on the abstruse matters of "necessary labor" and "relative surplus value."

As with the debtor-creditor relational structures, so (but even more so) with this second dimension of world-scale "electronification": We collectively lack as yet the theoretical ideas to gauge the directional impetus that this ongoing development will give to popular struggles and, a fortiori, to gauge the array of effects they may have on social movements forming through the structurally shifting loci of class struggle. Such theoretical understanding is therefore an urgent priority at this time if we wish to further the class struggle in this new period before us when the initial wave of national-liberation movements have more or less successfully completed the initial tasks they set themselves.

The central fact of the historical sociology of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Europe has been the emergence of powerful social movements which implicitly or explicitly challenged the achievements of triumphant capitalism. These movements generated organizations (parties, unions, mass organizations) that survived long after the early mobilization stage; long enough to become in turn one of the targets of the new social movements of the late twentieth century. It is our contention that the earlier movements were shaped by the social structure of the nineteenth century, one that has been thoroughly transformed in the course of the twentieth century, and that the later movements are precisely the expression of this transformation. Whether and how the old organizations can survive in the new social context largely depends on their capacity to come to terms with the contradictions posed by the dissolution of their social base.

The social movements of the late nineteenth century were rooted in the intensification of the processes of capitalist centralization, and rationalization of economic activities. A large variety of social groups (servants and peasants,
An tisystemic il40vements
craftsmen and low-status professionals, small traders and shopkeepers), which had up to then coped more or less with the spread of market competition, suddenly found their established patterns of life and work threatened by widening and deepening proletarianization, and reacted to the threat through a wide variety of struggles. These struggles owed their prominence and effectiveness to the very processes they were directed against: the capitalist centralization and rationalization of economic activities.

In earlier periods, food riots and similar forms of protest resulted merely in localized disruptions of law and order which at most contributed to sudden accelerations in the “circulation of elites.” The few struggles at the point of production — in industry or in agriculture — could most of the time be isolated and repressed or absorbed into the normal processes of capitalist competition. They remained, that is, the “private business” of the groups opposed in the struggle. The more production was socialized, however, the more the strife between labor and capital became a social problem: the very size and distribution of the social product were affected by them, with repercussions throughout the social and political system.

The main weakness of the European labor movement in the period under consideration lay precisely in the fact that the processes of capitalist centralization and rationalization had not gone far enough. By and large, capitalist production was still embedded in a social structure in which wage-labor played a limited role. As late as the beginning of the twentieth century, wage workers accounted for a majority of the active labor force in only a few states (definitely in the UK, probably in Germany, and possibly in France). In all states except the UK there were large numbers of “peasants” — a differentiated and stratified ensemble of low-status agricultural cultivators with some kind of access to the means of producing a subsistence.

In all states, furthermore, there were smaller but nonetheless relatively large groups of self-employed artisans, petty bureaucrats and professionals, small traders and shopkeepers, and domestic servants. The social weight of these other groups was far greater than their numbers indicated, because a good proportion of the wage-labor force itself retained organic links with them and/or had strong cultural affinities with them. Organic links between wage workers and non-wage workers were primarily due to the practice of pooling incomes in households from different sources. Many wage-earners were not full-lifetime proletarians but members of non-proletarian households who sold their labor power on a more or less temporary basis. This practice was particularly widespread among peasant households which hired out the labor power of some of their members precisely in order to preserve their own viability as peasant households. Since these workers were generally in low-pay and low-status jobs, they had a strong incentive to retain their links with the peasant households as a form of unemployment, sickness, and old-age insurance as well as a source of self-fulfillment.

If the lower layers of the wage-labor force were populated by peasant workers and other part-lifetime proletarians who were the bearers of non-proletarian cultures, the upper layers were populated by full-lifetime proletarians some of whom nonetheless also continued to reproduce, from one generation to another, non-proletarian cultures. The two most important instances were white-collar workers and skilled blue-collar workers. The former carried out subordinate entrepreneurial functions such as keeping accounts, buying and selling, servicing the entrepreneur, and supervising the labor process. They were recruited among the lower strata of the professional groups, and, notwithstanding (or because of) their full-lifetime proletarian status, they tended to show an exaggerated attachment to the lifestyle symbols of such elites. This attachment was generally accompanied by strong sentiments of loyalty.
towards the capitalist employer, with whom they worked in close contact, and of whom they were living extensions.

Skilled blue-collar workers were the bearers of a quite different culture. They were craftsmen who wielded complex skills (partly manual, partly intellectual) on which production processes were highly dependent and on which the income, status, and power of the craftsmen, both in the workplace and in the household, rested. Consequently, their greatest preoccupation was the preservation of their monopolistic control over production know-how. This preoccupation identified their interests with those of self-employed craftsmen, made them suspicious of unskilled workers, and was a continuous source of antagonism towards the attempts of the capitalist employers to break the monopolistic practices of these craftsmen through de-skilling innovations.

This antagonism of craftworkers towards de-skilling innovations was probably the most important single factor sustaining and shaping the development of the European labor movement at the turn of the century. White-collar workers generally played a secondary and ambiguous role, while unskilled blue-collar workers generated great but shortlived outbursts of conflict. Generally speaking the movement was neither based on, nor did it generate *mutu proprio*, the unity of wage-labor against capital. The protest of the various sectors was sparked by the same processes of capitalist development, but as the protest unfolded each segment and stratum of the wage-labor force tended to go in its own direction, often in open or latent conflict with the direction taken by other segments.

The fact that wage workers constituted either a minority or a small majority of the total labor force and that, in any event, the majority of the wage workers themselves still bore the stigmata of their non-proletarian origin, created serious dilemmas for the leadership of the movement. The first dilemma concerned the extent to which the rank-and-file of the movement could be relied upon spontaneously to produce realistic objectives and adequate forms of organization. The alternative, obviously, was that such objectives and organization be brought to the movement from the “outside,” that is, by professional politicians constituted in permanent organizations. The Marxists, who argued the necessity of the latter solution, were in conflict with the anarchists and syndicalists in the early stages of the movement, even though within Marxism itself anarcho-syndicalist tendencies survived throughout the period. The main weakness of the anarcho-syndicalist position (and a key reason for its political defeat) lay in the fact that, given the social context sketched above, the spontaneous tendencies of the labor movement could only be self-defeating, as they not only heightened the internal divisions of the wage-labor force but also were powerless in the face of the economic and political mobilization of the non-wage-labor force against the movement.

In a situation of this kind, the different and partly contradictory objectives of the movement could only be attained through political mediation and, ultimately, through control of state power. Political mediation and the gaining of state power in turn presupposed a centralized direction of the movement; and hence the creation of permanent organizations capable, on the one hand, of imparting such direction, and on the other, of operating professionally in the political arena.

Agreement on this point, however, posed a second dilemma concerning the time schedule and the means of gaining state power. Two alternatives presented themselves. On the one hand, the centralized direction of the movement could take a gradualist and democratic road, as advocated by the reformist wing of the Second International. The rationale of this position was that the minority status of the wage-labor force, as well as its internal divisions, were temporary problems which would in due course be taken...
care of by the further centralization/rationalization of economic activities immanent in capitalist accumulation. Hence the task of the leadership was to establish organic links with the movement, and fight the democratic battle for parliamentary power without any particular sense of urgency. On the other hand, the centralized direction of the movement could take a revolutionary and insurrectionary road, as advocated by the currents that were eventually to create the Third International. According to this position there was no guarantee that capitalist development would create more favorable conditions for a gradual accession to state power by working-class organizations. Quite apart from the fact that the representatives of the bourgeoisie and its allies could not be expected to yield their power peacefully, capitalism had entered a new stage of hegemonic rivalries and mercantilist struggles (the so-called stage of imperialism) which was bound to frustrate the expectations of the reformists, while however creating opportunities for the seizure of power by revolutionary vanguards.

Once in power, as happened in the interwar period to a revolutionary party in Russia and to a reformist party in Sweden, further dilemmas arose concerning what socialists could or should do with state power in a capitalist world-economy. These other dilemmas fall beyond our present concern, which is to point out that the social structure that generated the social movements, political dilemmas, and organizations of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was thoroughly transformed in the course of the Second World War and the subsequent postwar phase of rapid economic expansion.

By the late 1960s, peasants had dwindled into insignificance in most of Europe. The number of shopkeepers, small traders, and artisans had also been significantly reduced. The number of professionals had increased but not sufficiently to make a great difference in the overall picture. The overall picture was now that between 60 and 90 per cent (depending on the country) of the European labor force had come to depend on wages or salaries for its subsistence. On the basis of this purely formal criterion, the European labor force had become as fully “proletarianized” as it possibly could.

However, in this case sheer numbers are deceptive. This “proletarianized” labor force in fact had a number of relatively discrete sections. The number of salaried professionals was large and growing, in most cases over 15 per cent of the population in the 1980s. Those in this group normally had a university education, reflecting the high percentage of the population attending the university (see Table I). The percentage of women in this category had been growing, although men still predominated. This group was well-paid of course, but lived primarily on its income.

The manufacturing sector of European countries employed 30 to 40 per cent of the population in the 1980s. This was true even in those few countries where the agricultural population was still over 10 per cent (see Table II). However, the manufacturing sector was divided with increasing clarity on ethnic lines. The better-paid, more skilled workers were largely male and native to the country, whereas the less well-paid, less skilled workers were disproportionately drawn from radical minorities, immigrants, guest workers, and so on, many of whom were not citizens (though this may turn out to be a transitional phenomenon). Of course, ethnic stratification of the workforce had no doubt a long history, but prior to 1945 the ethnic “minority” was largely drawn from within a state’s boundaries (Irish in Great Britain, Bretons in France) which had different citizenship and voting consequences. The expanding clerical and service sector was in the process of increasing feminization with a concomitant loss of relative status and income level.

This sociological transformation has been going on for a long time. Its impact on the structure of social movements...
has been profound. The labor movement and the socialist parties had originally been constructed around (male) workers in the manufacturing sector whose numbers, it had been assumed, would be ever growing. But the manufacturing sector levelled off in numbers and percentage in the 1960s and began a process of shrinkage. Faced with a sharply declining percentage of the labor force in agriculture and a levelling-off (and potential decline) in the manufacturing sectors, the tertiary sector has necessarily become ever more central. However, this sector in turn became ever more polarized into a salaried professional stratum and a lower-paid stratum working under increasingly “factory-like” conditions.

As the “internal” reserve labor force (peasantry, small artisans, wives and daughters of industrial workers) disappeared by virtue of actual incorporation into the urban, proletarianized labor force, the only “reserve” available became one “external” to the state’s boundaries. Here, however, one must take into account the historical transformation of the capitalist world-economy as a whole. The development of national liberation forces in Asia, Africa, and Latin America had changed the world political rapport de forces, and above all the ideological atmosphere within which European social development occurred.

In the period 1945–60 it could be said that the social-democratic parties of Western Europe achieved a large number of their intermediate objectives: full organization of the industrial working class and a significant rise in their
Table II  Percentage of economically active population by occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Prof. *</th>
<th>Manag.</th>
<th>Clerical</th>
<th>Sales</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Agric.</th>
<th>Manuf.</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>36.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>4.6</td>
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<td>10.2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>45.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
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<td>7.8</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>7.6</td>
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<td>German Federal Republic</td>
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<td>11.9</td>
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<td>5.3</td>
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<td>13.7</td>
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Southern Europe

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<th>Clerical</th>
<th>Sales</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Agric.</th>
<th>Manuf.</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<td>Greece</td>
<td>1983</td>
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<td>1.7</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>8.0</td>
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<td>11.1</td>
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<td>9.1</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>37.3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1984</td>
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<td>1.4</td>
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<td>9.0</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>35.4</td>
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Other countries for comparison

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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<th>Manag.</th>
<th>Clerical</th>
<th>Sales</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Agric.</th>
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<th>Other</th>
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<td>Hungary</td>
<td>1980</td>
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<td>Venezuela</td>
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<td>Egypt</td>
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<td>82.0</td>
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*Full headings as follows: 0/1 – Professional, technical, and skilled workers; 2 – Administrative and managerial workers; 3 – Clerical and related workers; 4 – Sales workers; 5 – Service workers; 6 – Agricultural, animal husbandry and forestry, fisherman and hunters; 7–9 – Production and related workers, transport equipment, operators and laborers; Other – May include (varying with country): (a) Workers not classified by occupations; (b) Armed forces; (c) Unemployed workers; (d) Unemployed workers not previously regularly employed.
standard of living, plus accession to a place in the state political structure. But they found themselves to a significant degree locked into reflecting this traditional central core of the working class whose numbers were no longer growing. They found it far more difficult to appeal politically to the three growing segments of the wage-labor force: the salaried professionals, the "feminized" service-sector employees, and the "ethnicized" unskilled or semi-skilled labor force.

It seems therefore no accident that the three major varieties of "new" social movement have their social bases in these other groups: the peace/ecology/alternative lifestyle movements; the women's movements; the "minority" rights/"Third World within" movements. In different ways, each of these movements was expressing its discomfort not merely with the socio-economic structures that governed their lives but with the historical political strategy of the social-democratic (and Communist) parties in pursuing the need for change.

The basic complaint of the "new" social movements about the "old" social movements was that the social-democratic movements had lost their "oppositional" quality precisely as a result of their successes in achieving partial state power. It was argued that: (1) they supported both state policy and multinational policy vis-à-vis the Third World and the socialist world; and (2) they made no effort to represent the interests of the lowest-paid and most exploited strata of the work force. In short, the charge was that labor and social-democratic movements were no longer, antisystemic, or at least no longer sufficiently antisystemic.

The initial response of the "old" social movement was to dismiss the charges of one segment of the "new" movements as coming from middle-class elements (that is, salaried professionals) who were using anti-industrial-worker arguments. As for the criticisms of other "new" movements (women, minorities), the "old" movements accused them of being "divisive" (the traditional nineteenth-century view of the labor movement).

The relationship of the two sets of movements — the old and the new — has gone through two phases thus far. The first phase runs from about 1960 to 1975. This phase was one of deteriorating relations between the two sets. The simmering bad relations exploded in 1968 and the tensions strongly reinforced a period of acute ideological struggle in the Third World — the Vietnam war, the Chinese Cultural Revolution, the many guerilla struggles in Latin America.

Several factors entered to bring this phase to an end. The fraction of the new social movements that became most "radicalized" — taking the various forms of Maoist parties, autonomist movements, urban terrorism — failed politically. This was partly because of repression, partly because of exhaustion and a thin social base, and partly because of changes in the ideological tone of struggles in the Third World (end of the Cultural Revolution in China, socialist wars in Indochina, end of "focoi sm" in Latin America).

The new conjuncture of the world-economy also had its impact. The growing unemployment in Europe along with the partial dismantling of the traditional heavy-industry sectors began to reopen for the labor-socialist movements many ideological questions that had been undiscussible in the period 1945–65. Thus the social democrats started to reassess their view of the new social movements just at the moment when the new social movements began to have some inner doubts about the validity of the "new left" tactics evolved in the 1960s.

The period since 1975 has been one of an uncertain minuet in old left-new left relations in Western Europe. The case of the Greens and the SPD in the Federal Republic of Germany illustrates this perfectly. Both parties are constantly in the midst of a medium-decibel internal debate about their relations with each other, able neither to
move closer together nor to move further apart. Both sets of movements have however been more concerned with their relations to each other than to the other kinds of movements found in the socialist countries or the Third World.

We may resume what we have said thus: (1) the circumstances giving rise to the drive and partially successful organizational forms of the European left have been totally eroded by the very processes, those of capitalist development, they were created to supersede historically; (2) potentially serious (antisystemic) tendencies instead now come increasingly from social locales not central to the traditional organized forms of the European left. What, from our angle of vision, would seem to lie ahead?

The principal directional tendency of capital is its centralization on a world scale in two forms; financial pools, and technically divided and integrated labor processes. The first is effected through extraordinarily large-scale banking consortia managing "public" and "private" funds alike and mediated by such organs of the world’s bourgeoisie as the IMF, the IBRD, and the BIS. The second is effected of course through the multiplying transnationalization of production under the aegis of the transnational corporation. This determining direction of capital on a world scale — oddly enough, not one that departs greatly from that projected in "the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation" — entails for antisystemic forces at least three broad consequential subordinate directional tendencies.

First, and in the present context perhaps foremost, is the ongoing relocation of labor-using manufacturing processes to the semiperiphery and hence the shift there of the epicenter of "classically" framed and conducted class conflict — direct, organized, large-scale capital-labor struggles. That epicenter, and so its historical trajectory, will hence increasingly be formed within the jurisdictions of the states of that zone, and their politics indeed increasingly reflect the transformation.

Second is the de-nationalization, in effect, of domestic ("national") labor forces. The world’s workers, increasingly made into laborers under the aegis of capital, move as they always have in order to be in relation to capital, a movement sharply furthered in speed and extent by developments in communications and transportation. Marx and Engels saw the railroad as shortening to a century, for national proletarians, the time needed to achieve the degree of class organization it took national bourgeoisies, with their miserable roads, five centuries to attain. Ship, air, and electronics have for decades now been analogously forming the possibility of an organized world proletariat within "national" locales. The possibility is at once eliminated, however, so long as we think with the state-formed consciousness that there are "nationals" and there are "immigrants," and in that way reproduce the varieties of racism these historically formed categories inevitably entail. "National" and "immigrant" are categories of the capitalist world-economy’s interstate system; they have no place (except as phenomenologically real conditions to be overcome) in the language of world-scale workers’ movements.

And third is the "official pauperism" sketched in the general law, which, to estimate from recent trends in the US and Western Europe, has two principal overlapping social locales, the young and the aged (both men and women) and women (of all ages). These were, it will be recalled, the first "officially protected" social segments of labor, in country after country, in the decade or so that "Haymarket" signifies. "Welfare," too, has its contradictions. It seems likely that the "national"/"immigrant" categorization deepens the burdens of current capitalist development carried by the young, the old, and women, but it is only a deepening of the destruction of dignity, well-being, and hope that their pauperization per se entails.

The growing contradiction(s) between relations of rule and relations of production entail another trio of sub-
ordinate tendential or “directional” changes. Perhaps foremost here will be the growing contradiction of “stateness” in core-area countries, between forming and reforming the requisite frameworks of “capitalist development” of capital, on the one hand; and addressing and re-addressing the endless constituencies of “welfare” that that development continues to promote, on the other. The contradiction has been central to “stateness,” of course, throughout the interstate system’s historical elaboration; in our times it has been particularly evident in the peripheralized and semiperipheralized zones that are continually reproduced by the fundamental world-forming polarization entailed in the capitalist development of capital. In the state regimes of the core zone, governments have been largely spared the politics framed by the contradiction, essentially because coreness during US hegemony entailed a kind and degree of “revenue” flow that allowed “redistribution” without (all that much) pain. That has become, and will continue to become, less and less so. “Austerity” is the order of the day not only in Haiti, and in Argentina, but in France . . .

We must remark here in passing what this contradiction, in this form, implies for those of us who subscribe to the theoretical notion that relations of rule operate by virtue of a condition of consciousness known, since Weber, as their “legitimacy.” Namely, it implies increasingly corrosive effects on the very “right” of the apparatuses of states to compel compliance with state-promulgated rules (“laws”). *This* sort of “legitimacy” crisis — endemic where “stateness” has been a historically imposed form of relations of rule (for example, via overrule) — seems likely to have initial occurrence in the ideologically distorted form of “nationals” versus “immigrants,” with the rhetorical core being a matter of “patriotism” — the one defined domain of consciousness specifically formed to “legitimate” stateness, as every schoolchild, everywhere, knows without knowing. However, the structured incapacity of states to take care of their own, as it were, could so help shift modes of understanding and comprehension that the specifically legitimating domain of “patriotism” becomes secondary — but to what?

Second is the seemingly contradictory growth — contradictory to the capitalist development of capital — of “human rights” as an organizing concern of growing numbers of intellectuals and popular leaders, of various persuasions, throughout the world. To a large extent — framed, as the issue has been, almost solely in terms of relations of rule (its immediate locus of course, as “issue”) — the comprehension of its emergence as reflecting the contradictions between relations of rule and relations of production (including relations of appropriation) has been slow to form. The rights of workers in the end underpin all others. Without the former, such “rights” as others may have are but certificates issued; annulable by the particular apparatus of “stateness” that forms the confrontational relation. As elsewhere in our conditions of existence, so here too does the capital–labor relation organize the terrain of confrontation and discourse.

A third tendential development is the growing “anti-Westernism” of the peoples of the peripheralized and semiperipheralized zone of the world-economy’s operations. Primarily channelled in and through the interstate system, the impetus for the sentiment lies not in mere “anti-imperialist” (positively put, “nationalist”) movements but rather in elemental challenges to the “Westernism,” as encompassing civilization, that the capitalist development of the modern world as historical social system has entailed. This is a domain of inquiry fraught with difficulties, both theoretical and historical, for the once colonized and the once colonizing alike (specifically presuming good faith on the art of each, however central the historical divide perfecly remains).

The tendency shows more fundamentally, if less clearly
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theoretically, in the question of how relations of rule relate to relations of production. We reach here matters of very considerable civilizational depth, where even the distinction which we have been working with disappears. For the challenge, in process of realization, is to the “Westernism” of our ways of thinking — and, to short-circuit much — to our ways of conceiving of the “socialism” of a socialist world-system and so derivatively to our ways of identifying what is or is not “progressive.”

In brief, in question is — assuming we’re collectively and actively concerned with furthering the transformation of the capitalist world-system into a socialist world-system — “whose” socialism? That, it seems to us, is the query posed by the growing if still muted “anti-Westernism.” It addresses directly the assumption that the coming socialist world-system is of Western manufacture, so to speak.

Perhaps the central question is this: how, and to what extent, can the well-organized arms of progressive movements in Western Europe, framed as they are by their current forms and immediate concerns, recompose themselves into agencies, not of national realization but of world-historical transformation? This recomposition would mean they became in the future as subversive of the interstate system per se as they have in the past been its products and proponents.

The centralization of capital per se can be neither factually nor strategically a legitimate concern of movements, it as process being for them formative merely of terrain, not of objective. The further processes it entails, however, produce the very politics of movement formation and growth. The first observation above, about the relocating of the epicenter of overt “classical” class struggle, implies merely a refocusing of Western European movements. The second and third, in contrast, entail the redefinition of trajectories. For the de-nationalization of domestic labor forces suggests a fundamental change, on the part of the left, as to what “national” means (thus leaving to the right the systemically formed residues of “primordial” sentiments). To accomplish the reconception will entail a degree and kind of substantive and rhetorical inventiveness not presently in ascendance within prominent movements. And the third, the increasing salience of the gender question, entails; (1) the elimination from the movements of yet another (and in a different sense) “primordial” sentiment, and (2) the world-scale generality of — hence organizational subordination to — what is essentially a reforming movement (“capitalism” being quite able “to develop” under conditions of legal and substantive gender equality). It is the further generalization, from the pauperization of women to the pauperization of people on a world scale, that is precisely the change in consciousness the very effectiveness of the organizations in core zones may help to bring about, as part of world-scale movements that bypass and so subvert interstate arrangements. The growing contradictions between relations of rule and relations of production will in all likelihood occasion a plethora of radical nationalist expressions and “movements.” But world-scale movements, with emanations in various national arenas, may prove world historically even more consequential. At least, this is the major positive direction in which to move.
What Was 1968 About?

There have only been two world revolutions. One took place in 1848. The second took place in 1968. Both were historic failures. Both transformed the world. The fact that both were unplanned and therefore in a profound sense spontaneous explains both facts — the fact that they failed, and the fact that they transformed the world. We celebrate today July 14, 1789, or at least some people do. We celebrate November 7, 1917, or at least some people do. We do not celebrate 1848 or 1968. And yet the case can be made that these dates are as significant, perhaps even more significant, than the two that attract so much attention.

1848 was a revolution for popular sovereignty — both within the nation (down with autocracy) and of the nations (self-determination, the Volkerfrühling). 1848 was the revolution against the counterrevolution of 1815 (the Restoration, the Concert of Europe). It was a revolution "born at least as much of hopes as of discontents" (Namier: 1944, 4). It was certainly not the French Revolution the second time around. It represented rather an attempt both to fulfill its
original hopes and to overcome its limitations. 1848 was, in a Hegelian sense, the sublation (Aufhebung) of 1789.

The same was true of 1968. It too was born of hopes at least as much as discontents. It too was a revolution against the counterrevolution represented by the US organization of its world hegemony as of 1945. It too was an attempt to fulfill the original goals of the Russian Revolution, while very much an effort to overcome the limitations of that revolution. It too therefore was a sublation, a sublation this time of 1917.

The parallel goes further. 1848 was a failure — a failure in France, a failure in the rest of Europe. So too was 1968. In both cases the bubble of popular enthusiasm and radical innovation was burst within a relatively short period. In both cases, however, the political ground-rules of the world-system were profoundly and irrevocably changed as a result of the revolution. It was 1848 which institutionalized the old left (using this term broadly). And it was 1968 that institutionalized the new social movements. Looking back, 1848 was, in this sense the great rehearsal for the Paris Commune and the Russian Revolution, for the Baku Congress and Bandoeng. 1968 was the rehearsal for what?

The lesson that oppressed groups learned from 1848 was that it would not be easy to transform the system, and that the likelihood that “spontaneous” uprisings would in fact be able to accomplish such a transformation was rather small. Two things seemed clear as a result. The states were sufficiently bureaucratized and appropriately organized to function well as machineries to put down rebellions. Occasionally, because of wars or internal political divisions among powerful strata, their repressive machinery might buckle and a “revolution” seem to be possible. But the machineries could usually be pulled together quickly enough to put down the putative or abortive revolution. Secondly, the states could easily be controlled by the powerful strata through a combination of the latter’s econo-

nomics, their political organization, and their cultural hegemony (to use Gramsci’s term of a later period).

Since the states could control the masses and the powerful strata could control the states, it was clear that a serious effort of social transformation would require counterorganization — both politically and culturally. It is this perception that led to the formation for the first time of bureaucratically organized antisystemic movements with relatively clear middle-term objectives. These movements, in their two great variants of the social and the national movement, began to appear on the scene after 1848, and their numbers, geographic spread, and organizational efficiency grew steady in the century that followed.

What 1848 accomplished therefore was the historic turning of antisystemic forces towards a fundamental political strategy — that of seeking the intermediate goal of obtaining state power (one way or another) as the indispensable way-station on the road to transforming society and the world. To be sure, many argued against this strategy, but they were defeated in the debates. Over the following century, the opponents of this strategy grew weaker as the proponents of the strategy grew stronger.

1917 became such a big symbol because it was the first dramatic victory of the proponents of the state-power strategy (and in its revolutionary, as opposed to its evolutionary, variant). 1917 proved it could be done. And this time, unlike in 1848, the revolutionary government was neither suborned nor overturned. It survived. 1917 may have been the most dramatic instance but it was not of course the only instance of successes, at least partial, of this strategy. The Mexican Revolution beginning in 1910 and the Chinese Revolution of 1911 culminating in 1949 also seemed to demonstrate the worth of the strategy, for example.

By 1945, or perhaps more accurately by the 1950s, the strategy seemed to be bearing fruit around the world. All
three major variants of the historic “old left” antisystemic movements — the Third International Communists, the Second International Social Democrats, and the nationalist movements (especially those outside Europe) — could point to notable successes: the armed struggle of the Communist parties in Yugoslavia and China, the massive 1945 electoral victory of the Labour Party in Great Britain, nationalist triumphs in India and Indonesia. It seemed but a matter of decades until the goals of 1848 would be realized in every corner of the globe. This widespread optimism of the antisystemic forces was nonetheless quite exaggerated, for two reasons.

One, the institutionalization of US hegemony in the world-system as of 1945 made possible a generalized counterrevolutionary thrust to slow down the pace of the growing political strength of the antisystemic movements. The US sought to “contain” the bloc of Communist states led by the USSR. And in Greece, in Western Europe, in Korea, they succeeded in such “containment.” The US government sought to “defang” the Western labor and social-democratic parties by rigidifying historic differences between the Second and Third Internationals and by erecting “anti-Communism” as an ideological carapace. This attempt too was largely successful, within the US itself and elsewhere. The US sought to slow down, dilute, and/or coopt the political expressions of Third World nationalism and, with some notable exceptions like Vietnam, this effort too was largely successful.

Were the counterrevolution all that had occurred politically, however, its effect would have been momentary at most. A second thing occurred to dampen the optimism of the antisystemic forces. The movements in power performed less well than had been expected; far less well. Already in the interwar period, the Soviet experience of the 1930s — the terrors and the errors — had shaken the world’s antisystemic movements. But in a sense Hitler and the long struggle of the Second World War washed away much of the dismay. However, the terrors and the errors repeated themselves after 1945 in one Communist state after another. Nor did the social-democratic governments look that good, engaged as they were in colonial repression. And, as one Third World nationalist movement after another created regimes that seemed to have their own fair share of terrors and errors, the optimism of the antisystemic forces began to be eroded.

While the US, and more generally the upper strata of the world-system, attacked the antisystemic movements exogenously as it were, the movements were simultaneously suffering ailments endogenous to them, ailments which increasingly seemed to be themselves “part of the problem.”

It is in reaction to this double (exogenous and endogenous) difficulty of the traditional old left movements that the new social movements emerged, more or less in the 1960s. These new movements were concerned with the strength and survivability of the forces that dominated the world-system. But they were also concerned with what they felt was the poor performance, even the negative performance, of the world’s old left movements. In the beginning of the 1960s, the concern with the power and the evil of the proponents of the status quo was still uppermost in the minds of the emergent new movements, and their concern with the inefficacies of the old left opposition was still a secondary consideration. But as the decade went on, the emphasis began to shift, as the new movements began to be more and more critical of the old movements. At first the new elements sought to be “reformist” of the tactics of the old antisystemic movements. Later, they often broke outright with them and even attacked them frontally. We cannot understand 1968 unless we see it as simultaneously a cri de coeur against the evils of the world-system and a fundamental questioning of the strategy of the old left opposition to the world-system.
At its height, and when it had reached the highest level of screeching, the new left accused the old left of five sins: weakness, corruption, connivance, neglect, and arrogance. The weakness was said to be the inefficacy of the old antisystemic movements (the Social Democrats in the West, the Communists in the East, the nationalist governments in the South) in constraining the militarism, the exploitation, the imperialism, the racism, of the dominant forces in the world-system. The attitude towards the war in Vietnam became a touchstone on this issue. The corruption was said to be the fact that certain strata had, through the efforts of past antisystemic action, achieved certain material concessions and allowed their militance to be softened by this fact. The connivance was the charge of corruption taken one step further. It was said to be the willingness of certain strata worldwide actually to profit by the exploitation in the system, albeit at a lower level than that of the dominant strata. The neglect was said to be the obtuseness about, if not conscious ignoring of, the interests of the truly dispossessed, the real lower strata of the world-system (the subproletarians, the ethnic and racial minorities, and of course the women). The arrogance was said to be the contempt of the leadership of the old movements for the real problems of the lower strata, and their ideological self-assurance.

These were heady charges and they were not made all at once, or from the outset. It was an evolution from the mild questioning of the Port Huron founding statement of SDS in 1962 to the Weathermen in 1969 and after, or from the conventional views (if militantly implemented) of SNCC in the early 1960s to those of the Black Power movements of the late 1960s. It was an evolution from the Jeunesse Etudiante Communiste in France in the early 1960s who dared to be “pro-Italian,” to the barricades of May 1968 in Paris (and the virtually open break with the CGT and PCF). It was an evolution from the Prague Spring which emerged in late 1967 to the founding of Solidarność in 1980.

When 1968 exploded — in Columbia University, in Paris, in Prague, in Mexico City and Tokyo, in the Italian October — it was an explosion. There was no central direction, no calculated tactical planning. The explosion was in a sense as much of a surprise to the participants as to those against whom it was directed. The most surprised were the old left movements who could not understand how they could be attacked from what seemed to them so unfair and so politically dangerous a perspective.

But the explosion was very powerful, shattering many authority relations, and shattering above all the Cold War consensus on both sides. Ideological hegemonies were challenged everywhere and the retreat, both of the powerful strata of the world-system and of the leadership of the old left antisystemic movements, was real. As we have already said, the retreat turned out to be temporary and the new movements were checked everywhere. But the changes in power relations effected by the movements were not reversed.

**The Legacies of 1968**

Four main changes can be distinguished. First, while the balance of military power between West and East has not changed appreciably since 1968, the capabilities of either the West or the East to police the South have become limited. The Tet Offensive of early 1968 has remained to this day a symbol of the impotence of capital-intensive warfare in curbing the intelligence and will of Third World peoples. Within five years of the offensive, the USA was forced to withdraw from Vietnam, and a new era in North-South relations began.

The most dramatic expression of this new era has been the frustration of the US government’s multifarious
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ttempts to bring the Iranian people back to "reason." It is no exaggeration to say that events in Iran since the late 1970s have had far greater influence on the internal affairs of the USA (notably on the rise and demise of Reaganism) than events in the USA have had on the internal affairs of Iran. This frustration is not the symptom of some peculiar weakness of the United States as world power, or exceptional strength of the Iranian state as an antisystemic force. Rather, it is a symptom of the increased national sovereignty enjoyed by Third World peoples in general since the withdrawal of the US from Vietnam. The close parallel between the recent experience of the USSR in Afghanistan and that of the US in Vietnam provides further evidence that the unprecedented accumulation of means of violence in the hands of the two superpowers simply reproduces the balance of terror between the two, but adds nothing to their capabilities to police the world, least of all its peripheral regions.

Secondly, the changes in power relations between status-groups such as age-groups, genders, and "ethnicities," a major consequence of the 1968 revolution, have also proved to be far more lasting than the movements which brought them to world attention. These changes are registered primarily in the hidden abodes of everyday life and as such are less easy to discern than changes in interstate power relations. Nevertheless, we can say with some confidence that even after 1973 (when most movements had subsided), the commands of dominant status-groups (such as older generations, males, "majorities") continued in general to become less likely to be obeyed by subordinate status-groups (younger generations, females, "minorities") than they ever were before 1968. This diminished power of dominant status-groups is particularly evident in core countries but may be observed to varying degrees in semiperipheral and peripheral countries as well.

Thirdly, and closely related to the above, pre-1968 power relations between capital and labor have never been restored. In this connection, we should not be deceived by the experience of particular national segments of the capital-labor relation or by the short-term vicissitudes of the overall relation. What must be assessed is the likelihood that the commands of the functionaries of capital be obeyed by their subordinates over the entire spatial domain of the capitalist world-economy, and over a period of time long enough to allow for the interplay of commands and responses to affect the relations of production and the distribution of resources. From this point of view, the central fact of the 1970s and 1980s has been the growing frustration experienced by the functionaries of capital in their global search for safe havens of labor discipline. Many of the locales that in the early 1970s seemed to provide capitalist production with a viable alternative to the restive labor environments of the core zone have themselves turned, one after another, into loci of labor unrest — Portugal, Spain, Brazil, Iran, South Africa, and, most recently, South Korea. We may well say that since 1968 the functionaries of capital have been "on the run." And while this heightened geographical mobility has tended to dampen the unruliness of labor in the places from which the functionaries of capital have fled, it has tended to have the opposite effect in the places in which they have settled.

Finally, in the 1970s and 1980s, civil society at large has been far less responsive to the commands of the bearers (or would-be bearers) of state power than it had been before 1968. Although a general phenomenon, this diminished power of states over civil society has been most evident in the semiperiphery, where it has taken the form of a crisis of "bourgeois" and "proletarian" dictatorships alike. Since 1973, "bourgeois" dictatorships have been displaced by democratic regimes in southern Europe (Portugal, Greece, Spain), East Asia (Philippines, South Korea), and in Latin America (most notably Brazil and Argentina).
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Alongside this crisis, indeed preceding and following it, has developed the crisis of the so-called dictatorships of the proletariat. Notwithstanding the many and real differences that set the Prague Spring and the Chinese Cultural Revolution apart, the two movements had one thing in common: they were assaults on the dictatorship of the officials (primarily but not exclusively on the dictatorship of the Communist Party’s officials) dressed up as a dictatorship of the proletariat. In China, the assault was so violent and unrestrained as to deal a fatal blow to that dictatorship. Subsequently, party rule could be re-established (as it has been) only by accommodating demands for greater grassroots democracy and economic decentralization. In Czechoslovakia, a nonviolent and restrained assault was put down speedily through Soviet military intervention. Yet, between 1970 and 1980 the challenge re-emerged in a more formidable fashion in Poland, eventually shaking the Soviet leadership’s confidence in the possibility of patching up a crumbling hegemony indefinitely by means of repression and purely cosmetic changes in party dictatorship.

From all these points of view, 1968 is alive and well in the sense that its objective of altering the balance of power in the world social system in favor of subordinate groups has been highly successful. Yet, this success has been accompanied by an equally remarkable failure to improve the material welfare of these subordinate groups. To be sure, some material benefits did accrue to subordinate groups as a whole from the change in the balance of power. But most of these benefits have accrued to only a minority within each group, leaving the majority without any net gain, perhaps even with a net loss.

This tendency has been most evident among Third World states. The oil-producing states were able to take advantage of the new balance of power in the interstate system by charging after 1973 a much higher rent for the use of their natural resources than they were ever able to do before 1968. This advantage lasted about ten years. A few other Third World states have been able to step up their own industrialization by taking advantage of the relocation of industrial activities from core countries. How much of a gain this will constitute by the 1990s remains to be seen. But most Third World states, caught between higher prices for energy resources and stiffer competition from newly industrializing countries, have experienced even greater impoverishment and underdevelopment than they did before 1968.

Similar considerations apply to the other subordinate groups. Thus, over the last fifteen years the progressive breakdown of generational, gender, and ethnic barriers to the circulation of elites (which has benefitted quite a few members of each group) has been accompanied by youth unemployment, double exploitation of women, and the immiseration of “minorities” on an unprecedented scale. As for the change in the balance of power between labor and capital its benefits have accrued mostly to workers engaged in stepping up the automation of labor processes, or in servicing the expanded markets for elites, or in running the relocated plants in their new locations. For the rest, the gains of the late 1960s and early 1970s have been eroded, first by the great inflation of the 1970s and then by the unemployment of the 1980s. It is probably too early to assess who is benefitting and who is losing in material terms from the crisis of dictatorships. But here too the preliminary record seems to indicate that the material benefits of greater democracy have accrued only to a small fraction of the population.

In all directions we are faced with the apparent paradox that a favorable change in the balance of power has brought little or no change in material benefit to the majority of each subordinate group. This apparent paradox has the simple explanation that the reproduction of material welfare in a capitalist world-economy is conditional upon the political
and social subordination of the actual and potential laboring masses. To the extent that this subordination is lessened, the propensity of the capitalist world-economy to reproduce and expand material welfare is lessened too.

The history of the capitalist world-economy since 1973 has been the history of its adjustment to the social upheavals of the previous five years. The adjustment has been problematic, leading some to speak of a general crisis of capitalism, because of the scope, suddenness, and simultaneity of the changes in power relations ushered in by the social upheavals. When changes in power relations are limited and piecemeal, as they usually are, the capitalist world-economy can accommodate without difficulty imperceptible changes in the overall allocation of resources and distribution of rewards. But when the changes are numerous, significant, and simultaneous, as they were in the period 1968–1973, their accommodation involves long and serious disruptions in established patterns of social and economic life.

The inadequate access to means of production, of exchange, and of protection that characterizes subordinate groups makes the latter particularly vulnerable to these disruptions. We should not be surprised, therefore, if most members of the subordinate groups have experienced little or no improvement over the last fifteen years in their material welfare, notwithstanding, nay even because of, the improvement in their power position. One may wonder, however, whether this failure of a more favorable balance of power to deliver welfare might not be swinging the balance of power back in favor of dominant groups.

The cultural and political backlash of the late 1970s and of the 1980s against everything that 1968 stood for seems to suggest that this is indeed what is happening. While still paying lip-service to Third World solidarity, Third World states have been engaged in widespread feuding and intense economic competition among themselves. The younger generations, the women, the “minorities” have all switched, albeit to different degrees, from collective to individual concerns, while class solidarity and unity of political purpose among workers are in most places at an historical low. And in the epicenters of the struggle for political democracy, the desire for more and greater freedoms is often paralyzed by fears of economic disruption.

There is no denying that from all these points of view 1968 is dead and buried and cannot be revived by the thoughts and actions of the nostalgic few. Granted this, we must nonetheless distinguish carefully between the movements and ideologies of 1968 and the underlying structural transformations that preceded and outlived those movements and ideologies. These structural transformations are the outcome of secular trends of the capitalist world-economy, and as such cannot be reversed by any unfavorable conjuncture that might ensue from their open manifestation.

Thus, Adam Smith (1961: II, 213–31) long ago pointed out the negative long-term impact of an ever widening and deepening division of labor on the martial qualities of the peoples that are most directly involved in it. The greater specialization and mechanization of war activities themselves could counter this negative impact, but only up to a point. At the beginning of our century, Joseph Schumpeter made a similar point in support of his argument that capitalist development undermines the capabilities (as opposed to the propensities) of states to engage in imperialist wars:

The competitive system absorbs the full energies of most of the people at all economic levels. Constant application, attention, and concentration of energy are the conditions of survival within it, primarily in the specifically economic professions, but also in other activities organized on their model . . . . In a purely capitalist world, what was once energy for war becomes simply energy for labor of every kind (1955: 69).
To this we need only to add that the spatial unevenness of capitalist development has tended to undermine the martial qualities of peoples precisely in those states where it has tended to concentrate wealth. Up to a point, core states have been able to counter the ensuing change in balance of power implicit in this tendency through an ever-increasing capital intensity of war. But at a certain point — as the experience of the US in Vietnam and of the USSR in Afghanistan have shown in exemplary fashion — further increases in the capital intensity of war bring rapidly decreasing returns, particularly when it comes to policing the periphery of the world-economy.

The same processes that undermine the power of core states over peripheral states over the *longue durée* of the capitalist world-system also undermine the power of capital over labor, of dominant over subordinate status-groups, of states over civil society. An ever widening and deepening division of labor makes capital increasingly vulnerable to workplace acts of protest and passive resistance on the part of subordinate workers, regardless of the level of class consciousness and organization expressed by those acts (see, in particular, chapter 1 above; and Arrighi & Silver, 1984). In order to reproduce, or re-establish, the command of capital over labor in the workplace, the functionaries of capital are induced to mobilize an ever-growing proportion of the labor force in wage activities but by so doing they revolutionize power relations between the genders and among age-groups and “ethnicities.” Last but not least, the growing complexity of the division of labor within and across political jurisdictions makes the exercise of state power over civil society increasingly problematic.

These are the kinds of process that prepared the ground for, and eventually gave rise to, the movements of 1968. Being processes of the *longue durée*, their unfolding spans the entire lifetime of the capitalist world-economy. The explosions of 1968 and their aftermath can be interpreted as symptom of the fact that the system is approaching its historical asymptote. 1968, with its successes and failures, was thus a prelude, better, a rehearsal, of things to come.

1968: A Rehearsal of What?

If 1968 is analogous to 1848 as a failed world-scale revolution and as a world-historical great rehearsal, for what sort of world-revolution may it be the great rehearsal? Can we on analogy project today’s underlying secular trends, specify what was new about yesterday’s new social movements, and thereby sketch in advance likely trajectories of the confrontations and progressive social changes they suggest? As we move chronologically towards the 1990s and the 2000s, our historical social system, the capitalist world-economy, continues to be faced with difficulties in four principal arenas.

First, the interstate system is marked by a military stand-off between the US and the USSR and the evident inability of either to control matters of consequence in states of the periphery. Hegemony is giving way to its conceptual counterpoint, the condition of rivalry. The possible realignments of alliances between the five major actors — the US, the USSR, Western Europe, Japan, and China — are only now beginning. And everyone is approaching such realignments most gingerly and most fearfully. Hence, US hegemony is being eroded without any clear, and therefore reassuring, world order to replace it. Meanwhile, markets of all sorts — capital, capital goods, labor, wage-goods (ordinary), wage-goods (“durable”) — are evolving at a rapid pace. They are becoming less and less regulated social mechanisms of the circuits of capital and more and more loci of speculation (what liberals call “market forces”) and increasingly show (as on 19 October 1987 in equity prices) the kind of jagged price movements which are at once their
hallmark and the reason for their always and everywhere being objects of regulation.

Possibly the Group of Seven (with the IBRD, IMF, and BIS) can impose renewed order. Possibly the transnationals' ingestion of markets through vertical integration (and the analogous organization of their counterparts in countries of existing socialism) is sufficient for them to absorb and so to dampen the price movements. Whether, in this sense, the world-scale centralizing of capital is historically far enough advanced (as suggested by "the absolute general law") to replace the interstate system's market-regulation via hegemony, we shall all see.

Second, the contradiction between labor and capital, given both the increasing centralization of capital and the increasing marginalization of large sectors of the labor force, will remain elemental. The new social movements have increased the worldwide pressure for higher wage-levels with world capital seeking ever more to respond to this pressure by reducing the size of labor input. As a result, there has perforce been a rising level of material well-being for a significant sector of workers and a deepening relative immiseration of many others, hence an absolute and relative increase in the inequalities of well-being among the world's workers. There has been thus a widening scope for the mechanism of unequal exchange in world-scale accumulation.

At the same time, capital's increasing search for safe havens from organized labor unrest carries with it of course a growing relocation of industrial proletarianization and hence of collective efforts to control that process and/or to ameliorate its effects. The net result may well be an increasingly class-conscious focus to the nationalist sentiment that pervades the zones outside the core, particularly in semi-peripheral states (see chapter 3 above). Similar phenomena are increasingly occurring is socialist states, notably (but certainly not only) in Poland.

Third, the ability of states to control their civil societies is diminishing. Historically, it is through the constitution of civil society, and its subsequent extension — notably, through the 1848-engendered "incorporation of the working classes into society" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries — that one traces the successive transformations of the monarchies and patriciates of the nascent capitalist world-economy into its constituent and still evolving states. The organizing contradiction from the inception of stateness, state power versus civil rights and liberties, remains central to the state-civil society relation. Over time, of course, the scope of each has greatly expanded, thus sharpening the struggle, which the post-1968 world-scale "human rights" movements profoundly reflect. The notion that ruling strata seek to legitimate their rule — so that they are as morally obligated to command as those they claim to rule are morally obligated to comply — is both very old and very widespread.

Weber's central theoretical claim (1968: I, 212–307) — that certain beliefs in popular consciousness are an indispensable condition of routine compliance and so of the "stability" of the relational network administering the rules — remains plausible. However, the very increase in the efficiency of the ways in which each state controls its civil society, the expansion of an instrumental bureaucracy, itself creates the limits of its efficacy by generating an ever more widespread skepticism among those whom the bureaucracy is administering. The reach of authority has come to be more and more denied, as both the US and USSR governments among others, have increasingly discovered. 1968 symbolized the outburst of such skepticism. For the coming to state power of old social movements limited this corrosion of authority. But these new regimes were quickly swept up in the increasingly "anti-state" consciousness of the mass of the population.

This process has been spectacularly abetted by the
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impact of new technology on the ability of states to control their space. Electronification is physically different from electrification and does not so much abridge the space of social relations as abridge the capacity to control social relations through controlling their space. The implications for stateness remain to be explicaded — and experienced. But the control of populations through controlling the space they and their relations with one another occupy — as citizenry, as communities, as individuals — is in the process of being fundamentally undermined in the two key directions formed by the modern world-system's spatial jurisdictions; within states and between states.

Fourth, the demands of the disadvantaged status-groups — of gender, of generation, of ethnicity, of race, of sexuality — will get ever stronger. We must hear Gallaudet here and add the physically handicapped, who comprise the true pariah stratum of historical capitalism. All six status-group relations are deeply different one from another, and even more so in their specificities in the world's social structures, but they share three features. Each was a ground of a new left reproach of the old left. Each in a very real sense is as much a contradiction among the people as an element of the capital-labor or state-civil society contradiction. And the oppressed of each explicitly seek not the turning of the tables but social equality, not only structurally but ideologically as well (in the sense of the elimination from social consciousness of presumptions of superiority/inferiority in relations of gender, generation, ethnicity, race, sexuality, able-bodiedness).

We therefore project probable realignments in the alliance systems of the interstate system along with increased sharp economic fluctuations, a sharpened (and in particular a geographically widened) class struggle, an increasing inability of states to control their civil societies, and a persistent reinforcement of the claims to equality by all the disadvantaged status-groups. It is very unclear, in the

nature of things, where this will lead. After 1848, the world's old left were sure that 1917 would occur. They argued about how and where and when. But the middle-range objective of popular sovereignty was clear. After 1968, the world's antisystemic movements — the old and the new ones together — showed rather less clarity about the middle-range objective. They have tended therefore to concentrate on short-range ones. There is clearly a danger that if organizations concentrate on short-range objectives, even in the name of long-range ideals, they may sacrifice middle-range success or even middle-run survival.

We have no answer to the question: 1968, rehearsal for what? In a sense, the answers depend on the ways in which the worldwide family of antisystemic movements will rethink its middle-run strategy in the ten or twenty years to come. 1917, for good or ill, was the result of an enormous amount of collective and conscious effort by the world's old left in the years following 1848. No doubt it was also the result of structural developments in the capitalist world-economy. But it would not have happened without human organization and revolutionary programs.

The risks of drifting are very clear. The tenants of the status quo have not given up, however much their position is weakened structurally and ideologically. They still have enormous power and are using it to reconstruct a new inequalitarian world order. They could succeed. Or the world could disintegrate, from a nuclear or an ecological catastrophe. Or it could be reconstructed in the ways in which people hoped, in 1848, in 1968.