Class as encompassing <u>both</u> technical intelligentsia <u>and</u> intellectuals.[56]

Thus here too there is a "declassification" of intellectuals, who first lose their "old" class characteristics, and are then variously assigned to "new" classes.

But this merely removes the problem one step from that represented by Djilas. Thus Konrád and Szelényi state

that: "In capitalist society, then, the intelligentsia is bourgeois as much as it is proletarian, and Marxist analysis is correct in describing it as a stratum."[57] In market economies, its members are "proprietors of specialized intellectual knowledge" who "can share in profits." Thus:

> Intellectuals appear on the labor market not only as owners of labor-power, however, but also in a sense as owners of capital too. They can use their specialized skills as a means of production as well, and thus many of them do not offer for sale their labor so much as the intellectual products of their knowledge.[58]

Konrád and Szelényi believe that most East European intelligentsia bypassed the "stratum" stage altogether, going directly as it were from feudalism to socialism:

> Only in the West do we observe the phenomenon of intellectuals who sell their knowledge or their cultural wares on the open market being formed into a social stratum. In Eastern Europe the intelligentsia relatively early on conceived the intention to strive for something like class power. It avoided the detour on the road to class power which the position of a stratum would have entailed for it under liberal capitalism, and within a very short period of time transformed itself from an estate into a class.[59]

Yet as we have seen above, it was precisely the private owners of means of mental production, the petty bourgeois professionals, "selling their knowledge or their cultural wares," who served as a "model" for the emerging "communist bureaucrats." That it was the state that bought their services, not "the open market," does not make any difference in their class composition, though of course it did affect the kind of social formation that emerged.

Here again, just as in Djilas, a "stratum," this time in the West, is contrasted with a "class" in the East, made up of intellectuals instead of bureaucrats, but once more the existing classes "between labor and capital" vanish. Moreover if overthrowing the former masters and taking control of the state were in fact sufficient to create a "new" class where none existed before, then every assumption of power of any of the historic ruling classes might have suddenly rendered them a "different" class than they were under the previous regime. However, the question of what did in fact happen to the Bolshevik Party and the similar parties in other countries in the socialist era once the revolution was won cannot be solved by such "Eastern exceptionalism." The "bureaucracy," the "party," the "intellectuals" are all social formations in which *owning and non-owning classes compete for control*. We can only "solve" the problem of which class dominates among them by taking further the analysis of the actual struggle of historically existing classes which socialism inherits from capitalism.

The question of whether it is the intellectuals, the political bureaucrats, or both together that form a new "class" can lead to considerable confusion. Thus Stanislaw Starsky states by way of critique of Konrád and Szelényi: "under state socialism . . . it is by no means true that belonging to the intelligentsia is enough to secure a powerful and wealthy social position."[60] However, they may

"merge" with the ruling group by being "coopted" into it, while the rulers on their own part become more professional.

> It is much harder to discuss arguments like the ones put forward by Gouldner, who claims that professionals (i.e. the intelligentsia in the Eastern European meaning of the term) cheat society by getting their education in a socialized, collective manner due to participation in our educational institutions, while they make profit out of their education "on their own," by making society pay for their services. They share the benefits of social wealth by acquiring knowledge that is social capital but they fail to disseminate this knowledge in a social manner and moreover appropriate all benefits from the exercise of their profession to themselves. . . . But I fail to see the connection between this "reprivatization" of the fruits of the intelligentsia's labor and their dominating position in the state, especially in view of the total irrelevance of important groups of professionals in state socialist societies from the point of view of decision making. No doctors, no lawyers, no teachers--to mention a few--take part in the decision making process, unless they also happen to be members of the state ruling class, membership in which would have nothing to do with the mode of appropriation of the fruits of their education.[61]

But this is to isolate the knowledge of the "political elite" from that of other professionals. In fact, the means of mental production of the revolutionary struggle obeys the same "laws" as that of all other professional knowledge, which can be privatized like any other form of property by the petty bourgeois class.

Just as in all other classes, as well, there are various strata, some of which dominate the class, and even oppressing the others.

The second "school" of analysis of the "bureaucratization" of the Soviet Union seems at first to

recognize the role of the petty bourgeoisie in this process, as represented by Charles Bettelheim in Class Struggles in the USSR. In this exhaustive study, Bettelheim traces, for instance, the influx of many petty bourgeois and bourgeois elements into the party, as well as the presence of administrative and technical petty bourgeoisie. He also speaks of a "stratum," drawn in part from the working class, which "formed a bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie in the process of becoming."[62] Nevertheless, the bureaucracy itself once again lacks a clear class analysis:

> . . . what is usually referred to, when the descriptive term "bureacracy" is used, is the situation conferred on the agents of certain social apparatuses by a set of relationships which make of these agents a group placed in a position of relative independence both in relation to the dominant class (some of whose powers the group concentrates in its hands) and to the dominated classes. When, from 1921 onward, Lenin and other Bolsheviks denounced the rise of "bureaucracy," they were referring to a set of practices and relationships which put the leading officials of the state and party in a position of relative independence. That time saw only the beginning of practices that were later to become consolidated and deprive the proletariat of power, placing it instead in the hands of this leading group, which then became a state bourgeoisie insofar as it had at its disposal all or most of the means of production and activated them on the basis of capitalist production relations (in particular, the capitalist division of labor). While in 1921 that situation was still a long way off, what was truly and ultimately at stake in the struggle against "bureaucracy" was the position of the proletariat as the dominant class, with "the bureaucracy" representing the embryo of a new bourgeoisie in the apparatus of the state and of the ruling party.[63]

For all the quotation marks around "bureaucracy," this passage differs little from the one above by Djilas, except

that instead of a "new class" arising out of the bureaucrats, it is the "old" bourgeoisie in "new" form.

The use by Bettelheim of terms like "new intelligentsia" to describe what is happening to the bureaucratized cadre, especially those from the working class, does not resolve the problem, but is only reminiscent instead of the theories of Konrád, Szelényi, and Gouldner. The petty bourgeoisie is once again absent as the mass base of the bureaucracy, as a class with its own interests different from those of both the big bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Indeed, they are effectively excluded from the "two-class" socialist polarity.

> As long as bourgeois elements persist in the various social relations, then, until the coming of communism, there is room for the existence of a proletariat and a bourgeoisie, and it remains possible for the latter--if the proletarian class struggle fails to follow a correct line--to develop the bourgeois elements in social relations, consolidate the bourgeois aspects of the ideological and political machinery, and ultimately restore capitalism (in the specific forms dictated by those of the previously transformed social relations which the bourgeoisie cannot destroy).[44]

What there is no "room" for in this analysis is the petty bourgeoisie "for itself," yet the "bourgeoisie" is in fact composed of two, and not one, classes, and the question is what is the nature of the contradictions between them and which is the main bearer of bourgeois relations within the socialist era. We must thus see whether the petty bourgeois class has its own role under "socialism."

The bureaucratization of societies which have begun the socialist revolution therefore has diverse origins, but the critical aspect and the one which is central to its particular form of development is "deproletarianization" of the members of the party and of the state apparatus in which they are dominant. The specific character of this "bureaucratic distortion" is therefore that it is in effect "bottom-up," and in this respect differs from the "traditional" forms of bureaucracy which develop under feudalism and capitalism and are mainly "top-down." Though all bureaucracies share certain similarities, narrow concentration on these will prove misleading unless the actual class relations within each of them are made the focus of any examination. The "socialist" bureaucracy serves in the first place the interests of those who have risen above the working-class and poor peasants, notably among their "own" leading elements in the party and state. This bureaucratization produces a new political sub-stratum of professional petty bourgeoisie, as well as large numbers of semi-proletarians, who even despite proletarian or peasant backgrounds stand "over" the masses. Thus the petty bourgeois class in the socialist era is not just an ally of the proletariat against the emerging "bureaucracy," nor simply the bearer of bourgeois relations leading back to capitalism. Even if a "new bourgeoisie" were regenerated "a petty bourgeoisie exists" and cannot be dismissed, as Lenin had warned. Its role is critical in

giving a "class" name to Soviet bureaucratization as it tries to use both party and state to assert its own independence.

NOTES

1. V. I. Lenin, "The Party Crisis," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 32, 48.

2. Leon Trotsky, The Revolution Betrayed (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1970), 55, 59, 249.

3. See Charles Bettelheim, Class Struggles in the USSR, First Period: 1917-1923 (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976). Building on the analysis current in China at the time, a school of "capitalist restorationists" flourished in the United States in the 1970s. Two primary examples are Martin Nicolaus, Restoration of Capitalism in the USSR (Chicago: Liberator Press, 1975) and How Capitalism Has Been Restored in the Soviet Union, and What This Means for the World Struggle, The Red Papers 7 (Chicago: Revolutionary Union, 1974).

4. Milovan Djilas, The New Class: An Analysis of the Communist System (New York: Praeger, 1965), 38.

5. Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, "The Professional-Managerial Class," 42, and n. 58.

6. Bettelheim, Class Struggles in the USSR, First Period, 331.

7. To the extent that the Revolution had opened up the possibilities for even poor peasants to acquire land, it strengthened the petty bourgeois interests of all "small farmers," who formed part of "the last capitalist class--the rock-bottom of capitalism--small private property, the small producer." V. I. Lenin, "Third Congress of the Communist International, Report on the Tactics of the R.C.P.," 484-85.

8. V. I. Lenin, "Concluding Remarks, The Petrograd City Conferences of the R.S.D.L.P. (Bolsheviks), April, 1917," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 24, 150.

9. V. I. Lenin, "The Trade Unions, Their Present Situation and Trotsky's Mistakes," 24.

10. Lenin, "The Party Crisis," 48.

11. Lenin, "The Tax in Kind," 351.

12. Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," 332, 338-39.

13. V. I. Lenin, "The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 2, 335, 337.

14. Lenin, "The State and Revolution," 413.

15. V. I. Lenin, "Session of the Petrograd Soviet, Report on the Foreign and Home Policy of the Council of People's Commissars, Brief Newspaper Report," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 29, 24.

16. V. I. Lenin, "Reply to an Open Letter by a Bourgeois Specialist," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 29, 230.

17. V. I. Lenin, "Speech at the First All-Russia Congress on Education, August 28, 1918," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 28, 86.

18. Ibid.

19. V. I. Lenin, "Third All-Russia Conress of Soviets of Workers' Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, 466.

20. Ibid.

21. Lenin, "Reply to an Open Letter by a Bourgeois Specialist," 231.

22. Lenin, "Session of the Petrograd Soviet," 35-36.

23. Bettelheim, Class Struggles in the USSR, First Period, 165.

24. Ibid., 160-61.

25. Ibid., 238, 240.

26. Bettelheim, Class Struggles in the USSR, First Period, 276. The quote is from L. D. Trotsky, Kak vooruzhalas' revolyutsiya (Moscow: 1923), 37.

27. Ibid., 297.

28. Ibid., 299. The quotation is from N. Bukharin, Proletarskaya revolyutsiya i kultura, [Proletariat and Culture] (Petrograd: Priboy, 1923), 43.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid., 183.

31. V. I. Lenin, "The New Economic Policy and the Tasks of the Political Education Departments, Report to the Second All-Russia Congress of Political Education Departments, October 17, 1921," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 33, 76-77.

32. Ibid., 77-78.

33. M. Lewin, Russian Peasants and Soviet Power: A Study of Collectivization (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968), 122.

34. Ibid., 84.

35. Ibid., 123

36. Ibid., original in italics.

37. Ibid.

38. Charles Bettelheim, Class Struggles in the USSR, First Period, 195.

39. Karl Marx, "Address of the General Council of the International Working Men's Association on the Civil War in France, 1871," in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 2, 519: "From the members of the Commune downwards, the public service had to be done at workmen's wages. The vested interests and the representation allowances of the high dignitaries of State disappeared along with the high dignitaries themselves."

40. Bettelheim, Class Struggles in the USSR, First Period, 164-65, and Lenin, "The State and Revolution," 426.

41. V. I. Lenin, "Speech Delivered at a General meeting of Communists of Zamoskvorechye District, Moscow, Nobember 29, 1920," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 31, 435.

42. V. I. Lenin, "Our Foreign and Domestic Position and the Tasks of the Party, Speech Delivered to the Moscow Gubernia Conference of the R.C.P.(B), November 21, 1920," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 31, 421-42.

43. J. Stalin, "Speech Delivered at the Eighth Congress of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League, in J. Stalin, Works (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1954), vol. 11, 75. The practices of Stalin in this regard are another matter.

44. Charles Bettelheim, Class Struggles in the USSR, First Period, 195.

45. See, for example, Stanislaw Starsky, Class Struggles in Classless Poland (Boston: South End Press, 1982), 186: "Coming back to the newest theoretical interpretations of the younger Polish Marxists . . . they point out that all 'socialist' societies known so far, i.e., all state socialist societies, have a basic contradiction between the vast majority of state employeees, and the owners of the state or ruling class."

46. See George Konrád and Ivan Szelényi, The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), 146, regarding the "middle strata" of such societies: "Compared to the working class they all enjoy some privileges, be it a larger income, a taste of executive authority, or simply exemption from fatiguing physical labor." Konrad and Szelenyi, however, do not identify such persons as petty bourgeois. For them, the contemporary Eastern European societies are "socialist because they have done away with private property in the means of production." This, however, ignores the continued ownership of the means of mental production.

47. Lenin, "The New Economic Policy and the Tasks of the Political Education Departments," 65-66.

48. V. I. Lenin, "The Condition for Admitting New Members to the Party," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 33, 254.

49. Charles Bettelheim, Class Struggles in the USSR, First Period, 205, n. 49.

50. Ibid., 315.

51. Djilas, The New Class, 40.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid., 44.

54. Konrád and Szelényi, The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power, 147.

55. Ibid., 179-80.

56. Gouldner, The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class, 5.

57. Konrád and Szelényi, The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power, 68.

58. Ibid., 68.

59. Ibid., 85.

60. Starsky, Class Struggles in Classless Poland, 21.

61. Ibid., 21-22.

62. Charles Bettelheim, Class Struggles in the USSR, Second Period: 1923-1930 (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1978), 336.

63. Bettelheim, Class Struggles in the USSR, First Period, 314.

64. Ibid., 139.

CHAPTER 23

SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM: PETTY BOURGEOISIE IN THE "SOCIALIST SOCIAL SYSTEM"

In his effort to prove that there can be no "middle class" in modern society other than the remnants of the "old" independent petty bourgeoisie with their "petty mode of production," Charles Loren poses this question:

> How is this [new middle] class different in its relation to the means of production from the three classes of capitalist society? Every class has a mode of production it represents and strives for. What would be the middle class mode of production? Or is this the first class without its own mode of production, a class whose interest is, depending on the fancy of the particular writer, the same as that of the capitalists (capitalism) or that of the workers (socialism)? If capitalism, we have a non-capitalist class whose basic interest lies in capitalism! We have the neat trick by which the growth of a non-capitalist but pro-capitalist class counters the polarization of classes. . . . On the other hand, "middle class socialism" always turns out to be something other than socialism, something opposed to proletarian interests.[1]

There are two assumptions in the above passage that must be of interest here. The first is that classes always defend their interests in the "purest" form, in this case, that the petty bourgeoisie can only assert its position by an attempt to turn the clock backward to the actual "collection of families of petty producers" by which Loren initially defines its mode of production, based on

individual ownership and labor.[2] This assumes that there may not be more "modern" ways in which the same class can establish its own economy under new, changed circumstances. The second assumption made by Loren is that: "The mode of production corresponding to the needs of the working class is socialism. . . ."[3] The polarity of modern society is thus for him capitalist and socialist, as the expressions of the only two classes which have relevance in it, bourgeoisie and proletariat.

Let us take up the second assumption first, for the question of which form of social economy corresponds to the working class is crucial to the other problem also. For Marx at least, Loren of course is wrong: the mode of production of the proletariat is not in fact socialism, but communism. Nothing is more basic to Marxism, going back to the Manifesto itself, where it was made clear that in opposition to the capitalists, various classes, not even excluding feudalists and a part of the bourgeoisie, put forth forms of "socialism" as a way to critique and reform capitalism and to combat the rising power of the proletariat, in order to protect their own class interests. As Engels explained:

> Yet, when it was written, we could not have called it a Socialist Manifesto. By Socialists, in 1847, were understood, on the one hand, the adherents of the various Utopian systems . . . on the other hand, the most multifarious social quacks, who, by all manners of tinkering, professed to redress, without any danger to capital and profit, all sorts of social grievances, in both cases men outside the working-class movement, and looking rather to the "educated" classes for support. Whatever portion of the working class had become

> convinced of the insufficiency of mere political revolutions, and had proclaimed the necessity of a total social change, that portion then called itself Communist. . . . Thus, Socialism was, in 1847, a middle-class movement, Communism a working-class movement.[4]

The unique expression of the proletariat is thus communism. But if communism is the form of social economy of the working class, the question arises all the more persistently: What then is socialism? For what class or classes is it a form of social economy? And in particular, what role does the "middle class" play in socialist society?

For Marx, socialism, properly speaking, is the first step or transitional period to a communist society in which class distinctions will have been eliminated and the state as the instrument of the rule of some classes over others dies out. As such, the socialist era is indeed the expression of the historical interests of the working class, but only in its initial stages, not its final realization. In all their theoretical statements about the stage of socialism, Marx, Engels, and Lenin stressed always just these transitional characteristics. Thus as Marx stated:

> Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but <u>the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat</u>.[5]

Lenin in turn gave various formulations to the same fundamental conception.

> Theoretically, there can be no doubt that between capitalism and communism there lies a definite transition period which must combine the features and properties of both these forms of social economy. This transition period has to be a period of struggle between dying capitalism and nascent communism--or, in other words, between capitalism which has been defeated but not destroyed and communism which has been born but is still very feeble.[6]

The socialist era is thus a transitional one in which two forms of social economy are struggling.

But this struggle is not, of course, an abstract one between two "systems" or two possible historical directions: it is the conflict of specific classes:

> Only a definite class, namely, the urban workers and the factory, industrial workers in general, is able to lead the whole mass of the working and exploited people in the struggle to throw off the yoke of capital, in actually carrying it out, in the struggle to maintain and consolidate the victory, in the work of creating the new, socialist social system and in the entire struggle for the complete abolition of classes. (Let us observe in parenthesis that the only scientific distinction between socialism and communism is that the first term implies the first stage of the new society arising out of capitalism, while the second implies the next and higher stage.)[7]

Socialism, therefore, was always conceived by the founders and leading developer of Marxism as the revolutionary working out in practice of the form of social economy which alone coincides with the needs of the working class: communism. The proletariat alone can bring this "new, socialist social system" into being, and to that extent the latter is representative of its interests, but only as the initial step to that form of society under which all class distinctions will have been abolished.

Nevertheless, socialism as a transition stage also has its own characteristic economic formations, which are neither capitalist nor communist, but combine aspects of both of these, in forms which are in certain ways unique. It is thus necessary to examine the character of the "socialist social system." As the Manifesto describes this stage:

> The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the State, i.e., of the proletariat organised as the ruling class; and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible.[8]

Here then are the four main elements: proletarian rule, a take-over of the economic bases on which capitalist power rests, centralization of the means of production under the state, and rapid productive expansion.

Marx, Engels, and Lenin always recognized that socialism as it first arises on the ruins of capitalism would be a far cry from the realization of final proletarian principles, but would instead inherit much of bourgeois society. In particular, Marx stressed that the movement of products would still rest on the labor they contain, just as in commodity exchange. But their distribution would now assume a new form: on the one hand, the accumulated wealth of society would no longer be a source of profit, on the other, workers would no longer be paid for labor-power, but for the actual work they performed.

> What we have to deal with here is a communist society, not as it has developed on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, just as it emerges from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birth marks of the old society from whose womb it emerges. Accordingly, the individual producer receives back from society--after the deductions have been made [for common social expenses]--exactly what he gives to it. What he has given to it is his individual quantum of labour. . . .
>
> But one man is superior to another physically or mentally and so supplies more labour in this same time, or can labour for a longer time; and labour, to serve as a measure, must be defined by its duration or intensity, otherwise it ceases to be a standard of measurement. This equal right is an unequal right for unequal labour. It recognizes no class differences, because everyone is only a worker like everyone else; but it tacitly recognises unequal individual endowment and thus productive capacity as natural privileges.[9]

From this comes the socialist formula: "from each according to their ability, to each according to their work."

This form of income breaks directly with capitalist exploitation based on the difference between the costs of labor-power and actual labor performed. But it is still a remnant of "bourgeois right," still "stigmatised by a bourgeois limitation," because its seeming "equality" rewards the unequal advantages, and ignores the varying needs, of workers.[10] It is therefore necessary to take another step beyond this inheritance from capitalist society, to transcend the economic forms of socialism itself. As Lenin in turn explained it:

> From capitalism mankind can pass directly only to socialism, i.e., to the social ownership of the means of production and the distribution of products according to the amount of work performed by each individual. Our Party looks further ahead: socialism must inevitably evolve gradually into communism, upon the banner of which is inscribed the motto, "From each

according to his ability, to each according to his need".[11]

Thus while socialism can be considered a "compromise" or amalgam of the two "poles" of capitalism and communism in some respects, it also contains forms of economy, such as income for actual labor performed, which are not common to either of them. In the socialist period there will no longer be "class differences, because everyone is only a worker like everyone else," but distinctions will still exist, based on the division of labor, on different levels of skill and talent, on manual versus mental work, and so on. In addition, though the character of socialism is in its essence transitory, it nevertheless will only "evolve gradually into communism," so that it is in fact an extended phase of social development, a stage of human history.

However, the economy which the proletariat inherits from capitalism is not just "stamped with the birth marks of the old society" in the sense of still containing structural aspects of the previous relations of production. It emerges with the classes of the modern era still intact, despite immediate suppression of the main centers of power of the capitalists and the landlords. In particular, the working class is faced at the start of the socialist stage with a petty bourgeois mass, the size of which will vary from country to country, but which was not and cannot be eliminated while capitalism exists. Lenin thus stressed

that socialism can only be realized by overcoming the remaining class barriers, primarily by proletarianizing the petty bourgeoisie.

> Socialism means the abolition of classes.
>
> In order to abolish classes it is necessary, first, to overthrow the landlords and capitalists. This part of our task has been accomplished, but it is only a part, and moreover, <u>not</u> the most difficult part. In order to abolish classes it is necessary, secondly, to abolish the difference between factory worker and peasant, to make <u>workers of all of them</u>. This cannot be done all at once. This task is incomparably more difficult and will of necessity take a long time. It is not a problem that can be solved by overthrowing a class. It can be solved only by the organisational reconstruction of the whole social economy, by a transition from individual, disunited, petty commodity production to large-scale social production. This transition must of necessity be extremely protracted.[12]

Thus a long transitional period, under the dictatorship of the proletariat, is necessary to "abolish" not only the capitalists but also the petty bourgeoisie, and to bring a fully socialist society into being.

According to both Marx and Lenin, therefore, socialism is the first stage of communism, in which "everyone is only a worker like everyone else," "all are workers," and to the extent that this condition has not yet been attained, the social economy is only incompletely socialist.

> A society in which the class distinction between workers and peasants still exists is neither a communist society nor a socialist society. True, if the word socialism is interpreted in a certain sense, it might be called a socialist society, but that would be mere sophistry, an argument about words. Socialism is the first stage of communism; but it is not worth arguing about words.[13]

Thus the transition society inherited from the bourgeoisie will contain for a long while other characteristics, other

classes representing the remnants of capitalism, even if it is called "socialist . . . in a certain sense." Socialism therefore can only come into being, can only triumph, by contending for control of the new social order with those capitalistic forces still present. As Lenin wrote in 1921:

> No one, I think, in studying the question of the economic system of Russia, has denied its transitional character. Nor, I think, has any Communist denied that the term Soviet Socialist Republic implies the determination of the Soviet power to achieve the transition to socialism, and not that the existing economic system is recognised as a socialist order.
>
> But what does the word "transition" mean? Does it not mean, as applied to the economy, that the present system contains elements, particles, fragments of both capitalism and socialism? Everyone will admit that it does. But not all who admit this take the trouble to consider what elements actually constitute the various socio-economic structures that exist in Russia at the present time. And this is the crux of the question.[14]

He then lists the five "socio-economic structures" present at that time as: patriarchal peasant farming, small commodity production, private capitalism, state capitalism, and socialism.

Lenin constantly emphasized that, apart from the threat to an overthrow of the Soviet power from outside, which was successfully defeated during the period of the Civil War and imperialist intervention, the main antagonist of the proletariat in the socialist transition was the petty bourgeoisie. Thus,

> we must expose the error of those who fail to see that petty-bourgeois economic conditions and the petty-bourgeois element is the <u>principal</u> enemy of socialism in our country.[15]

Chastising the "Left" Communists, whose "petty-bourgeois mentality" was shown by their inability to recognize this class as the main opponent of socialist development in Russia, Lenin explained that even state capitalism would constitute an advance over small commodity production, because though it made concessions to capital, it would be within the framework of Soviet control, accounting, and organization. In contrast to those who saw in such policies a danger of capitalist revival, Lenin stressed the more insidious threat of a capitalistic petty bourgeoisie:

> Peasant farming continues to be petty commodity production. Here we have an extremely broad and very sound, deep-rooted basis for capitalism, a basis on which capitalism persists or arises anew in bitter struggle with communism. The forms of this struggle are private speculation and profiteering versus state procurement of grain (and other products) and state distribution of products in general.[16]

The petty bourgeoisie had moved quickly to fill the "gap" left by the big capitalists. As Lenin noted: "Obviously the beginning of a new, petty, profiteering capitalism began to make their appearance after large-scale capitalism had been crushed."[17] The latter, in turn, grasped at every such manifestation in hopes their own fortunes would revive.

The petty bourgeoisie in Russia after the revolution, therefore, did not form simply a "remnant" element of the old society holding the proletariat back from the full realization of socialism. They were a class actively serving as representatives of capitalism within the

transition period to communism. As such, the petty bourgeoisie constituted a threat to the dictatorship of the proletariat itself, raising the possibility not merely of slowing the progress toward socialism, but of retrogression and capitalist restoration.

> Either we subordinate the petty bourgeoisie to our control and accounting (we can do this if we organise the poor, that is, the majority of the population or semi-proletarians, round the politically conscious proletarian vanguard), or they will overthrow our workers' power as surely and as inevitably as the revolution was overthrown by the Napoleons and the Cavaignacs who sprang from this very soil of petty proprietorship. That is how the question stands.[18]

The struggle against small commodity production was the more difficult because "the million tentacles of this petty-bourgeois octopus now and again encircle various sections of the workers . . . [and] forces its way into every pore of our social and economic organism."[19] The need to proletarianize the petty bourgeoisie was therefore absolutely critical not only to advance to socialism, but to avoid moving backward.

Thus the victory of the working class over large-scale capitalism was only the beginning of their tasks, for it left them face to face with petty bourgeois owners: "The peasants have remained property-owners in their form of production, and they are continuing to develop new capitalist relations after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie."[20] Indeed, as Lenin had anticipated long before the revolution, the defeat of landlord and capitalist power caused an upsurge of capitalistic methods

among the petty bourgeoisie. This became more pronounced with the introduction of the "New Economic Policy" in 1921, which relaxed controls on market forces, and after 1925 even led to granting the right of peasants and entrepreneurs to hire labor and to lease land, in an effort to revive the war-shattered economy.[21] The result was "that 'capitalist relationships' . . . had taken root in the countryside," and "a new stratification was forming within the peasantry."[22] Predictably, the utopian efforts of the peasants after the revolution to establish an "independent" form of farming based on the equal parcelling out of land had dissolved in an internally generated polarization typical of the capitalization of the petty bourgeois class, so that

> "not only does almost every peasant work on his farm, but he himself or the members of his family also work outside of it; or again, he may take on workers, or hire the means of production from someone, or alternatively hire out his own means of production. He borrows or lends, for example, his seed-grain. In short, there are practically no cases where a peasant farm manages its production entirely independently. But very often it will nevertheless be managed, in substance, as an independent farm."[23]

"Independence" without "independence," that is an exact description of the petty bourgeois condition under capitalism, which in itself was reviving by the actions of that class.

On this basis a force capable of challenging the proletariat emerged, as the effects of the New Economic Policy developed.

> It was abundantly clear that the free dynamic of NEP was producing kulaks in the countryside, as well as Nepmen in the towns. . . . If conditions unfavourable to the regime were to develop, there was the risk that a smychka (alliance) of hostile classes nurtu red by NEP might combine against the Soviet government.[24]

Indeed, such a "combination" did not have to take the form of open opposition. So favourable were conditions for their development that the kulaks were "seizing control in the countryside, and beginning to support the poor man's Soviet regime."[25] Such "support" was obviously a kiss of death, and was inevitably accompanied by disillusionment among the hired workers and poor peasants who were harshly exploited by the kulaks during this time. Even with the bigger capitalists defeated or at least contained, the working class thus faced a struggle for control over the new "transition" society. The petty bourgeoisie constituted an enemy which could not only block forward progress by the proletariat, but go back to the conditions of capitalism itself, which were increasingly imbedded, moreover, within the functioning of "the poor man's Soviet regime," that is, under cover of the institutions of the new social order. Thus left to themselves, the petty bourgeois owners were restoring capitalist relations, within the "shell" of socialist state power. Only by moving the economy in the opposite direction, building socialism as the first step toward communism, and making over society so that "all are workers," could this threat ultimately be defeated.

Even in the midst of warning of the most dire consequences of petty bourgeois reaction and profiteering and of the revived capitalism that could arise from them, however, Lenin never lost sight of the duality of that class and its other potential.

> Petty-bourgeois elements vacillate between the old society and the new. They cannot be the motive force of either the old society or the new. On the other hand, they are not bound to the old society to the same degree as the landowners and the bourgeoisie.[26]

Indeed, after the revolution as before, Lenin stressed that it was the same road that led the petty bourgeoisie toward capitalist aspirations that could also lead it toward socialism under the leadership of the proletarian class. For if the overthrow of the big bourgeoisie opened up new opportunities for petty bourgeois capitalism, it at the same time demonstrated the possibilities for a better life under a different social system than they had known before.

> In this peasant country it was the peasantry as a whole who were the first to gain, who gained most, and gained immediately from the dictatorship of the proletariat. The peasant in Russia starved under the landowners and capitalists. Throughout the long centuries of our history, the peasant never had an opportunity to work for himself: he starved while handing over hundreds of millions of poods of grain to the capitalists, for the cities and for export. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat the peasant <u>for the first time</u> has been working for himself and <u>feeding better than the city dweller</u>.[27]

The peasantry, Lenin said, would not soon forget that the proletariat had liberated them from the oppression of the landlords and capitalists, and this would enhance the attractiveness of the socialist goal.[28]

Moreover, under conditions of the "transition" period, just as under the previous landlord and capitalism regime, only a small fraction of the middle peasants could rise into the ranks of the kulak capitalists, while the majority suffered from the renewed tendency toward polarization. It was thus possible to win over the core of this petty bourgeois mass.

> We can work together with the middle peasants, and with them fight the kulaks. We have nothing against the middle peasants. They may not be socialists, and may never become socialists, but experience will teach them the advantages of socialised farming and the majority of them will not resist.[29]

The middle peasantry could be won over only by an extended educational process and by the example set by poor peasants and rural workers. For a long time, they would be torn between the old and new forms of society:

> A few of them may become kulaks if they are lucky, that is why they are attracted to the kulaks, but the majority of them will never be kulaks. . . . The middle peasant, however, wavers. Today he is for us, tomorrow for some other power; partly for us and partly for the bourgeoisie. . . . The middle peasant stands between two camps. But, comrades, in this case the policy is quite clear--we are against force where the middle peasants are concerned, we favour agreement with them, we favour concessions to them. The middle peasant can and will come to communism by a slow journey.[30]

To achieve this it would be necessary not only to put an end to the big bourgeoisie, but to the kulaks also, to remove any lingering "attraction" to capitalism which the continued existence of rich peasants would provide.

The same process occurring among the peasantry was taking place in all the other segments of the petty

bourgeoisie as well. For, as already noted, there were two primary forms in which the petty bourgeois class "remained property owners" after the revolution, one based on "yesterday's money bags," the other on "yesterday's store of knowledge." As far back as 1904 Lenin found the "working, salaried intellectuals" still largely under the political domination of the Cadet party of liberal bourgeoisie. But in the revolutionary upsurge of 1905 the situation had already changed:

> Simultaneously with the vast movement of the working class, the peasant revolt is spreading and growing, and the petty-bourgeois democratic forces, consisting mostly of the professional classes, are coming into alliance.[31]

However, as the struggle passed over into its socialist phase directed against capital itself, the professional petty bourgeois elements also faltered. After the Bolshevik revolution, therefore, "specialists" too at first continued to want to serve the bourgeoisie and acted in various ways to both openly and quietly sabotage socialist progress. Yet here also Lenin foresaw the possibility of improvements in the lives of educated "experts" that would slowly draw them to the side of socialism.

> Unless our leading bodies, i.e., the Communist Party, the Soviet government and the trade unions, guard as the apple of their eye every specialist who does his work conscientiously and knows and loves it--even though the ideas of communism are totally alien to him--it will be useless to expect any serious progress in socialist construction. We may not be able to achieve it soon, but we must at all costs achieve a situation in which specialists--as a separate social stratum, which will persist until we have reached the highest stage of development of communist society--can enjoy better conditions of life under socialism than

> they enjoyed under capitalism insofar as concerns their material and legal status, comradely collaboration with the workers and peasants, and in the mental plane, i.e., finding satisfaction in their work, realising that it is socially useful and independent of the sordid interests of the capitalist class.[32]

It is important to note here that Lenin recognized the "professional" needs of the specialists, notably to find satisfaction in socially useful work, "independent" of narrow subservience to capitalist interests, and believed these could be more fully realized under socialism. Yet he lays on such persons a higher demand than mere "expertise" and technical autonomy, for they must labor in "comradely collaboration with the workers and peasants." No stratum of specialists, raised "above the people" and exercising authority over them, was allowable in the vision Lenin held of the new socialist society.

To make sure that these demands were fulfilled, both the oversight of the masses "from below" and the control of Soviet authorities "from above" were needed, including the threat of removal from their jobs for those who resisted. For instance, Lenin noted that: "Education workers--the teachers--were trained in the spirit of bourgeois prejudices and habits, in a spirit hostile to the proletariat, with which they have had no ties whatsoever."[33] Only gradually could this situation be changed:

> The People's Commissariat of Education has gone through a long struggle; for a long time the teachers' organisation resisted the socialist revolution. Bourgeois prejudices have struck deep roots among the teachers. There has been a long struggle in the form of direct sabotage and of tenacious bourgeois

> prejudices, and we have to fight for the communist positions slowly, step by step and win them.[34]

As in the case of the petty bourgeois peasantry, therefore, professionals had also threatened the authority of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and tried to cling to their bourgeois inclinations, offering a challenge to the new Soviet government as to whether the direction of the society would be toward socialism. Yet Lenin could say as early as 1918 that

> the teachers, who had at first been rather slow in making up their minds to work with the Soviet government, were now growing more and more convinced that such collaboration was essential. Such cases of conversion from opposition to support of the Soviet government were very numerous among other sections of society too.
>
> The army of teachers must set themselves tremendous tasks in the educational sphere, and above all must form the main army of socialist education. Life and knowledge must be liberated from the sway of capital, from the yoke of the bourgeoisie. The teachers must not confine themselves to narrow pedagogical duties. They must join forces with the entire body of the embattled working people. The task of the new pedagogics was to link up teaching activities with the socialist organisation of society.[35]

Nevertheless, it was a slow and tedious process to bring this about.

The reality of Soviet power, however, plus the new opportunities for creative labor which it released, did begin to win over the petty bourgeois and semi-proletarian "specialists." As in the case of the middle peasants also, the ultimate victory over their openly bourgeois tendencies lay not only in the example set by the communists and workers, but also in removing the doubts remaining in the

ranks of professionals and semi-professionals that the old capitalist order would return. By November, 1918, a year into the revolutionary rebuilding of society, it was possible for Lenin to declare: "Our specialists are now quite sure they cannot overthrow the workers' government by sabotage or wilful damage to work."[36] Here was the key to the "conversion" of these elements.

But as Lenin explained in regard to the "petty-bourgeois parties and middle peasants," such changes would remain only partial, and they would still retain their own always unstable class interests:

> For a long time we shall have a difficult, double problem. For a long time these parties are bound to take one step forward and two steps back because their economic status compels them to do so, and because their acceptance of socialism is not due to a definite conviction that the bourgeois system is worthless. We cannot expect them to be loyal to socialism, and it would be absurd to rely on their socialist convictions. They will support socialism only when they are convinced that there is no other way out, when the bourgeoisie is finally defeated and smashed.[37]

To the extent that the petty bourgeoisie were won over to the Soviet cause it was because it was the proletariat which had freed them, in spite of themselves, from capitalist control, an act they cannot and will not do for themselves in a consistent and thoroughgoing manner. It was the workers too who formed the bulwark against a "restoration." The socialist revolution thus at least temporarily releases the "vise" of the capitalist contradictions crushing the petty bourgeoisie by putting an end to capitalism itself, despite, as it were, the

resistance of that class. It thereby gives the petty bourgeois class a new lease on life, and in a much more complete fashion than is achieved by its own efforts. But their identification with socialist society is not out of positive identification with the proletarian cause.

Their "socialism," therefore, was primarily directed against the capitalists, not toward the proletariat, and they would resist control by the working class just as surely as they had previously attempted to escape domination by the bourgeoisie. Thus

> in Russia we have a petty-bourgeois mass which sympathised with the abolition of the big bourgeoisie in all countries, but does not sympathise with accounting, socialisation and control. . . . The petty bourgeoisie, as we see, steeps the whole social atmosphere with petty-proprietor tendencies, with aspirations which are bluntly expressed in the statement: I took from the rich, what others do is not my affair.[38]

But the defeat of the domestic capitalist class and the spread of socialist relations in industry and trade, meant that what the working class did must in time become the "affair" of the petty bourgeoisie too. As proletarian power grew, it became necessary for the petty bourgeois class to reach some kind of accommodation with it and at least formally to "support socialism." However, even as they did so they could not help but attempt to also "steep the whole social atmosphere" of the socialist system "with petty-proprietor tendencies." It could not be otherwise. A class which only "yesterday" was still hoping for the opportunity to advance its own bourgeois interests, could

not "today" be committed to a thoroughgoing proletarian socialism, much less to communism proper. Thus they would conform "in theory" to the new regime, while pursuing as much as could still be managed within it their age-old dream of "independence." Not only would they attempt to maintain themselves as a class, but they would continue to challenge the proletariat for control of the society, only now within the formal framework of "socialism."

There was in fact nothing very new about this as it developed after the Russian revolution, for in victory or in defeat the petty bourgeoisie change their "name" and their "color" as need be to further their own survival. Thus Marx noted that in the aftermath of the unsuccessful revolutions of 1848, "the republican petty bourgeoisie in France now call themselves Socialists." But: "It is evident . . . that the altered name of this party does not make the slightest difference in its attitude to the workers, but merely proves that they are now obliged to turn against the bourgeoisie, which is united with absolutism, and to seek support in the proletariat."[39] Nothing could describe better the position of the petty bourgeois class under the conditions of the socialist revolution. The petty bourgeoisie are political chameleons, capable of being "white" one day and "red" the next, but no matter how many times they change color, what lies beneath the surface is not fundamentally altered. Thus their purpose is to blend in and escape detection

within the "socialist social system," even as they turn it to the same time-worn interests which they always uphold, that is, to be free of the class struggle and, above all, to resist their final proletarianization into the working class itself. Meanwhile their "attitude to the workers" remains one of paternalistic domination, only now exercised through the institutions of "socialist" society, joining the latter as a means to maintain their old class role despite the change in social form.

The "socialism" of the petty bourgeoisie is therefore a way for it to avoid proletarianization, not to get closer to the proletariat. The workers, however, were not interested in suspending class struggle, and they knew that to do so would in fact only lead to capitalist restoration. They therefore continued to press forward to the building of socialism, and undertook policies undermining the "independence" of the petty bourgeoisie. Deprived of the backing of the capitalists, the latter chose the path of least resistance: they would henceforth be "socialists." But this does not mean that they abandoned their own class interests, only that the struggle now shifted to within the "socialist social system" or, more precisely, within that transitional stage of society that is no longer capitalism, but has become just "socialism . . . in a certain sense."

> And classes still <u>remain</u> and <u>will remain</u> in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The dictatorship will become unnecessary when classes disappear. Without the dictatorship of the proletariat they will not disappear.

> Classes have remained, but in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat <u>every</u> class has undergone a change, and the relations between the classes have also changed. The class struggle does not disappear under the dictatorship of the proletariat; it merely assumes different forms.[40]

In particular, Lenin noted, "the peasants, like the petty bourgeoisie in general, occupy a half-way, intermediate position <u>even</u> under the dictatorship of the proletariat."[41] That is, their interests remain the same, though the class struggle must of necessity now assume different forms and lead to changed relationships within the "socialist social system."

We must thus take up again the question of "middle class socialism" as it occurs in the period of transition from capitalism to communism. In particular, we must examine in what ways the different strata of the petty bourgeois class respond to the new circumstances of Soviet control. This in turn leads us back to the first of the two assumptions of Charles Loren noted at the beginning of this chapter: that the "middle class" can only occur in the form of a "traditional" petty bourgeoisie asserting the reactionary goal of returning the social economy to small commodity production. In reality, the <u>Manifesto</u> described two different ways in which "petty-bourgeois socialism" combats modern economic conditions.

> In its positive aims, however, this form of Socialism aspires either to restoring the old means of production and of exchange, and with them the old property relations, and the old society, or to cramping the modern means of production and exchange, within the framework of the old property relations that have been,

> and were bound to be, exploded by those means. In either case it is both reactionary and Utopian.[42]

Let us examine each of these two forms in light of the changed "relations between the classes . . . in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat." For the "old" stratum of the petty bourgeoisie, in particular the peasantry, it was possible to continue to assert the first form cited above in the Manifesto. Throughout the history of "actually existing socialism," many peasants in various ways continued to cling to the small commodity production of the previous society, notably in the form of "private plots" whose products they generally market outside the official or socialized state monopolies, usually for higher prices as well. In some countries, such as Poland, privately-owned "family farms" were never eliminated.

Once modern industry arose, however, efforts to actually turn the entire economy back to small-scale productive and exchange relations were clearly doomed, and the program of "petty bourgeois socialism" therefore always included some form of social ownership or nationalization of the larger means of production, trade, and finance to keep them from crushing the smaller owners. But while the petty bourgeoisie were usually not very clear on who would administer these socialized institutions, it is evident that if they were merely turned over to the proletariat, the latter would command a power capable of overwhelming small-scale ownership no less than the capitalists had. To

protect their class position, therefore, it was necessary for petty bourgeois interests also to seize control of the large modern means of production. Here the "new" strata of the petty bourgeoisie already stood prepared for the task, for the professionals and managers who helped direct these industries within the capitalist system could perform this role under "socialism" as well. Moreover, with the big bourgeoisie removed by working-class revolution, the "newer" petty bourgeois strata could finally attempt to put into action their dream of social efficiency and technological advance, free from external restraints or the intrusions of the class struggle, which would now be eliminated beneath a "classless" state power.

In doing so, however, they would continue to "cramp" the modern means of production and exchange within the "old property relations," specifically by monopolizing "yesterday's store of knowledge" in such a way that the proletariat could not exercise class power over the primary economic units. In other words, large-scale industry and distribution, though formally socialized or nationalized, would in fact be controlled by those from the "educated classes," each of whom are owners of a small share of the "means of mental production," which remains their property even after the revolution. Individual possession is still the ground on which such professional control rests, but now exercised through collective bodies and state-owned industries, which give them a basis for dominating the

economic system as a whole. This leads to a newer, more "modern" form of the transitional economy: on the one hand, the major productive resources are owned socially, as a result of the proletarian revolution; on the other, the knowledge used to run them is the private capital mainly of the petty bourgeoisie. Thus its "new" professional stratum, together with the managerial element, also challenge the proletariat and reassert their class independence. However, unlike the peasants and small traders, the professionals and managers do not lie outside the socialistic sector, but are imbedded in it and are able to take it over from within.

Even the socialist form of income, "to each according to their work," provides the petty bourgeoisie with a perfect "cover" to continue to pursue their special class interests. Indeed as the working class begins to advance toward communism, throwing off the exploitative relations which it suffered under capitalism, it creates a mode of distribution of the social product within which the petty bourgeois role can be easily "hidden." Because income based on actual labor, rather than wages for labor-power, is the very means by which the petty bourgeoisie is classically rewarded, such a method is to this extent more typical of that class than of the proletariat, for whom it is merely a transitional stage, rather than the final goal. Then too, while the socialist form of distribution rests on the assumption that "everyone is only a worker like

everyone else," and thus "recognizes no class differences," the society in which it is applied must in the beginning be one where other classes still in fact exist. Insofar as the professional petty bourgeoisie come with just those endowments which make them "superior to another," in the sense of being more highly educated or talented, what Marx labelled the "bourgeois right" to an income based on "the individual quantum of labor," even if applied equally to all, therefore actually masks and reinforces the special factors which work to their benefit over that of the proletarians in the socialist transition. Thus they may gain a kind of "rent" on the special nature of their abilities, within what seems to be an equal formula by which income is distributed.

This still does not exhaust the matter, however, for as Marx also explained, even under socialism there must be "deductions" from the income of the workers for purposes of expanding production, health and welfare, and so forth, and there is therefore the potential for an uneven distribution of these various costs. If in the socialist transition the "educated classes" are able, by monopolizing "yesterday's store of knowledge," to command an additional premium for their work, while at the same time they put the burden of these common expenses solely on the working class, then their own labor can be rewarded fully or even at a somewhat higher rate, and they can benefit from socially accumulated wealth without themselves being subject to reductions in

earnings. In other words, the proletariat will be forced to bear the costs of the social maintenance of the "middle class," including its education, so that both individually and collectively the professionals and managers profit from deductions taken by "society" from the workers. Thus knowledge once again has a kind of market value, and serves as capital that yields returns, while the earnings of the proletariat take on aspects of a capitalist wage. In this modified form the "new" strata can therefore reintroduce a type of exploitative bourgeois relationship, though on a petty bourgeois level. This role may be temporarily obscured because of the surface appearance in which "all are workers," but it in fact makes the petty bourgeoisie the bearers of capitalistic economic relations within the body of the transitional society.

Thus even with the big bourgeoisie effectively eliminated, a class is still in existence which represents capitalist forms within the "socialist social system." Having first resisted socialism, the petty bourgeoisie now largely adopts it, but only to turn it into its opposite, something which prevents rather than furthers the full realization of proletarian goals. The necessarily incomplete first stage of the socialist revolution therefore corresponds in certain respects to the program of the petty bourgeois class in general, and the modern professionals in particular, and can be turned by them to their own ends and against those of the working class.

True to its entire history, the petty bourgeoisie thus attempts to "freeze" society in the transition stage from capitalism to communism, and to put an end, not to classes themselves, but to the threat of class struggle, and above all to the danger that it will eventually be proletarianized itself. It tries to uphold a system in which bourgeois relationships can still continue in the midst of what is formally called "socialism," where an "educated class" gains the full reward, or more, for its labor, enhanced by the social investment in its education or the accumulated knowledge of the proletarian revolution, and where the autonomy of the experts can be practised as much as possible within the limits set by large-scale industrial economy and the demands of the working class.

Though learning is now largely paid for directly or indirectly by "society," the benefits are still privately and individually appropriated by the "middle class." In this way, an oppressive division of labor is, as it were, frozen into society, and as a result, the modern means of production and exchange are "cramped" within the old petty bourgeois class and property relations. By their possession of social knowledge, the professionals in particular are able to practice the same limited forms of exploitation of the working class in the transition to socialism as they did in the capitalist era. Charles Loren, as we saw above, said that there could be no in-

between class in the modern period, because it would have to be either "non-capitalist but pro-capitalist" or else would have to represent that "'middle class socialism' [which] always turns out to be something other than socialism, something opposed to proletarian interests." What he should have said is that such a class would have to embody both these characteristics. Except that it is "non" big capitalist, while continuing to be "pro" expoitation of the working class by petty bourgeois capitalism, now hidden within the "socialist social system." Its "socialism" is thus a defensive one against both the major classes of modern society. There is a continuum here, two expressions of the same social economy. "Middle-class socialism" is in fact "petty bourgeois capitalism" which has changed form to meet the new circumstances of the socialist period. These two manifestations of the petty bourgeoisie interpenetrate each other, and the representatives of both of them often work together.[43]

Lying "between labor and capital," between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeois class is in reality the "perfect" representative of the new transitional society which arises on the ruins of the overthrown capitalists. In fact it seizes on the very concept of "transition" as a means to defend in ideological terms its interests in avoiding class struggle and proletarian revolution. Thus in criticizing the eclecticism of petty bourgeois socialists, Lenin noted:

> The eclectic does not want propositions that are "too absolute", because he wants to push forward his philistine desire to substitute "transitional stages" for revolution.
>
> The Kautskys and Verderveldes say nothing about the fact that the transitional stage between the state as an organ of the rule of the capitalist class and the state as an organ of the rule of the proletariat is revolution, which means overthrowing the bourgeoisie and breaking up, smashing, their state machine.[44]

Socialists like this "blur all that is concrete and precise in the class struggle and advance instead the general concept of 'transition', under which they may hide . . . their renunciation of revolution.!"[45] This petty bourgeois socialism thus replaces revolutionary action with vague gradualist stages, and only partly destroys, or rather "reforms," the bourgeois state. In particular, it opposes the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat, or if this cannot be initially resisted, tries to alter it from "inside" and turn it into a lengthy "transitional" era without any struggle of classes. In fact the petty bourgeois class itself attempts to "occupy" this transition stage, replacing the power of the proletariat with that of its own.

That frozen, bloodless, bloody, "dead fish" of a "socialism" which at times has so plagued the modern world is in reality the exact expression of the attempt by the petty bourgeoisie to "stop history," to declare an immediate end to class struggle while classes still exist. It is true that their "socialist social system" is largely a mix of what is passing and what is still to come, but it

is also stamped with its own petty bourgeois nature, and like all the products of that class, it has its own uniqueness, its own particular expressions, its own goals, and its own internal dynamic. In this regard, and to just this extent, the petty bourgeoisie are in reality the true representative of "socialism," not as the first step to communism, but as the annulment and negation of that eventual goal. Thus, as noted above, Marx spoke of: "Socialism proper, petty-bourgeois socialism, socialism par excellence. . . . ," which he went on to describe as follows:

> Since it dreams of the peaceful achievement of its socialism--allowing, perhaps, for a second February Revolution [1848] lasting a brief day or so--the coming historical process naturally appears to it as an application of systems, which the thinkers of society, whether in companies or as individual inventors, devise or have devised. Thus they become the eclectics or adepts of the existing socialist systems, of doctrinaire socialism, which was the theoretical expression of the proletariat only as long as it had not yet developed further into a free historical movement of its own.
>
> . . . this utopia, doctrinaire socialism . . . subordinates the total movement to one of its moments . . . and sets forth each of the so-called systems as a pretentious adherence to one of the transit points of the social revolution as against another. . . .[46]

Thus petty bourgeois socialism tries to freeze the proletarian revolution in "transit," at a single "moment," to prevent the "total movement" from being completed.

It is this dogmatic, statist, "systems-analyst" socialism, having been updated to fit modern conditions by the "inventors" of the petty bourgeois professions, warping the "existing socialist systems" to their own ends, against

which "revolutionary socialism . . . communism" must now contend.[47] The latter is the unique expression of the proletariat alone:

> This socialism is the declaration of the permanence of the revolution, the class dictatorship of the proletariat as the necessary transition point to the abolition of class distinctions generally, to the abolition of all the relations of production on which they rest, to the abolition of all the social relations that correspond to these relations of production, to the revolutionising of all the ideas that result from these social relations.[48]

But since this proletarian socialism is only one step toward communism, even it may parallel in part the goals of "middle class" strata, who may attempt to halt it at any one of its "moments," its "transit points." The stage at which they do so is determined by their own class positions, the relative "distance" which separates each of them from the proletariat.

The class struggle therefore includes a battle over the very "definition" of socialism, an ideological conflict, one that carries over to the field of culture, that can end only with the "revolutionizing of all the ideas" of the old society, and especially in this case petty bourgeois ones. As a consequence, this fight is one which must be continued within the transition stage, and even under the "socialist social system" itself. It is evident then that "socialism" must move in one of two directions: that it must either be truly a dictatorship of the proletariat, which expands the control of the working class over every aspect of the social order, and which

builds a socialist society as the first step toward communism, or it must see the solidification of petty bourgeois power and the suppression of the efforts by the working class to abolish all classes.

If the latter, the petty bourgeoisie will reintroduce the methods of bourgeois order within those areas of social life that fall under its sway. This cannot, however, in the first instance be simply a return to the "overt" capitalism of the previous regime, in part because of the danger that such efforts would bring about renewed proletarian revolutionary action, but primarily because the petty bourgeois class itself learns from the revolution that it can only successfully resist the power of the big capitalists by organizing under the "socialist" banner with the working class behind it. Its "bourgeois restoration," therefore, is to just this extent only a petty bourgeois one, and it must continue to conform in many respects to a proletarian "socialist social system." Here lies the significance of the "conversion" of many petty bourgeoisie to "socialism," thus providing a mass base for their own rule over society. However, faced with the concentrated political and economic power of the proletariat, the ability of the petty bourgeois class to maintain these "new" forms of oppression would be very temporary if not reinforced from other quarters also. It is here, then, that the true significance of "bureaucratization" must emerge, for it is only by penetrating the state apparatus

itself, and behind it the main instrument for the organization of proletarian power, the Communist Party, that there can be created a situation in which the petty bourgeoisie reasserts its "independence," and in fact challenges both the capitalists and the proletariat for leadership over the entire society.

The broad strata of this class moving toward at least a formal acceptance of the Soviet regime and "socialism," therefore, find their complement in those professional revolutionaries who are increasingly "petty-bourgeoisified" through bureaucratic "distortions." It is the latter, however, who must take the lead in the actual organization of the petty bourgeoisie within the "socialist social system," for they alone take the entire society as their field of activity, have the prestige and authority to challenge proletarian leadership, and are so situated that their true intentions may remain temporarily obscured. As Konrád and Szelényi express this relation:

> In modern redistributive systems it is the rationality of the redistributors' activity which legitimates their authority. The power of the social group which exercises a monopoly over the redistributive process has a class character; it is the power of the intellectual class. We say "intellectual class" even though the functions of central redistribution in the strict sense are carried out not by the intelligentsia as a whole but by a narrower segment of it--the state and party bureaucracy, which we shall call the ruling or governing elite, since the criteria for admission to it are those of a status-group rather than a class.[49]

This does indeed capture the relationship, when the criticisms of the concept of the "intellectual class" made earlier have been taken into account.

Thus just as the survival of small-scale private ownership of knowledge becomes the means for dominating the socialized economy, and in fact as the basis for the lack of economic control by the proletariat, the state serves as the formal owner of large-scale property, but it is in turn dominated by those who possess the critical training in politics and administration. Finally, the party acts as the association of "professional communists," the sub-stratum who have made "middle-class socialism" their profession, licensing those who have the political education necessary to help lead the society, and excluding all others--notably the mass of proletarians. In this way, as Lenin noted, "the million tentacles of this petty-bourgeois octopus" insinuate themselves into every pore of social and economic life, gradually destroying the centers of working-class power, reviving bourgeois forms within the "socialist social system," and replacing proletarian class rule with that of the "middle classes."

Once this relationship is grasped, we are then in a position to elaborate on the petty bourgeoisie as it develops in history, and assign to the professionals their proper place in the role of this class, taken as a whole. We find that for each historical period, there corresponds

one petty bourgeois stratum, representing its most "advanced" segment at the time.

STAGE OF SOCIETY	PETTY BOURGEOIS STRATUM
Feudalism	Pre-Petty Bourgeoisie
Feudal lords exploit peasant serfs	"Small-patriarchal, subsistence economy, "petty producers"
Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism	Independent Petty Bourgeoisie
Feudal lords decline, bourgeoisie rises	Small commodity production
Capitalism	Managerial Petty Bourgeoisie
Capitalists exploit the workers wage	Direct servants of capitalist class in exploitation of proletariat
Imperialism	Professional Petty Bourgeoisie
"Moribund" monopoly capitalism, bourgeoisie are challenged for power by the proletariat, who are successful at its "weakest links"	"Mediators" of class struggle between the capitalists and working class
Transition from Imperialism to Socialism	"Professional Communists"
"Socialism in a certain sense," classes still in existence, petty bourgeoisie and the proletariat contend for social power	The "bureaucratized" members of the apparatus of party and state
Socialism	-----
Proletariat alone exists but divisions remains in skill, agriculture and industry, mental and manual	Petty bourgeoisie have now been proletarianized into workers

Beyond this lies only communism, in which the final distinctions within the proletariat itself disappear and the last remnants of the state, rendered redundant, "wither away."

Here we see in graphic form the two contradictory aspects of the petty bourgeoisie as Marx and Engels analyzed them as far back as the Manifesto. On the one hand, this class is "ever renewing itself as a supplementary part of bourgeois society," yet at the same time, taken as a whole, it must "sink gradually into the proletariat" until it disappears completely from history. In general, each petty bourgeois stratum or sub-stratum shows a contraction of the class compared to the previous one, and yet it is by the same token a more concentrated and "advanced" segment in relation to the new methods of organizing production which continually force their way forward in society. Each of these forms of the petty bourgeoisie is progressively more "social" in its role. For the small owner of a farm or store, activities of a "public" kind may be inherent in varying degrees, but they are mainly direct and individualistic in content, and local in scope. For managers, there is already a further enlargement of the relations involved since command over large numbers of workers, within an enterprise which itself has social ties on a significant level, is present here. With the professionals, there is another increment in "socialization," insofar as the professions are in general

oriented in some degree toward society as a whole, even though usually practiced within a fairly narrow specialization or in highly individualistic ways. It is in the "professional communists," however, that the area of expert competence is declared to be the entire social order, with an explicit resistance to narrow specialities or individualism.

We are now better able to grasp the alternating rise and fall of this class "as an independent section of modern society," that is, its ability to act as an organized body contending with other classes for social control, and to realize, relatively more or less at different stages, the historic petty bourgeois goals and interests. What we find is that there are in fact two stages at which such opportunities reach a peak, corresponding to the two periods in which the transition from one mode of production to another, from the domination of one class to another, allows the petty bourgeoisie to exercise a greater degree of independence. The first of these, of course, occurs as feudalism crumbles with the onslaught of the bourgeoisie, allowing the "independent" petty bourgeoisie to emerge in conditions of relative freedom, to which they thereafter ever yearn, but which can never be recaptured once capitalism is firmly settled in power. But a second opportunity for petty bourgeois independence arises as the bourgeoisie in turn are challenged by the rising proletariat, now here, now there, taking advantage of the

"weak links" in the imperialist system to make revolution. The professional petty bourgeoisie emerge in this period to blunt the proletarian challenge, in the process putting forward their own "progressive" solution to the class struggle, one which maximizes their ideals of social efficiency and technocratic "self-activity," while maintaining their own exploitative relations.

The independent practice of their "expertise," however, is severely limited as long as the capitalists still hold sway over the largest means of production on a global scale and control the state in the main industrialized nations. It is therefore only where the power of the bourgeoisie has been broken, under the blows of successful working-class revolution, that these professionals are partially and temporarily released from the "vise" of modern society and can advance in their own right the vision of a "classless" order ruled by social experts and technocrats, and free from the contradictions of the class struggle. However, even here, they cannot do so openly in their own name, but must hide behind the goal of proletarian socialism, led by a sub-stratum of their ranks which imbeds itself within the party and the state, the better to obscure its class nature and to control and mobilize the essential power of the workers. For without the latter, this "petty bourgeois socialism" would prove itself powerless, and the inherent weakness of the "middle class" would be reasserted. Taken overall, therefore, the

program of the petty bourgeoisie must be the same under the "socialist social system" as it was under capitalism, that is, to prevent itself from being crushed by the capitalists, who still threaten it with great strength, though now primarily from "outside," and on the other hand to fend off the power of the proletariat, to stop the progress toward that true socialism which is the first step toward communism and the proletarianization of all other classes, and which thus threatens the very existence of the petty bourgeois class.

NOTES

1. Loren, Classes in the United States, 117-18.

2. Ibid., 53-54.

3. Ibid., 53.

4. Frederick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party, Preface to the English Edition of 1888," in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 1, 27-28.

5. Karl Marx, "Critique of the Gotha Programme, Marginal Notes to the Programme of the German Workers' Party," in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 2, 32-33.

6. V. I. Lenin, "Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 30, 107.

7. Lenin, "A Great Beginning," 420.

8. Marx and Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," 53.

9. Marx, "Critique of the Gotha Programme," 23-24.

10. Ibid., 23.

11. V. I. Lenin, "The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution, Draft Platform for the Proletarian Party," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 24, 84-85. See also Marx, "Critique of the Gotha Programme," 24.

12. Lenin, "Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," 112.

13. V. I. Lenin, "First All-Russia Congress on Adult Education, May 6-19, 1919," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 29, 358-59.

14. Lenin, "The Tax in Kind," 330.

15. Ibid.

16. Lenin, "Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," 109-10.

17. V. I. Lenin, "Report on Subbotniks Delivered to a Moscow City Conference of the R.C.P.(B.), December 20, 1919," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 30, 185-86.

18. Lenin, "The Tax in Kind," 332.

19. Ibid.

20. V. I. Lenin, "Speech Delivered at the Third All-Russia Trade Union Congress, April 7, 1920," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 30, 506.

21. M. Lewin, Russian Peasants and Soviet Power, 42.

22. Ibid., 41.

23. Ibid., 45. The quote is from [?] Kritsman, "Criteria for the Study of the Class Structure in the Countryside," Na Agrarnom Fronte, 4 (1928): 142.

24. Ibid., 43.

25. Ibid., 42.

26. Lenin, "Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)," 148.

27. Lenin, "Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," 112.

28. Lenin, "Speech Delivered at the Third All-Russia Trade Union Congress," 506.

29. V. I. Lenin, "Speech at a Meeting of Delegates from the Poor Peasants' Committees of Central Gubernias, November 8, 1981," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 28, 177.

30. Lenin, "Session of the Petrograd Soviet," 31-32.

31. V. I. Lenin, "The Third Congress," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 8, 448.

32. V. I. Lenin, "The Role and Functions of the Trade Unions Under the New Economic Policy, Decision of the C.C., R.C.P.(B.), January 12, 1922," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 33, 194.

33. V. I. Lenin, "Speech Delivered at an All-Russia Conference of Political Education Workers of Gubernia and Uyezd Education Departments, November 3, 1920," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 31, 368.

34. Ibid.

35. V. I. Lenin, "Speech Delivered at the First All-Russia Congress of Internationalist Teachers, June 5, 1918," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 27, 445.

36. Lenin, "Speech at a Meeting of Delegates from the Poor Peasants' Committees of Central Gubernias," 177.

37. Lenin, "Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)," 150-51.

38. V. I. Lenin, "Session of the All-Russia C.E.C., April 29, 1918," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 27, 295.

39. Marx and Engels, "Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League," 108-89.

40. Lenin, "Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," 115.

41. Ibid., 116.

42. Marx and Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," 57.

43. This has been particularly evident in China, where the post-Mao "socialist" leadership has promoted the revival of petty bourgeois peasant farms, which are permitted to practice small-scale capitalist exploitation of labor.

44. Lenin, "The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky," 324.

45. Ibid.

46. Marx, "The Class Struggles in France 1848-1850," 222.

47. Ibid., 222-23.

48. Ibid., 223.

49. Konrád and Szelényi, The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power, 147.

CHAPTER 24

THE REGIME OF THE PETTY BOURGEOIS "PROFESSIONAL COMMUNISTS"

It is above all in those countries where a proletarian revolution has been followed by bureaucratic "distortion" and political "revision" that we find in its most clearcut fashion the realization in practice of the social vision advanced by the petty bourgeois professionals. Of course, these "socialist" societies are not the "pure" expression of the professional petty bourgeoisie alone, which must compromise its interests with the working class and other strata of the "middle classes." Nevertheless, it is in the transitional stage following on the overthrow of capitalism by the proletariat that the petty bourgeois professionals attain their greatest degree of historic independence, and attempt to rule over society led by their most advanced segment, the "professional communists." In particular, here we see the alternative political "line" or ideology which the professionals put forth in their challenge to the workers, as to who will control the post-revolutionary social order, which class will lead. Because this same threat to the advance of the proletariat has arisen over and over, in different countries of the now dissolved "socialist bloc," it can no longer be treated merely as an

aberration of the specific circumstances in which a given revolution came about, but has clearly emerged as a "universal" aspect of the class struggle, one that the working class in all cases will most probably confront. It is in fact this obstacle which represents the greatest difficulty to the progress of the proletariat once capitalism has been overthrown, the main "detour" that it faces in its passage first to socialist society, and then through socialism to communism.

To begin with, it must be understood that the opportunities to realize their class interests after the revolution are different for each of the strata of the petty bourgeoisie, which in turn produces considerable contradictions between them. That is, whatever independence they achieve is very unequally distributed among the segments of the "middle class," with those most "advanced" in the historical sense attaining the highest levels due to their being most nearly in accord with the development of the "socialist social system," while other strata are pushed to the back as anachronistic in the new order. Thus Al Szymanski, for instance, in Is the Red Flag Flying?, describes a kind of "pecking order," in which in the Soviet Union today "party and state officials play the central role both in initiating decision making and in day-to-day operation of the economy." Next come "the professional intelligentsia who are definitely the most privileged group in Soviet society as well as the most

socially cohesive . . . led by technical experts and scientists who play an important, but not politically leading, role." Nevertheless a "considerably greater participation . . . in Soviet institutions gives them a disproportionate political influence compared to the manual working class." Behind these come the managers: "Although the managerial stratum consistently pushes for greater autonomy in the running of their enterprises, they show very little interest in or ability to assume leadership of Soviet society as a whole."[1]

Finally there are the peasantry, the main remnant of the "old" petty bourgeoisie, whose economic "independence" in the system is limited generally to the exploitation of their "private plots" either for household use or for market, and which serves primarily to supplement their income from the collective farms. Their ability to exercise this semi-independence consists largely of negative actions, such as diverting produce from sale to their own consumption if the policies of the state, notably pricing or marketing restrictions, are too objectionable. Most peasants have been sufficiently collectivized or proletarianized so that they now constitute workers or semi-proletariat, not petty bourgeoisie proper. In fact, taken as a whole, the remnant peasantry of the Soviet Union generally rank lowest in the highly hierarchical structure of that society. Only managers or experts on state or collective farms share in any significant degree in overall

political, economic, and social power.[2] Today, according to Szymanski, "the peasantry are the poorest . . . and least influential group."[3] The rural population generally trails behind the urban working class in income, access to education, and a role in politics, perpetuating the sharpest divisions of town and country, and of industrial and agricultural labor in the society.

This relative suppression of the peasantry may seem to fly in the face of the role of the "professional communists," and the more highly educated members of society in general, as the organizers and leaders of the renewed independence of the petty bourgeoisie as a whole. Indeed in the early years of the Soviet Union, rural officials, who were often from the peasantry, were sometimes forced to choose between their own political careers and the loyalty which they might otherwise feel toward their fellow peasants. This was particularly clear in the grain procurement and collectivization drives of the late 1920s. Though the latter were led by workers and semi-proletarians, many of the budding petty bourgeois "bureaucrats" proved their mettle or won advancements by the firmness with which they were willing to use their authority not only against the kulaks but also the middle peasants.[4] But there is nothing unusual in a class being represented only by its leading stratum, which may even turn on the other strata and actually choose allies among other classes in preference to the more backward of its own

segments. Thus Marx and Engels in the Manifesto examined the same phenomenon in regard to the bourgeoisie:

> The bourgeoisie finds itself involved in a constant battle. At first with the aristocracy; later on, with those portions of the bourgeoisie itself, whose interests have become antagonistic to the progress of industry; at all times, with the bourgeoisie of foreign countries. In all these battles it sees itself compelled to appeal to the proletariat, to ask for its help, and thus, to drag it into the political arena. The bourgeoisie itself, therefore, supplies the proletariat with its own elements of political and general education, in other words, it furnishes the proletariat with weapons for fighting the bourgeoisie.[5]

What is true of the bourgeoisie is even more so for the petty bourgeoisie, which is much less capable of relying on its own strength, and thus needs greater working-class help against both its own backward strata and other classes.

I will return later to a discussion of the "political and general education" with which it too arms the proletariat. Here it is necessary to look at the nature of the "appeal" made by petty bourgeois professionals to the working class. Even those who, like Szymanski, wrote in defense of the Soviet Union as an "authentically socialist country," were forced nevertheless to concede that it was not the proletariat, but rather the "technical or professional strata," of "a petty bourgeoisie, who the Soviets themselves call highly educated workers", which played the dominant role within that society.[6] Thus,

> although considerable influence over the course of public policy seems to be exercised by the working class, it does appear that greater influence is exerted by the professional intelligentsia. The Soviet political process seems to be considerably biased in favour of the highly trained employees.[7]

A few pages later, it becomes apparent that it is not in fact the "working class" as a whole which exercises influence over public policy, so much as it is those workers most closely tied to the professionals.

> In sum, there appear to be numerous mechanisms by which real control is exerted by the producing classes over the power elite. The only important qualification to this statement is that the centre of gravity of power within the producing classes lies with the skilled workers and the technical and professional intelligentsia who seem to play a disproportionate role in public debates, the Communist Party, the government apparatus and the decision making processes in economic enterprises. While democratic life in the Soviet Union seems to be real, it is not dominated by the peasantry, and unskilled and semi-skilled workers; but rather by the upper levels of the working class and professionals and experts of various kinds.[8]

In fact, the external relations between classes, as well as of the various strata which compose each of them, have shown a total change from those forces which made the Bolshevik revolution.

In other words, the original revolutionary alliance, in which the great mass of industrial laborers was supported by the most oppressed peasant stratum, and in which the proletariat itself dominated, had been completely reversed, so that there was a new "coalition" of professional petty bourgeoisie with the elite of skilled workers and trade union bureaucrats, led by the former. As a result, even "the trade unions . . . have not traditionally played as active and as autonomous a role in public opinion formation," especially nationally, as have "various groups of intelligentsia generally."[9] Thus the

hierarchical nature of Soviet society, so often noted, had its origins not in the specific character of the bureaucracy per se but in the "ranking" of class strata depending on their influence and power. It was the special role of the bureaucratized members of the party and state to keep the relations of these various classes and sub-classes in order and to freeze social development in the "transition" between capitalism and socialism. On the one hand, therefore, they had to hold the proletariat in overall subordination and prevent the continuation of the revolution to a truly classless society, while providing enough "reforms" to head off a renewed revolutionary outburst. On the other hand, they had to restrain the "pure" technocratic inclinations of the "specialists" as a whole, since the indifference of the latter to the form of society--capitalist or socialist--threatened to open the door again to the big bourgeoisie or capitalists propoer and thereby destroy the newly-won petty bourgeois independence.

The "professional communists" who compose the historically most advanced sub-stratum of the petty bourgeoisie therefore must perform a balancing act which carries out the general suppression of the working class even while it at the same time fights the more anachronistic trends in the "middle class" as well. In the process, it heightens the divisions within both classes, particularly by dividing the skilled elite of workers from

less well trained proletarians. The criteria which it employs in making such distinctions are not those of the revolutionary proletariat, but of the petty bourgeoisie, based not on which class segments are most politically advanced, but on which are economically and socially most reliable and useful from the standpoint of the "educated classes." It thereby shatters working-class unity and hold down the mass of the workers, while a relative few are raised up to become the allies of the petty bourgeois class. In fact, there is created from the top stratum of the proletariat a kind of new "labor aristocracy," except that under "socialism" this element is the junior partner primarily of the petty bourgeois professionals. Thus the same "alliance between a numerically small upper stratum of the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie . . . against the masses of the proletarians, the masses of the toilers and oppressed in general," that Lenin had earlier denounced as the basis for both "chauvinism and opportunism" in the labor movement of the imperialist era, is now revived within the "socialist social system," as the ruling power.

The stratification of Soviet society which has replaced the early revolutionary alliance is in turn based on the forms of training in which the different strata of the working class and petty bourgeoisie can participate. Access to the various "ranks" of the social order is largely determined by the educational system, that is, through the typical form by which petty bourgeois

professionalism is produced and reproduced from one generation to the next. As Alfred G. Meyer notes,

> the educational system itself is geared to differentiate sharply between steeply graded levels of occupational and professional training. With all its emphasis on equal opportunities, the educational ladder reinforces status differences in Soviet society.[10]

Since neither property, in the main, nor positions are directly inherited, the primary means of achieving more advanced "rank" is through higher education. "The most strongly resented barrier is that of the university degree. Like the Table of Ranks in the past, the degree is associated with prestige and sometimes with income."[11] As Rudolph Bahro puts it:

> It is not by change that competitive behaviour between individuals in our system is so strongly focused on the phase of education, in which access and admission to favourable positions in the system of overall social labour is determined, with those strata who have already acquired education and influence holding the centre of the stage.[12]

With only about 20% of high school graduates going on to universities in Russia, there is indeed great competition for this opportunity, an unequal race in which "children of the Soviet intelligentsia are still three times more likely than working-class children to be at college," though the larger overall size of the proletariat means that the absolute numbers from each class are about the same.[13]

Thus though some preference is given to getting the members of the working class into the universities, it is at the same time the case that the professionals are much better able to pass on the more privileged positions of the

"educated classes" to their own children. This ability comes not only from cultural and economic factors, but from being able to gain entrance into specialized high schools, by paying for private tutoring, through "old boy" networks and so on, which perpetuate petty bourgeois class rank. Even though the education system at every level is free, and is in theory equally open to all on the basis of academic merit, it is in reality the key to a monopoly, access to the higher levels of which is limited to a relative few. For them, knowledge continues to operate as private property, the personal possession of those who get training, as a basis for accumulation by families from generation to generation, and as a form of investment. Those who already own capital in the "means of mental production" are able to profit from it and help their children to do so. By contrast, for those workers who do not manage to enter universities, there are technical and vocational schools, night courses, and so on, which in turn produce the lower levels of managerial personnel and the more skilled elements of the working class. Nevertheless, a fairly high proportion of the proletariat pass directly from high schools into industry, and for the peasantry an unequal quality in schooling in comparison to the urban population leaves most with few opportunities.

Educational achievement is in turn the basis for power in politics: "Education itself is made to serve a political ideology that jealously guards its monopoly."[14] The

political elite was increasingly recruited from among the professionals, and by the late 1970s, "specialists" made up 43% of party membership, four times their proportion in the population, and equal in number to those from the much larger working class itself. Their power was magnified by heavier individual "weight," so that they "exert influence greatly out of proportion to their numbers, thus in considerable degree reducing the influence that the manual classes can exert on Soviet society through the Party."[15] This is so much the case that the party itself becomes a means by which to aid professional careerism, and by which proletarians can move "up":

> Intellectuals join the party in order to insure that they can pursue their careers undisturbed. For the worker party membership is a way to become an intellectual; it means emancipation from the worker's life (or at least from physical labor) and ascent into the middle strata. For workers the party is an express elevator of social mobility.[16]

As one result of these changes, party membership among unskilled workers had become rather "rare." Szymanski attempted to obscure this class relation by focusing on the origins of the political leadership, while playing down their subsequent "movement up" through bureaucratization. But, after noting that ten of the fifteen Politburo members had held manual jobs, he adds:

> It should be noted however that, while the number with experience as manual workers has increased, the average experience as manual workers has declined. The overriding tendency would seem to be for Politburo members to more and more be career party people.[17]

In other words, whatever their origins may have been, they have since become professionals.

Moreover, though the political leadership maintained its own special method of recruiting into its ranks, through a "parallel hierarchy," notably advanced party schools, this merely served autonomous reproduction of the "professional communist" sub-stratum. If this also provided the proletariat with the opportunity to elevate certain of its members into positions of authority, it left most workers powerless.

> Standards are rising, and, for many reasons, the educational screening process tends to favor the children of the professional classes. Of course, the educational ladder is not the only method of elite recruitment. Especially for recruiting its political elite, including such institutions as the police, the political system of the USSR has often seemed deliberately to circumvent the process of formal education. It relies, instead, on avenues of purely political training, i.e., the Party and its youth affiliate. This practice inevitably favors the working class. Its effect has been to give the top leadership--or, perhaps more precisely and at the same time more broadly, the professional Party officials--a noticeable proletarian character, certainly as compared with the professional elite of the society as a whole.
>
> All such measures of recruitment can drain off only a small proportion of the workers; they leave the vast majority unaffected--all the more so because, in line with the feverish urgency of the effort toward industrialization, the conditions of life and work imposed on the industrial labor force have been most stringent.[18]

Thus the initial "bureaucratization" of the party and the elevation of certain members of the proletariat over the mass of their class is endlessly repeated. The sub-stratum of "professional communists" reproduces itself separate from both the main body of professionals and the masses of

proletarians. In contrast to the former it may have a "noticeable proletarian character," especially in its lower ranks, but in its own "professionalism" it upholds the goals of the petty bourgeois class, to which it grants influence superior to that of workers.

Finally, though party training may be less academically "formal," it produces the most valuable commodity in the marketplace of knowledge.

> That is the reason why the teaching of the ideology of scientific socialism occupies such a prominent place in the education of the intellectuals. Indeed, this shift in emphasis in the makeup of intellectual knowledge has been carried to such a bizarre extreme that the pure ideology offered by the higher party schools, quite devoid of any substantive content, has become the most negotiable kind of intellectual knowledge--so much so that diplomas acquired there entitle their holders to assume any kind of leadership position.[19]

Here in fact is the secret of that utmost rigidity which marks politics under the rule of such "professional communists," the severe reaction to any challenge to their authority from workers or other professionals. Political knowledge and ideological training are the most powerful form of capital in the "means of mental production" in the transition regime. They are not the first line of defense of the system, but its heart: that part of the "superstructure" which the ruling sub-stratum owns, the collective property on which their ability to control society rests. Thus just as capitalists erect "No Trespassing" signs around the edge of their factories, so

the "professional communists" guard their private political ideology from even the most minor unauthorized intrusions.

The regime works precisely to protect those who have achieved the highest levels of training in politics, and who have risen furthest above the masses, while putting the burden of any criticisms on those beneath them. This means playing off various class strata, as Meyer shows in describing the samokritika or "self-criticism" sessions:

> Although discussions in such meetings may be rather free, there usually is planning even behind the seeming spontaneity of such criticism from below; truly spontaneous self-criticism would doubtless be considered too dangerous by the Party. Instead, samokritika doubtless is an effective method of using discontent among the citizens for the purpose of putting lower and middle-range officials under pressure and keeping them in line--even to terrorize them, if that expression is not too strong. Samokritika sessions therefore are also safety valves because they allow popular discontent to discharge itself in controlled fashion, so that it does not hit those higher up and does not challenge the political system itself.[20]

Obviously it is above all the mass of "citizens"--that is, mainly the workers--who are thus "controlled," while criticism is focused on lesser officials, on the technical experts, and managers. Both in their origins and in their methods, therefore, the "professional communists" maintain just that proper "balance" of the various petty bourgeois strata against the proletariat that allows their "transition" regime to exist.

The interests to which their rule is directed are those of the professional petty bourgeoisie, though with a "socialist" coloring. Thus two of the basic conditions of

the transition to socialism, the expropriation of large private capital and concentration of the means of production in the hands of the state continue under their regime. Moreover many of the welfare benefits which are normally expected to accrue to the working class under the "socialist social system" are very much in evidence: this includes not only completely free education, but a similar system of medical care, housing at a minimal rent needed only to maintain the facility, a very high degree of job security and a correspondingly low rate of unemployment, recreational and cultural opportunities provided at little or no cost by the state, and so forth. As a result there is a close correspondence between the first stage of the transition to socialism and those ideals of "public service" which are put forward by the petty bourgeois professionals. To this extent their "socialist welfarism" does represent a new historic period, a rationalizing of the social order, an advance over private capitalism. Nevertheless, not only is this not socialism, properly speaking, it can not even be the road to a true socialist society, because it lacks the critical element on which that goal depends: that is, proletarian rule over all other classes. Instead, the regime of the "professional communists" replaces the dictatorship of the proletariat with the reign of "specialists" and experts.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the organizing of production. Here the socialist goal, as seen above, is to

"increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible." In fact this need coincides perfectly with the technocratic aims of the petty bourgeois professionals who try to justify their "right" to rule society largely on this basis. For the petty bourgeoisie, or rather its managerial and professional strata, industrialization is the necessary condition for realization of a "classless" technocracy in which the "self-activity" of the experts has fullest play. It is by very high rates of accumulation, steady and uninterrupted growth of production, and big public projects that thes petty bourgeois elements try to prove their superiority as the organizers of society compared to the bourgeoisie. Moreover, a large industrial base is critical to their ability to defeat the attacks of the latter. In fact, despite weaknesses in some areas, the Soviet economy grew very rapidly to become the second largest in the world, topped only by the United States. However the basic class contradiction remains: for high productivity became an overriding goal of the "professional communist" regime, one which ruled out any disruption by the workers in their own interests. Thus managers, technical experts, and party officials dominated the plants, while independent economic organization by the proletariat was forbidden, much less the use of such weapons of class struggle as strikes. Official unions helped guarantee job security and welfare, and did

influence wages and work norms, but in exchange they also enforced a rigid production discipline.

Here are realized the goals of independence for the professionals as they were first advanced during the capitalist era: the "Soviet of technicians" called for by Veblen, united with the top stratum of the working class, which rules over a largely depoliticized proletariat, and implements "social management" under a paternalistic state bureaucracy. What is new is that their regime is now led by "professional communists." Though Szymanski partly concedes this "rule by experts," he also adds:

> For the most part, however, it seems that their superior decision making role is not so much used for their own personal benefit, as to guide Soviet society according to their almost technocratic ideology of efficiency and scientific expertise. The state socialism of the Soviets has a strong technocratic, rather than bureaucratic or charismatic bias, enabling it to be categorized as a technocratic state socialism.[21]

Though this describes aspects of the rule of the professional petty bourgeoisie, Szymanski is nevertheless wrong to erect an artificial barrier between their "personal benefit" and their expert "guidance" of the entire society. He thus makes the following arbitrary distinction:

> . . . in socialist societies the difference between the petty bourgeoisie of salaried managers, officials, professionals and experts on the one hand, and the working class on the other, must be defined in terms of the character of the work done, and not in terms of whether they receive a wage or a salary, or in terms of the varying degree of control of the two classes over the conditions of their labour.[22]

In other words, under "socialism," the difference between classes is primarily "occupational," rather than being based on form of income or the relative amount of autonomy which they have in their own labor, though Szymanski does not deny that the latter distinctions may remain.

In reality, the working class of the Soviet Union, unlike the professionals, and particularly the members of the state and party apparatus, have largely been stripped of their "self-activity," as the result and consequence of their having lost political and economic power to the petty bourgeois class. Thus despite his review of various means by which workers "share" in running the enterprises where they work--such as "production conferences" and "self-criticism sessions" in which there is worker input--Szymanski is still forced to conclude that "more power resides with management and the Communist Party apparatus outside the plant than with rank and file workers within the plant."[23] In a study which he then summarizes, it was found that only 13% to 24% of Soviet managers and specialists felt they had no influence on the affairs of their work establishments, while the figures for machine operators were 32% to 45%, for skilled manual workers 32% to 67%, and for the low- and unskilled 67% to 68%![24] Konrád and Szelényi confirm this difference in autonomy, especially for top party officials:

> The ruling elite reserves to itself the right to make decisions; in general, decisions can only be taken by someone who has a party book and sits behind a desk, connected by direct telephone lines with the rest of

> the functional hierarchy. Anyone with a direct phone line can make decisions with relative autonomy in the area of responsibility assigned to him; there he has a monopoly of decision affecting the lives of others, and he need not turn to his superiors unless he is uncertain in a particular case what the interests of the ruling elite demand. In his every gesture a successful member of the ruling elite combines with instinctive flair a smooth pliability and a forceful independence.[25]

Thus the same stratification noted earlier pertains to "self-activity" in the work place as well, with the "professional communists" on top.

This is one of the primary "personal benefits" for which the petty bourgeoisie strives, and is a primary dividing line between the classes. In reality, the relative autonomy of the petty bourgeois professionals, even though limited for each individual, can only be maintained by denying to the working class an equal degree of independence, as was seen in previous parts of this study. However, having achieved the dominant political position in the society, and having suppressed the "self-activity" of the proletariat, the professional petty bourgeoisie must still find a way to stimulate the high levels of production on which their claim to social control ultimately rests. Here they are brought up hard against the limitations of their ideology of a "classless" technocracy, for in practice there is in fact no "third way" by which the social economy can be structured in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, no mode of production independent of these two main tendencies.

Fearful of releasing the political and economic power of the working class, but at the same time unable to sustain high rates of productivity simply by appealing to the goals of technological advance and accelerated accumulation, or promises of collective gains, the benefits of which go disproportionately to the "educated classes," petty bourgeois "professional communists" have no alternative but to turn back toward the methods employed by the capitalists to obtain production from largely powerless workers.

On the one hand, therefore, they have favored a strong management stratum, which is appointed "from above" and invested with considerable autonomous powers by the highest state planners and party leadership. On the other hand, they have appealed to the material interests of the proletariat, not only by a focus on individual "piece rates" and bonus systems, but by maintaining a sharp division between manual and mental work, so that the "educated classes" stand as an ideal to the workers, who may be elevated into non-manual jobs if they excel in production. Meyer indicates who it is that benefits most from this incentive system.

> Rewards for what is regarded as outstanding performance are high. Managers, like virtually everyone else, are on something akin to a piece-rate wage, because the Soviet system pays substantial cash bonuses to those individuals, firms or production chiefs who overfulfill their assigned quotas. These material rewards are supplemented by important psychological rewards; and the general recognition which accompanies them leads to higher, more responsible, and more rewarding assignment. More specifically, successful economic

> managers are the most likely candidates for rise in the Party leadership.[26]

But obviously it is in reality the workers who "overfulfill their assigned quotas," even if the managers receive the highest "personal benefit" and have the strongest incentive to accelerate production. Such a system tends to undermine the collective activity of the working class and subordinate its political goals to immediate economic gains. This updated form of "economism" has the same basis as did the original tendency of that name denounced by Lenin: it denies the proletariat is "ready" to look beyond narrow material interests, and says in effect, "stick to production and leave politics to us, the educated classes."

To some extent the bonus system may be said to resemble a form of socialist income distribution, insofar as payment is related to actual production, and is thus in part based on the labor performed by each person, rather than on the former flat wage for labor-power. However, as noted above, for the formula of socialism to be put into effect, "to each according to their work," it is actually necessary that the stage has already been reached in which "all are workers." The application of this method of economic exchange in a society in which class divisions still exist, means that the rewards associated with the "abilities" of each of the classes will be different as well. For in practice the "educated classes" receive a return for their labor based not merely on duration,

intensity, or even skill per se, but also on the investment in knowledge of which they are the owners. The bonus system under such circumstances becomes an application of bourgeois payment methods used to promote "socialist" growth. But, as already seen, it can by the same token easily lead to a "petty bourgeois capitalist" form of exploitation, that is, to profit which is over and above the income which the members of that class obtain simply by their own labor. In other words, they may once again practice that small-scale profiting off workers which makes the petty bourgeoisie the representatives of the "reproduction of capitalist social relations" even in the socialist era. To the same degree, the proletariat are reduced to the status of wage-laborers who produce surplus-value for their bosses.

Here then is the underlying form of exploitation that is practiced under the regime of the "professional communists," based on continued ownership of the "means of mental production" by the petty bourgeoisie. It is just this relationship which Szymanski tries to deny when he says that "for the most part" the experts do not derive "personal benefit."

> To show that an exploiting class exists, it must be demonstrated that the people who are in leading roles operating the means of production exercise control over the production process in ways that benefit themselves at the expense of the actual producers. It must be specifically shown that they appropriate the economic surplus of the producers for their own ends. This is not the case to any appreciable degree in the Soviet Union. Although the salaries and fringe benefits of the managerial and government power elite are

> significantly greater than those of the average production worker (by a factor of four or five), this is very small compared to either the differential between ruling class families and the productive classes in the Western capitalist countries or in comparison to the size of the economic surplus which is disposed of in the U.S.S.R.[27]

Here is our old friend, the "non-exploiting petty bourgeoisie," once again. But the key phrase in the above passage is "to any appreciable degree," for in comparison with full-blown capitalist exploitation or the total surplus of a given country, petty bourgeois profit-making will always appear penny ante. It is exploitative nonetheless, and it is experienced as such by the working class, as shown earlier. Thus Konrád and Szelényi speak of "great state enterprises where they [the workers] must produce four or five times their wages in order to support others (among others) an overblown administrative apparatus."[28]

The immediate source of such profits, however, can only be from the "deductions" taken out of the income of the workers to meet the social needs of expanded production, health and welfare, and so forth. In effect, the petty bourgeois officials, professionals, and managers "skim" this pool of wealth for their own private gain before it is channeled back to the various purposes for which it is designated. "The State budget creams off a very large proportion of profits in the form of taxes and compulsory levies; as a result, the factory's profit is put to the service of the economy as a whole and not to that of

the enterprise."[29] Therefore it is possible for the "professional communists" both to use the social surplus for meeting public needs and still take their "cut" off the operation of the economic system, within certain limitations.

Other developments merely serve to reinforce and compound this relation. Thus in a society where personal incentives were the primary means to stimulate production, there had at some point to be a large increase in consumer goods for the "bait" of higher earnings to have any major effect. To meet such demands, a gradual shift took place from heavy industry toward products for personal consumption, though often of very low quality. But despite the general rise in living standards for the Soviet population, such "stimulation" served first and foremost the petty bourgeoisie, who gained disproportionate access to scarce "luxuries." As early as 1967, one author noted that "the car owner is likely to be a member of a professional family in which both husband and wife work at jobs requiring technical skill."[30] Szymanski, twelve years later, still found the petty bourgeoisie 2.5 times more likely than workers to own cars.[31] In the meantime, many basic items, including housing, were in short supply, especially for working-class families. Thus a class "gap" grew around consumer goods, in favor of the professional strata, even though by Western standards they lived quite simply.

The economy therefore shows the basic "transitional" form, and has the contradictory aspects, which flow inevitably from its class character. The attempt to achieve "socialism" by appeal to private interests, the pinnacle of which are those professionals who actually make a profit off their investment in education, produces great irrationalities. Meyer captures this contradiction, noting that the leadership must both "devise routines of planning and . . . manipulate bureaucratic incentives so as to promote economic growth."[32] In fact, the specific irrationality of the Soviet economy is derived from the effort to utilize bourgeois incentives as the main motivation for the workers to produce under socialist planning. Suspended between socialism and capitalism, between proletarian plans and petty bourgeois profits, such an economy cannot but be highly distorted. Thus to cite the most common problem: bonuses were earned by meeting the fulfillment of planned quotas or contracts, largely based on "mere quantity of output." Yet for the same economic system to work, there had to be a sufficient quality to the goods produced to make people want them. This led to scarcity of products actually bought, unsold items due to shoddiness, black and gray markets, a scramble for foreign imports, and a constant breakdown of the whole incentive system. As a result, the typical "crisis" of Soviet production has been the opposite of that under capitalism: not too little money to purchase what is produced, but too

few available products that the workers are actually willing to buy.

For if there is little worth buying, monetary incentives lose their value, there is less point in producing, and so the circle is complete. Indeed to some extent, the more money the workers have in their hands, the greater the contradiction with the lack of desirable consumer goods. This was highlighted by Premier Yuri Andropov, mentor of Mikhail Gorbachev, who began the introduction of reforms during his brief tenure in office:

> One of the urgent tasks remains to satiate the market with the necessary manufactured goods. Under the conditions of a growth of the purchasing power of the population and the level of the supply of people with various commodities, the demands made on the assortment and quality of products have been considerably increased recently. Yet industry is extremely slow in readjusting itself to the manufacture of modern consumer goods.
>
> At the wholesale fair of recreational and household goods intended for sale in 1984, trade organizations refused to purchase 500,000 TV sets, 115,000 radio sets, almost 250,000 photographic cameras, 1.5 million watches and clocks, 160,000 refrigerators and a number of other products because of the disparity between the quality and assortment of these goods and the demands made by the buyers.
>
> It is intolerable that with a shortage of many products for sale, high-quality raw and primary materials are wasted on the manufacture of products which are unmarketable.[33]

This, says Andropov, is causing "discontent among the population." At the same time the national plan was largely ignored, as each firm sought only to fulfill its immediate quotas and contracts and thereby earn bonuses, without any interest in meeting larger social goals. Even while avoiding the extremes of "boom and bust" of the

capitalist system, therefore, the Soviet Union showed a growing tendency toward slower growth and lethargy from which there was no apparent avenue out without major changes. The transitional economy of the "professional communists" thus proved to be lacking in the very efficiency and rationality which was meant to justify their rule.

As a result, an endless series of "reforms" intended to rationalize the functioning of the system were continuously being introduced. By the very nature of the problem they tried to address, however, these measures naturally oscillated between the "stick" of increased pressure for labor discipline and economic accountability in enterprises, and the "carrot" of steps to inspire production through better conditions for the working class or greater "autonomy" for experts and managers. What marks these various changes, however, whether they tended toward stricter control over or improvements for workers is their reformism. Thus William J. Pomeroy stated of the "Kosygin reforms" of 1965, which put primary emphasis on incentives and enterprise profitability:

> The implication of the present economic reform, with its predicted effect on bureaucratic tendencies, is that it will lead to extensive changes. Such processes have not been reflected in mass struggle among the Soviet people. At most, popular participation has been at discussion level in organizations or in orderly petitions through channels. . . .
>
> There are red banners and mass demonstrations on occasion, but mainly for the holidays; they are not for making demands but for celebrating progress measured in the organizational report, the statistical table, the computer. The museums of the revolution are for

> education and reminder, but today's revolution goes on in the workshop and in the laboratory. It is the image of a working machine--of the Soviet leaders like engineers studying its design to add a component here or change a component there. . . .[34]

"Revolution" for workshops, "reform" for workers, under the leadership of "social engineers" armed with tables and computers--that was the "professional communist" regime. Such tinkering, however, could never overcome the basic contradictions between the classes, correct the structural faults in the system of production and distribution, nor inspire the proletariat to greater efforts.

In fact, the threat remained that the workers would once again engage in "mass struggle," take the revolution out of the "museums," and renew the march toward a truly socialist society. To resist the danger that the proletariat represents to its control over society, the professional petty bourgeoisie must therefore confront them on the plane of ideology, by putting forth its own conception of "socialism." In doing so they must accomplish two things: first, to overthrow the theories of the working class, particularly the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat. At the same time, the petty bourgeoisie must deny its own class rule, since this would conflict too baldly with the theoretical goals of socialism and would threaten it with the open dissatisfaction of the workers. A new set of ideological formulations was therefore needed which, though originating in part much earlier, were codified and put into official

documents under Nikita Khrushchev during 1958-1964. Specifically, the Soviet Union under his leadership announced that the internal class struggle had ended in its society, and that there was now a "party and state of the whole people" in place of the former dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Soviet leaders did not deny that classes still existed: in addition to the working class, they acknowledged there was a peasantry, and a "stratum" of intelligentsia. But despite the obviously privileged position of the latter, it was declared that all antagonistic conflicts of classes had ceased and that the state was now in essence "classless."

> According to official Soviet doctrine, the USSR is a socialist state, a government of the toilers, for the toilers, and (with limitations) by the toilers--"toilers" being all people who work for a living rather than live by exploiting the labor of others. By definition, all Soviet citizens are toilers because private property in the means of production (which leads to exploitation) has been abolished; all means of production are in the hands of the people, either as cooperative property or as government property. "The state," says the 1961 platform of the Communist Party (Part Two, section III), "which arose as a state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, has become, in the new contemporary period, a state of the entire people, an organ expressing the interests and will of the people as a whole." By definition, therefore, there can be neither exploitation nor class struggle. In the words of the basic ideological textbook, "The state ceases to be a class state in as much as it becomes the expression of the will and interests of the whole people . . . the state loses its age-old characteristic of being an instrument of class suppression."[35]

Moreover, the party too was declared to share the same "classless" nature. There is nothing new in this

ideological formula, which is just the "free people's state" of the German Social-Democrats in the 1870s, or the "people's labour state" which Lenin characterized as a "non-class" illusion forty years later. Thus the political formulas of the earlier petty bourgeoisie were resurrected by the "professional communists." These were not a step forward, as the latter claimed, but an absurd attempt to cover over classes and turn the clock backward.

These attitudes were reflected among analysts of the Soviet Union as well. At first, Al Szymanski seems to differ with these formulations, since he identifies the "intelligentsia" properly as primarily petty bourgeois, thus opening the way to a full exploration of their rule over the proletariat. But in fact this change is only cosmetic since, as we have seen, he insists that: "No exploiting class controls the means of production nor dominates the state and party."[36] Indeed, it turns out that in his view the members of these institutions are "a group of managers and officials who do not form a distinct social class, let alone a ruling class,"[37], and are thus reduced to a kind of classless "power elite." We are thus back to the Soviet "revisionist" model, which leads to a complete theoretical muddle, as exemplified by a table in which Szymanski lists under "Advanced Classless Societies": "Socialism: The producing class(es) own and control the means of production and the state."[38] "Classless societies"--"advanced" no less!--which still have

"class(es)"--it is the perfect expression of petty bourgeois revisionism. Thus the dual aspect of the "transition" period to socialism is covered over. But what is equally obscured is the very nature of the revisionist theories: for the concept of the "people as a whole" has been the timeless formula by which the petty bourgeoisie attempts to put an "end" to the class struggle, in ideology if not in fact, and thereby prevent its own proletarianization, as long as it has existed. This, as we have seen, has been recognized virtually since the founding of Marxism. The ideological "revisionism" advanced by the "professional communists" is therefore just the expression of the petty bourgeoisie and "its" socialism, updated to account for its seizure of the party and state power following the revolution.

These tendencies, then, can arise in any country which has had a revolution, since the class basis for its development, notably the professional petty bourgeois stratum, will be present everywhere. It will thus be useful to review briefly the origins of this same ideological expression in China also, for though its basic features were identical to those found in the Soviet Union, the Chinese experience shows the flexibility of its forms under various circumstances, and reveals further aspects of its nature. Moreover, China led the first major struggle against this system of thought, and its history in this regard is therefore crucial. A "professional communist"

challenge arose in open fashion there in the mid-1950s, only five years or so after the revolution, during its involvement in the Korean War. Specifically, the assistance that China received from Russia for its army proved to be an opening wedge for the introduction of Soviet technocratic influence. Under this impact, the People's Liberation Army was "revised" by making it dependent on Soviet armaments and expertise, by reintroducing sharp rank differentiations, downgrading political guidance, eliminating production activities by soldiers, and recruiting officers from the "educated classes." At the same time the militia organization among the masses declined. Thus while the army was "professionalized" to place it under the leadership of "experts," the proletariat and peasantry were to be increasingly disarmed, while the entire country was to be subordinated militarily by ties to the Soviets on whom both armament and defense plans would depend.[39]

Such dependency, politically sensitive in any country, was exacerbated because the Chinese army had been the very model of revolutionary dedication, political education, and egalitarianism for the entire population. Its professionalization directly threatened the course of the revolution. Moreover these changes were extended by their advocates to include attacks on Mao and his policies, especially the rapid communalization of peasants during the Great Leap Forward. In a showdown over these conflicting

"lines" in 1959, Peng Teh-huai was replaced as Defense Minister by Lin Piao, who immediately began a revitalization of the political education of the army and its support for rural socialization.[40] Clearly the success of "professional communism" in China would require a more subtle approach. This more flexible method came to be centered in Liu Shao-ch'i, who as President of the People's Republic and head of the bureaucratic administration was much better situated than those in the military to implement a new general social plan, and whose training in engineering prepared him as a "technocratic" leader. The chief battleground centered on the agricultural communes, where the size of the responsible unit of production was continually scaled down until individual families became the focus, each with their own quota to produce, under strict accounting procedures, and an elaborate system of bonuses that degenerated into open piece work. Private plots and free markets were expanded, while trading in land and even hiring of labor crept in. By such means, the Chinese technocratic professionals sought actively to form a rural petty bourgeoisie.[41]

A second area which became a particular focus of this struggle was that of education and culture generally. In part this was because of the close ties which the leading officials had with the educational and cultural establishments, as well as the historically exalted position which the "scholar" class had held within Chinese

society. These relations were particularly strong in Peking where an advocate of "revisionist" policies, mayor P'eng Chen, was tied in directly with the heads of the leading universities, and a playwrite and essayist Wu Han was the vice-mayor. In the words of a biographer of Liu,

> the cultural establishment had become interlocked with the political elite. . . . When this establishment was threatened from the outside, it locked in a united front so tight that "you couldn't stick a pin in," as Mao put it.[42]

This meant that the cultural and educational institutions served in the most direct manner the goals of the forces of P'eng and Liu. The colleges in particular were oriented toward education of a new technocratic elite of highly trained experts inevitably drawn mainly from among the families of the "old" educated classes and those of the top strata of officials. Indeed, another author states that "the single most privileged group in all of China prior to the Cultural Revolution were the children of cadre."[43] Though the leading role of the proletariat was acknowledged in a formal way, universities were considered the proper realm of "bourgeois" professionalism, in which the expertise of the educated petty bourgeoisie dominated.

Here political considerations were downgraded, theory was divorced from labor or practical application, and abstract or esoteric studies were encouraged. Here too, there was slavish attention to anything which came from abroad, regardless of its relevance to the specific needs of the Chinese revolution. Though reforms were introduced

which allowed large numbers of those from worker or peasant background into the colleges, those from the intelligentsia were still favored, and the curriculum and methods of teaching remained untouched, so that those with less training were easily "outclassed," and poor students met hostility and discouragement. Moreover, a sharp line was drawn between the work-study schools where most of those from poorer families went, and the full-time academic facilities which the intellectuals attended. This division of the masses from the "experts," and the emphasis on technical abilities over political militancy, carried over into all the fields of science, art, literature, medicine, journalism, and so on, which were geared to a professional and urbanized petty bourgeoisie, not to the workers and peasants. The sharpness of the struggle over education and culture, came from the collision of such practices with the attention that Mao had always given to just these aspects of revolution, and his calls for intellectual forms that would break with the patterns of the old society and the dominance of "Mandarin" scholars, and instead "serve the people."[44]

The most important accomplishment of Liu, however, was adapting the "professional communist" party and state apparatus, and its supporting class alliance, to Chinese conditions. This was a role for which his own background of work with trade unions, the urban underground, and the intellectuals had prepared him. Thus he tied the

administration to an elite of older and more skilled workers, who benefitted from higher bonuses and long-term job security, in contrast to the non-industrial urban proletariat and the more transient semi-proletarians drawn from the peasantry. The top echelons of this privileged stratum also ran the labor organizations, but these trade unions were limited to the role of encouraging production and assisting in welfare programs. In this way the working class was structured in support of increased productivity, in which the highest value was placed on skills and on uninterrupted output, not on politics. By such methods its power was tightly contained within administrative forms that discouraged any independent actions not sanctioned by bureaucratic channels. This was the nature of the entire party and state apparatus, which stretched down into the factories and communes and protected the control exercised by governmental and technical experts at every level of the society. "The regime acquired a monopoly over political communication...," as well as over production.[45] The effect was to put a damper on any assertions of the proletariat or poorer peasants whether politically or economically, preventing any speeding up of socialization and the releasing of their creative energy.

Liu went beyond the immediate control which he maintained through trade unions, party schools, youth organizations, and so on, however, by the specifically "Chinese" tone which he gave to the ideology of

"revisionism." His most important work in this regard was the book On Self-Cultivation of Communists, the very title of which went against the concept of "mass line," linking the Confucian ideals of scholarly rectitude and social service to the role of "professional communists."[46] In this study, as well as in other writings and pronouncements, Liu promoted the party as a paternalistic agency in which "filial loyalty" and self-sacrifice would eventually be rewarded with material advantages and increased authority, in a rigidly hierarchical structure based on seniority. In fact, the same values were projected for the whole of society, where each of the various class segments were considered to have their predetermined place. Thus, "the masses were situated on the bottom tier of the organization and were expected to subordinate themselves to the 'higher level' and to conform to various organizational rules, while having minimal share in decision making."[47] Just as in the case of Confucius, Liu conceived of a form of "social harmony," based not on the elimination of inequality, but rather its regulation under the "educated classes." In every field, he played the role for China of adapting the rule of petty bourgeois "experts" to national circumstances, and modernizing ancient social patterns to conform to a new "professional communist" model.

Summing up the goals Liu set for himself and for Chinese society as a whole, Dittmer states: "Liu's life may be viewed as an attempt to combine order with revolution

and equality with economic efficiency and technocratic values."[48] But in practice, the same author adds:

> Liu stood for a concept of socialist modernization that stressed the institutionalization of revolution within complex structures of elaborately qualified formal rules regulating nearly every aspect of life.[49]

Clearly in such an approach "order" must prevail over "revolution," and no challenge to the division of labor was to be permitted "from below." In fact in 1958 Liu "declared the end of class struggle, saying that the 'question of who will win in the struggle between socialism and capitalism in our country has now been decided.'"[50] "He envisaged a 'state of the whole people' in which all classes lived together in peace, each 'respecting one another and getting what he wants.'"[51] So too his 1962 revised edition of Good Communists did not mention the dictatorship of the proletariat.[52] Instead he advanced a "professional communist" model for the state:

> Liu's attempt to integrate the [party] organization with the masses took the form of cooptation of non-Party elites into a "whole people's" united front, a policy he applied across the board to nationalities and minority religions, technical and managerial personnel, scientists, artists and cultural notables, et al. This resulted in two parallel ladders of upward career mobility: cooptation, based on expertise, and recruitment, based on Party loyalty.[53]

But even in the party he said that "every member . . . has an opportunity to express his opinion if he is up to a certain intellectual level and is able to understand the revolution."[54] This was not a "whole people's" regime, but one of the "whole" petty bourgeoisie: intellectuals,

managers and better-off peasants, allied with an elite of skilled proletarians, all led by "professional communists," and ruling over the masses.

NOTES

1. Al Szymanski, Is the Red Flag Flying? (London: Zed Press, 1979), 88, 93, 200-1.

2. Basile Kerblay, Modern Soviet Society, trans. Rupert Swyer, foreword by Moshe Lewin (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), 99.

3. Szymanski, Is the Red Flag Flying?, 200.

4. Bettelheim, Class Struggles in the USSR, Second Period, 39, 473.

5. Marx and Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," 43.

6. Szymanski, Is the Red Flag Flying?, 200-1.

7. Ibid., 87.

8. Ibid., 95-96.

9. Ibid., 86.

10. Alfred G. Meyer, The Soviet Political System: An Interpretation (New York: Random House, 1965), 373.

11. Kerblay, Modern Soviet Society, 227.

12. Rudolph Bahro, The Alternative in Eastern Europe, trans. David Fernbach (London: Verso, 1977), 212.

13. Szymanski, Is The Red Flag Flying?, 73.

14. Kerblay, Modern Soviet Society, 168.

15. Szymanski, Is the Red Flag Flying?, 91.

16. Konrád and Szelényi, The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power, 222.

17. Szymanski, Is the Red Flag Flying?, 92.

18. Meyer, The Soviet Political System, 59-60.

19. Konrád and Szelényi, The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power, 151.

20. Meyer, The Soviet Political System, 385.

21. Szymanski, Is the Red Flag Flying?, 201.

22. Ibid., 23.

23. Ibid., 56.

24. Ibid.

25. Konrád and Szelényi, The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power, 182-83.

26. Meyer, The Soviet Political System, 397.

27. Szymanski, Is the Red Flag Flying?, 199.

28. Konrád and Szelényi, The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power, 227.

29. Kerblay, Modern Soviet Society, 179.

30. William J. Pomeroy, Half a Century of Socialism: Soviet Life in the Sixties (New York: International Publishers, 1967), 26.

31. Szymanski, Is the Red Flag Flying?, 68.

32. Meyer, The Soviet Political System, 391.

33. New York Times, December 27, 1983, A10.

34. Pomeroy, Half a Century of Socialism, 120-21.

35. Meyer, The Soviet Political System, 86.

36. Szymanski, Is The Red Flag Flying?, 199.

37. Ibid., 200.

38. Ibid., 17.

39. See, inter alia, Han Suyin, Wind in the Tower: Mao Tsetung and the Chinese Revolution 1949-1975 (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1976), 144-46.

40. Much debate has raged over whether Peng was unfairly attacked, including by Mao himself, as an advocate of Soviet influence and opponent of Maoist policies. Regardless of his individual role, that period did see the stronger emergence of a "two line struggle" over the course

of Chinese development that was to continue and grow ever more bitter and violent for more than two decades.

41. E. L. Wheelwright and Bruce McFarlane, The Chinese Road to Socialism: Economics of the Cultural Revolution, with a foreword by Joan Robinson (New York: Monthly Review, 1970), Part I, "Chinese Economic Development: 1949-1965," 13-95.

42. Lowell Dittmer, Liu Shao-ch'i and the Chinese Cultural Revolution: The Politics of Mass Criticism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 347.

43. Hong Yung Lee, The Politics of the Chinese Cultural Revolution: A Case Study (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 82.

44. See William Hinton, Hundred Days War: The Cultural Revolution at Tsinghua University (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 11-40; and Maria Antonietta Macciocchi, Daily Life in Revolutionary China (New York: Monthly Review, 1972), 36-45.

45. Dittmer, Lui Shao-ch'i and the Chinese Cultural Revolution, 317. Also see generally the section on "Economic Themes" 243-67.

46. See Jean Daubier, A History of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, trans. Richard Seaver, with a preface by Han Suyin (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1974), 180-3.

47. Dittmer, Liu Shao-ch'i and the Chinese Cultural Revolution, 286.

48. Ibid., 3, original in italics.

49. Ibid., 6-7.

50. Ibid., 232. Dittmer points out, however, that Mao was also making overly optimistic statements about the victory of socialism in China in this period.

51. Ibid., 222.

52. Edgar Snow, The Long Revolution (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1973), 81-82. Also Dittmer, Liu Shao-ch'i and the Chinese Cultural Revolution, 221.

53. Dittmer, Liu Shao-ch'i and the Chinese Cultural Revolution, 285.

54. Ibid., 191-92, emphasis added by Dittmer.

CHAPTER 25

CULTURAL REVOLUTION

The path through socialism to communism is marked by cultural revolution. Though we can express this as a general "law" of the revolutionary proletarian struggle, the specific form it takes depends on the nature of the "transition" regime. That is, the character of the cultural revolution is determined by whether the class forces of the proletariat are firmly established in power and are being advanced over all other classes, or whether the continued authority of bourgeois culture in the educational, literary, and other centers of intellectual life is being protected by "bureaucratized" petty bourgeois members of the party and state apparatus, the "professional communists." Before we can study these specific aspects, however, we must first look at the general necessity which underlies the cultural revolution and its goals. To begin with, seizure of the major means of material production by the proletariat allows it to put an end to the open anarchy and exploitation of private capitalism and to lay the foundation for a more advanced economy on which new social relations will be able to emerge. Nevertheless, to achieve even these initial changes, there must also be a revolution

in the so-called "superstructure," that is, in the political and cultural institutions of the society, to remove the power of the capitalist class and to replace it with the overall control of the proletariat. In this process, Marx stressed above all the need to smash the bourgeois state and to put in its place more direct forms of proletarian rule.

But this is still only a first step toward the eventual goal, for the latter requires not just the suppression of the bourgeoisie and the rise of the proletariat to the ruling position over society, but also that social divisions must be ended by a further advance in which all other classes are in turn proletarianized and even the distinctions among workers extinguished. Yet this too leaves the full realization of communist society unexplained, resting as it does on a formalistic end to classes, for the goal is not simply a leveling down of all former class strata into a minimalized "common denominator," but rather the fullest flowering of the individual in a communal environment. These latter developments also cannot occur except by means of the cultural revolution. For just as the proletariat inherits from the bourgeosie existing forms of social economy, together with the classes of capitalist society, so too it must "start" with bourgeois culture and the divisions and deprivations which accompany this. Unless it overcomes these inheritances, it cannot move forward to socialism,

much less achieve the goal of communism. We have seen that Marx recognized this necessity when he stressed that the revolution would not be "complete" until it has succeeded in "revolutionising . . . all the ideas" corresponding to the relations of production and of society on which class distinctions rest.

With Engels, Marx envisaged nothing less than the universalization of "self-activity," of an end to the self-estrangement and alienation of people from their own labor.

> For as soon as the division of labour comes into being, each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape. He is a hunter, a fisherman, a shepherd or a critical critic, and must remain so if he does not want to lose his means of livelihood; whereas in communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticise after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic.[1]

The remarkable image of the above passage, which seems so far from the "Sturm und Drang" of class struggle, nevertheless represents a reality which has been achieved to a remarkable extent in the course of the proletarian revolution. Thus the Chinese Red Army, as we saw, did indeed create a situation in which even the poorest of peasants were able to be farmers at dawn, students in the morning, soldiers in the afternoon, critics in the evening, and even to attend a play or perhaps write a diary or poem before retiring finally for the night. Of course such

"self-activity" was still involuntary insofar as it continued to repond to the necessities of the class struggle, but the advance which it represented over the previous life of the workers and peasants was enormous. Of course, the point is not that every person can be anything at any time, but rather the freeing of all individuals from an imposed and involuntary division of labor which consigns them to individual "boxes."[2]

Communism, then, strives not only to universalize such humanistic potentials, but to render them entirely voluntary, which is only possible in a classless society, one in which even the remnants of class division have disappeared. However, this does indeed require that "society regulates the general production," for the ability to subject the material powers they must use to their own control and to end the division of labor cannot be accomplished by every individual in isolation, but only through the efforts of the entire community. This state of society cannot be reached unless three things occur. First, the forces of production must have reached a level of advancement in which human activity loses its character of drudging toil, of "labor" in the proper sense, and becomes instead an expression of those creative abilities which each individual and the community as a whole possess, a stage which society as a whole can attain only by the self-realization of the proletariat:

> Only the proletarians of the present day, who are completely shut off from all self-activity, are in a

> position to achieve a complete and no longer restricted self-activity, which consists in the appropriation of a totality of productive forces and in the development of a totality of capacities entailed in this. All earlier revolutionary appropriations were restricted; individuals, whose self-activity was restricted by a crude instrument of production and a limited intercourse, appropriated this crude instrument of production, and hence merely achieved a new state of limitation. Their instrument of production became their property, but they themselves remained subordinate to the division of labour and their own instrument of production.[3]

This is particularly the case with the petty bourgeoisie, who even within the "socialist social system" are bound by their own narrow specializations, and who continue to impose these on the working class and the entire society.

Secondly, therefore, the proletariat itself must overcome the limitations placed upon it by the division of labor, and become capable of the "totality of capacities" necessary for carrying out all social functions. For

> the abolition of classes in society presupposes a degree of historical evolution at which the existence, not simply of this or that particular ruling class, but of any ruling class at all, and, therefore, the existence of class distinction itself has become an obsolete anachronism. It presupposes, therefore, the development of production carried out to a degree at which appropriation of the means of production and of the products, and, with this, of political domination, of the monopoly of culture, and of intellectual leadership by a particular class of society, has become not only superfluous but economically, politically, intellectually, a hindrance to development.[4]

This applies to the political dominance and the "monopoly of culture" held by the petty bourgeoisie, even under "socialism." Finally and specifically, continuing restraints on the creativity of the proletariat in the form of monopolization of knowledge by the "educated classes"

must also be shattered, and the last basis for their separate identity be eliminated.

> In making itself the master of all the means of production to use them in accordance with a social plan, society puts an end to the former subjection of men to their own means of production. It goes without saying that society cannot free itself unless every individual is freed. The old mode of production must therefore be revolutionized from top to bottom, and in particular the former division of labor must disappear. Its place must be taken by an organization of production in which, on the one hand, no individual can throw on the shoulders of others his share in productive labour, this natural condition of human existences; and in which, on the other hand, productive labour, instead of being a means of subjugating men, will become a means of their emancipation, by offering each individual the opportunity to develop all his faculties, physical and mental, in all directions and exercise them to the full--in which, therefore, productive labour will become a pleasure instead of being a burden.[5]

The full self-activity of each individual, physical and mental, comes only with both socialization and the end of exploitation.

Thus the struggle to eliminate "the existence of class distinction itself" requires in the first instance an end to the appropriation of any "means of production and of the products" by one class in preference to any others. As society as a whole becomes the "owner" or "master" of the productive forces, it must also become the possessor of what is produced, and this is as true of the knowledge accumulated by the social body as it is of any other segment of production. It is evident, however, that to the extent that they are able to hold power within the "socialist social system," the petty bourgeois

professionals have both the ability and the class interests to resist this forward progress. As a consequence, the struggle of classes in the "transition" period is very sharp over who controls "yesterday's store of knowledge." In this lies the basis for the cultural revolution, not only as a raising up of the proletariat, but as a casting down of the professional petty bourgeoisie, through the carrying of the revolution into the very realm of "ideas" itself.

Here the critical task in the field of politics and culture is to resolve the contradiction after the revolutionary triumph between the already largely socialized sectors of the "material" economy and the remaining private ownership of the "means of mental production" by the petty bourgeois professionals. There is, of course, a precedent here: just as the peasantry must undergo communalization and proletarianization to eliminate their privately owned property and small-scale exploitation of the workers, so too the professional strata must go through a process of socialization that ends their monopolistic possession of knowledge and their oppression of the working class. For them the cultural revolution is the equivalent of "communalizing," so that ideas are deprivatized and become common social property, and professionals are reduced to the level of other "workers." Its ultimate result can only be the complete socialization of the "means of mental production," proletarianization of

the "educated classes," and the freeing of the full faculties of every person, to share equally in both physical and intellectual productivity.

When Lenin first raised explicitly the concept of cultural revolution, it was inevitable that he did so in the framework of overcoming the backwardness of Russia which the proletariat had inherited from the semi-feudal regime. There could be no thought of "higher" culture until at least a minimum level of educational achievements had been spread among the population at large, and among the largely illiterate peasantry in particular: "An illiterate person," Lenin says, "stands outside politics, he must first learn his ABC. Without that there can be no politics; without that there are rumours, gossip, fairy-tales and prejudices, but not politics."[6] Nor could the first steps toward socialization, particularly in the rural areas, be undertaken if there was not at the same time an effort to upgrade the level of culture, which in turn required greater material productivity, for

> the organization of the entire peasantry in co-operative societies presupposes a standard of culture among the peasants (precisely among the peasants as the overwhelming mass) that cannot, in fact, be achieved without a cultural revolution.
>
> Our opponents told us repeatedly that we were rash in undertaking to implant socialism in an insufficiently cultured country. But they were misled by our having started from the opposite end to that prescribed by theory (the theory of pedants of all kinds), because in our country the political and social revolution preceded the cultural revolution, that very cultural revolution which nevertheless now confronts us.
>
> This cultural revolution would now suffice to make our country a completely socialist country; but it

> presents immense difficulties of a purely cultural (for we are illiterate) and a material character (for to be cultured we must achieve a certain development of the material means of production, must have a certain material base).[7]

The results must be universal, "a veritable revolution--the entire people must go through a period of cultural development."[8]

Therefore, Lenin stressed, apart from the necessity of defending the gains of the revolutionary process on the international front, "the emphasis is changing and shifting to peaceful, organisational, 'cultural' work . . . the emphasis in our work is certainly shifting to education."[9] His perspective was a long-term one:

> A cultural problem cannot be solved as quickly as political or military problems. It must be understood that conditions for further progress are no longer what they were. In a period of acute crisis it is possible to achieve a political victory within a few weeks. It is possible to obtain victory in war in a few months. But it is impossible to achieve a cultural victory in such a short time. By its very nature it requires a longer period. . . .[10]

But of course the goal of this extended process was not just "culture" in some abstract sense, much less literacy in its purely technical realization. The purpose was to facilitate "political education" in its largest terms, as a necessary part of both the class conflict and the expansion of the productive forces. "Education is one of the component parts of the struggle we are now waging."[11]

> The working people are thirsting for knowledge because they need it to win. Nine out of ten of the working people have realised that knowledge is a weapon in their struggle for emancipation, that their failures

> are due to lack of education, and that now it is up to them really to give everyone access to education.[12]

This task was not simply an academic one, it extended into the realm of politics as well. Above all it was necessary for every worker to learn the skills needed in the state administration, for "we are convinced that with every step Soviet power takes the number of people will constantly grow who have completely thrown off the old bourgeois notion that a simple worker and peasant cannot administer the state. Well, if he sets to doing it, he can and will learn."[13]

But this in turn meant that the old stranglehold on education as the monopoly of the "educated classes" had to be broken. In a statement on "Admission to Higher Educational Institutions," Lenin demanded

> that in the event of the number of applications to the higher educational institutions exceeding the usual number of places, extra-special measures be taken to ensure a chance to study for all who so desire, and to ensure there be no actual or legal privileges for the propertied classes. Priority must certainly go to workers and poor peasants, who are to be given grants on an extensive scale.[14]

Moreover, those who previously had the privilege of education must now not only use their skills for the advancement of the working class, but must do so under the direction of the proletariat, who were to move into positions of control in the state and economy formerly held by others, for

> all that human knowledge, human skill and human intervention have achieved, all the knowledge of the specialists, must be devoted to the service of the united workers. The workers must become the masters in

> all fields; they must learn to be managers and to direct those who up to now, like many agronomists, for example, acted as stewards for the capitalists against the workers.[15]

Thus the cultural revolution was to be part of a complete reversal of class relations, in which the educated were to devote their knowledge to the advancement of the workers and poor peasants, and in which the proletariat was to take over the reins of society, and lead and re-educate the professionals. The professionals had shown their resistance to the Soviet power:

> Despite the revolutionary tradition of the Russian intelligentsia, almost none of its members supported the Bolsheviks in the first months after October. Even students were overwhelmingly opposed to the October revolution: teachers in Petrograd and Moscow went on strike; professional associations refused to recognize Soviet power. During the Civil War, the provincial intellingentsia largely supported the Whites.[16]

It was therefore useless after the revolution to piously wish for the voluntary support of the professionals:

> But this is utopian, for the issue is decided by the class struggle, and the majority of intellectuals gravitate towards the bourgeoisie. Not with the assistance of the intellectuals will the proletariat achieve victory, but in spite of their opposition (at least in the majority of cases), removing those of them who are incorrigibly bourgeois, reforming, re-educating and subordinating the waverers, and gradually winning ever larger sections of them to its side. Gloating over the difficulties and setbacks of the revolution, sowing panic, preaching a return to the past--these are all weapons and methods of class struggle of the bourgeois intellectuals.[17]

Lenin thus noted that one of the "mistakes" of the revolution was "the <u>lack</u> of sufficient supervision by the <u>workers</u> over the <u>organisational</u> work of the intellectuals."[18] The working class was to become the

teacher of all other classes. Schools too would be converted from instruments of bourgeois class rule to one overthrowing it and abolishing the division of society into classes.

Yet even this only begins to capture the full intent of this new form of education, this campaign for a "political culture." For it could not end except with a complete appropriation by the proletariat of "yesterday's store of knowledge," as a foundation for their own society.

> How can this be done? Only by acquiring the sum total of knowledge that the teachers have inherited from the bourgeoisie. Without this the technical achievements of communism will be impossible, and all hopes for those achievements would be pipe dreams.[19]

For Lenin, therefore, the goal was the complete overthrowing of the old ways in which knowledge was used and monopolized, seizing back for the proletariat the very workings of the mind to release them from the exploitation of the past.

> In the old days, human genius, the brain of men, created only to give some the benefits of technology and culture, and to deprive others of the bare necessities, education and development. From now on all the marvels of science and the gains of culture belong to the nation as a whole, and never again will man's brain and human genius be used for oppression and exploitation.[20]

Education and art "should be imbued with the spirit of the class struggle being waged by the proletariat for the successful achievement of the aims of its dictatorship," and must link up theory with practical activities.[21] But

here too there were from the first efforts by the professionals to coopt the movement, a

> plethora of bourgeois intellectuals, who very often regarded the new type of workers' and peasants' educational institution as the most convenient field for testing their individual theories in philosophy and culture, and in which, very often, the most absurd ideas were hailed as something new, and the supernatural and incongruous were offered as purely proletarian art and proletarian culture.[22]

To combat such tendencies, then, the cultural revolution was to "socialize" knowledge and culture, open them up to the working class, and thereby lay the basis for that "complete and no longer restricted self-activity" which Marx and Engels had described as the universal form of liberation within a classless social order.

To achieve this the workers would have to overcome the "ideological resistance" of the capitalists, the most stubborn area of their power to root out, because it involved fighting the remnants of bourgeois ideas in the working class itself. "The working masses, the masses of peasants and workers, must oust the old intellectualist habits and re-educate themselves for the work of building communism."[23] Lenin thus seized on and encouraged any small "shoot," as he called it, of the new order, every example of the creativity of the masses in putting into effect a different pattern of labor which would break with the bourgeois past and strengthen the emergence of proletarian ideology. Chief among these in the early years of the revolution were "subbotniks," in which communist cadre and

workers, and then ever broader masses among the proletariat, performed labor as volunteers without pay, to speed production efforts.

> And communism, if you take the word in its strict meaning, is voluntary unpaid work for the common good that does not depend on individual differences, that wipes out all memories of everyday prejudices, wipes out stagnation, tradition, differences between branches of work, differences in the rate of pay for labour, etc.[24]

Lenin called this "the actual beginning of communism," and placed particular emphasis on the subbotniks being "initiated by workers who were by no means placed in exceptionally good conditions, by workers of various specialties, and some with no specialty at all, just unskilled labourers, who are living under ordinary, i.e., exceedingly hard, conditions."[25] In other words, the first "shoots" of communism could occur even when labor was still very burdensome and technology low.

This "communism" stood in contrast not only to capitalist forms of labor, but to socialist ones as well, and could arise even before the latter triumphed over the former, before socialism itself was consolidated.

> There is, however, not yet anything communist in our economic system. . . . If there is anything communist at all in the prevailing system in Russia, it is only the subbotniks, and everything else is nothing but the struggle against capitalism for the consolidation of socialism out of which, after the full victory of socialism, there should grow that communism that we see at subbotniks, not with the aid of a book, but in living reality.
>
> Such is the theoretical significance of subbotniks; they demonstrate that here something quite new is beginning to emerge in the form of unpaid labour, extensively organised to meet the needs of the entire state, something that is contrary to all the old

> capitalist rules, something that is much more lofty than the socialist society that is conquering capitalism.[26]

Lenin recognized that the transition from socialism to communism, just like that from capitalism to socialism, would be uneven, and that communist "shoots" would arise in parts of the system and contend with earlier social forms. He opposed any rigid or formalistic theory of "stages" each of which must be "completed" before a new one could begin. Thus Lenin explicitly opposed the idea of holding back communism until socialism was "consolidated," but rather stressed the crucial importance of supporting working-class experimentation that would show the actual methods by which the communist system of labor could begin to take hold. The party must take the lead in encouraging all these mass activities: "The point is to foster each and every shoot of the new; and life will select the most viable."[27] Those that are clearly premature would not survive, but those that did would speed the passage to communism. In the process, even workers with little or no education would become the "teachers."

The conception Lenin held of cultural revolution therefore went beyond the gradual acquiring of intellectual skills by the proletariat, and was in every sense part of the class struggle, based on their mass control over the "educated classes," and in which even "extra-special measures" might be invoked to overthrow the power of the latter as needed, and install the working class in turn as

the leading educators. The extent to which such actions became necessary would depend on the degree to which the professionals as a whole resisted the rise of the working class and used their power within the state and party to protect their interests. In fact, just such a situation developed by the late 1920s due to a series of factors. The first of these was the strengthening of "middle class" elements generally during the period of the New Economic Policy. Just as bureaucrats, kulaks, and the private enterprise of "NEPmen" flourished, so too the domination of cultural, educational, and intellectual activities by the "old" professionals had continued, and even expanded insofar as they replaced the "big" bourgeoisie in many positions. Their control paid off in material advantages as well.

> With some exceptions, the intelligentsia rose quickly from the poverty of the Civil War years. By the mid-twenties, the old intelligentsia of the capitals clearly constituted a privileged group that, in material terms, was part of an emerging "Soviet bourgeoisie." Specialists employed by the government agencies earned very high salaries. Professors, despite their vociferous complaints of ill treatment, had high salaries and a number of special privileges in areas like housing priority and access to higher education for their children. White-collar workers as a group earned more than industrial workers, were less liable to unemployment, and were better housed.[28]

This situation contrasted sharply with the heavy unemployment among workers, the continued poverty of the vast majority of poor peasants, and the low pay and lack of amenities for the mass of party members also.

By 1927 several developments brought this situation to a head rapidly. On the one hand, leaders in the sciences laid down a virtual challenge to the government to "raise scientific budgets and academic salaries," hinting that they had support within the highest levels of the party itself, and leaving the impression that "their irreplaceable skills allowed them to negotiate on equal terms with Soviet power."[29] The head of the state institution most directly involved, Anatoly Lunacharsky, himself considered if anything too "soft" on "bourgeois specialists," felt compelled nevertheless to warn that the intelligentsia were hoping to revive "the prerevolutionary concept of . . . a meritocracy of non-Marxist intellectuals" and were "'awaiting a call from Soviet power to bring the most valuable elements of the aristocracy of the mind into the highest organs of government.'"[30] Such a goal of sharing in political power, and not "simply" to increase their own autonomy and privileges--though this too was increasingly being asserted--was an open threat to proletarian rule.[31] Moreover, this attempt drew its strength from a veritable dictatorship of the "educated classes" in the professions, where despite the growth of small groups of Bolsheviks, real authority continued to rest with the old professionals. In the universities also, in spite of opening increased enrollment to workers and peasants, the children of the "liberal intelligentsia" still held a majority.[32]

Such a situation, which had to be accepted to some degree under the NEP, was a definite hindrance once the country began to move toward the rapid industrialization and collectivization of the first Five-Year Plan. The signal was given by the Soviet regime in the arrest and trial of engineers for sabotage and counterrevolution in 1928, known as the "Shakty Affair".[33] Thousands of those in engineering were arrested or fired, and their numbers in production declined by 17 per cent.[34] But this was but a prelude to a mass upsurge of "cultural revolution" which in three short years transformed the professional and educational fields. Though this crucial episode in the development of the Soviet Union is not widely known, its content is nevertheless familiar due to its similarity to the much longer and even more cataclysmic events later to occur in China. With official acquiescence at the least, and open encouragement and direct involvement by the party and state in many aspects of the conflict, bureaucratic practices, "bourgeois" culture, and professional autonomy all were attacked. Stalin announced the two basic goals in remarks in 1928 to the Young Communist League:

> Only by organising twofold pressure--from above and from below--and only by shifting the principle stress to criticism from below, can we count on waging a successful struggle against bureaucracy and on rooting it out.[35]

And again:

> The working class cannot become the real master of the country if it does not succeed in overcoming its lack of culture, if it does not succeed in creating its own

> intelligentsia, it if does not master science and learn to administer economy on scientific lines.[36]

Calling for a "cultural revolution," Stalin added that: "We now need Bolshevik experts . . . in the most diverse branches of knowledge."[37]

In the sweeping movement that followed, large numbers of students from the intelligentsia were driven from the schools, while workers and peasants became the majority in institutions of higher learning. Many universities closed, while more "proletarian" ones opened instead. Literacy and compulsory schooling became general. The entire content of education shifted, losing its bookish and regimented character, and becoming linked to practical application. Schools and factories established close ties, and workers helped "reelect" professors and set courses. In the professions too, Marxists overthrew the rule of the old bourgeois academics, redirecting efforts toward the accelerating socialization drive. Such actions reached into the administration also, with at least a tenth of state employees losing their jobs, including Lunacharsky and others who tried to shield the professionals, to be replaced by those with working-class or peasant background or Communist Party membership. The party itself now came close to acquiring a majority of actual workers. New openings for proletarians and peasants occurred in all areas of life, tied to the rapid industrialization and collectivization: many became managers, or improved their

skills, often through accelerated training. Demands for greater equalization of wages grew, and the privileges associated with educational status were challenged. Everything "old" or "bourgeois" was opened to question, and literature and art for the masses, and experiments with "proletarian culture," flourished. Much of this surged up "from below," with little or no control by the party.[38]

The campaign ended almost as suddenly as it began, when Stalin in 1931 announced that the core of a "working-class industrial and technical intelligentsia" had been formed, and signalled the easing of strictures placed on "bourgeois specialists." He now demanded wider income differentials, denounced "petty bourgeois egalitarianism," and even claimed that "technique and organization decide everything."[39] By this time the cultural revolution was largely "from above," amid new calls for worker discipline. Typical of the changes was the emphasis on "Stakhanovites" or "labor heroes," who took an individual lead in upping production, and often received training, official positions, and material payments, in contrast to the old communist "subbotniks" which were collective and brought no reward. As policy once more shifted, those drawn from the "educated classes" again outnumbered workers and peasants in the universities, with a return to more rigid scholastic methods and "professional" standards.[40] Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to view this as mere retrogression:

> Any of the intelligentsia members who between 1935 and 1940 returned to public service or entered it for

> the first time, did not receive even the shadow of professional autonomy they or their colleagues had enjoyed a decade before. Instead, they came back cowed and tamed, fully aware of their thoroughly precarious position and of the claims the Party now made on all professions . . . that professional views and values must always be subordinate to the views, values, and interests of the general public (as expressed by the Communist Party) - that political considerations outweigh all expert opinion or knowledge.[41]

The entire structure and content of education and of the professions had changed, altered to meet the needs of rapid industrialization and collectivization, not the individual scholasticism of an elite.

The later 1930s were to see a further sharp expansion in social inequality in the Soviet Union, with a resurgence in the bureaucracy, in fact to previously unknown dimensions, and a rapid rise in the salaries of party and state officials, professionals, and managers.[42] In particular:

> As part of a general process of social differentiation in the thirties, the privileges of the intelligentsia relative to society as a whole greatly increased. The leaders of the cultural intelligentsia became part of the highest Soviet elite. The "cultural achievements" of the Soviet Union--which essentially meant the achievements of the old "bourgeois" intelligentsia during the thirties--were acclaimed and rewarded by the regime.[43]

Thus a new hierarchy emerged with the goal of developing the forces of production, and at the same time "raised up" their own class position. The Russian cultural revolution, then, clearly contains fundamental contradictions, since it was both started and ended by the same forces, notably Stalin, and those who rose via this "anti-bureaucratic"

movement themselves became leading examples of this very same "distortion."

> The substance behind the rhetoric of class war was large-scale upward mobility of industrial workers and working-class Party members into higher education and administrative and managerial jobs. Cultural revolution was the vehicle for training the future Communist elite and creating the new Soviet intelligentsia.[44]

But in reality, the entire concept of "working-class intelligentsia" or "Bolshevik experts" must of necessity contain contradictory aspects, on the one hand, raising up members of the proletariat to positions of leadership, but at the same time tending to their isolation from the masses and the use of "anti-elitism" to cover "upward mobility" yearnings. As one author was to later remark as to similar developments in Poland:

> The new arrivals in the ranks of intelligentsia have a plebeian backround but nonplebeian aspirations. . . .
>
> It is astonishing how quickly the newcomers come to treat the traditional values of the intelligentsia as their own.[45]

With the end of a mass cultural revolution "from below," these members of the "new" professional ranks were freed of any direct relation to their class origins, opening them to bureaucratic deproletarianization. At the same time: "The image of socialism as an egalitarian proletarian democracy was supplanted by another image that equated socialism and meritocracy, albeit in a plebiscitarian framework."[46]

Thus the Russian cultural revolution largely accomplished many of its primary goals. But these

accomplishments took place in a particular form, which in many ways reflected the semi-proletarian side of the revolution, instead of its proletarian character. This is as might be expected not only from the class origins of Stalin, whose background in both family and level of training are typical of the semi-proletariat, but of large numbers of those whom he helped to bring to power as well. Typical was the situation of engineering after the cultural revolution: "In 1930 a survey of industrial cadres showed that more than half the engineers and technicians in industry were praktiki (persons working as engineers and technicians without the appropriate formal training and diplomas) with low education and sometimes without even a crash course."[47] Among those who began their rise to eventual national position as a result of the cultural revolution were Khrushchev, Kosygin, Brezhnev, and many thousands more of lesser known administrators drawn from the working class and peasantry. It was they who came to replace the "Old" Bolsheviks when the latter were purged during the later 1930s, and who either carried out or at least went along with the purges, which represented the triumph of the semi-proletariat over both professional revolutionaries drawn from the "educated classes" and those of earlier proletarian origins. This class created the extremely statist regime led by a rigid authoritarian party, and willing to use the most brutal means against all dissent, which is commonly labeled "Stalinism."

In fact, being even weaker objectively than the petty bourgeoisie, the semi-proletariat is still more reliant on an "executive power" that rises "above" society. Here all control came ultimately to rest in the person of Stalin, who rose to extreme authority not only over the social order in general, nor even over the state, but over the party itself. Nevertheless he was the representative of a class, the "new" semi-proletarian "professional communists," insofar as he advanced the interests of the "working-class and peasant intelligentsia," but at the same time raised these "new" intellectuals above those from whom they had come. It is in this class basis that we find the "secret" of the Stalinist system, which was capable of massive revolutionary transformations of Soviet society, even while it repressed all opposition, including any independent activities by the workers themselves. While acting in the name of working-class revolution, it nevertheless halted the forward progress of that democratic and participatory process which alone could lead to a truly proletarian socialism. It thus denied its own revolutionary origins. "Promotion of the 'Brezhnev generation' was the major product of cultural revolution, and the subsequent embourgeoisement of the new elite formed the very unrevolutionary cultural climate of the Stalin period."[46] The very idea of further revolutions in culture, which might challenge the "professional communists" themselves, was among the first victims of this stratum,

which imposed rigid control on all cultural and intellectual expressions, including by the workers themselves.[49]

If we recall the specific ideology of this class--"working-classism"--it is apparent that what developed in the Soviet Union closely follows its pattern. There was here not so much the "overthrow" of the professional petty bourgeois stratum, as its subordination to those who are "closer" to the working class by virtue of their having risen at some point from the ranks of the proletariat. Charles Bettelheim points to this same phenomenon, but he typically fails to analyze it as semi-proletarian.

> . . . the ouvrieriste conceptions tend to identify one's ideological class position with one's original class origins . . . "scholars, artists, and engineers, etc.", who have emerged from the working class will produce a "proletarian class culture and no other"--a culture quite different from that produced by their counterparts of bourgeois origin. As Lenin remarked, this was "utter fiction." Such a fiction confers upon cadres who are of working-class origin--or who have merely spent some time working in industry--a working-class "essence" which is supposed to endow them with qualities they can never lose. It is in the personal interest of these cadres to support this fiction.[50]

By thus denying the contradictions of their own newer class position, they clear a way for the later "classless" ideology of full revisionism. This new "anti-elite elite" is nevertheless strongly attracted to the same goals as earlier professionals, and as a stratum it fears mass proletarian power. It therefore opens the door to the very abuses it claims to be opposing. Its regime is highly contradictory, being revolutionary in its transformation of

society toward a "socialist social system," yet carrying within itself the seeds of its own destruction, a petty bourgeois "restoration" that lays the basis for recapitalization. Most fundamentally, it denies that autonomous power of the working class which alone can keep society moving along the path toward revolutionary socialism and the realization of communism.

The semi-proletariat puts forward its own specific program for organization of the new society, a "command economy" stressing gross production "for its own sake" at the expense of consumption, and the most rapid possible accumulation of a "heavy" industrial base. These class interests are realized through forced collectivization and crash industrialization, which drives not only the kulaks but also the middle peasants into semi-proletarian status, creates legions of newly urbanized workers, and opens up avenues for rapid social advancement. In their rise, the semi-proletarians tend at times to treat both the capitalist and petty bourgeois classes as "one reactionary mass,"[51] but once in power, they rehabilitate the professionals, whose skills are needed in the building of a national "socialist social system." Thus they play a kind of "middle" role in between the class interests of the proletariat and of the professional petty bourgeoisie, balancing one against the other, allowing the semi-proletariat itself to rule.

Both the successes and failures of Stalin can largely be understood in terms of his fulfilling this historic function, which expanded certain features of the socialist revolution, even while allowing many aspects of the previous bourgeois society to creep back in, thus leading in time to a full-blown petty bourgeois "professional communist" regime. Nevertheless, the advancement of the forces which he represented meant that the semi-proletariat too had assumed the stage of history, not simply as the follower of the proletariat, but as a challenger to both it and the petty bourgeoisie. It is this dual nature that makes "Stalinism" often seem so contradictory, as it was in some respects "closer too," but in others "further from," the goals and methods initially laid out by Lenin, in comparison with the less draconian but also less revolutionary stages of Soviet society which were to follow after his death.

When Mao and the Chinese in turn confronted the problem of cultural revolution, they had before them the example of the Soviet Union, in which there had arisen "a working-class intelligentsia," but which had failed to root this proletarian advance in ongoing mass control, thus allowing its "professional" side to flourish. Especially after the death of Stalin in 1953, these newer semi-proletarians had gradually abandoned any remaining ties to the original revolutionary base of Soviet society and carried out the full establishment of a petty bourgeois

"professional communist" regime. The problem for China therefore presented itself as one of how to continue the socialist transformation of society, including "raising up" a new leadership of proletarian and poor peasant origins, without releasing the kinds of semi-proletarian consolidation that had allowed them to reverse the "color" of the revolutionary forces. Specifically, it would be necessary to find a way to continue the role of the masses into the "transition" period to ensure that the cultural revolution would not be foreshortened, as it was in Russia, especially after 1931. The question for the Chinese thus could not be restricted to domestic developments, but inevitably involved the relationship to the Soviets themselves. Even the terms of the struggle in China were marked by the Russian experience, with Liu Shao-ch'i being referred to as "China's Khrushchev," comparing him to the leader of the "revisionist" forces in the Soviet Union. This, as well as the massive scale on which the Chinese movement arose, gave to its confrontation between two class lines worldwide significance.

These monumental events began tamely enough, on the surface, but under an apparently "literary" issue lay the foundations of an entire political system. The immediate action launching the cultural revolution was a criticism made by a young essayist in Shanghai in 1965, with the support of Mao himself, against a play written by Wu Han, the vice-mayor of Peking and a party member. Via

historical allusion, the latter protested the dismissal of Defense Minister Peng Teh-huai by Mao, and treated the communes as a "confiscation" of peasant lands. The mayor of Peking, Peng Chen, tried to deflect the criticism of Wu Han into safer "academic" forms, so that the political character of the struggle would be lost.[52] This attempt exposed the entire network of ties between the cultural and party-state segments of the "professional communist" establishment, and the movement soon spread uncontrollably to the universities in Peking and elsewhere, where the same combination of forces restrained and oppressed the masses. It was the attempt in turn to call a halt to this challenge, by the sending of repressive "work-teams" to the colleges by Liu Shao-ch'i, that brought about the full-scale form of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which spread from the colleges until no part of the society was untouched by the struggle against the "bureaucracy" and its professionalist basis. In this ever-widening campaign the masses themselves showed great creativity, and many events occurred which were beyond the control of any authority. Nevertheless, at every crucial stage it was Mao who gave the movement support, and it clearly expressed his own deepest political goals.

Through the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, Mao put into practice five major theoretical advances regarding socialist societies. The first was that classes and class struggle continued under "socialism," that is, during the

entire "transition" from capitalism to communism, and that this can even take on the form of antagonistic relations:

> Now then, do classes exist in socialist countries? Does class struggle exist? We can now affirm that classes do exist in socialist countries and that class struggle undoubtedly exists. Lenin said: After the victory of the revolution, because of the existence of the bourgeoisie internationally, because of the existence of bourgeois remnants internally, because the petit bourgeoisie exists and continually generates a bourgeoisie, therefore the classes which have been overthrown within the country will continue to exist for a long time to come and may even attempt restoration.[53]

For Mao, the assertions made in the Soviet Union that there was now an end to classes as opposing social forces under "socialist" conditions made it imperative to reassert this understanding and give it an updated application. Thus at the height of the Cultural Revolution, responding to the initiatives of the masses, for instance in seizing control of the main Shanghai newspaper, Mao stated: "This is one class overthrowing another. This is a great revolution."[54] Even after socialism triumphed, there would still be "conservative strata" and "'vested interest groups'":

> For example, if the rule of distribution according to labor is in effect they benefit from higher pay for more work, and when it came time to change over to "distribution according to need" they could very well be uncomfortable with the new situation. Building any new system always necessitates some destruction of old ones.[55]

Therefore, Mao concluded: "The transition from socialism to communism is revolutionary . . . from one stage of communism to another is also."[56]

The second crucial aspect of the analysis made by Mao was that the class struggle in the socialist stage occurs primarily between the "levels" of the whole society. Specifically, he stressed that even after the "base" of the economy had been socialized, contradictions would continue if parts of the superstructure were still occupied by non-proletarian classes. For instance, he said that: "In a socialist society there are still 'academic overlords' who control the organs of scientific research and repress new forces."[57] Here Mao concentrated not primarily on the remnants of the bourgeois classes, nor even the petty bourgeois professionals, but instead focused on the problem of the "newer" intellectual stratum. Thus he challenged the concept that a "working-class intelligentsia" was not subject to the same contradictions as "older" intellectuals. Their class position was determined by whether they treated knowledge as socialist property or as their own private monopolistic possession.

As Mao stated in commenting on a Soviet economic textbook:

> Page 341 is devoted exclusively to the problem of fostering the development of intellectuals who are the workers' and peasants' own, as well as the problem of involving bourgeois intellectuals in socialist construction. However, the text fails to deal with the transformation of intellectuals. Not only the bourgeois intellectuals but even those of worker or peasant origin need to engage in transformation because they have come under the manifold influence of the bourgeoisie. Liu Shao-t'ang, of artistic and literary circles, who, after becoming an author, became a major opponent of socialism, exemplifies this. Intellectuals usually express their general outlook through their way of looking at knowledge. Is it privately owned or

> publicly owned? Some regard it as their own property, for sale when the price is right and not otherwise. Such are mere "expert" and not "red". . . .[58]

Thus Mao recognized that intellectual property must also be socialized, demonopolized and deprivatized, regardless of whether it belonged to "worker and peasant intellectuals" or others.

Thirdly, in criticizing the Soviets, Mao identified the bureaucratic elements as potentially a "new class."

> "Humanity left to its own devices does not necessarily reestablish capitalism (which is why you are perhaps right in saying they will not revert to private ownership of the means of production), but it does reestablish inequality. . . . you begin by no longer tolerating criticism, then you abandon self-criticism, then you cut yourself off from the masses, and since the Party can draw its revolutionary strength only from them, you tolerate the formation of a new class."[59]

But increasingly Mao began talking of a "new bourgeoisie."

> The bureaucratic class is a class sharply opposed to the working class and the poor and lower-middle peasants. These people have become or are in the process of becoming bourgeois elements sucking the blood of the workers.[60]

Thus Mao clearly labeled the "bureaucrats" as members of a class that was exploiting the proletariat and semi-proletariat. This "bourgeois dictatorship" might serve as a means by which capitalism could be restored, "so that although they still nominally have socialism, it is in fact capitalism."[61] Hence the term "capitalist roaders." In 1971 Premier Chou En-lai gave a particularly good analysis of this:

> . . . bourgeois elements will be newly generated. In the development of socialism right up until today, if the directors of industry--the accountants, engineers,

> managers, etc.--expand and consolidate special privilege, a new privileged class will be generated and its members will be the capitalist roaders. . . .[62]

Neither Mao nor Chou made a precise class analysis of this phenomenon. However, the term "capitalist roader" is a nearly perfect descriptive term for the petty bourgeoisie. As we have seen, it is precisely the role of the petty bourgeois class to "take the capitalist road," whether in the era of capitalism or in the "socialist social system," and this phrase captures exactly their embodiment as a "transitional" force.

Fourth, Mao centered the struggle against "new bourgeois elements" within the Party itself, and moreover among the highest ranks of its leaders. In 1965, before the Cultural Revolution began, he outlined the goals of its immediate predecessor, the Socialist Education Movement.

> The key point of this movement is to rectify those people in positions of authority within the Party who take the capitalist road, and progressively to consolidate the socialist battlefront in the urban and rural areas. Of those Party persons in authority taking the capitalist road, some are out in the open and some are at the higher levels. . . . Among those at higher levels, there are some people in the commune districts, hsien, special districts, and even in the work of provincial CC [Central Committee] departments, who oppose socialism.[63]

Indeed even during the Socialist Education Movement a struggle had arisen due to the attempt of Liu and his closest associates to direct criticism toward the lower levels of cadre and administrators, while leaving the "top" alone. Mao completely reversed this approach, which assumed the infallibility of the "highest authorities," and

in one of the most important and dramatic events of the Cultural Revolution wrote his own "big-character poster" calling on the masses to "Bombard the Headquarters," that is, to root out "revisionism" at the center. Such a call was calculated to smash through the paternalistic isolation that had grown up around many in the administration, especially among the top leadership. Mao placed the primary blame for the revival of "bourgeois dictatorship" on the corrupting of the party itself, up to and including some members of the Central Committee, since it was the leading force in the society.[4] Within the "bureaucracy" in general, he called to account those with the most authority.

Lastly and most fundamentally, then, the Cultural Revolution under Mao attempted to shatter the political and ideological bondage of the masses of proletarians and peasants. Mao declared that "It is right to rebel"--even against the party authorities. For only in this way could a force be created powerful enough to reverse the tendencies toward "professional communism" and petty bourgeois "restoration," release the energy of the working class, and put the revolution once again on the path toward socialism. "It was upon this arousal of awareness--among the masses, the cadres, the Party--that Mao placed high hope. Paradoxically, only those who would protest and rebel against the distortions, exercising the right of dissidence, could close the existing gap between Party and

people."[65] At stake was not just the class nature of the regime, but the very ability to move on to a socialist society.

> We believe in the masses. To become teachers of the masses we must first be the students of the masses. The present great Cultural Revolution is a heaven-and-earth-shaking event. Can we, dare we, cross the pass into socialism? This pass leads to the final destruction of classes, and the reduction of the three great differences [mental/manual, urban/rural, agriculture/industry].
>
> To oppose, especially to oppose "authoritative" bourgeois ideology is to destroy. Without this destruction, socialism cannot be established nor can we carry out first struggle, second criticism, third transformation.[66]

Here then was the true start of socialism, brought about through struggle with the ideological representatives of the old society.

It was in the radical students, many of them from worker and peasant origins, who were eager to recapture the revolutionary experiences of their elders and to make a similar contribution to a socialist order, that Mao at first found the mass base for the movement that was needed. With a tenacity indeed worthy of their forerunners, these first "rebels" in the universities held out against the entire weight and authority of both the academic and the party and state apparatuses until the latter, forced into mistakes, showed their hand, exposing ever higher levels of the "bourgeois headquarters." From this beginning, the movement was spread, in particular by the young "Red Guards," to the rural masses and the working class, who

increasingly took part in the struggle and at times exercised leadership over it.

The cultural revolution then, had two principal aspects, the first of which was to be the restoration of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the return of power to the masses, of learning from them. Nowhere was this more evident than in the schools, where the children of cadre and professionals were stripped of their special privileges, and the authority of the "academic overlords" was broken. In their place came large numbers of worker, peasant, and soldier students who were "elected" by their production or army units to receive training and to return to "serve the masses." Universities established ties with factories and communes, set up joint productive enterprises, and combined work and study.[67] Throughout the society there was a similar revolution--no one was immune. Academics, professionals, and even cadre were subject to mass criticism, reductions in salaries and privileges, and were required to participate in manual labor, often "going down" to the rural areas for long stays. In "May 7th Schools" even high officials took part in ideological remolding under the guidance of workers and peasants. Cultural activities were altered to address worker and peasant issues and revolutionary themes. In every place of production and institution, a "bottom-up" dictatorship was reestablished, now over the petty bourgeois professions and

"bureaucratized" cadre, making class struggle once again a living reality in the "socialist social system."[68]

But there was another side, in which the crucial element was the "arming" of the workers and peasants in the political and ideological realm, enabling them to end the monopoly over the superstructure and to exercise "all-round administration" of the society, thus seizing power from the "professional communists."[69] Mao constantly stressed the need to break down the division of labor and to put an end to rigid specialization and the isolation of separate occupations, particularly those whose monopolization carried with them control over politics, ideology, and culture. Therefore he insisted that workers, peasants, soldiers, and intellectuals, while in the main still concentrating on their primary activities, should take up the pursuits of each other in limited ways as well.[70] Above all, the masses must learn theory and "concern yourselves with state affairs." Here one means used was the "Little Red Book" of quotations from Mao. This pocket-sized and necessarily simplified approach was one tool by which even uneducated peasants and workers could gain access to the basic methodology and ideas of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought. Never before had such a mass attempt been made to make available to even the "lowliest" workers the dialectical materialist method as a means of carrying on class struggle, the development of production, and participation in state affairs.

The results, as observer after observer chronicled, were unprecedented. Enormous masses of working people, both singly and collectively, strove to grasp the fundamentals of Marxism and utilize them in political and ideological struggles, to practice criticism and self-criticism, and to share in the general administering of the society, especially the party and state.[71] Such efforts reached even into remote and impoverished villages.[72]

> The masses were to discuss, criticize, and judge whether the cadres, after self-criticism and repentance, would remain in their positions. The supervision of cadres by the masses was a right Mao spoke about constantly, but it was seldom exercised until the cultural revolution.[73]

Moreover, when applied to productive activities and the provision of social services, these same abilities smashed the rigid, self-serving "expertise" of the petty bourgeois professionals, and replaced it with the daring and determination of vast numbers of people mobilized, performing often without pay or quota to revolutionize both the forces and relations of production. Here indeed was the beginning of that universal "self-activity" of which Marx and Engels had spoken, the communist spirit which rested not on individualized rewards, but on the promotion of the social good without class divisions or exploitation.

Yet the cultural revolution clearly reached severe limits, and in time degenerated into widespread violence and chaos. These very limitations were inherent in the situation in which this struggle had to be carried out in

China. Mao challenged the party cadre to serve as leaders of the movement, even if it turned against themselves, "to lead the fire toward your own bodies, to fan the flames to make them burn. Do you dare to do this? Because it will burn your own heads."[74] Many responded to this challenge, but others, especially among the higher cadre, refused to lead the struggle, and in fact opposed it. Moreover, the process could not even begin with the proletariat proper, but from the start depended largely on "rebels" in the universities and schools, and only later gradually spread to workers and peasants. These students showed the usual factionalism for which they are noted, fed by divisions between children of cadre and those of other origins. More significantly in the long run, the working class also proved very susceptible still to being split apart by the maneuvers of the leading cadre, who played on their skill and seniority differences and "economist" yearnings for better immediate conditions regardless of the political system. The theoretical level of the masses was low and too often applied by rote. Finally, to the extent that the proletariat was called in to help end the fights among student factions or otherwise left work in order to carry on the political struggle, production inevitably suffered, giving rise to calls to "restore order."[75]

These limits came to a head in the part played by the army and Lin Piao. As the institution least scarred by the growth of "professional communism," with its links to the

revolutionary past, and leadership role in educating the masses, the Red Army came to play a "middle" role in the social struggle that was developing. Originally taking over from discredited party units, its position was central in the "three-in-one" Revolutionary Committees set up througout the society, in which representatives of the masses, army, and cadre were united. This special role as the mediator in the relationship of the mass organizations or Red Guards and the party, between workers and peasants on one side and the "professional communists" on the other, placed the army under Lin in a kind of semi-proletarian position, partly in the working classes but also tied to the professional ranks in the administration of the state and the armed forces themselves.[76]

This opened up opportunities for the assumption by Lin of "executive authority," not unlike that of Stalin in the Soviet Union. He thus turned the real content of Mao Tse-tung Thought into an empty shell of exaggerated adulation. At the same time, he encouraged the more extreme tendencies in the student Red Guards, directed at the "old" party leaders and even many army commanders, at the same time opening the path for his own authoritarian rule within these same institutions. These actions were accompanied by an attempt to raise Mao into a kind of exalted status which exceeded all bounds, a super "personality cult."[77] In turn, Lin Piao tried to pass this mantle onto his own shoulders, by promoting himself as the "successor" to Mao. But the

latter had learned from the Soviet experience, and was thus prepared to resist not only the "professional communist" forces rallied around Liu, but also any attempt to "resolve" that conflict via semi-proletarian authoritarianism by Lin. This brought the two into a clash, leading to an attempt at a coup d'etat that ended in failure and the death of Lin Piao.[78]

As the proletariat struggles for power, therefore, it confronts one class after another: first capitalists, then the petty bourgeoisie and, as socialism itself is being consolidated, the semi-proletariat. Even the latter class has both "right" and "left" aspects, the former primarily those who have a strong base in an institutional center such as the army or party, the latter those who represent the "outsiders," especially in the level of the superstructure, that is, on the fronts of politics, culture, and ideology. In these "fields" especially, the cultural revolution gives semi-proletarian forces special opportunities to grasp for power and exert its class role. Hence it puts forth representatives who are the experts in an "anti-elitist" but dogmatic party "line" and cultural and "media" specialists.

> Now that the right wing was attacked everywhere, an insidious "ultra-left," which is actually a right in disguise, was manifest. Mao had already remarked how, as in layers, one tendency covered another; peel off one and the other came up.[79]

Thus as Lin Piao was defeated, the so-called "Gang of Four," persons previously without much power, who rose to

prominence by helping Mao to lead the Cultural Revolution, and especially in the arts and media, now came to the fore. Just as the treachery of Lin undermined the army as a support for the masses, so tendencies toward an extreme anti-elitism by the "Gang" were to play a similar role in actually strengthening the reaction. As in Russia under Stalin, the semi-proletarian forces in China helped open the door even wider to the petty bourgeoisie, and when Mao died it was possible for elements in the party, led by the twice-purged Teng Hsiao-p'ing, to revive the practices of "professional communism" in more blatant form than ever.

In addition to these underlying class forces, however, there were also serious limitations to the leadership Mao offered to the Cultural Revolution, both in theory and practice, that helped prevent consolidation of the initial gains of the movement toward a form of socialism with a high degree of mass participation and power. First there was the lack of a precise class analysis of the forces oppressing the workers and peasants--a gap Chang Ch'un Ch'iao of the so-called "Gang of Four" was reportedly trying to fill when arrested. This stands in sharp contrast to the extremely careful and detailed analyses which Mao had always made of classes in his earlier work. Thus he tended to treat his opponents as "a reactionary mass," without distinguishing between the different class forces within the "bureaucratized" strata. A related problem was the focus that he placed on the "top" of the

party and state apparatus, which though a correct strategy in its placing of responsibility on those with the most authority, tended to obscure the mass base of petty bourgeoisie on which the goals of "professional communism" rested. This led him to generalize the problem as a "bourgeois" phenomenon, though as Marx and Lenin had taught, there are two bourgeoisie, and they required different treatment. This was compounded by the criteria used by Mao of "good" or "bad" cadre, of which he insisted that the overwhelming majority fit the former category.[80] Such concepts did not allow the masses to carefully analyze the nature of the class forces oppressing them, a weakness that must certainly have contributed to the lack of clarity and the many factional disputes which arose in the course of the Cultural Revolution.

Practically, the most serious failure was the lack of any nationwide revolutionary worker and peasant organizations with representatives at the highest levels. Though Mao helped "raise up" individual workers to leadership positions, the proletariat as a whole had no way to exert mass power at the "center," to directly combat "professional communist" tendencies.[81] Thus for all the emphasis on "the masses," the working class and peasants were left largely unorganized as a political or ideological force which could compete for power on the same level as the party. The latter, together with the state and army, remained the only national institution, and even in its

drastically weakened state could reassert itself against the increasingly disorganized and factionalized mass struggle. As excesses mounted, and public sympathies and energies were exhausted, it became a relatively easy matter for the "professional communist" factions within the party and state to recoalesce, especially when Mao himself died. No organizational legacy of the Cultural Revolution was left, among the workers and peasants, which could successfully oppose the restoration of the professional petty bourgeoisie.

Mao opposed the excesses of the struggle, but he also suggested that he had been too lenient, allowing his enemies to keep coming back. It is in such light that the violence of the Cultural Revolution should be viewed. Any true revolutionary movement employs force, for it must overcome the brutal power, open and hidden, of the exploiting classes. The growing social dislocations of the present Chinese regime, which has so avidly pursued the "capitalist road," with renewal of the open exploitation of the working class, massive unemployment and corruption, and a breakdown in welfare services and investment in social infrastructure, have already resulted in the massacre of Tiananmen Square, which is almost certain to be but a foretaste of the violence and oppression which lie ahead. The Cultural Revolution must be understood as a desperate effort to head off such developments, but it will surely not be the last:

> "The present great cultural revolution is only the first; there will inevitably be many more in the future. The issue of who will win in the revolution can only be settled over a long historical period. If things are not properly handled, it is possible for a capitalist restoration to take place at any time. Let no one in the Party or among the people in our country think that everything will be all right after one or two cultural revolutions, or three or four. We must be very much on alert and never lose vigilance."[82]

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, for all its ultimate failures, stands as the opening shot in the struggle to put an end once and for all to exploitation by the "educated classes."

Like the Paris Commune, it is a source of extremely important lessons, both negative and positive, which will undoubtedly be drawn upon by future generations of proletarian "rebels."

NOTES

1. Marx and Engels, The German Ideology, 53.

2. For a negative example of why such changes require a revolution in attitudes, and not simply in formal relationships, see Alec Nove, The Economics of Feasible Socialism (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983), 46-50. By accepting as givens that a high degree of specialization, hierarchy, and authority are necessary in modern society, Nove easily "debunks" Marxism as utopian on this and many other questions. It is precisely such assumptions, however, which are the focus of cultural revolution.

3. Marx and Engels, The German Ideology, 96-97.

4. Engels, "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific," 152.

5. Engels, Anti-Dühring, 349.

6. Lenin, "The New Economic Policy and the Tasks of the Political Education Departments," 78. It is largely for this reason that virtually the first, and most successful, campaign of every socialist revolution has been a mass literacy drive.

7. Lenin, "On Cooperation," 474-75.

8. Ibid., 470.

9. Ibid., 474.

10. Lenin, "The New Economic Policy and the Tasks of the Political Education Departments," 79. In this sense, Lenin, like Marx before him, saw a parallel to the long process that would be necessary for the socialization of peasant property as well.

11. Lenin, "Speech at the First All-Russia Congress of Education," 86.

12. Ibid., 87.

13. Lenin, "Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants Deputies," 469.

14. V. I. Lenin, "Admission to Higher Educational Institutions of the Russian Federation, Draft Decision of the Council of People's Commisars," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 28, 47.

15. V. I. Lenin, "Session of the First Congress of Farm Laborers of Petrograd Gubernia, March 13, 1919," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 29, 41.

16. Sheila Fitzpatrick, "Cultural Revolution as Class War," in Sheila Fitzpatrick ed., Cultural Revolution in Russia, 1928-1931 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978), 18.

17. Lenin, "A Great Beginning," 424-25.

18. V. I. Lenin, "How to Organize Competition," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 26, 412.

19. V. I. Lenin, "Speech Delievered at an All-Russia Conference of Political Education Workers," 369.

20. Lenin, "Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets, of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants Deputies" 481-82.

21. V. I. Lenin, "On Proletarian Culture," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 31, 316.

22. Lenin, "First All-Russia Congress on Adult Education," 336.

23. Lenin, "Speech at an All-Russia Conference of Political Education Workers," 367.

24. V. I. Lenin, "Eighth All-Russia Conference of the R.C.P.(B.), Political Report of the Central Committee, December 2," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 30, 186.

25. Lenin, "A Great Beginning," 426-27.

26. V. I. Lenin, "Report on Subbotniks," 286-87.

27. Lenin, "A Great Beginning," 425-26.

28. Fitzpatrick, "Cultural Revolution as Class War," 19-20.

29. Ibid., 21.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid., 10.

32. Kerblay, Modern Soviet Society, 149.

33. Fitzpatrick, "Cultural Revolution as Class War," 20-22.

34. Ibid.

35. J. V. Stalin, "Speech Delivered at the Eight Congress of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League," 78.

36. Ibid., 81.

37. Ibid., 82, and J. V. Stalin, "The Work of the April Joint Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission, April 13, 1928," in Stalin, Works, vol. 11, 41.

38. Fitzpatrick, "Cultural Revolution as Class War," 23-34.

39. See, inter alia, Alec Nove, The Soviet Economic System (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1977), 207.

40. Fitzpatrick, "Cultural Revolution as Class War," 34-38.

41. Meyer, The Soviet Political System, 453.

42. Nove, The Soviet Economic System, 207. See also Murray Yankowitch, Social and Economic Inequality in the Soviet Union: Six Studies (White Plains, NY: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 1977), 23-24, and M. Lewin, "Society, State, and Ideology during the First Five-Year Plan," chap. in Fitzpatrick, Cultural Revolution in Russia, 72-73.

43. Fitzpatrick, "Cultural Revolution as Class War," 38.

44. Ibid., 11.

45. Alexander Matejko, Social Change and Stratification in Eastern Europe: An Interpretive Analysis of Poland and Her Neighbors (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974), 145, 147.

46. Gail Warshofsky Lapidus, "Educational Strategies and Cultural Revolution," in Fitzpatrick, Cultural Revolution in Russia, 102.

47. Lewin, "Society, State, and Ideology During the First Five-Year Plan," 71.

48. Fitzpatrick, "Cultural Revolution as Class Warfare," 40.

49. Ibid., 39.

50. Bettelheim, Class Struggles in the USSR, Second Period, 554.

51. Ibid., 551-52. Here Bettelheim notes that this phrase was the subject of a critique by Marx of the German Social-Democratic "Gotha Program," against which he contrasted the analysis of the dual nature of the "middle classes" in the Manifesto, which distinguish them from the "big" bourgeoisie.

52. Daubier, A History of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, 291.

53. Mao Tse-tung, "Speech at the Tenth Plenum of the Eighth Central Committee, September 24, 1962," in Chairman Mao Talks to the People, Talks and Letters: 1956-1971, Stuart Schram ed., trans. John Chinnery and Tieyun (New York: Pantheon Books, Random House, 1974), 189.

54. Mao Tse-tung, "Talk at a Meeting of the Central Revolution Groups, January 9, 1967," in Schram, Chairman Mao Talks to the People, 275.

55. Mao Tsetung, A Critique of Soviet Economics, trans. Moss Roberts, with an introduction by James Peck ((New York: Monthly Review Press, 1977), 62-63.

56. Ibid., 71.

57. Ibid., 74.

58. Ibid., 47.

59. Dittmer, Liu Shao-ch'i and the Chinese Cultural Revolution, 47. The quote is from Andre Malraux, Anti-Memoirs, trans. Terence Kilmartin (New York: 1968), 369-70.

60. Ibid. The quotation is from "Comment on Comrade Ch'en Cheng-jen's Report on Stay in Selected Spot," January 29, 1965, in "Long Live the Thought of Mao Tse-tung," in Current Background, Hong Kong, no. 891 (October 8, 1969): 49.

61. Mao Tse-tung, "Speech at the Tenth Plenum of the Eighth Central Committee, 190. For a similar expression see also Han, Wind in the Tower, 215.

62. Debbie Davison and Mark Selden, Chou En-lai and the Chinese Revolution: Chou-Enlai Conversations with Americans, Interviews by William Hinton (Los Angeles: US-China Peoples Friendship Association, 1977), 48.

63. Dittmer, Liu Shao-ch'i and the Chinese Cultural Revolution, 57. The quote is from Richard Baum and Frederick C. Teiwes, Ssu-ching: The Socialist Education Movement of 1962-1966 (Berkeley, CA: 1968), 120.

64. See Daubier, A History of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, 290. See also Han, Wind in the Tower, 219, 264.

65. Han, Wind in the Tower, 220.

66. Mao Tse-tung, "Talk to Leaders of the Centre, July 21, 1966," in Schram, Chairman Mao Talks to the People, 254.

67. See Hinton, Hundred Day War, for an account of the struggle at one of the leading universities.

68. See, inter alia, Macciocchi, Daily Life in Revolutionary China, for an account of the effects of the Cultural Revolution on many different parts of society.

69. Snow, The Long Revolution, 66.

70. Han, Wind in the Tower, 274.

71. See Hinton, Shenfan, 176-82.

72. Jan Myrdal and Gun Kessle, China: The Revolution Continued, The Cultural Revolution at the Village Level, trans. Paul Britten Austin (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1972), 28-33.

73. Han, Wind in the Tower, 220.

74. Mao, "Talks to Leaders of the Centre," 254.

75. See Neale Hunter, Shanghai Journal: An Eyewitness Account of the Cultural Revolution (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969).

76. Lee, The Politics of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, 121.

77. Mao both promoted the "personality cult" as a way to combat the party bureaucracy, and objected to the excesses to which it was carried. See Snow, The Long Revolution, 71, 169.

78. See Jaap van Ginneken, The Rise and Fall of Lin Piao, trans. Danielle Adkinson (New York: Avon Books, 1972).

79. Han, Wind in the Tower, 298.

80. Han, Wind in the Tower, 300.

81. These leaders whom Mao coopted into the center were scornfully referred to by Teng and others as "helicopters."

82. Myrdal and Kessle, The Revolution Continued, 192. The quote is from Mao, Renmin Ribao (May 23, 1967).

CHAPTER 26

POLARIZATION AND DISINTEGRATION OF THE "PROFESSIONAL COMMUNIST" REGIME

Dialectical materialism is the study of the contradictions inherent in all things, of the unity of two internal and opposing aspects within phenomenon, and of the changing positions and the transformations brought about by their struggle. Historical materialism is the application of this dialectics to the development of human society, and to the analysis of the contradictory process by which the struggle of classes produces those changes which drive social history forward. Specifically, the materialist approach to historical progression shows that each class which assumes control of society bears within itself the source of its own demise, that through its own advances it must develop new conditions of production, and with them opposing classes which undermine its power, until its rule is overthrown by the representatives of another social order. Thus just as bourgeois society and the higher levels of productivity which it created developed within feudalism until they could no longer be contained, and finally overthrough the "ancién regime," so Marx analyzed how the proletariat in turn would become the "gravediggers"

of capitalism. The development of the "new" strata of the petty bourgoisie, however, intervenes as a "transitional" stage in the proletarian revolution and leads to attempts to "freeze" society in the form of a "middle class" socialism. The task now is to examine what in turn are the new kinds of class contradictions which arise within this "socialist social system," undermining the regime of the petty bourgeois "professional communists" and leading to their overthrow. This will allow us to analyze as well the "historical destiny" which faces the professional petty bourgeoisie as a whole.

Specifically, what is required is to understand the manner in which the rule of the petty bourgeois "professional communists" contains the seeds of its own degeneration and weakness, as well as the new class forces which it raises up, and which carry out its eventual destruction. In the first place, it must be understood that the petty bourgeoisie do not lose their fundamental class characteristics merely by virtue of passing out from under the domination of the capitalists into a "socialist social system." That is, they still "vacillate between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie," between the "poles" of socialism and capitalism. Moreover, their seizure of power from the working class, in the guise of "professional communists," not only does not alter their own character, but allows it all the freer play as remaining restraints are lifted from their actions. Thus all the aspects of

this class which were earlier to be found under capitalism are equally relevant in its "socialist" phase, and may even be heightened there, producing the same basic contradictions. To begin with, just as in the capitalist era, the petty bourgeoisie under "socialism" begin their own internal polarization, and once again produce from within their midst big bourgeoisie, larger versions of themselves, who practice an even higher level of exploitation. This process was already apparent to Lenin, who warned of it as early as March 1919:

> . . . Comrade Rykov, who is closely familiar with the facts in the economic field, told us of the new bourgeoisie which have arisen in our country. This is true. The bourgeoisie are emerging not only from among our Soviet government employees--only a very few can emerge from their ranks--but from the ranks of the peasants and handicraftsmen who have been liberated from the yoke of the capitalist banks, and who are now cut off from railway communications.[1]

Thus not only the "old" independent petty bourgeoisie, including even those most isolated both economically and politically, but the "new" strata of state-employed bureaucratized officials, professionals, and managers, were generating a bourgeoisie.

This general striving to join the ranks of the bigger bourgeoisie and to preserve capitalist relations served as a source of petty bourgeois unity and of common interests in the early days of the Soviet Union. However, as the peasantry and tradespersons lost their autonomy as segments of that class, the route to becoming "new bourgeoisie" came to be focused almost entirely in the party and the "Soviet

government employees." Nevertheless, "only a few" could emerge from their ranks, in accordance with the historic nature of the polarization of the petty bourgeoisie. The degree to which a "big bourgeoisie" developed in the Soviet Union, and whether they constituted a new "ruling class," was a matter of widespread debate and even very sharp struggle internationally, providing one basis for the Sino-Soviet split. On the one hand, some analysts tried to ignore such elements, for example, Al Szymanski, who apart from a passing reference or two to those "exclusive neighborhoods" reserved for top Soviet leaders, failed to examine this question, a major gap in his detailed study. On the other hand, there were those who exaggerated this tendency, to the point where "elite" Soviets and Western capitalists are virtually indistiguishable.

Alfred G. Meyer provided a balanced view:

> As an industrial society, the Soviet Union is stratified in a manner not too different from the United States. Such a statement can be made more precise by specifying the differences in stratification that distinguish the two societies. The most well-known difference is the lower level of the general standard of living. Profession by profession, layer by layer, the Soviet citizen consumes fewer goods and services than his American counterpart. Furthermore, entire components of the American stratification pattern are absent, among them that stratum we would call the "very rich." Although a small handful of men in the highest political posts probably enjoy all the material advantages they might desire, the USSR does not have the hundreds of millionaire families which form the apex of the United States' pyramid of wealth.[2]

In other words, starting from a lower base, and with fewer numbers involved, some persons reached a point of

considerable comfort or even wealth, but not in comparison with the extreme decadence of the "jet-setting" imperialist rich of the United States, some of them "worth" billions,[3] who often own palatial residences scattered throughout the entire world, staffed by scores of servants, and with every conceivable type of luxuries, private airplanes, yachts, fleets of cars, and so forth. By the standards of the latter, the complaints about "privileges" in the Soviet Union and other countries of the "socialist bloc" often appeared almost ludicrous: an extra room or two of housing, a car, the right to buy scarce "luxury" or imported goods, very often items common to a "middle class" lifestyle in the West.

The work of those, such as Mervyn Matthews, who studied the Soviet "elite" further reinforces the conclusions of Meyer. To begin with, there is the question of the scale on which such elements arise. Matthews delineates a Soviet "elite" of only 227,000 persons: 36% party officials, 26% state, Komsomol (youth organization), and trade union leaders, 18% "intelligentsia," 13% military, police, and diplomatic corps, and 7% managers.[4] This alone must be compared with the 1.58 million size which Charles Loren assesses for the United States capitalist class, seven times larger, despite the somewhat smaller population of the latter country.[5] Moreover, Matthews concludes, "the Soviet elite family in the early seventies enjoyed a standard of living roughly equal to, or

perhaps somewhat below, that of an average American household."[6] In other words, such families barely match the life-style of lower professionals and managers, and perhaps even of the "labor aristocracy," in the United States, hardly constituting a "bourgeois" mass. Thus only the cream of the Soviet population even reached the minimum level which in the United States begins to mark a true "upper class," while a mere handful rose higher. In fact just to enter the top 2/1000ths of the United States income earners, the same percentage as the Soviet "elite," one would have had to earn four to seven times more than the latter do on average. Compared to the 180,000 persons in the United States who in 1972 had $1 million or more in assets, and the 11,000 with over $5 million, Matthews states: "By this measure the most wealthy Soviet citizens are paupers indeed."[7]

But there is further evidence against the thesis that "capitalism had been restored" in the Soviet Union, under a "new" state bourgeoisie. To begin with, the constitution required all able to do so to work,[8] and essentially everyone even among the most "bourgeois" continued to do personal labor of some kind, so that a purely "rentier" class living off "coupon-clipping" did not exist. This means that capital as such, distinct from professional and managerial duties, did not operate freely in the Soviet Union: the "professional communists" and leading managers shared with the petty bourgeoisie in general the necessity

to work, even if their income contained a larger portion of the wealth "skimmed" from the proletariat. Popular sentiment also acted as a restraint on what could normally be accumulated:

> In the Communist economy there is no opportunity to make a fortune safely. Owning an apartment or a small house, one car, and regular vacation travel abroad are the upper limits of material well-being accepted by law and by society. Anything more is hazardous and worthless in the circumstances of relatively tight formal and informal social control. People do not like others to be much richer than they are, and it is quite easy to levy sanctions against anybody whose high standard of living seems to be unjustified by his official source of income.[9]

Egalitarianism remained a strong ideal of the population within the "socialist social system," however violated in practice.

So too with the reforms which tried to put economic production more on a "profit" basis, in which each unit was normally expected to show that it produced more than it absorbed in state funds. This was sometimes taken to mean that the Soviet system had become based on capitalistic profits. But while elements of profiteering existed, "profit" overall remained less a goal in itself than a method of input/output accounting and as one basis for calculating bonuses and incentives.[10] Alec Nove spoke for many other Sovietologists when he concluded that

> although price relationships and expected levels of profits can affect the decisions of planners, and also the proposals of managers, the latter must obey instructions even where, at the fixed level of prices, the result is a loss. In other words, the plan must be fulfilled whatever the effect on profits, and the plan-

> indicators that relate to profits play--despite recent reforms--a subordinate role.[11]

Profit-maximization, the hallmark of capitalism, was not dominant: neither pricing nor investment decisions were made primarily for rate of return.

Nevertheless, it became increasingly apparent that some in the very highest levels of the Soviet government and party, and the most favored of the professionals and managers, lived in large measure off the surplus-labor of the workers and peasants. The private and state-supplied dachas and chauffered cars, access to special stores for "luxuries," extremely high incomes and "personal rates" which replace regular salaries, "no-show" work, exclusive vacation and medical facilities, use of domestic servants, large-scale diversion of state resources for individual purposes, and gray and black markets all indicated the existence of "new bourgeois" elements.[12] This tendency reached extremes at times, as in the collection of expensive autos which Brezhnev maintained, the private usage of houses of the old aristocracy or newly built homes costing relative fortunes, lavish entertaining, the indolent life-style of some children of the "rich," and other similar forms. A tiny crust of rulers, artists, and scholars lived like this:

> Attention is sometimes concentrated on the very small group of high officials, who, together with a few successful writers, ballerinas, musicians and top academicians, constitute the upper stratum of Soviet society in material terms. It is widely believed in the USSR that the highest officials live in great luxury, and that most of it is provided for them not as

> salary but as fruits of office, so to speak (villas, servants, cars, etc.).[13]

The very secrecy which surrounded these exalted few, so much so that Soviet studies barely mentioned them, suggested the degree to which their lives departed from the "norm" expected in a "socialist society." The generally low standard of living made such departures from the ideological claims of the "professional communist" regime all the more galling: "We expect such things in capitalist society, but not in what is forever described as a workers' state."[14] In its most extreme versions, such as that of the Ceausescus in Romania, as we now know, such developments reached truly obscene heights, almost more feudal than bourgeois.

What must concern us, however, is not the exact level of such developments, but the inability of the petty bourgeoisie to prevent "new bourgeois" elements from arising out of their ranks. Between the petty and big bourgeoisie there is no barrier, no sharp dividing line, such as separates bourgeois classes as a whole from the proletariat. Having held on to a system of private monopolization of knowledge and appropriation of the social surplus, together with material bonuses as the main means to reward and stimulate productivity,[15] the petty bourgeois "professional communists" could not by themselves stop expansion of those who "live in great luxury." Nevertheless, within such systems, efforts are made to put

a "cap" on bourgeois tendencies. In China, for example, under the post-Mao regime of Deng Hsiao-p'ing, such urban entrepreneurs as shopkeepers and restaurant owners were at first only "permitted to employ up to seven helpers and apprentices, not including family members."[16] Here the unity of "middle class socialism" and "petty bourgeois capitalism" is perfect. The Chinese leadership was clearly trying to separate an "acceptable" level of capitalist exploitation as practiced by the petty bourgeoisie from an "unacceptable" form of big capitalism. Similar limits existed in other parts of the "socialist bloc," notably Hungary.

For other strata of the petty bourgeoisie, however, "unacceptable" levels of profiteering are more difficult to measure and thus to control. The problem comes precisely with those whose "high standard of living" does seem to be justified by an "official source of income." Here it is hard to draw a line such as the exploitation of "only" seven workers. In a society where "all must work," even capitalistic forms of profit can be excused on the grounds that they are payment for extra-valuable labor. Moreover, the "socialist" form of ownership means that such income seems not to be a reward for private ownership. This can thereby provide a cover for a "new bourgeoisie," as in China, where entire factories with dozens of workers began to be "contracted out" to individuals, who run them and keep the profits. Nevertheless:

> Xie Heng, first secretary in the Chinese embassy in Washington, disputed [the] claim that this involves exploitation. She asserted that "because this is just a system of management and not a system of ownership, there is no exploitation involved." She pointed out that some enterprises operated at a loss under state control but are now making a profit since [being] contracted "to individuals with higher technical expertise. They may receive higher rewards but that is just for their managerial technique. Since they don't own the means of production they cannot exploit," she concluded.[17]

It would be hard to find a better example of the rationalization of petty bourgeois capitalism "hiding" within a "socialist" shell, or of the way in which denial of the ownership of the "means of mental production" serves to cover over the exploitation of the working class.

Despite proposals to control such situations through laws, regulations, and taxes, it is apparent that in the professional and managerial area attempts to limit the level of exploited surplus-value are difficult to measure and are largely arbitrary and easily circumvented. In this way the petty bourgeois professionals and managers once again serve as the basis for the emergence of "new bourgeoisie" out of their own ranks, now within the "socialist social system." Nevertheless, the presence of a certain number of such "bourgeois" elements, even in leading positions, does not necessarily alter the fundamental nature of the regime as a whole, which may continue to pursue primarily the "professional communist" goals of the petty bourgeoisie. Moreover, what wealth is enjoyed is largely the "fruits of office" and cannot easily

be passed on to heirs, thus limiting consolidation of a bourgeois class.

However the continuous generation of "new bourgeoisie" strains to the limit the petty bourgeois "professional communist" regime, threatening to break it up completely through polarizing the class as a whole. Even if power in general is still in the hands of the "middle class" professionals therefore, the growth of a more clear-cut "bourgeois" element creates weaknesses and contradictions in their own ranks, since only a relative few can enter this higher level, and these inevitably become indifferent to the mass from which they arose. Thus the petty bourgeoisie are weakened from within, by their own striving for "big bourgeois" levels, just as also occurred in the era of capitalism. Moreover, the possibility of a true "capitalist restoration" looms over them, with the birth from out of their midst of a consolidated class of big bourgeoisie.

At the same time, under the "socialist social system," just as under capitalism, the vast majority of petty bourgeoisie are subject to proletarianization. This process was fairly advanced in the Soviet Union, with mass education of professionals lowering their "value," so that many earned less than the skilled workers:

> The much-increased supply of literate citizens qualified for office work, and of engineers, doctors and other specialists, and the substantial diminution of the inflow of unskilled ex-peasants to the towns, are the fundamental explanation of the changes we have been noting. Clearly, the difference between skilled

> and unskilled workers is much smaller than it was in the thirties. Clearly also, the scarcity value of engineers, accountants, teachers, relative to factory workers, has substantially diminished.[18]

Here too the "semi-professionals," especially women, are hardest hit. Though indications are that there may have been a general narrowing of income differences in Soviet society over the last decades, the main effect on the petty bourgeoisie was greater internal contradictions.

> The relatively low and declining earnings differential between workers and engineering-technical personnel deserves further attention. Soviet writers often present it as illustrating the increasing equality in economic status of manual and mental labor. It is true, of course, that the average earnings figures for engineering-technical personnel conceal substantial variations in earnings within the broad range of occupations included in this heterogenous category and thus understate the privileged economic status of individuals in the higher-ranking managerial and specialists' positions. But this had always been the case, while the narrow gap between the average earnings of engineering-technical personnel and workers is a relatively recent phenomenon. . . . Whatever it may conceal, the narrowing wage differential cited here reflects a kind of "proletarianization" of the lower rungs of the engineering-technical category in the sense of a loss of traditional earnings superiority over manual workers.[19]

In other words, even while the "new bourgeois" elements have continued to emerge and flourish, the mass of professionals are being proletarianized. Thus "equalization is advancing anyway; it is only a relatively thin upper stratum who break the normal limits of distribution, and for the most part they are not motivated principally by the financial stimulus, no matter how happy they may be with it."[20] The effect, nevertheless, is a polarized petty bourgeois class, just as under capitalism.

Similar contradictions and polarization arise on the international plane. The Chinese in particular accused the Soviet Union of practicing "social-imperialism," as an extension of "state monopoly capitalism." But in fact, "social-imperialist" phenomena, that is, the exploitation of other countries under the cover of "socialism," have their origin in those petty bourgeois elements threatened by the worldwide class struggle. The "social-imperialists" first arose as an aspect of the labor aristocracy and middle class within the socialist movement, which feared both war and revolution, and favored a "reformed" imperialism which would be carried out in cooperation with their "own" capitalists. Lenin confronted and analyzed this tendency at the start of World War I:

> To defend and strengthen their privileged position as a petty-bourgeois "upper stratum" or aristocracy (and bureaucracy) of the working class--such is the natural wartime continuation of petty-bourgeois opportunist hopes and the corresponding tactics, such is the economic foundation of present-day social-imperialism.[21]

In fact, as early as the 1907 meeting of the Second International, it was moved that: "'The Congress does not in principle and for all time reject all colonial policy, which, under a socialist regime, may have a civilising effect.'"[22] The resolution was only narrowly defeated. Relating this and other similar policies of the European socialist parties, such as immigration exclusion, Bahro notes that: "The labour bureaucracies were all inclined, at the very least, to an educational colonialism."[23] Thus this

"'socialist colonial policy'" showed that social-imperialism had an independent class basis that could survive the overthrow of "big" bourgeois imperialism per se. Therefore even if the term "imperialist" is used, it must not be assumed that it is identical with its "monopoly capitalist" form.

The social-imperialists are, on the contrary, drawn from among the "civilizing" professional petty bourgeoisie and the "labor aristocrats" caught between the two main classes. Thus "social-imperialism" bears the same relation to the "imperialists" proper that "petty-bourgeois capitalism" has to the "capitalists" themselves. That is, it accepts those aspects of imperialism useful to the "middle class," but struggles against those that oppress and threaten it, just as we earlier saw they did in relation to capitalism. So too, when the proletariat carries out the overthrow of the imperialists, it is the petty bourgeoisie "social-imperialists" who rush in to fill their place, just as in the domestic economy they strive to uphold bourgeois elements within the "socialist social system." In the beginning, consequently, "their" imperialism is still at a "petty-bourgeois" level, just as "their" capitalism must be. Thus Mao in 1964 gave this picture of the attitude of the Chinese toward trade with the Soviets: "We can do a little business, but we can't do too much, for Soviet products are heavy, crude, high-

priced, and they always keep something back."[24] To which the editor of this collection of statements by Mao adds:

> That the Soviets always "kept something back" . . . i.e. that they kept certain key plans or information, or even a key piece of machinery, under the control of the Soviet experts so the Chinese would not be able to complete or operate a plant without their assistance, was a common complaint in China in the late 1950's and early 1960's.[25]

Here, raised to the level of international trade, is that spirit of "kulak" hoarding and gouging that Lenin warned against. But now it is combined with that professional monopolization of "key" knowledge, the domineering role of "expertise," typical of the "new" petty bourgeoisie, and at times with racist overtones.[26]

Indeed, the most common representative of the social-imperialists abroad was not a corporate entrepreneur or slave-driving manager, but the ubiquitous and stiff-necked "expert" who scorned the poverty and ignorance of the "natives,"[27] and imposed their own statist and technocratic methods down to the level of individual Chinese village.[28] It is thus impossible, as Szymanski tries to do, to draw a careful dividing line between a non-exploitative socialist "hegemony" and "social-imperialism," stating: "If political domination only, but not economic exploitation, is demonstrated, then all that is shown is that the U.S.S.R. is hegemonic."[29] This denial that the Soviet "professional communists" were exploitative of other countries is only the international extension of the claim by Szymanski that the educated strata of the petty bourgeoisie do not

"benefit . . . to any appreciable degree" from their rule over the proletariat.

In fact, however, hegemony is "social-imperialist," because it subjects even "friendly" nations to outside control, by exporting the ruling power of the "professional communists," who led the highly paid Soviet experts "to defend and strengthen their privileged position as a petty-bourgeois 'upper stratum,'" not only over the workers, but also over the "middle classes" of other lands. Abroad just as at home the monopoly of political knowledge was their most valuable form of economic property in the "means of mental production." The non-Marxist attempt by Szymanski to separate politics from economics, and to extend internationally the theory of a "non-exploitative" petty-bourgeois class, thus fails, just as it did on the domestic level. "Hegemonism" is the imperialist form of "professional communism," the "educational colonialism" which saw the Soviets demand ideological and political conformity throughout their "bloc," a position which maintained them in positions of political power and economic domination as the "aristocracy" of their stratum.

Yet the petty bourgeoisie can no more keep control over "its" imperialism than it can over "its" capitalism, that is, it cannot maintain a permanently "low" level of international domination, due to its own internal contradictions. In the first place, it is not subject to any inherent limits in this area any more than it is in the

domestic economy, because no clear line divides imperialist "levels." Even as social-imperialism differs from "classical" imperialism, insofar as it often involved the supplying of goods at below world price levels, especially in the area of energy resources, and thus was not based on maximization of profits, it also showed a tendency to share in the spoils of the global imperialist system in various ways. Thus it enforced its own forms of economic dependency, which at times brought it commercial advantages that yielded a form of "profit," in its terms of trade with both Eastern Europe and the "Third World." In particular, Soviet aid has commonly been tied to the purchasing of the "heavy, crude, high-priced" products of their machinery industry.[30] As a result, the initial "petty-bourgeois imperialist" limitations have been strained, through the adoption of methods which bear a resemblance to "big" imperialism proper.[31]

Moreover, the very premise of social-imperialism is to provide a bridge between the proletarian movement and the international bourgeoisie, and it is thus open to both the attractions and the threats of the imperialists. Specifically, the latter hold out to the social-imperialists the "bait" of an era of peaceful trade and investment, of the training of Soviet specialists, who often turn out to be the children of these same leading cadre, as well as various forms of cultural exchange, including research and technology--if they will just

abandon both proletarian revolution and movements for national liberation. Behind this "carrot," of course, looms the "stick" of the threat of war, including impoverishment through military expenditures, and also of the encouragement of counter-revolution within the "socialist bloc" itself. Social-imperialism is then both bribed and threatened to help contain the revolutionary forces internationally in cooperation with "big" imperialism.[32]

Thus the Soviet regime, notably under Khrushchev, went backward to reformist concepts, primarily through its revival of the "parliamentary road" to socialism, in place of Marxist theories of the necessity of revolution. It held up the goal of a period of "peaceful coexistence and competition" with the United States and other imperialist powers, a struggle that was to take place largely as a race to see which form of society, capitalist or socialist, was best able to generate rapid growth.[33] But if support for revolutionary struggles abroad was downplayed, insistence on the subordination of the rest of the socialist movement was all the more necessary to prevent any challenges to the projected aims of Soviet policy. Khrushchev thus continued to insist on the primacy of the Russian party and treated any break from its authority as a violation of its historic "right" to lead. This form of patriarchal "hegemonism," which created a "hierarchy" of states under Soviet tutelage, was the ultimate international expression of

petty-bourgeois professionalism. Its hallmarks were Soviet insistence that it remain the final arbiter for all political and ideological matters within the communist movement, resistance to any independent economic actions in its "bloc," and enforcement of its class relations based on material incentives and high bonuses to a "professional communist" elite.

The door is thus opened to all forms of conciliation with the imperialists, in particular cooperation in dividing up the world into "spheres of influence," as well as the mutual role of "police" over all other less favored countries. Such unity could not be permanently maintained, however, because the balance of power was constantly being upset by material changes, strategic developments in the relations of the "super-powers," the revolutionary struggles within each nation, and the resistance of peoples throughout the world to both imperialism and social-imperialism. In particular, the United States never abandoned its determination to destroy the remnants of socialism in the Soviet Union. This in turn pushed the social-imperialists to match the imperialists step for step, and in particular to compete throughout the world for a dominant role.

Their originally fairly benign "hegemonism" thus at times turned more openly reactionary and aggressive, both within their "bloc" and without. In the end their policies paralleled those of the imperialists, so that even the most

brutal anti-Communist regimes in the world, such as that of Suharto in Indonesia, which had massacred hundreds of thousands of communists and other progressives after overthrowing Sukarno, were given direct or indirect support by countries of the "socialist bloc," with their willingness to "deal" with the Soviets being the only criteria for relations, without regard for their domestic reigns of terror.[34] So too with Soviet support for India in its 1962 war with the Chinese. Ultimately, countries which got "out of line" faced the threat or reality of Soviet intervention, which began with Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and led to the "Vietnam-style" quagmire into which the Soviets bogged down in Afghanistan, in an effort to counter reactionary United States-sponsored forces.

However it is apparent that social-imperialism can be seen in two different ways, or rather has two alternate "sides," depending on the perspective of the viewer, and that such differences are in fact unavoidable because of the inevitable unevenness of development of the world-wide proletarian movement. From the standpoint of those who had completed the first stages of socialist revolution and whose national liberation was relatively secure from imperialist pressures, social-imperialism must appear as oppressive and reactionary, not only holding back further progress toward communism, but actually trying to prevent the independent exercise of policy in each country. It is this face which the Soviets turned in particular to the

Chinese in the late 1950s and later decades. Soviet "professional communists" could not but react in the most virulent manner to the refusal of China to be subordinated. The result was the growth of the Sino-Soviet split and the divisions which it spawned within the international revolutionary movement. Such a struggle has been costly for the "professional communists," for it exposed their pretensions to be representatives of communism, contributing to the gradual erosion of the power of Soviet social-imperialism.

But from the standpoint of those nations, such as Cuba and the majority of "Third World" countries, still threatened primarily by the United States and the other imperialist centers, the Soviets appeared in their more "socialist" mode, as an advanced and progressive alternative to the ravages of capitalist exploitation and imperialism. From this point of view, the support of the Soviet Union and of the other East European countries was a valuable resource by no means to be scorned. Thus their aid was sought in wars of national liberation and to build socialism. Nevertheless, even among nations allied to the Soviets there was an increasing pattern of resistance, which took the form of asserting the right to pursue an independent foreign policy and to run their domestic economies free from interference, despite an acceptance of material or political assistance. Here the effort has concentrated on preventing consolidation of social-

imperialism and an abject surrender to the dictates of the Soviet Union. In this regard, the course was the same as that which Marx had laid out for the revolutionary working class movement toward the petty bourgeoisie: march together as long as interests are parallel, but never abandon the independence of line or organization of the proletarian forces, nor accept petty-bourgeois dominance. Such a principle has now been raised to the international plane of relations between states, such as the partially independent foreign policy positions adopted by Cuba despite its reliance on Soviet economic and political support. In this way the duality of the petty bourgeoisie is once again revealed, internationally as well.

The contradictions inherent in the petty bourgeois class therefore begin to catch up with it, even within the "socialist social system" itself. Though the same stratum of petty-bourgeois "professional communists" developed in more or less similar degree throughout both the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the further contradictory developments within this element were necessarily uneven. For the leading position of the Soviets and the enormous size of their economy made them the first "socialist superpower," rivalling the imperialist United States. The contradictions present in the petty bourgeois class thus took on an international dimension as well, in which even the "professional communist" rulers of other nations had to tread carefully in regards to the Soviet Union, in turn

both supporting it and struggling against domination from that quarter. The hegemonism of the Soviets therefore further exacerbated the divisions and polarization in the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie, by pitting various segments of the class even in different countries of the "socialist bloc" against one another. The petty-bourgeois "professional communist" regime thus comes under challenge from both "above" and "below," the result of its own tendency to polarize, particularly by producing "new bourgeois" elements. At the same time, the hierarchical stratification which is typical of the professions on the whole is now extended to include the international role of the social-imperialists. Therefore just as polarization of the Soviet petty bourgeoisie threatened its unity domestically, so social-imperialism strained its class rule in the "bloc" also.

It was of course the workers and peasants in these nations who suffered the most from such relations, since they had not only to contend with their own domestic ruling stratum of petty-bourgeois "professional communists," but had to combat as well the power of the social-imperialists of the Soviet Union. Therefore the petty bourgeoisie of the Eastern European countries found their role once again truly in the "middle," only this time within the structure of the "socialist social system" itself, between their own working classes and the Soviets. The petty-bourgeois ideology of a "classless" state, operating smoothly to

implement its professionalist values, became more and more difficult to maintain. Particularly on the international plane, the existence of class conflict was apparent to all, and it became harder to dismiss this as the fault of "outside" forces when the challenge arose increasingly from within the "socialist bloc" itself.

As the contradictions deepened, the struggle to extract productive labor from an ever more alienated working population became harder and harder.[35] The lethargy of the Soviet economy, whose growth rate had slowed perceptibly, and which was plagued by low productivity, was incapable of reversing its decline as long as the existing class rule was maintained. One result was the turning for credits and investment to the West, to which the Soviets and East Europeans were by the late 1980s in debt by tens of billions of dollars. This meant that the workers of these countries increasingly had to work to pay interest to the imperialists, and the petty bourgeoisie were once again reduced to partial dependence on the capitalists, making them vulnerable to all the "shocks" of the global economic system, such as those caused by the disruption of oil supplies in the 1970s.

Thus under "socialism" the petty bourgeois class finally comes face to face with its historic destiny: that left to its own devices it tends to restore the very forces which have always oppressed it, and increasingly comes under the sway once again of international capitalism. The

fundamental point is that the petty bourgeoisie alone cannot stop this process of polarization, which in the "socialist social system" as under capitalism leads to renewed weakness. Only by accepting its "future," that is, the proletarianization that awaits it, can it escape this "fate." This drives it back toward the working class, to save it from its own "worst self," its internal regeneration of capitalist forces. For it to take the proletarian direction, however, the working class itself must gain in power, and the last barriers to its rule over the entire society must be removed. So far I have examined what might be called the "negative" aspects of the dialectic of the petty bourgeoisie in the "socialist social system," those elements which contribute to its polarization, disintegration, and weakening, that represent its specific attempt to try to hold history back, and that prepare it from within for the overthrow of its "professional communist" regime. But there is a "positive" side to this contradiction as well, which raises up the class forces that correspond to the new forms of society, and that must eventually carry out the actual revolutionary overthrow of the petty-bourgeois rule of the professionals, replacing it with a proletarian socialism.

Not only can the petty bourgeoisie not hold back the development of the proletariat indefinitely, they must push it forward by the very working out of their own dialectical contradictions. The principle form which this takes is the

contribution which they must make to the education of the working class, thereby preparing it further for its historic role. In this case, what determines the course of development is the specific nature of the challenge which the petty bourgeois professionals mount against the bourgeoisie proper, and the need they have for support from a significant segment of the proletariat to carry this out successfully. For the historic "competition" that the "professional communist" petty bourgeoisie hopes to win against their capitalist antagonists requires a very full mobilization of the society over which they rule. This means in turn both a high degree of education in its more general academic sense for the workers, but also the involvement of the working class in the promotion of economic development, and their participation in socialist politics as well. These processes are distorted and do not have as their end goal proletarian power, but they lead part way in the direction of it nonetheless.

Thus despite the unequal opportunities for schooling between the children of the "intelligentsia" and of workers in the Soviet Union, there was nevertheless a considerable effort to raise the educational level of the entire proletariat, in order to produce the skilled labor and pool of experts needed by the society. Szymanski remarks that: "The system of part-time, night and adult education programmes is probably the most extensive in the world."[36] Participation in such forms of schooling was apparently

high, with 20 million workers continuing their training.[37] All education was explicitly "socialist" in content:

> Socialization begins very early in life and continues throughout adulthood by means of intensive propaganda, exhorting everyone to work better and harder for the triumph of communism. . . . Although Marxism-Leninism is the only philosophy that can be expressed freely in the Soviet Union, it does not follow that social values coincide with official doctrine.[38]

Though much of this ideology was learned by rote, and often ignored or violated in practice, by both the regime and the population, socialist goals and its basic theoretical tenets were familiar to even the average worker.[39] A similar relation also exists regarding the economic and political administration, where in spite of the overall domination of "professional communists," the proletariat is enlisted to participate as "junior partners" in the regime, especially through the mass organizations. The working class gains experience and education by taking part in such social activities, even though they are dominated by others.

Thus some 95 per cent of the workers belonged to trade unions, and every production unit was unionized,[40] compared to the United States, where unionization is a constant struggle, and well under 20 per cent of the working class is organized. The Soviet unions were advanced precisely in their role of helping to administer the society. In addition to widespread production and welfare functions, they were instruments in the political schooling of the

workers in the official doctrine of socialism, in close relationship with the party and state, for which they served as "transmission belts" to the masses.

> All the unions' various activities at the grass-roots level are carried out through committees established within each enterprise. A typical union local thus might have special committees dealing with wages, housing, grievances, social security, recreation, and innovations or suggestions. Since the workers have a good deal of opportunity to participate in union work through such committees, the unions, like all Soviet mass organizations, also fulfill the important functions of political socialization and elite recruitment. Through such participation, the worker is socialized to the processes of Soviet administration; and by organizing this kind of participation, the leadership is able to discover activists with various kinds of talents who can then be recruited to more responsible work. In turn, the opportunity to participate in public life which this system offers to any worker must be a source of considerable satisfaction for great numbers of workers and give them a personal interest in "their own" enterprise.[41]

Whatever "satistaction" occurred was certainly tainted by the general subordination of the unions and the overall control by managers and professionals. In particular, lack of independence led to their rejection by workers as a sufficient or valid form of class organization. But union work did serve as a training ground for social administration and the spread of socialist ideology. These activities, though falling far short of proletarian class rule, made of the unions those "schools of communism" that Lenin envisioned, even if the manner in which this occurred was but a pale reflection of his intentions.

Each of these forms of educating the proletariat serves to heighten the contradictions between its actual

power in society and its theoretical preeminence. This creates growing frustrations on the part of workers.

> One of the principal findings of Soviet industrial sociology has been that the extension of education has created aspirations for a "creative" job content that the existing structure of job opportunities frequently cannot satisfy. The result had been a "surplus" of educated workers in the special sense that their formal schooling is in excess of that required for effective performance of the many routine, manual, or assembly-line types of jobs that must be filled. Much of the recent Soviet concern with job dissatisfaction is explicitly centered on this issue of the apparent "disproportion" between the level of formal schooling and limited opportunities for intellectually rewarding work.[42]

Thus: "'The highly educated worker now coming into the factory is prepared to assume greater responsibility for the affairs of production and the organization of labor.'"[43] Denial of this opportunity is one reason for the excessively high turnover rate--20 per cent per year in the factories.[44] At times the situation boiled over into forms of labor "dissidence," including strikes, despite their illegality, and even attempts at independent trade union organization.

Thus, though it was dissident intellectuals who were most prominent in struggles against the Soviet regime,

> recent strikes, although isolated until now, suggest that the working class is not immune to this upsurge of demands. A spontaneous trade-union movement has grown up out of protests against infringements of the labour laws; these have met with instant and violent repressions, and leaders being imprisoned or expelled. The movement has been obliged to modify its methods accordingly.[45]

But greater trade union independence or even worker self-management in factories would not have ended the problem,

for the conditions extended outside the workplace. There was a growing proletarian demand for an increasing degree of "self-activity" and greater equality in the society at large as well, especially as more of them received opportunities for higher levels of education. As the educational monopoly of the professionals was increasingly lost, their class rule necessarily came under a growing challenge: "The spread of education breeds a tendency to criticism--of the privileges enjoyed by the elite, in particular--and new aspirations among the young."[46]

Like other systems, this one also broke first at its weakest link: the contradictory aspects which arose from the control of society by the petty-bourgeois "professional communists" was revealed most dramatically in Poland, with the rise of the Solidarity trade union. This independent movement of workers exposed the degeneracy of the regime, beginning most notably with the failure of its "planned" economy to provide elementary and regular provisions of foodstuffs and other necessities at affordable prices, which in turn resulted in large measure from the stifling of all initiative by the proletariat and peasantry. Instead, a swollen and self-protective ruling stratum, far from proving its superior qualities, had shown that by itself petty-bourgeois "expertise" was no substitute for the involvement of the working class. Nor had matters stopped there: as the economy drifted into stagnation in the 1960s, the autonomy of the entire nation was

undermined. Beginning in 1971, the Gierek regime turned to the West for industrial capital, and thus, as a Solidarity publication was later to put it: "'Inefficiencies of the system and inefficiencies of economic policy have been compensated for by growing foreign credits. Capitalist bankers have had to finance the economic inefficiencies of our state planned economy.'"[47] By 1980 Poland was hopelessly indebted to the imperialists, having borrowed more than $25 billion, almost half the Eastern European debt, requiring enormous interest payments. The situation fed on itself:

> "However, these loans have to be repaid, with interest, which is possible only if the economy is effective. But given economic failures, conpensation cannot be made for a long time and becomes another factor in the crisis. . . . The country has to pay more for interest and loan backpayment than export brings in return for commodities. This means that all imports have to be paid for by additional credit."[48]

The relation to international capitalism thus resembled that of many "Third World" countries. This financial dependency was in turn only the other side of the coin of the economic, political, and military subordination to the Soviets, who propped up the ruling stratum and reserved the "right" to intervene.

Of course a relative handful of professionals and managers, particularly in the top ranks of the "professional communist" party and state administration did benefit from this arrangement, not only by a complete monopoly of power to run the society, but in more immediate

material ways, as the "scandals" regarding their wealthy lifestyle, personal use of public property, and even foreign escapades exposed after 1980 made abundantly clear.[49] As one worker eloquently put it:

> "What I see here . . . is what has happened since the beginning of time all over the world. After the war they started out well in Poland, with most people being more or less equal, but then it fell apart. Now it is the rich getting richer--I mean our privileged people--and the rest of us getting poorer. There has to be some kind of control over those who are ruling. They live like Westerners."[50]

In fact a true bourgeois element was developing in Poland,

> as public-spiritedness declined among Party officials and managers, a pattern of cynical privilege-hoarding degenerated into a system of rampant petty and not so petty corruption. It's easy to see, for example, how anyone whose job involved contact with the West could quickly conjure an extraordinary fortune in zlotys. Poles refer over and over to the case of Maciej Szcsepanski, the head of the state television network, who, it is said, managed to obtain a yacht, a private jet, and a villa in Kenya before his recent ouster. Gierek is said to have spotted himself ten villas around the country; the one in which he is currently living, according to a recent expose, cost twenty-seven million zlotys to build--funds skimmed off the budgets of a variety of highway and mass-housing projects. Such corruption, in all fairness, is relatively small-time compared with some of the scandalous examples one finds in the West; but in a country as poor as Poland, and one that at least claims to aspire to an egalitarian ideal, this pattern of inequality has been a cause of increasing public frustration.[51]

Of course, this "petty and not so petty corruption" had arisen to some degree throughout the Soviet bloc, but specific aspects of Polish history--notably the long legacy of struggle against domination by Russia or the West, and the role of the Catholic Church as a focus of national consciousness--helped bring the contradictions to a head in

Poland. Above all, the recurring struggle of its workers to reverse the degeneracy of the regime and "renew" socialist society was unique in Eastern Europe.

Outbreaks of worker unrest in Poland in 1956, 1970, and 1976 were relatively spontaneous and easily if bloodily ended, though the first two led to changes in the ruling group. But the class lines had been drawn. When the movement arose again in 1980, two things altered its character. One was the change in the makeup of the Polish working class itself.

> The appearance of independent militancy in the working class was not just a matter of resistance to high prices and low wages. Another factor was the great expansion of higher education. By 1975, nearly half of all students in higher education were workers or of worker origin. But at the same time, the chances of social promotion were narrowing. The industrial 'leap forward' of the previous years had absorbed another wave of educated young workers into management, which was now saturated. . . . The Party, a traditional social escalator, was also blocked as its bureaucracy became a self-perpetuating and to some extent hereditary elite. Ambitious, educated young men and women who would certainly have been recruited upwards ten years before now stayed on the factory floor; they were the natural leaders of discontented workers and were soon to emerge as local Solidarity activists.[52]

This development specifically underlay the formation of the movement:

> The gap between description and reality--the "sham" nature of everything . . . became particularly hard to bear as Poland's enormous post-war expansion of public education began to produce generations of increasingly well-informed and reflective men and women.[53]

As Lech Walesa, the main leader of Solidarity, expressed it:

> I belong to the generation of workers who, born in the villages and hamlets of rural Poland, had the

> opportunity to acquire education and find employment in industry, becoming in the course conscious of their rights and importance in society. These were the years of awakening aspiration of workers and peasants, but also years of many wrongs, degradations and lost illusions.[54]

Clearly the educational monopoly of the professionals was crumbling.

Secondly, worker activists like Walesa had made links with intellectuals, notably KOR, the Committee for Workers' Defense, which included ex-party members who helped them to organize and served as advisers. The division which had marked the student uprising of 1968 and the worker rebellion of 1970, each ignoring or even opposing the other, no longer existed. Their new knowledge, moreover, specifically included socialism: "The Polish regime has, at least, given its working class a socialist education."[55] Thus:

> I have heard several Solidarity spokesmen scoff at the government's accusations that they are anti-socialist. "On the contrary," they insist, "socialism consists in the social ownership of the means of production, which is precisely what we advocate."
>
> . . . although Solidarity (and society) may not yet have arrived at a consensus on how to proceed from here, there is virtually no one in Poland who advocates a restitution of a capitalist free market. "There is a profound egalitarian impulse at the heart of the Solidarity movement," explains a Warsaw sociologist who had spent time in the West. "Maybe that's one valuable legacy of the thirty-five years of Communist rule here: people have been exposed to those slogans for so long that now they want to make them real. . . ."[56]

Warsaw Solidarity sponsored an "openly Marxist magazine," another branch distributed "What Is To Be Done?" by Lenin.[57] Or as Lech Walesa again put it:

> "All of this is taking place in the name of the rebuilding of socialism. But a basic question arises: Can socialism be built without workers or against workers?"[58]

Education in socialist theories also came from KOR and other advisers. Resistance to capitalism, to Soviet social-imperialism, and to domestic rule of "professional communists" all combined to produce Solidarity. In retrospect, it is nevertheless difficult to know to what extent there was a committment to "socialist renewal" here, and how much was the "self-limiting" recognition of the power relationships in Poland in 1980. It seems most likely that there were always competing and opposing forces within Solidarity, some of which truly wanted to move toward a more proletarian socialism, and others of whom from the beginning hoped that the entire system could be overthrown and replaced with a "market" economy.

As early as 1970, Polish strikers insisted that "'the earnings of the Party and government apparatus should be limited to the level of average industrial earnings.'"[59] In 1976, Polish workers at Radom broke into party headquarters and passed out stocks of meat to the crowd amid shouts of "'Red Bourgeoisie.'"[60] Then they torched the building. "All over Poland, workers protested against the special pay and privileges reserved for the Party elite."[61] Now Solidarity greatly expanded such demands: that independent and self-governing trade unions and the right to strike be recognized; that the needs of workers be met, by

redistribution of the economic product; and that an end be put to inequalities and privileges. Thus property belonging to the party and state which served only the "professional communists" was reclaimed and converted to social uses. Above all, Solidarity demanded a halt to the monopolization of politics, culture, and ideology by the "professional communist" regime. As Walesa put it:

> "We cannot grant the monopoly of political wisdom to every new ruling team that gets power after political shake-ups and palace games. . . . Mistakes have happened too often."[62]

Solidarity insisted on truthful information--"Give over making us eat lies"[63]--access to the media, and that it be listened to, so that the power base of the "professional communists," resting on secrecy and the exclusive possession of knowledge, would be broken. Only if workers "'know what they are working for'" could the economy be "renewed."

A particular aspect of this struggle was the determination of Solidarity to delegitimize the historic monopolization of knowledge and the belief that it should be better rewarded.

> The movement's first concern has been for its poorest members. Wage demands, for instance, have always been on an across-the-board rather than a percentage basis. Everybody, no matter what his current salary, gets an extra thousand zlotys rather than an extra five per cent. As a researcher, I have no objection to seeing a factory worker get paid more than I do; after all, I enjoy my work, while his is often drudgery. And I think my attitude is fairly common among professionals here in Poland. I think I'd be hard pressed, though, to find a similar attitude among professionals in the West."

Indeed, it would be hard to find a parallel there, for while such an "abstention" from profit-making offers nothing to most Western members of the professions, in an ostensibly socialist country, the decision to voluntarily "collectivize" their mental "holdings" began to resolve the class contradictions which face most petty bourgeois professionals. At the same time, they prevented the historic response of the Polish "communist" regime to working class rebellion, the paying off of the upper levels of the proletariat with special emergency wage increases and food distributions, thus dividing some workers against the others.

The "professional communists" of Poland who by changing leaders in each crisis strove to cover over social divisions and thereby preserve the "independence" of their class and prevent its proletarianization, were thus back where they started: unable to escape these very same contradictions. "Above" them stood the Western imperialists and Soviet social-imperialists, determined to keep them "in line"; "below" them were the masses of workers, calling for "renewal." That the choices thus presenting themselves often seemed "impossible" to these rules can hardly come as a surprise, for there is in fact no way out historically for the petty bourgeoisie as a permanent "middle class." Unwilling to lead the struggle of the mass of workers, and to put themselves truly on the side of the revolutionary proletariat, but equally afraid

of the social-imperialists, who threatened to intervene if Solidarity was allowed to go too far, they reacted simply by clinging to their own monopolization of power. Indeed, nothing so terrified them as when Solidarity turned "political," a development which they consistently denounced as beyond its scope: for a truly politicized working class is the greatest threat they face. Thus above all it was declared that Solidarity should not try to attain political power. Backed by the Soviets, they were reduced to name-calling and arrogance. Thus they labelled Solidarity "anti-socialist," and stated that Walesa was "'a charismatic figure who did not have the education to perform such high political functions.'"[65] Nothing could reveal better the depoliticization they imposed on, and the scorn in which they held, the masses of "uneducated" workers.

Given the refusal of the regime to share real power, its constant "cheating" on agreements already reached, and its brutality against Solidarity, it can be no wonder that the latter turned away from such a "socialism." Having initially "limited" its revolution, largely in order to avoid Soviet intervention, the movement found nevertheless that with the economy in shambles and official authority dissolving, it had to play a role in administering society. Thus it was the proletariat itself which outlined a "new" social order, drawing in its wake the largely private remnants of the peasant class, students, intellectuals, and

even many party members, who refused to desert the workers. Solidarity was therefore forced in a few short months to begin to devise a program which would solve the most fundamental issues of socialist society. That given such circumstances, the historic weakness of "spontaneous" working-class movements would in part emerge, was virtually inevitable. Lacking a fully developed program of its own, reluctant to take political power, and increasingly torn between its more radical and reformist wings, Solidarity was unprepared for the crack-down by the regime when it inevitably came.

There had nevertheless reemerged with Solidarity the mass, class-conscious organization of the proletariat, acting "for itself," demanding an end to its exploitation by all other classes, ten million strong, "asserting their right to be subjects as well as objects of history."[66] This is the most basic step toward the demise of the rule of the "professional communists." It was the worker masses themselves who claimed leadership of the nation, and assumed the actual coordination of social life. The result was an explosion of "self-activity." Secondly, these workers acted not only in their own interests, but as the guide for all those who opposed the "professional communist" regime. In particular, it was the proletariat that "educated" the intellectuals, who "were content to act as ancillaries to the revolt of the working class,"[67] serving as advisers to it or forming their own unions.

Thus the petty-bourgeois mass base of the regime began to melt away, as hundreds of thousands of Communists either gave up their party cards or were expelled, but not before bringing about a temporary democratization. With a third of its members, especially among the proletariat, joining Solidarity, political power was no longer the monopoly of the regime. It was precisely this "duality," this dissolution of their authority, which drove the "professional communists" to declare a "state of war" against the very workers on whom their claim to legitimacy theoretically rested. Finally, they found no way out except through the iron heel of martial law and that "executive power" which is the last resort of their class. But though temporarily crushed, Solidarity had released the forces that would return to overthrow the "professional communist" regime ten years later.

As Walesa had predicted, however, the Polish "professional communists" not only were unable to build their "socialism" without the workers, but they could not even maintain the minimal well-being and development of the society as a whole. Within a few months Solidarity began to revive, now largely underground. More and more segments of the social body withdrew their support of the regime, and began to build the elements of "civil society" underneath the oppressive shell of the "professional communist" state. As the economy spiralled ever more rapidly downward, strikes and other manifestations of

discontent spread once again. It became apparent that the monopolization of political power and ideological control by "professional communists" was no longer supportable, and that the very existence of the society was being threatened by their refusal to include the working class in the administration of the Polish state and industry. In a historic "compromise," Solidarity was relegalized, and the parliament was "redistributed" between the popular forces, led by the union, and the "professional communist" regime. It was the former, in very short time, who were in fact to gain dominatation over the state.

NOTES

1. Lenin, "Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.), 189.

2. Meyer, The Soviet Political System, 51.

3. The 1983 "Forbes 400" list of wealthiest persons in the United States listed fifteen with an estimated minimum net worth of one billion dollars or more. See New York Times, September 28, 1983, B1. In 1978, there were 2,041 persons with adjusted gross personal incomes of a million dollars or more. See New York Times, July 19, 1981, 3.

4. Mervyn Matthews, Privilege in the Soviet Union: A Study of Elite Life-Styles Under Communism (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978), 30-34.

5. Loren, Classes in the United States, 32.

6. Matthews, Privilege in the Soviet Union, 177.

7. Ibid., 179-80.

8. Kerblay, Modern Soviet Society, 166.

9. Matejko, Social Change and Stratification in Eastern Europe, 147.

10. W. Keizer, The Soviet Quest for Economic Rationality: The Conflict of Economic and Political Aims in the Soviet Economy 1953-1968 (Rotterdam: Rotterdam University Press, 1971), 123.

11. Alec Nove, The Soviet Economic System, 24.

12. Marshall I. Goldman, U.S.S.R. in Crisis: The Failure of an Economic System (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1983), 101-3.

13. Nove, The Soviet Economic System, 211.

14. Goldman, U.S.S.R. in Crisis, 101.

15. Bahro, The Alternative in Eastern Europe, 397: "Given the existing economic system, society in fact gets ever more deeply stuck in that system of incentives in which it is only the bonus that ensures a more or less adequate intensity and quality of labor."

16. New York Times, September 15, 1984, 2.

17. Guardian, May 30, 1984, 17.

18. Nove, The Soviet Economic System, 210.

19. Yankowitch, Social and Economic Inequality in the Soviet Union, 30-31.

20. Bahro, The Alternative in Eastern Europe, 397.

21. Lenin, "The Collapse of the Second International," 243.

22. V. I. Lenin, "The International Socialist Congress in Stuttgart," in Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 13, 82.

23. Bahro, The Alternative in Eastern Europe, 60.

24. Mao Tse-tung, "Remarks at the Spring Festival, Summary Record, February 13, 1964," in Schram, Chairman Mao Talks to the People, 198-99.

25. Schram, Chairman Mao Talks to the People, 325, n. 9.

26. See H. W. Edwards, Labor Aristocracy: Mass Base of Social Democracy (Stockholm: Aurora, 1978), 310-11: "But most of the gripes I heard centered on the Russians. Having paid for up-to-date equipment, I was told the Ghanaians got mainly 20-year-old material obsolete on arrival even in European socialist countries. . . . Is it any wonder, then, that the conclusion drawn by such Ghanaians was that European socialists, being white, felt that second-hand merchandise was 'good enough for black people.'" For a particularly blatant example of such racism see "The Adventures of Little Kofi," a "blackface"-style cartoon published by Sputnik (Moscow), 3, no. 1, January, 1967, reproduced as Appendix II, 405-11.

27. See H. W. Edwards, The Anatomy of Revisionism (Stockholm: Aurora, 1979), 339, where a Czech magazine editor complains about the "unfair" competition of the Chinese for influence in Africa, because "They allow their technicians to live in these countries just like the natives." When asked if that was not "what socialism was all about," the same editor answered: "You cannot expect a

European with a high standard of living to take a big cut in standards in order to help these countries." See also H. W. Edwards, Labor Aristocracy: Mass Base of Social Democracy, 310-311, which notes the "personal exclusiveness of the Russians" and their "'clannishness.'"

28. See Hinton, Shenfan, 89-90, for an example of the heavy-handed imposition of large-scale machinery farming in Long Bow village, which failed because: "The whole project departed from the principle of self-reliance and voluntary participation."

29. Szymanski, Is the Red Flag Flying?, 103.

30. Thus Bahro, The Alternative in Eastern Europe, 59, where speaking of "Third World" countries he states: "This state [strong] power must be in charge of any 'development aid' that comes from outside with technical knowledge, and is therefore always inclined to fall into the old colonial manner. . . . And if such advisers are now coming from the Soviet Union itself, as well as from the other countries tied to it, the same arrangements must apply to them too, until they have given proof of their internationalist solidarity and fraternity."

31. See Lawrence Wechsler, Solidarity: Poland in the Season of Its Passion, with a foreword by William W. Winpisinger (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982), 110, on the provision by the Soviets of cheap energy to the Polish economy without an equal return in terms of trade. In contrast, see Giovanni Graziani, "Dependency Structures in COMECON," and Patrick Clawson, "The Character of Societ Economic Relations With Third World Countries," in Review of Radical Political Economics, 13, no. 1 (Spring 1981), 67-75, 76-84. See also How Capitalism Has Been Restored in the Soviet Union, Red Papers 7, 64-65.

32. See Edwards, The Anatomy of Revisionism, sections on "The Peaceful Road to Socialism," "Revisionism and Class Struggle at the International Level," and "International Consequences of 'Peaceful Co-Existence,'" 62-94.

33. Dittmer, Liu Shao-ch'i and the Chinese Cultural Revolution, 45: "In 1961, [Khrushchev] advocated the 'parliamentary road' as a legitimate alternative to violent revolution: 'The transition to socialism in countries with a developed parliamentary tradition may be effected by utilizing parliament, and in other countries by utilizing institutions conforming to their national traditions.' Soviet relations with the Third World accordingly emphasized 'revolution from above' by support for 'national bourgeois' leaders (even without proletarian hegemony) and also through technical assistance to emerging nations. Chinese criticisms of these Soviet policies later found

their echoes in GPCR [Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution] allegations that Liu Shao-ch'i advocated a 'parliamentary road,' 'peaceful coexistence' with capitalist imperialism and reaction, reduction of aid to wars of national liberation, and so on."

34. See Edwards, The Anatomy of Revisionism, 96-99.

35. Goldman, U.S.S.R. in Crisis, 100.

36. Szymanski, Is the Red Flag Flying?, 72.

37. Kerblay, Modern Soviet Society, 167. See also 160.

38. Ibid., 270.

39. Ibid., 289.

40. Szymanski, Is the Red Flag Flying?, 55.

41. Meyer, The Soviet Political System, 333.

42. Yanowitch, Social and Economic Inequality in the Soviet Union, 143.

43. Ibid.

44. Kerblay, Modern Soviet Society, 190.

45. Ibid., 298. See also 53, 142.

46. Ibid., 305.

47. Quoted in Starski, Class Struggle in Classless Poland, 102.

48. Ibid.

49. Neal Ascherson, The Polish August: The Self-Limiting Revolution (New York: The Viking Press, 1982), 119-20.

50. New York Times, August 29, 1980, A5.

51. Wechsler, Solidarity, 8-9.

52. Ascherson, The Polish August, 136-37.

53. Ibid., 275.

54. New York Times, December 12, 1983, A10.

55. Ascherson, The Polish August, 16.

56. Wechsler, Solidarity, 67.

57. Ascherson, The Polish August, 138.

58. New York Times, December 16, 1983, A9.

59. Ascherson, The Polish August, 241.

60. Ibid., 113.

61. Ibid., 114.

62. New York Times, December 16, 1983, A9.

63. Ascherson, The Polish August, 282. The line is from an anonymous poem which circulated in the main hall of the 1980 strike at the Lenin Shipyards in Gdansk.

64. Wechsler, Solidarity, 67. The quote is from the same "Western sociologist" cited earlier.

65. Middletown (NY) Times Herald Record, January 7, 1982, 7.

66. Ascherson, The Polish August, 16.

67. Ibid., 219.

CONCLUSION

THE HISTORIC DESTINY OF THE PROFESSIONAL PETTY BOURGEOISIE

This work has demonstrated several main aspects of the professional petty bourgeoisie, which may now be summarized:

First, the petty bourgeois class lies "between labor and capital" and not only shares in the capitalistic development of modern society, but generates such tendencies from within itself.

Second, "new" professional and managerial strata are united with the "old" small-scale entrepreneurial elements in the petty bourgeoisie, and no "newer" classes are needed to explain them.

Third, all segments of the petty bourgeois class reveal the same basic economic, political, and ideological forms, especially the effort to escape their polarization and proletarianization.

Fourth, these efforts take the form in particular of an ideology which proclaims the petty bourgeoisie as "classless" and tries to prevent even any knowledge of the struggle of classes.

Fifth, all these aspects of the petty bourgeois class are carried over into the "socialist social system," where

it plays the role of both maintaining and expanding bourgeois relations.

Sixth, the petty bourgeoisie tries to freeze the transition to socialism at an incomplete stage, in which the "professional communists" assume leadership of both the class and all society.

Seventh, these efforts fail, because the internal dynamic of the petty bourgeois professionals leads to their polarization and a heightening of the contradictory aspects of their regime.

Finally, the monopoly of the means of mental production by the petty bourgeois professionals comes increasingly into conflict with the expanding knowledge of the proletariat.

In this growing contradiction, the first class conflicts between the working class and the professional petty bourgeoisie focused explicitly on the issue of who will control the ideas of society have already broken out. It is the further development of this dialectic and the conclusions which may be drawn from it which must now be examined. As was seen above, "professional communism" has exhibited all the attributes, all the internal polarizations and class divisions, of every other form of petty bourgeois professionalism. It has provided no "classless" escape from history for itself or the petty bourgeoisie as a whole. The inescapable contradiction of the petty bourgeois professionals has therefore once more

been starkly revealed, and their "destiny" stands clearly before them. Thus even while the startling suddenness of the collapse of much of the "socialist social system" caught most analysts, myself included, by surprise, beneath the dramatic developments the underlying class dynamic has been understood from the time of Marx onward, resting on his examination of the petty bourgeoisie. A brief and necessarily sketchy review of these events reveals the historical "choices" confronting the professional petty bourgeoisie, both those in power and those leading the revolt. Such an examination will also lay the basis for understanding the possibilities for the proletarian and socialist movements at this time, and the longterm developments which are forming the material base for new class relationships that can no longer be contained within the "shell" of petty bourgeois professionalism.

From the early days of the "dissident" movement in Eastern Europe, its class character was quite clearly revealed. Konrád and Szelényi caught this perfectly when they observed that:

> For today's Eastern European intelligentsia . . . marginality represents not a road to power but one leading away from it. They are confronted not with the power of an alien class but with the power of their own class.[1]

However bitter at times, this was a struggle within the various sub-strata of the petty bourgeois professionals. Thus even among the dissidents, some called for a renewal of the role of the "professional revolutionary" and a

"purified" socialism, while others embraced an empiricism which "would simply leave ideological value-judgments to one side."[2] What provided the underlying "unity" of all these groupings, not only in relation to each other, but to the regime they were opposing as well, was their common membership in the professional petty bourgeoisie. Thus regardless of the specifics of their political positions, they reflected the "classless" ideology of the "middle class."

> The working class can acquire some degree of class power only if it formulates its class-consciousness; the intelligentsia, on the other hand, can make its class power secure only if it refuses to formulate its class-consciousness; or, if that is impossible, if it merely assigns it a heuristic value and guards against drawing any ideological consequences from it. For that reason the intelligentsia is extremely diffident about its own power. For its sake the intellectuals cling to the notion of a unitary culture, centered upon a "constructive," hierarchical value-system derived from the universal concept of man. . . . Those whom the elite has driven into marginality are the only ones in a position to recognize the class character of the intelligentsia, and they, understandably, are not anxious to identify themselves, even as a class, with the elite.[3]

But in thus refusing to identify themselves in terms of classes, the "dissidents" merely affirmed the "classless" ideology of the "professional communist" regime, even if only in negative terms.

However, as this work has shown, the denial of class and ideology by the petty bourgeoisie, including its professional stratum, is but one weapon in its attempt to escape the struggle of classes, and specifically to avoid both its proletarianization and the rise to power of a

revolutionary socialist proletariat. What further united the "dissidents" and their opponents was that both turned their backs on the working class as a political actor. Thus

> a portion of the scientific intelligentsia desired reforms that would introduce the economic efficiency and political freedoms necessary to enable the regime to maintain its position in the world. . . .
> . . . It is by no means certain that the working people, with their anti-intellectual traditions, sympathize with the demands of this handful of intellectuals, whom they regard as privileged individuals, or even as traitors. . . .
> . . . Nor is there any evidence or an alliance between the dissidence of intellectuals and workers' demands. In any case, the dissidents never address the people, turning always to the authorities or to world opinion.[4]

In this same period, the passage of such dissidents as Rudolph Bahro from East to West Germany, and "From Red to Green."

Bahro exemplified this newer "classless" and "universal" politics.

> The class struggle is not the solution. The problem is the dissolution of the entire formation itself. From scientific socialism I have returned to utopian socialism, and politically I have moved from a class-dimensional to a populist orientation.[5]

The political "displacement" here is expressed quite explicitly:

> . . . I want to withdraw energy from the class conflict. If I discuss with a factory worker who wants to get involved in politics, I would advise him to invest one little finger of one hand in the trade union and to invest the rest in the new social movement. Trade union activity is a retrograde step. It's not good when Capital takes more than it should, but this whole defensive struggle takes place on a carousel which guarantees the continued reproduction of the system.[6]

Even Solidarity, in the view of Bahro, had a structure "of popular resistance and not of a class-against-class formation."[7]

In such formulations and movements the proletariat was either ignored altogether or "dissolved" into "the people." Given such an ideological orientation, no class difference was expressed by the distinction between "socialist" or "anti-socialist" positions. Thus "dissidents" in the Soviet Union often moved from the one to the other, but their ideologies continued to rest on the same basis as those still in power. So too, when the new technocratic element within the party began to seriously demand reforms, they did so in the name of the same class interests as the older generation they hoped to replace. Thus when Mikhail Gorbachev first put forth his plans for reform, it was all done in the name of "socialist" renewal. "The essence of perestroika lies in the fact that <u>it unites socialism with democracy</u> and revives the Leninist concept of socialist construction both in theory and practice."[8]

But the formulas of Gorbachev, unlike those of Lenin, had a "classless" basis:

> More socialism means a more dynamic pace and creative endeavor, more organization, law and order, more scientific methods and initiative in economic management, efficiency in administration, and a better and materially richer life for the people.
>
> More socialism means more democracy, openness and collectivism in everyday life, more culture and humanism in production, social and personal relations among people, more dignity and self-respect for the individual.
>
> More socialism means more patriotism and aspiration to noble ideals, more active civic concern about the

> country's internal affairs and about their positive influence in international affairs.
>
> In other words, more of all those things which are inherent in socialism and in the theoretical precepts which characterize it as a distinct socio-economic formation.[9]

In fact, there is virtually nothing in "all those things" which distinguishes such a "socialism" from the ideals of bourgeois society. Only "collectivism" might serve as the basis of a "distinct socio-economic formation," but as only one word in this shopping list of categories to which any good bourgeoisie, "big" or petty, would subscribe, it can hardly be considered so.

It is in reality what is not there, the total lack of reference to class relations, much less the proletariat, as the foundation of socialism, that robs even "collective" forms of any meaningful socialist content. It is this which makes the words which come next ring so hollow:

> We will proceed toward better socialism rather than away from it. We are saying this honestly, without trying to fool our own people or the world. Any hopes that we will begin to build a different, non-socialist society and go over to the other camp are unrealistic and futile.[10]

It is not the "honesty" of these lines as written at the time that is in question here. It is the class relations which were even then forcing Gorbachev and his followers to choose. Their choice was either to renew the proletarian basis of socialism, by actually mobilizing the workers to overthrow the petty bourgeois "professional communist" regime and all the "middle classes" on which it rested, or be forced by the internal contradictions of their system to

move inevitably "to the other camp." Instead, Gorbachev and his more "radical" supporters and challengers, such as Boris Yeltsin, stressed the "democratization" of the system in forms which were stripped of any remnants of class struggle for socialism. When the showdown came, in the attempted coup d'etat, all emphasis was put on the survival of "democracy," and none on the relations of classes which underlay the existing regime.

The inherent instability of the petty bourgeois class and of its "professional communist" state could therefore only dissolve either into a renewed proletarian socialism or toward capitalism. The petty bourgeoisie does not represent a "Third Way," except insofar as it is able to balance temporarily in the "middle" between the workers and the capitalists in the transition period. As Marx long ago explained, the "poles" of the petty bourgeois class cannot be endlessly reconciled, but must move dialectically in one direction or the other, depending on the relative strength of the proletariat and bourgeoisie. Rejecting even any remnant ideological claim as representatives of the working class, and riding the crest of a revolt of the classless "people," those who emerged triumphant from the coup represent the petty bourgeoisie standing alone, no longer with the proletariat "behind" them.

In such circumstances, they have no choice but to move toward the capitalist "pole" of their class, and in their weakened state, to place themselves again under the "wing"

of the "big" bourgeoisie. Thus Soviet leaders, whether eagerly as in the case of Yeltsin, or with apparent relunctance as in that of Gorbachev, embrace "market reforms," the euphemistic phrase by which they try to deny their abject surrender to capitalism. They thus follow in the footsteps of the East Europeans, who see those leaders most acceptable to the capitalists put into power:

> To make one thing clear from the start: The most important and influential person in Czechoslovakia today is not its playwright-President, Vaclav Havel. It is someone whose name will be less familiar, except maybe to a regular leader of The Economist, The Wall Street Journal and National Review. That man is Finance Minister Vaclav Klaus. He is what Chileans would call a "Chicago boy," an unreconstructed apostle of the economic theories of Friedrich von Hayek and Milton Friedman. He is also, since his election on October 13, the chair of Civic Forum, the loose grouping of intellectuals that brought down Czechoslovakia's decrepit Communist regime a year ago.[11]

Once caught in the inevitable logic of such a position, all pretence to independence for their class must be abandoned. The capitalists demand with increasing insistence that they renounce all claims and allies which represent their past relationships. Only on such a basis, will they be allowed to gather a few crumbs from the imperialist table, to prop up their disintegrating economies, no longer "socialist" and not yet fully capitalist.

> By offering to remove all Soviet troops from Cuba and hinting that four Kurile islands might after all be returned to Japan, Soviet and Russian leaders have, in effect, abandoned pride and begun begging for economic aid for their collapsing economies.[12]

They thus join the long line of "beggars," from the "Third World" and more recently Eastern Europe, who compete in

pleading for handouts and to be given preference in imperialist investments.

The "classless" popular revolts which swept Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in 1989-1991, therefore, were indeed the perfect example of "civil society" reclaiming its autonomy from the "communist" state, and reviving the forms of parliamentary democracy, however temporary these may shortly prove to be. But far from demonstrating that the "people" can establish democratic relations which are unrelated to classes, they have proven once again the truth of the Marxist analysis of the bourgeois nature of such structures, which have led within an historical blink of the eye to restoration of capitalist control. No other outcome was to be expected, since the proletariat had been systematically stripped of real power, and the advocates of "democracy" were in most cases committed also to "market reform." Those who were not, were quickly and ruthlessly pushed out of the way.

> Unceremoniously swept aside by the free-market tide were other economists of the Prague Spring generation such as Ota Sik, an adviser to Havel. Sik was the author of the New Economic Model that Czechoslovakia introduced in 1967, parallel with similar reforms in Hungary. Even he no longer has any illusions about the reforms of that era. But he has continued to argue in favor of not only a "social market economy but a socially just market economy with strongly ecological goals.". . .
>
> "To pursue a so-called third way is foolish," Klaus retorts. He wants "a market economy without any adjectives." Marketization must be swift and uncompromising, with the primary goal of breaking state economic monopolies, even at the cost of high unemployment.[13]

Thus does "civil society," resting on parliamentary guarantees and the undifferentiated power of "the people," lead directly to the "classless" future--of millions of unemployed workers.

In Germany, most of all, those who favored renewal of socialism with a greater degree of democratic participation, and who took the lead in stimulating the popular uprising, were quickly swept away as the East was swallowed up in reunification with the capitalist West. This stampede to join Western Europe and by extension to share in the bounty of United States-led capitalism was based in large measure on an almost willful naiveté about the working of "free markets." Thus: "In listening to Russians fascinated with the market's magical qualities, I felt as if I were being transported back to debates at the dawn of modern capitalism."[14] But more is involved than simply lack of knowledge or refusal to face reality, or even the real desire to escape the rigidity of the statist "socialist social system."

> Thanks to glasnost, thousands of them have traveled abroad for the first time. And coupled with the crisis of the Soviet economy, their encounter with the Western standard of living has been a shattering experience. To remind such persons that not all Americans share in capitalism's bounty is beside the point. They are interested in their own equivalents overseas, not the plight of the poor or the homeless.[15]

While such yearnings to some extent affected all classes, it was the petty bourgeois professionals, with both the access to travel and the real possibilities for

"westernization," who led the demands that the East become like Europe and the United States. Whatever thoughts some of them may earlier have had of going back to their Leninist roots, vanished in most cases when confronted with the lifestyle of their Western professional counterparts. Yet as Germany has shown, though some make the transition to milk, honey, and BMWs, many others even among the professionals find themselves losing rather than gaining class position.

Nor are things any better in Poland, the home of Solidarity. There, in a pattern repeated throughout the former "socialist bloc," many of those who only yesterday called themselves "communists," today scramble to become the capitalist entrepreneurs of a market economy. Thus "Poles see that the same people remain in charge of their factories and offices,"[16] even as they are put on the auction block to private capital. In this way, "professional communists" become capitalists, changing their "color," but not their class, unless of course they manage to rise into the "big" bourgeoisie.

With Lech Walesa largely representing the "worker" wing of the old Solidarity alliance, and Tadeusz Mazowiecki, one of its former advisers speaking for the "intellectual" branch, the Presidential election of 1990 might have been one between the proletarian and "middle class" programs for social renewal. But such was hardly the case, since "the two protagonists agree on the

essential thing, namely, the quick road to capitalism."[17] Walesa attacked, not the class basis of the new regime, but only the remnants of "communism," such as the "nomenklatura." "It is popular but purely cant--since, having forgotten the pledges of self-management and workers' control, Walesa the privatizer has no intention of giving working people any mastery over their labor."[18] Having won the presidency, he then appointed a government of "experts,"[19] and flew to Washington and New York, describing himself as a "businessman," and taking his place with the others insisting that capitalism has the obligation to reward "democratization" with economic "relief," in the form of cancelled debts, new loans and grants, and of course investment. Meanwhile, strikes against the "Solidarity" government spread.

Today, throughout Eastern Europe, it is the working class which everywhere bears the full brunt of "capitalization," and among them it is the women and ethnic minorities who suffer the most, as the full effects of the "free market" are compounded by abandonment of social services, a widespread return of clerical authority, and often reactionary regional and national conflicts, which have already broken out in civil war. Far from being an arena of "classless" social experimentation and movements, therefore, these societies have demonstrated the rapidity with which "the people" dissolves in the face of restored or looming capitalist exploitation into its component

parts, and renews the competing interests of classes, ethnic groups, and nations.

It is one of the great ironies of these developments, which must have even Mao laughing in the mausoleum he never wanted, that the China of Deng Hsiao-ping now claims to be the last great bastion of "socialism." The leader who before all others led the "socialist social system" down the "capitalist road," who said that "it makes no difference if a cat is black or white, as long as it catches mice," the slogan of whose regime was "to get rich is glorious," now takes umbrage at events in the Soviet Union. The nature of the "socialism" which the current leaders of China advocate, however, was best revealed in the massacre of June 1989 in and around Tiananmen Square,[20] a slaughter that in its ferocity and calculation, if not its scale, harks back to the great terror which Chiang Kai-shek unleashed on the communists in the 1920s. The youthful students who occupied Tiananmen, of course, were in large measure themselves already alienated from the "socialism" of the regime, but whatever chance for socialist renewal they might have represented was drowned in blood. Of perhaps even more significance, it was the workers who had joined them in opposition who were singled out for the most draconian treatment during and after the June days, as even in the midst of murder the regime tried to salvage through relative leniency the young members of their own class, while they executed the proletarian youth.

Through such means, the petty bourgeois and bourgeois "professional communists" cling a few more years to power.

It is, nevertheless, perhaps only in the "Third World," that a truly democratic and revolutionary proletarian socialism may be in the early stages of emerging. The defeats there at the hands of international capitalism, and particularly by United States imperialism, have been exceedingly hard and brutal, but the reaction has not been the same. On the level of state power, it is true that most of these countries, even those which call themselves socialist, have moved closer to the United States, the one "superpower" still on the field, and have adopted the forms of politics and economy calculated to win its favor. But beneath this level, the critique of "actually existing socialism" has found voice in mass movements in which the working class itself, united with the struggles of women, ethnic groups, youth, and so on, insists on more direct self-expression and political and economic power. In Nicaragua, for instance, the trade unions took their own initiatives in opposing the reprivatization and stripping of social services which the Chamorro government has tried to introduce, in a new assertion of independence in their relationship with the previously dominant Sandinista Liberation Front. In fact, worker militancy at times exceeded that of the latter party, which is undergoing its own internal challenges to its historic leaders, largely from those active in the mass

movements. Despite the relative openness with which the Frente Sandinista ruled, compared to the "professional communists" of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, they have shown considerable resistance to bridging the gap within the party between the top leadership and the mass working-class base of its supporters.[21]

Such examples give eloquent testimony to the strength of the "wall" which separates the "educated classes" from the workers and the mass organizations, even in the best socialist movements. The struggle to overcome this barrier is increasingly being made explicit in the programs of "Third World" socialist movements, such as the Partido dos Trabalhadores, or PT, in Brazil. This "was designed to be a legal party, organized on a mass scale and capable of competing with bourgeois parties for electoral office," and this in turn meant "the abandonment of revolutionary theories of <u>focismo</u> and of all strategies of armed struggle."[22] Here workers who had gained power through mass organizations, were determined to resist their subordination to a party structure.

> Having learned through their involvement in grassroots social movements to coordinate political action collectively, to make decisions collectively, to organize in a decentralized manner, and to rotate leadership, they now regard the limitations of traditional left parties as a straitjacket that curbed their potential participation.[23]

The PT is engaged in finding the means to institutionalize the power of the workers themselves not only in the society at large, up to and including the state administration, but

within the party itself. This includes efforts to prevent the emergence of a rigid "line" representative only of the top leadership.[24]

In these struggles, the role of the "professional" leaders, however committed to socialism and revolution, is being challenged by the very people they claim to lead, overturning a legacy of elitism and bureaucratization, and the privileges of a more material kind they have all too often entailed. However, they have nowhere found the ability to overcome the massive threat from imperialism which hangs over their heads. Nor have these movements anywhere completely reversed the "professionalism" which has so limited the possibilities for full "poder popular." The "distortions" which such difficulties have introduced into socialist movements of the past remain a constant threat.

The same contradictions and choices therefore constantly confront the petty bourgeoisie, but not in the same historical circumstances. The collapse of large parts of the "socialist social system" is world-historic because it is the failure of the bid for class independence by the petty bourgeoisie, led by the "professional communists." Its dissolution means that the worldwide polarization of classes may be one step further to being "completed," and that the renewal of a "middle class" power base may be even less likely in the future than it has been in past decades. Classes do not commit suicide, but growing members of the

petty bourgeoisie may come to learn from this experience that there is no "third way" out for them. Rather, they will increasingly have to choose between being junior partners of the "big" bourgeoisie, with all the threats to their autonomy which that entails, and all the cringing subordination it will require. Or they may seek to escape their growing alienation in modern society by seizing the "future" which Marx long ago held out to them, to accept the "inevitability" of their proletarianization. Of course, their social position is not simply a voluntaristic act, but politics and ideology are shaped by class consciousness, which may in turn grow stronger through being confronted with the historical possibilities which are realistically open to them.

Most professional petty bourgeoisie, no doubt, will try to remain somewhere "in between," clinging as long as possible to the relative autonomy which their position in the system of classes allows them. Here they may adopt a wide variety of political and ideological stands, depending on the class forces around them. But a few will always continue to "go over" to the working class and socialist movements or, much more commonly, and especially under proletarian pressure, may accept a degree of deprofessionalization, as a means of releasing the polar tensions which pull them back and forth between the main classes of society, or out of recognition that their dominant and exploitative relationship to the working class

cannot be maintained forever. We must therefore look at the general nature of their "future" more closely, not from the specific details of events in particular countries, but in its universal aspect.

It is to the credit of certain analysts of the "new mandarins" of the modern era that they confront the issue of deprofessionalization head on. In their study of Power in the Highest Degree, Charles Derber, William A. Schwartz, and Yale Magrass even dare to raise the ghost of Mao and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China, providing a balanced and thoughtful critique, which is most unusual in this day when it is more fashionable to "bash" them. By citing such examples as the peasant "barefoot doctors" that developed out of that struggle, these authors recognize that more is involved in resolving the contradiction of the working class and professionals than simply ending the educational monopoly of the latter. They correctly note that: "Knowledge cannot be 'socialized' in the same way that capital can--by simply distributing it equally."[25] If the "class barriers linked to professionalism" are to be "dismantled," and "skill hierarchies . . . radically reduced," the content of the labor of professionals themselves must change. They must be willing to "get their hands dirty," to move toward the proletariat, and not simply expect the working class to join them in an expanded "middle."

Here there is a recognition, even if only incipient, that the goal of a classless society cannot be achieved other than by a fundamental reorganization of the means of production, not by trying to give every individual a piece of the "middle class" pie, but by the breaking down of the relationships on which the very existence of classes is based. This is true of ownership in the "mental" realm as in all others, and it implies a "loss" to professionals that goes beyond sharing its present largesse. It means the transformation of the very roots of professionalism, and its pretensions to represent the ideal toward which all others, and especially the working class, must inevitably aspire.

> Socializing knowledge does not mean turning everyone into a professional. Professionalism emerged as a stategy to <u>privatize</u> knowledge. It exists only by limiting opportunities for the disenfranchised, who do the tedious work that professionals shun. If everyone were a professional, professionals would have to share the burdens of manual labor. Professionalism exists to prevent its own universalization and cannot stand as a model for socialized knowledge.[26]

"Deprofessionalization," therefore, means more than making everyone part of the professional "middle class." It requires that the professionals also "learn from the masses," and share their life conditions, including "the burdens of manual labor." "Classlessness," in this view, comes not from expanding the "middle," but by universalizing the proletariat, in transformed relations which allow it to realize its own full "self-activity."

Such a change in relationships, however, like all forms of revolutionary transformation, can only come when material forces have developed to a sufficient degree. The potential for the overthrow of the rule of the "educated classes" is prepared by three closely related changes. First, the knowledge of the educated strata actually declines in relation to what is needed to further the development of productive forces, since the ways in which the means of mental production are owned, controlled, and monopolized actually inhibits the honest flow of ideas. Because the professionals own knowledge and monopolize its use, and are rewarded for doing so, it quite literally pays them to prevent the uncontrolled movement of ideas either among their own class or between themselves and other classes. But as society as a whole becomes more advanced, this private ownership of the means of mental production and the attitude of omniscience that forbids any equal exchange, in particular with the masses of workers, prevents any effective flow from them of creative ideas. The contradiction between the information needed for social advancement, which includes the knowledge of the primary class in production, and its monopoly control under the professional petty bourgeoisie, widens and grows increasingly more anachronistic.

This situation developed in particularly sharp form in Eastern Europe under the "professional communist" regimes: "It should be clear by now that no growth in productivity

will take place without the voluntary enthusiasm and participation of the workers."[27] Yet it was especially the monopolization of ideas by the ruling strata that prevented any participatory relation.

> Our system does not possess any social organ for impartial knowledge for an objective analysis of existing conditions. In any investigation, the premises of particular interests intervene from the start, premises which precisely falsify the basic structure of social facts. . . .[28]

Unique as were certain aspects of that "socialist social system," the contradiction based on the class monopolization of knowledge by the "professional communists" and the rest of their stratum, was but an extreme of the general effect on society of exclusion of the working class from the means of mental production.

Secondly, the educational process itself is increasingly paid for by society, so that the claim to private appropriation of its products and rewards loses any previous validity it may have had. Thus while ownership of the means of mental production remains privately owned a basic class contradiction exists in the social body. As the whole society collectively invests in all productive forces, it must also become the possessor of what is produced, and this is as true of the knowledge it has accumulated as in every other area. Here again, the contradiction reaches its highest degree of development under socialism, where the costs of education are paid for entirely by society.

> How then are we to solve the whole important question of the higher wages paid for compound [skilled] labour? In a society of private producers, private individuals or their families pay the costs of training the qualified worker; hence the higher price paid for qualified labour-power accrues first of all to private individuals: the skillful slave is sold for a higher price, and the skilful wage-earner is paid higher wages. In a socialistically organized society, these costs are borne by society, and to it therefore belong the fruits, the greater values produced by compound labour. The worker himself has no claim to extra pay. And from this, incidentally, follows the moral that at times there is a drawback to the popular demand of the workers for "full proceeds of labour."[29]

But what is true for the skilled workers must be even more so for those petty bourgeois professionals who still cling to the prerogatives of their class: here, finally, is the historic extinguishing of all claims to the "right" to earn a profit on their investment in learning by the "educated classes," and the material basis for their final proletarianization into the working class.

With the socialization of education, the private ownership of knowledge loses its material base, and with it the last monetary rewards for owning the means of mental production. This actual transformation, however, proceeds through several stages. First, the private capitalistic profit which accrues to investment in education can no longer be justified when the costs of that acquisition of knowledge are in fact borne socially. Thus the petty bourgeois professionals must be decapitalized. This change alone, however, does not end the monopolization which the professional petty bourgeoisie may maintain, even within the "socialist social system." Second, therefore, all

knowledge must be made openly available to every member of society, and that "rent" which accrues to their means of mental production by virtue of being monopolized must also be stripped away from the professionals. By this means, the stage will be reached when each person is paid "according to their labor," the formula which reflects a socialist society in which all are workers. Even here, however, as Engels warns, those with better training or extra talent will receive the benefits of their advantages. Thus in demanding only the "full proceeds of their labor," the workers reinforce the maintenance of the remaining differences in society, which may form the basis for a revival of division into actual classes and a restoration of exploitative relationships. Even this "talent rent," therefore, must finally be denied, and the stage of communist society be reached in which all members of society draw on its common wealth only "according to their need," while nevertheless contributing "according to their ability."

Thirdly, the knowledge the professionals own is also rapidly being socialized, particularly in the political sphere. As seen above Marx and Engels in the Manifesto showed how the bourgeoisie "supplies the proletariat with its own elements of political and general education, in other words, it furnishes the proletariat with weapons for fighting the bourgeoisie." As we saw above, however, in pursuit of their own class interests, professionals serve

as the disseminators of knowledge to the working class, a process which gradually breaks down the exclusive monopolization which is the basis for professionalism. Historically, a kind of "division of labor" occurs, in which the big bourgeoisie brings into being the proletariat, organizes its work, gives it a rudimentary schooling, and "drags it into the political realm," while the petty bourgeois professionals "complete" its general education, and arm it with a wider knowledge of politics.

Here again, this reaches its most advanced form in the struggle for socialism. The Chinese Cultural Revolution was the most massive such effort as political education. But even the "professional communists" educated the workers not only in common subjects, but also in politics. They did so because they had to "ask for the help" of the working class against the bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, they at the same time carried out the mission of supplying the proletariat "with its own elements of political and general education" more intensively than did the capitalists. It was their specific historical "task" to accelerate this process, to perform it in even more thorough manner, and to help train the proletariat to administer the whole society. The "professional communists" did not play this role because they "wanted to," but in spite of themselves, as it were, in defense of their own class interests. Thus they undermined the old rigid mental/manual division of labor, and furnished the proletariat with educative "weapons" for

fighting the petty bourgeois professionals themselves, a struggle which broke out most notably in Poland in the early days of Solidarity, and continues down to today.

All three of these elements are critical to the development in which the relations of production and the productive forces of society lose their correspondence, creating a revolutionary situation within the social body. In other words, the private monopolistic ownership of knowledge and its actual growing socialization come into conflict, and because the former is represented by the petty bourgeois professionals, and the latter by the proletariat, this takes the form of a class struggle between them. Here is in fact the classical situation of ruling classes which find not only their own ability to manage the social forces slipping away, and their legitimacy challenged, but the material foundation for the rule of another "new" rising class expanding. Such a state always carries with it not only the possibility, but in fact the demand, for revolution, since only in this manner can society prevent its further deterioration under an increasingly obsolete and anachronistic regime.

Bahro, in The Alternative in Eastern Europe recognized this dialectic, describing an accumulation of "surplus consciousness," that is, of unused "energetic mental capacity" that can only be released through a "second cultural revolution."[30] However, he also made the crucial mistake of locating this expanding pool of nonutilized

"human expertise" primarily in the "intelligentsia" itself, since they are the most highly trained. At the same time, writing just four years before Solidarity in Poland, Bahro could only speak of "The Working Class as an Inapplicable Concept in Proto-Socialist Society,"[31] and deny the existence of any antagonistic contradiction between workers and professionals, stressing instead their common oppression under the ruling stratum. Thus he looked for "reform potential" in the ranks of skilled specialists who were excluded from political power, expressing a pious hope that they would not simply restore the privileged reign of "experts," but would instead serve all of society.

This is a blind alley, and not only because, as we have seen, the "expert" regimes which have emerged from the "socialist bloc" have moved quickly and brutally to invite the full-scale capitalist exploitation of the working class. It is also deeply flawed because it fails to see that it is the proletarian masses whose education most sharply collides with the ownership of the "means of mental production" by not only the "professional communists," but all the members of the "educated classes." It is this contradiction that must be resolved if society is truly to move forward to socialism. Only the working class itself can carry out this struggle, overthrow the ruling stratum, renew the socialist goals of the proletariat, and prevent a constantly recurring cycle of revolution and "professional restoration."

In the climactic passage of Capital, Marx shows how the narrow monopolization of capitalist ownership becomes less and less able to contain the socialized labor and new productive forces which it has generated within itself, and that finally, in the form of the proletariat, put an end to its reign.

> The monopoly of capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production, which has sprung up and flourished along with, and under it. Centralization of the means of production and socialisation of labour at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated.[32]

What we have now seen is that the same dialectic process occurs in relation to the "means of mental production": namely, that there is a growing contradiction between the private ownership of knowledge and of the material rewards its brings, and its actual socialization. Here too social progress, including economic development, is held back because the socialized education which the workers already possess, and which must be utilized and mobilized in order for society to move to a higher stage, cannot be brought into play as long as the professionals own the products of schooling, especially that paid for by the state. Growing concentration of the means of mental production in the working class and the socialization of knowledge at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their "professional" integument.

At that point, the proletariat itself must intervene to alter the relations that are holding back social productivity.

> The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men that change circumstances and that the educator himself needs educating.[33]

The monopoly of education has now become a fetter upon the productive potential of society, but it is the working class itself which must act in order to bring about the new relations in society. The private ownership of the means of mental production too must therefore be "burst asunder," and the professional petty bourgeois mode of production replaced with proletarian socialism and the common control of all knowledge. In so doing, "changed men and women" rise up against all exploitation and "educate the educators," expropriating the already socialized means of mental production. The "knell of petty bourgeois professional property sounds."

In the long run, the professional petty bourgeoisie are powerless to stop this revolution. Their choices are rather to help the workers seize the means of mental production, and accept the proletarianization that is most certainly their historic destiny, or try to hold it back as long as they can and cling to a monopoly of knowledge they no longer truly possess and a division of labor with ever decreasing social justification. Dedicated revolutionaries

and progressive professionals who were themselves members of the petty bourgeois class have chosen the former course, and have thereby helped to speed the proletarian revolution. Yet they too must be educated, and must realize that like all other professional knowledge, that which deals with revolutionary change is worthless unless it is guided by the knowledge and critique which the workers themselves bring to the struggle, not only in production, but in politics, ideology, and culture, and all the relations of classes. The "professional revolutionaries" too must lose their special status, and themselves be proletarianized.

But most of the professionals, in vastly greater numbers, cling to the illusion that they will forever be able to hold on to their monopoly of knowledge, and thus help to oppress the workers and share in their exploitation. They may of course do so, but only for a while, until they are swept away, by violent revolution if necessary. Of course, as Mao stressed, this may require many cultural revolutions over decades or even centuries, but the opening battles in this struggle have already occurred. The last barriers behind which the "educated classes" have reigned will finally be overthrown. For the workers, possessing the knowledge needed to run the society, will claim their birthright: they will in the phrase used by Lenin cited at the start of this work "pull down the fence." Then truly will be realized the prophecy

of Eugene Pottier, Parisian transport worker, when in 1871 he wrote the words of the "Internationale" to commemorate the Commune: "The International working class shall be the human race." All will be workers, no longer divided into classes. But when there is only one class, there is no class.

NOTES

1. Konrád and Szelény, The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power, 239.

2. Ibid., 241, 245.

3. Ibid., 249.

4. Kerblay, Modern Soviet Society, 297-98.

5. Rudolph Bahro, From Red to Green: Interviews with New Left Review, trans. Gus Fagan and Richard Hurst (London: Verso, 1984), 219-20.

6. Ibid., 235-36.

7. Ibid., 225.

8. Mikhail Gorbachev, Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World (New York: Harper and Row, 1987), 22.

9. Ibid., 23.

10. Ibid.

11. George Black, "To Market, To Market: Prague Gets the Chicago Treatment," The Nation 251, no. 20 (December 10, 1990): 717.

12. New York Times, September 12, 1991, A13.

13. Black, "To Market, To Market: Prague Gets the Chicago Treatment," 734-45.

14. Eric Foner, "Soviet Yuppies: The Romance of the Market," The Nation, 251, no. 22 (December 24, 1990): 800.

15. Ibid., 798.

16. Daniel Singer and Lawrence Goodwyn, "Poland Chooses - What's at Stake," The Nation, 251, no. 18 (November 26, 1990): 635.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. New York Times, September 11, 1991, A13.

20. See William Hinton, The Great Reversal: The Privatization of China, 1978-1989 (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1990), an analysis of the capitalistic nature of the Chinese regime, which concludes with a firsthand account of the events at Tiananmen, and a description of its role as the "natural" outgrowth of the class basis and policies of the government. Also see Michel Chossudovsky, Towards Capitalist Restoration? Chinese Socialism after Mao (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986).

21. See, inter alia, Barricada Internacional, XI, no. 332, (January 19, 1991), and XI, no. 340 (August 1991) for various articles on both the trade union movement and the internal debate within the Sandinista Front. See also Julie Light, "Will Nicaragua's poor pay for Sandinista 'pinata,'" Guardian, 43, no. 38 (August 28, 1991), 12.

22. Ibid., 238.

23. Maria Helena Moreira Alves, "The Workers' Party of Brazil: Building Struggle from the Grassroots," chap. in William K. Tabb ed., The Future of Socialism: Perspectives from the Left, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1990), 233.

24. Ibid., 234-38, 242.

25. Derber, Schwartz, Magrass, Power in the Highest Degree, 193.

26. Ibid., 205.

27. Goldman, U.S.S.R. in Crisis, 160.

28. Bahro, The Alternative in Eastern Europe, 245.

29. Engels, Anti-Dühring, 239-40.

30. Bahro, The Alternative in Eastern Europe, 256-57.

31. Ibid., 183.

32. Marx, Capital, vol. 1, 763.

33. Karl Marx, "Theses on Fuerbach," in Marx and Engels, Selected Works, vol. 2, 403-4.

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