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INTELLECTUALS AND THE STATE

Noam Chomsky

There are two basic questions that I would like to consider in these remarks, the first rather abstract, the second more topical.

First, I would like to discuss the roles that intellectuals often tend to play in modern industrial society, a topic that has been a lively one at least since the Dreyfus affair, when the term "intellectual" came into common usage as a committed group of intellectuals took an important stand on an issue of justice. In this context I also want to comment on the engagement of American intellectuals in the ideological battles relating to World War I, when a prominent group of liberal intellectuals including John Dewey, Walter Lippmann, and others described themselves as a new class, engaged for the first time in applying intelligence to the design of national policy.

Second, I want to turn to some of the contemporary contributions of the "new class" -- specifically, their contribution to constructing the moral and ideological framework that will be appropriate to the tasks of the American state in the "post-Vietnam era." I will try to show that some rather striking features of contemporary ideology can be understood in the terms suggested in the preliminary, more general discussion.

Before proceeding, I would like to enter several caveats. In the second part of this talk I will concentrate on the United States -- in part, because I know it better, but also because of its predominant influence in world affairs since World War II. But much of what I have to say has direct bearing, I think, on other industrial democracies. Furthermore, time being short, I am going to omit many important nuances and draw lines more sharply than the full range of complexity warrants, trying to isolate some "ideal cases" that can serve to organize and facilitate our understanding of more complex phenomena, much as one does in the natural sciences, for example. Though such an effort carries risks, it is indispensable if we hope to proceed beyond a kind of "natural history" to some understanding of what lies behind a confusing range of events, acts, and pronouncements. Finally, I will, reluctantly, have to omit the documentation that is certainly required to make a case that I will only sketch in outline. I have tried to do this elsewhere in books and articles. What are the typical roles of the intelligentsia in modern industrial society? There is a classic analysis of this question in the works of Bakunin, about a century ago. He may have been the first to suggest the concept of a "new class" in reference to those who were coming to control technical knowledge. In a series of analyses and predictions that may be among the most remarkable within the social sciences, Bakunin warned that the new class will attempt to convert their access to

knowledge into power over economic and social life.¹

They will try to create the reign of scientific intelligence, the most aristocratic, despotic, arrogant and elitist of all regimes. There will be a new class, a new hierarchy of real and counterfeit scientists and scholars, and the world will be divided into a minority ruling in the name of knowledge, and an immense ignorant majority. And then, woe unto the mass of ignorant ones.

Though a passionately committed socialist himself, Bakunin did not spare the socialist movement the force of his critique: "The organization and the rule of the society by socialist savants," he wrote, "is the worst of all despotic governments." The leaders of the Communist party will proceed "to liberate [the people] in their own way," concentrating "all administrative power in their own strong hands, because the ignorant people are in need of a strong guardianship . . . [the mass of the people will be] under the direct command of the state engineers, who will constitute the new privileged political-scientific class." For the proletariat, the new regime "will, in reality, be nothing but a barracks" under the control of a Red bureaucracy. But surely it is "heresy against common sense and historical experience" to believe that "a group of individuals, even the most intelligent and best-intentioned, would be capable of becoming the mind, soul, the directing and unifying will of the revolutionary movement and the economic organization of the proletariat of all lands." In fact, the "learned minority, which presumes to express the will of the people," will rule in "a pseudo-representative government" that will "serve to conceal the domination of the masses by a handful of privileged elite."

As for liberal capitalism, it develops in the direction of increased state centralization, while the "sovereign people" will submit to the "intellectual governing minority, who, while claiming to represent the people, unfailingly exploits them." "The people," Bakunin wrote, "will feel no better if the stick with which they are being beaten is labelled 'the people's stick.'" Under either evolving system of governance -- state socialist or state capitalist -- "the shrewd and educated" will gain privileges while "regimented workingmen and women will sleep, wake, work, and live to the beat of a drum."

A century later, Bakunin's new class has become a grim feature of contemporary reality. State centralization has indeed proceeded in capitalist society, along with and always closely linked to centralization of ownership and control in the economic institutions that set many of the basic conditions for social life. By the turn of the century there were already close links in the United States between corporate ownership and control on the one hand, and university-based programs in technology and industrial management on the other, a development studied in recent work by David Noble.² And in more recent times there has been an increasing flow of technical intelligentsia through universities, government, foundations, management, major law firms that represent broad interests of corporate capitalism, and in general through the tightly linked network of planning and social control. Spokesmen for the new class never tire of telling us how the people rule, while concealing the real workings of power. The real and counterfeit scientists have been responsible for innumerable atrocities themselves and for the legitimation of many others, while wielding the people's stick.

I need not dwell on the performance of Bakunin's Red bureaucracy when they have succeeded in centralizing state power in their hands, riding to power on a wave of popular movements that they have proceeded to

dismantle and finally destroy.

I might also mention in this connection the penetrating studies by the Dutch Marxist scientist Anton Pannekoek.³ Writing in the late 1930s and then under the German occupation, he discussed "the social ideals growing up in the minds of the intellectual class now that it feels its increasing importance in the process of production: a well-ordered organization of production for use under the direction of technical and scientific experts." These ideals, he pointed out, are shared by the intelligentsia in capitalist societies and by Communist intellectuals, whose aim is "to bring to power, by means of the fighting force of the workers, a layer of leaders who then establish planned production by means of State-Power." They develop the theory that "the talented energetic minority takes the lead and the incapable majority follows and obeys." Their natural social ideology is some version of state socialism, "a design for reconstructing society on the basis of a working class such as the middle class sees it and knows it under capitalism" -- tools of production, submissive, incapable of rational decision. To this mentality, "an economic system where the workers are themselves masters and leaders of their work . . . is identical with anarchy and chaos." But state socialism, as conceived by the intellectuals, is a plan of social organization "entirely different from a true disposal by the producers over production," true socialism, a system in which workers are "masters of the factories, masters of their own labor, to conduct it at their own will."

The emergence of a new class of scientific intelligentsia has been extensively discussed -- though with a very different attitude towards the phenomenon described -- by Western analysts of "postindustrial society"; for example, Daniel Bell, who believes that "the entire complex of social prestige and social status will be rooted in the intellectual and scientific communities,"⁴ or John Kenneth Galbraith, who holds that "power in economic life has over time passed from its ancient association with land to association with capital and then on, in recent times, to the composite of knowledge and skills which comprises the technostructure."s Both have expressed high hopes for the new "educational and scientific estate," Bakunin's new class, ruling in the name of knowledge. But I must emphasize that Pannekoek did not conclude that since the technical intelligentsia make decisions on behalf of others in capitalist democracy, they therefore hold power.

One may, I think, note a kind of convergence, in this regard at least, between so-called socialist and capitalist societies. Lenin proclaimed in 1918 that "*unquestioning submission* to a single will is absolutely necessary for the success of labour processes that are based on large-scale machine-industry . . . today the Revolution demands, in the interests of socialism, that the masses unquestioningly obey the single will of the leaders of the labour process" (emphasis in original); "there is not the least contradiction between soviet (i.e., socialist) democracy and the use of dictatorial power by a few persons." And two years later: "The transition to practical work is connected with individual authority. This is the system which more than any other assures the best utilization of human resources."⁶

Consider, in comparison, the following dictum:

Vital decision-making, particularly in policy matters, must remain at the top. God -- the Communist commentators to the contrary -- is clearly democratic. He distributes brain power universally, but He quite justifiably expects us to do something efficient and constructive with that priceless gift. That is what management is all about. Its medium is human

capacity, and its most fundamental task is to deal with change. It is the gate through which social, political, economic, technological change, indeed change in every dimension, is rationally spread through society . . . the real threat to democracy comes not from overmanagement, but from undermanagement. To undermanage reality is not to keep it free. It is simply to let some force other than reason shape reality . . . if it is not reason that rules man, then man falls short of his potential.

In short, reason demands submission to centralized management: This is true freedom, the realization of democracy. Apart from the reference to God, it would be hard to tell whether the quote is from Lenin, or -- as indeed is the case -- Robert McNamara, a typical example of the scientific and educational estate in state capitalist democracy.⁷

Science has also been called upon to explain the need for submission to the talented leadership of those whom Isaiah Berlin has called "the secular priesthood." For example, Edward Thorndike, one of the founders of experimental psychology and a person with great influence on American schools, solemnly explained in 1939 the following grand discovery:

It is the great good fortune of mankind that there is a substantial positive correlation between intelligence and morality, including good will toward one's fellows. Consequently our superiors in ability are on the average our benefactors, and it is often safer to trust our interests to them than to ourselves. No group of men can be expected to act one-hundred percent in the interest of mankind, but this group of the ablest men will come nearest to the ideal.

Earlier he had explained that "the argument for democracy is not that it gives power to men without distinction, but that it gives greater freedom for ability and character to attain power,"⁸ as we have repeatedly witnessed.

Think what this means in a capitalist democracy. Some complex of characteristics tends to enhance wealth and power (it also doesn't hurt to have rich parents), including political power, which is closely linked to success in the private economy. This collection of characteristics -- some combination of avarice, lack of concern for one's fellows, energy and determination, a certain style of cleverness, etc. -- is "nearest to the ideal," and democracy permits the people so endowed to rise to power, which is good, because they are our benefactors, given the correlation between intelligence and morality.

Suppose we add a standard assumption that is central to many of the modern justifications for meritocracy, and to much of economic theory as well: People labor only for reward; the natural state for humans is to vegetate. It then follows that talent should be rewarded, for the benefit of all, since otherwise the talented and moral (recall the correlation) will not bestir themselves to act as our benefactors. The message, for the great mass of the population, is straightforward: "You are better off if you are poor. Accept powerlessness and poverty for your own good." One might note the importance of this lesson when other techniques of social control fail, for example, the promise of endless growth, which has served for a long period to induce conformity and obedience.

The secular priesthood has noticed that democracy poses some problems for the realization of the rule of reason, in which everyone submits willingly to their benefactors. One problem is that in a democracy, the voice of the people is heard. Therefore, it is necessary to find ways to ensure that the people's voice speaks the right words. The

problem was faced in an interesting essay by the well-known political scientist Harold Lasswell in the early 1930s.⁹ He wrote that the rise of democracy -- or, as he put it, "the displacement of cults of simple obedience by democratic assertiveness" -- "complicated the problem of eliciting concerted action," a problem perceived early by "military writers." The spread of schooling "did not release the masses from ignorance and superstition but altered the nature of both and compelled the development of a whole new technique of control, largely through propaganda." With the rise of democracy, "propaganda attains eminence as the one means of mass mobilization which is cheaper than violence, bribery or other possible control techniques." Propaganda, he explained, "as a mere tool is no more moral or immoral than a pump handle." It may be employed for good ends or bad. "Propaganda is surely here to stay; the modern world is peculiarly dependent upon it for the coordination of atomized components in times of crisis and for the conduct of large-scale 'normal' operations." It is "certain that propaganda will in time be viewed with fewer misgivings." He went on to point out that "the modern conception of social management is profoundly affected by the propagandist outlook" in its task of eliciting "concerted action for public ends." The propagandist outlook respects individuality, but this regard for men in the mass rests upon no democratic dogmatism about men being the best judges of their own interests. The modern propagandist, like the modern psychologist, recognizes that men are often poor judges of their own interests. . . . With respect to those adjustments which do require mass action the task of the propagandist is that of inventing goal symbols which serve the double function of facilitating adoption and adaptation.

Management must cultivate "sensitiveness to those concentrations of motive which are implicit and available for rapid mobilization when the appropriate symbol is offered." The modern propagandist "is able and anxious to apply the methods of scientific observation and analysis to the processes of society" and "to direct his creative flashes to final guidance in action," since in creating symbols he is "no phrasemonger but a promoter of overt acts."

It would seem to follow that no moral issue is posed when a benevolent authority manipulates "men in the mass" by appropriate forms of propaganda. This Leninist idea is a typical doctrine of the new class and is an example of the convergence of which I spoke earlier. (See note 23.)

In fact, in a capitalist democracy the pump handle will generally be operated by those who control the economy, and it comes as no great surprise to learn that they have fully comprehended this message, most notably in the "public relations" industry which has flourished ever since the potential for indoctrination was effectively demonstrated during the First World War. "Public relations," we learn from a leading spokesman for industry, "is nothing more than the mass production of personal good manners and good morals."¹⁰ And a vast effort has been expended to ensure that Americans have both -- as these are defined by our benefactors."

The leading figure in the public relations field, Edward Bernays, has had interesting things to say about these matters.¹² "Leaders . . . of major organized groups, . . . with the aid of technicians . . . who have specialized in utilizing the channels of communication, have been able to accomplish . . . scientifically what we have termed 'the engineering of consent,' " he explained in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* in 1947 -- at a time when a vast propaganda campaign was undertaken by government and industry, which has not flagged since. The phrase "engineering of consent,"¹³ Bernays continues,

quite simply means the application of scientific principles and tried practices to the task of getting people to support ideas and programs. . . . The engineering of consent is the very essence of the democratic process, the freedom to persuade and suggest. . . . A leader frequently cannot wait for the people to arrive at even general understanding . . . democratic leaders must play their part in . . . engineering ... consent to socially constructive goals and values.

Once again, it is business and its representatives in government who will, in practice, judge what is "socially constructive."

Who has this freedom to persuade and to suggest, which is the essence of the democratic process? Evidently, it is not evenly distributed -- nor should it be, given the correlation between intelligence and morality . One estimate of how the freedom to persuade is distributed appeared in the leading business journal *Fortune* in 1949, where it was claimed that "nearly half of the contents of the best newspapers is derived from publicity releases; nearly all the contents of the lesser papers . . . are directly or indirectly the work of [public relations] departments." The editors went on to make the now familiar point that "it is as impossible to imagine a genuine democracy without the science of persuasion as it is to think of a totalitarian state without coercion."h Indoctrination is to democracy what coercion is to dictatorship -- naturally, since the stick that beats the people is labeled "the people's stick."

With such insights as these we begin to gain a better picture of one major role of the intelligentsia in a capitalist democracy. Contrary to the illusions of the postindustrial theorists, power is not shifting into their hands -- though one should not underestimate the significance of the flow of trained manpower from university to government and management for many decades. But the more significant function of the intelligentsia is ideological control. They are, in Gramsci's phrase, "experts in legitimation." They must ensure that beliefs are properly inculcated, beliefs that serve the interests of those with objective power, based ultimately on control of capital in the state capitalist societies. The well-bred intelligentsia operate the pump handle, conducting mass mobilization in a way that is, as Lasswell observed, cheaper than violence or bribery and much better suited to the image of democracy.

I have been speaking so far only of those who are sometimes called the "responsible intellectuals," those who associate themselves with external power or even try to share in it or capture it. There are, of course, those who combat it, try to limit it, to undermine and dissolve it, to help clear the way for an effective democracy which, in my view at least, must incorporate the leading principles that Pannekoek outlined. There is a revealing analysis of these several roles in the major publication of the Trilateral Commission, a private organization of elites of the United States, Western Europe, and Japan founded at David Rockefeller's initiate in 1973, which achieved some notoriety when its members captured the posts of President, Vice-President, National Security Adviser, Secretaries of State, Defense, and Treasury, and a host of lesser offices in the 1976 U.S. presidential elections.

This study, called *The Crisis of Democracy*, is the work of scholars from the three trilateral regions.¹⁵ The crisis of democracy to which they refer arises from the fact that during the 1960s, segments of the normally quiescent masses of the population became politically mobilized and began to press their demands, thus creating a crisis, since naturally these demands cannot be met, at least without a significant redistribution of wealth and power, which is not to be contemplated. The trilateral scholars, quite consistently, therefore urge more "moderation in

democracy."

The lesson is similar to one offered to the underdeveloped world by another distinguished political scientist, Ithiel de Sola Pool, who explained in 1967 that in the Congo, in Vietnam, in the Dominican Republic, it is clear that order depends on somehow compelling newly mobilized strata to return to a measure of passivity and defeatism from which they have recently been aroused by the process of modernization. At least temporarily, the maintenance of order requires a lowering of newly acquired aspirations and levels of political activity.

This is not mere dogma, but what "we have learned in the past thirty years of intensive empirical study of contemporary societies."¹⁶ The trilateral scholars are proposing, in essence, that the same lesson be applied in the centers of industrial capitalism as well.

Earlier precedents come to mind at once -- for example, medieval attitudes towards the third estate. The "qualities which bring credit to 'this low estate of Frenchmen' " are "humility, diligence, obedience to the king, and docility in bowing 'voluntarily to the pleasure of the lords' " -- Huizinga's characterization, citing the chronicler Chastellain.¹⁷ Correspondingly, on the underdeveloped periphery of modern civilization, the natural state of passivity and defeatism must be restored. And at home, in the version of democracy expounded by the trilateral theorists, the commoners may petition the state, but with moderation. It is unnecessary for these scholars to stress that other social groups, somewhat better placed, will not temper their demands, though the American contributor does recall, with a trace of nostalgia perhaps, that before the crisis of democracy had erupted, "Truman had been able to govern the country with the cooperation of a relatively small number of Wall Street lawyers and bankers," a happy state to which we may return if the commoners cease their indecent clamor.

It is in this context that the Trilateral Commission study turns to the intelligentsia, who, according to their analysis, come in the familiar two varieties: (1) the "technocratic and policy-oriented intellectuals," responsible, serious, and constructive; (2) the "value-oriented intellectuals," a sinister grouping who pose a serious danger to democracy as they "devote themselves to the derogation of leadership, the challenging of authority, and the unmasking and delegitimation of established institutions" -- even going so far as to delegitimize the institutions that are responsible for "the indoctrination of the young" -- while sowing confusion and stirring dissatisfaction in the minds of the populace.

Speaking of our enemies, we despise the technocratic and policy-oriented intellectuals as "commissars" and "apparatchiks," and honor the value-oriented intellectuals as the "democratic dissidents." At home, the values are reversed. Ways must be found to control the value-oriented intellectuals so that democracy can survive, with the citizenry reduced to the apathy and obedience that become them, and with the commissars free to conduct the serious work of social management. The intellectual backgrounds of all of this, I have already discussed.

It is interesting that the term "value-oriented" should be used to refer to those who challenge the structure of authority, with the implication that it is improper, offensive, and dangerous to be guided by such values as truth and honesty: The trilateral scholars nowhere attempt to show that the value-oriented intellectuals they so fear and disdain are wrong or misguided in their conclusions. It is also striking that subservience to the state and its doctrines is not regarded as "a value," but merely the

natural commitment of the intelligentsia, or at least their more honorable representatives.

At the outset I mentioned the Dreyfusards and the liberal American intellectuals who rallied to the state during the First World War. It is fair, I think, to regard these two groups as early variants of the two categories of intellectuals distinguished in the Trilateral Commission study.

Those who denounced the injustice of the state at the time of the Dreyfus affair by no means dominated French intellectual life, as Henk Wesseling reminds us in a recent study.¹⁸ They typify the "value-oriented intellectuals" who have always been such a trial to their more sober colleagues.

Consider, in contrast, the group of liberal pragmatists in John Dewey's circle during World War I.¹⁹ In December 1916, the editor of the *New Republic* wrote to President Wilson's leading adviser, Colonel House, that their most fervent wish was "to back the President up in his work" and "be the faithful and helpful interpreters of what seems to be one of the greatest enterprises ever undertaken by an American president." At the time, Wilson was calling for "peace without victory" -- and a few months later, for victory without peace. By then, his leading enterprise was to guide a divided nation into the European war. The intellectuals proved to be faithful and helpful interpreters of this great enterprise. According to their own estimate, which is no doubt exaggerated, "the effective and decisive work on behalf of the war has been accomplished by . . . a class which must be comprehensively but loosely described as the 'intellectuals' " (*New Republic*, April 7, 1917). The nation entered the war "under the influence of a moral verdict reached after the utmost deliberation by the more thoughtful members of the community" -- the secular priesthood, the technocratic and policy-oriented intellectuals, the commissars. The latter term is in fact rather apt. The techniques of propaganda described by later scholars were developed and applied with much success during World War I and led to the explosive growth of the public relations field shortly after -- though for accuracy, I should add that "the more thoughtful members of the community" were as much the victims of the highly effective British propaganda machine, with its manufacture of "Hun atrocities," as they were purveyors of war propaganda, proceeding (in their own words) to "impose their will upon a reluctant or indifferent majority."

It would only be fair to commend the BBC for returning the favor in October and November of 1977, with its presentation on the Third Programme of a series entitled "Many Reasons Why: The American Involvement in Vietnam."²⁰ Demonstrating its taste for symmetry, the BBC has concocted an account that is certain to delight the American propaganda services no less than the response of the more thoughtful members of the American intellectual community must have warmed the hearts of such men as Sir Gilbert Parker, who headed the American section of the British propaganda bureau in World War I, and who was able to gloat about "the permeation of the American Press by British influence" in his secret reports to the British Cabinet.²¹

The services rendered to the state by the academic professions during World War I are surveyed in a recent work by Carol Gruber.²² Historians were particularly keen to be mobilized. A National Board for Historical Service (NBHS) was founded by a group of historians "to bring into useful operation, in the present emergency, the intelligence and skill of the historical workers of the country," so one of them (A. C. McLaughlin) wrote in *The Dial* in May 1917. One of the founders of the NBHS, Frederic L. Paxson, later described its activity as "historical engineering,

explaining the issues of the war that we might the better win it" -- an early example of "the engineering of consent." The press was also mobilized. An NBHS study of the German press concluded that the "voluntary cooperation of the newspaper publishers of America resulted in a more effective standardization of the information and arguments presented to the American people, than existed under the nominally strict military control exercised in Germany." The main government commission (Creel Commission) established to direct wartime propaganda made effective use of the services of American scholars. Among its achievements was a pamphlet entitled *The German-Bolshevik Conspiracy*, which employed documents generally regarded as forgeries in Europe (and shown to be forgeries forty years later by George Kennan) to "demonstrate" that the Bolsheviks were paid agents of the German General Staff, who had materially aided them in coming to power. In later years too, historians were to advocate "historical engineering" in the war against the Bolshevik menace. In his presidential address to the American Historical Association in 1949, Conyers Read explained that we must clearly assume a militant attitude if we are to survive. . . . Discipline is the essential prerequisite of every effective army whether it march under the Stars and Stripes or under the Hammer and Sickle. . . . Total war, whether it be hot or cold, enlists everyone and calls upon everyone to assume his part. The historian is no freer from this obligation than the physicist. . . . This sounds like the advocacy of one form of social control as against another. In short, it is.

The long, sorry record has been surveyed in an important unread monograph by Jesse Lemisch.²³

Not all of the scholars who lent their services during World War I were acclaimed. Thorstein Veblen, for example, "prepared a report demonstrating that the shortage of farm labor in the Midwest could be met by ending the harassment and persecution of the members of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW)," Carol Gruber points out, but "he also, however, together with his assistant, was fired for his pains" from his position as statistical expert for the Food Administration.

Then too there were "value-oriented intellectuals" who did not see the light. Randolph Bourne is the best-known case. We may recall how he was dropped by the *New Republic*, and forced out of an editorial position on *The Dial* by John Dewey, one indication of his displeasure over Bourne's penetrating criticism of the liberal intellectuals who were working to sell the war, Bourne felt, in the interests of "an opportunist programme of state-socialism at home" -- with the secular priesthood in command -- "and a league of benevolently-imperialistic nations abroad."

Clarence Karier goes on to observe that John Dewey had much contempt for the "pacifists" who, in his words "wasted rather than invested their potentialities when they turned so vigorously to opposing entrance" into the war instead of working for attainable goals within the growing chauvinist consensus (July 1917). In a more abstract discussion of "force and coercion," Dewey had expressed his view that if pacifists "would change their tune from the intrinsic immorality of the use of coercive force to the comparative inefficiency and stupidity of existing methods of using force, their good intentions would be more fruitful." Continuing, Dewey explained:

Squeamishness about force is the mark not of idealistic but of moonstruck morals.... The criterion of value lies in the relative efficiency and economy of the expenditure of force as a means to an end. With advance of knowledge, refined, subtle and indirect use of force is always replacing coarse, obvious and direct methods of applying it. This is the

explanation to the ordinary feeling against the use of force. What is thought of as brutal, violent, immoral, is a use of physical agencies which are gross, sensational and evident on their own account, in cases where it is possible to employ with greater economy and less waste means which are comparatively imperceptible and refined.

His general point was that "the only question which can be raised about the justification of force is that of comparative efficiency and economy in its use."²⁴ This in April 1916. A good, sober, pragmatic evaluation, which we have heard in other contexts since, without Dewey's qualifications.

Not surprisingly, Dewey felt that the war had taught valuable lessons in this regard. He wrote that "the one great thing that the war has accomplished, it seems to me, of a permanent sort, is the enforcement of a psychological and educational lesson. . . . It has proved now that it is possible for human beings to take hold of human affairs and manage them, to see an end which has to be gained, a purpose which must be fulfilled, and deliberately and intelligently to go to work to organize the means, the resources and the methods of accomplishing those results." Now that this lesson had been learned, "the real question with us will be one of effectively discerning whether the intelligent men of the community really want to bring about a better reorganized social order."²⁵ The war had revealed the possibilities of intelligent administration, and it is now the responsibility of the intelligent men of the community to rise to the occasion, organizing intelligence for the design of a more benign state capitalist social order, with the economical and refined use of force to achieve socially desirable ends.

I have so far been discussing the first of my two topics, the roles played by intellectuals, focusing on the role of commissar versus dissident, technocratic and policy-oriented versus value-oriented intellectual. Now I would like to apply these remarks to the contemporary world. First, however, a few general comments, to set the stage, as I see it.

The United States emerged from World War II with unparalleled wealth and power. Quite naturally, state power was employed to construct an international order -- extensive, though not all-encompassing -- that would satisfy the needs of the masters of the domestic economy. Equally naturally, this is not what one reads in most history books, though the basic facts are, I believe, well established, and the business press is often quite straightforward about the matter.²⁶

In general, the postwar global enterprise was a stunning success, though there were reversals -- the most dramatic in Southeast Asia. In the course of a "limited war," which proved quite costly, U.S. power declined somewhat relative to its industrial rivals. A major task of the state and its propagandists has been and remains to reconstruct the domestic and international order that was bruised, though never undermined, by the bloody events in Indochina. I will concentrate here only on the reconstruction of the ideological system, since that is the province of the intelligentsia; more central tasks are delegated elsewhere.

In the United States, the prevailing version of the "white man's burden" has been the doctrine, carefully nurtured by the intelligentsia, that the United States, alone among the powers of modern history, is not guided in its international affairs by the perceived material interests of those with domestic power, but rather wanders aimlessly, merely reacting to the initiatives of others, while pursuing abstract moral principles: the Wilsonian principles of freedom and self-determination, democracy, equality, and so on. Responsible controversy proceeds within a narrow spectrum: At one extreme, there are those who laud the United States for

its unique benevolence; at the other, we find the "realist" critics -- George Kennan and Hans Morgenthau, for example -- who deplore the foolishness of American policy and believe that we should not be so obsessively moralistic but should pursue the national interest in a rational way.

The work of the realist critics gives the deepest insight into the dominant ideology and dramatically reveals the extent of its penetration. In the early 1960s, Hans Morgenthau -- who was near the outer limits of responsible criticism and, to his credit, passed beyond them a few years later -- could write that the United States has a "transcendent purpose," namely, "the establishment of equality in freedom in America," and indeed throughout the world, since "the arena within which the United States must defend and promote its purpose has become world-wide." "America has become the Rome and Athens of the Western world, the foundation of its lawful order and the fountainhead of its culture," though "America does not know this."²⁷

To be sure, Morgenthau recognizes certain defects both at home and abroad -- in Central America and the Philippines, for example. But he chides those critics who rely on the ample historical record to deny the "transcendent purpose" of America and who claim that the United States is very much like every other power -- what is often described (though not by Morgenthau) as a "radical critique," a revealing choice of words. Such critics, according to Morgenthau, are guilty of a simple error of logic: "To reason thus is to confound the abuse of reality with reality itself." It is the unachieved "national purpose," revealed by "the evidence of history as our minds reflect it," which is the reality; the actual historical record is merely the abuse of reality.

The theological overtones are apparent, and Morgenthau is not unaware of them. He remarks that the critics, who mistake the real world for reality, have fallen into "the error of atheism, which denies the validity of religion on similar grounds." The comment is apt. There is indeed something truly religious in the fervor with which responsible American intellectuals have sought to deny plain fact and to secure their dogmas concerning American benevolence, the contemporary version of the "civilizing mission."

But the doctrines of the state religion were not able to survive the war in Vietnam, at least among large parts of the population. The result was an ideological crisis. The institutional foundations for the repeated counterrevolutionary intervention of the postwar years remained unshaken, but the doctrinal system that had served to gain popular support for the crusade against independent development had collapsed. The problem of the day has been to reconstruct it. It is a serious problem, since imperial intervention carries costs, both material and moral, which must be borne by the population. I would now like to survey some of the methods by which this problem is being faced by the secular priesthood.

The first task is to rewrite the history of the American war in Vietnam. This is relatively easy, since the press and academic scholarship have consistently held to the required mythical history, to which I will return.

A more difficult task is to shift the moral onus of the war to its victims. This seems a rather unpromising enterprise -- rather as if the Nazis had attempted to blame the Jews for the crematoria. But undaunted, American propagandists are pursuing this effort too, and with some success. Things have reached the point where an American President can appear on national television and state that we owe "no debt" to the Vietnamese, because "the destruction was mutual."²⁸ And there is not a

whisper of protest when this monstrous statement, worthy of Hitler or Stalin, is blandly produced in the midst of a discourse on human rights. Not only do we owe them no debt for having murdered and destroyed and ravaged their land, but we now may stand back and sanctimoniously blame them for dying of disease and malnutrition, deploring their cruelty when hundreds die trying to clear unexploded ordnance by hand from fields laid waste by the violence of the American state, wringing our hands in mock horror when those who were able to survive the American assault -- predictably, the toughest and harshest elements -- resort to oppression and sometimes massive violence, or fail to find solutions to material problems that have no analogue in Western history perhaps since the Black Death.

The only unresolved issue is the remains of American pilots missing in action, not American responsibility to help rebuild what they destroyed, if this is even possible. Worse yet, we refuse to allow others to aid them. India tried to send one hundred buffalo to Vietnam to help replenish the herds decimated by American terror, a necessity of survival for this primitive agricultural economy. This tiny gift had to be channeled through the Red Cross to avoid American retribution -- cancellation of "Food for Peace" aid, in this case.²⁹ In Indochina peasants pull plows because the animal herds were destroyed by American bombardment. And the *Washington Post*, which concealed and supported that aggression, publishes photographs of Cambodian peasants pulling plows as an illustration of Communist atrocities. In fact, the photographs in this case are probable fabrications of Thai intelligence, so clumsy that they were rejected even by the right-wing English-language Thai press -- though the European press has been less discriminating in this regard. The *Post* knew this, and knew its account of the source of the photographs to be a falsehood, but refused to publish a letter giving the documented facts that it knew to be true, let alone publicly retract its fabrications -- one small example of the stream of misrepresentation that has disfigured the American (indeed Western) press with regard to postwar developments in Indochina. A good deal of this is documented elsewhere, and I will not review it here.³⁰ The crucial point here is the truly obscene character of the attempt to blame the victims, the denial of American responsibility, and the startling success of this campaign; and still more, the refusal to meet the elementary responsibility to offer massive reparations to help overcome the carnage.

Another task for the intelligentsia is to reduce the "lessons of the war" to the narrowest possible terms. Again, this is not very difficult, since the intellectuals always tended to construe the issues in an entirely unprincipled fashion. There is a study by a Columbia University sociologist, Charles Kadushin, that gives a good deal of insight into the facts, which are rather different from what is generally assumed.³¹ He investigated attitudes of a group that he called "the American intellectual elite" in 1970, at the very peak of active opposition to the war, when colleges were closed down in opposition to the invasion of Cambodia and demonstrations swept the country. Much of his study was devoted to the war in Vietnam. The "intellectual elite" opposed the war, almost without exception. But the grounds for their opposition deserve careful attention. Kadushin identified three categories of opposition -- what he called "ideological," "moral," and "pragmatic" grounds. Under "ideological" opposition to the war he includes the belief that aggression is wrong, even when conducted by the United States. Opposition on "moral" grounds is based on deaths and atrocities: The war is too bloody. "Pragmatic" opposition to the war is grounded on the feeling that we probably can't get away with it: The war is too costly; the enterprise should be liquidated as no longer worthwhile.

There are two points of interest about this analysis. First, the terminology itself. No doubt the group surveyed would have been unanimous in deploring Russian aggression in Czechoslovakia. But on what grounds? Not on "pragmatic" grounds, since it was quite successful and not very costly. Not on "moral" grounds, since casualties were few. Rather, on "ideological" grounds: that is, on grounds that aggression is wrong, even if it is relatively bloodless, costless, and successful. But would we ever refer to this as an objection on "ideological" grounds? Surely not. It is only when one challenges the divine right of the United States to intervene by force in the internal affairs of others that such sinister terms as "ideological" are invoked.

More interesting, however, is the distribution of responses. Opposition on "ideological" grounds of opposition to aggression was very limited. More objected on "moral" grounds. But to an overwhelming degree, objections were "pragmatic." Recall that this survey was taken at the height of popular opposition to the war, when, in contrast to the "intellectual elite," substantial segments of the unwashed masses had come to oppose the war on grounds of principle and even to act on their beliefs, much to the horror of more delicate souls who now explain that their sense of irony and the complexities of history kept them removed from such vulgar display. As for the survey itself, my guess would be that a similar study in Germany in 1944 might have produced comparable results.

Similar attitudes are revealed in the debate over "amnesty" for those referred to as "draft dodgers." The more compassionate feel that they should be granted absolution for their crimes, though others sternly object that they must bear some punishment at least. That the real question is the granting of "amnesty" to those who conducted the war, or the intellectual clique that supported them until it became too costly, is an observation that far transcends the limits of "responsibility" within the reigning doctrinal system. It is commonly alleged that the "draft dodgers," and the student movement on the whole, opposed the war out of fear. They were unwilling to face the terrors of the war. In fact, the leading initiative in the American resistance, which was unprecedented in scale and character, was taken by young men who could have easily escaped combat -- not very difficult at the time for privileged groups -- but who chose to face great risk, long imprisonment or exile, out of simple moral commitment. Similar comments apply rather generally to desertion, the resistance of the underprivileged. The common claim that student opposition to the war collapsed because of the termination of the draft, though comforting to ideologues, is also false. In fact, certain more "politicized" elements in the student movement had (foolishly in my view) come to regard opposition to the war as relatively unimportant long before the draft was ended; and mass opposition to the war quite closely reflected the degree of overt American involvement, independently of the draft. But the ideological system cannot tolerate the fact that there was a principled opposition to the war, primarily among the young, conducted with great courage, conviction, personal cost, and considerable effectiveness. Therefore it is necessary to pretend that the serious and meaningful opposition was led by sober-minded intellectuals and heroic politicians, those "thoughtful members of the community" who, like their predecessors, reached a verdict "after the utmost deliberation" and acted with dispatch to restore national policy to its proper channels.

The rewriting of this history too deserves serious attention -- more than I can give it here. To illustrate with just one case, consider the current (December 10, 1977) issue of the *New Republic*, still more or less the official journal of the liberal intelligentsia. The lead editorial, entitled "The McCarthy Decade," is an ode to Eugene McCarthy, who "changed the

landscape of American politics" when he challenged Lyndon Johnson in the 1968 presidential campaign. The McCarthy campaign, the editors allege, "seeded the political system with men and women schooled in dissent" and introduced "a streak of unpredictable idealism" into American political life. "The most obvious postscript to the McCarthy campaign was the ending of the Vietnam war," as McCarthy "and his cohort established a consensus on the need to end that war." The editors quote with approval John Kenneth Galbraith's statement on the aforementioned BBC program that McCarthy is "the man who deserves more credit than anybody else for bringing our involvement in the war to an end," and they proceed to laud McCarthy for his modesty in refusing the mantle of hero. McCarthy, they conclude, "has insured that no President ever will feel again that he can carry on a war unaffected by the moral judgment of the people."

Compare this analysis with the facts. By late 1967, the mass popular movement against the war had reached a remarkable scale. Its great success was that the government had been unable to declare a national mobilization. The costs of the war were concealed, contributing to an economic crisis which, by 1968, had brought leading business and conservative circles to insist that the effort to subdue the Vietnamese be limited. The Pentagon Papers reveal that by late 1967 the scale and character of popular opposition was causing great concern to planners.³² The Tet offensive, which shortly after undermined government propaganda claims, enhanced these fears. A Defense Department memorandum expressed the concern that increased force levels would lead to "increased defiance of the draft and growing unrest in the cities," running the risk of "provoking a domestic crisis of unprecedented proportions." Mass popular demonstrations and civil disobedience were a particular concern, so much so that the Joint Chiefs of Staff had to consider whether "sufficient forces would still be available for civil disorder control" if more troops were sent to crush the Vietnamese.

The unanticipated growth of protest and resistance was largely leaderless and spontaneous. It took place against a background of considerable hostility in the media and the political system, and of occasional violence and disruption. One can identify deeply committed activists -- Dave Dellinger, for example -- who worked with tireless devotion to arouse and organize the public to oppose American aggression, with its mounting and ever more visible atrocities. There were some, like Benjamin Spock, who supported the young resisters, and even a few who joined them; for example, Father Daniel Berrigan, who offered "our apologies, good friends, for the fracture of good order, the burning of paper instead of children," when he and six others destroyed draft files in Catonsville, Maryland. But one will search in vain for the contribution of Eugene McCarthy to "establishing a consensus" against the war or arousing opposition to it. In the difficult early period, he did not even rise to the level of insignificance. There were a few political figures -- Ernest Gruening and Wayne Morse, for example -- who condemned the escalation of the American war. McCarthy never joined them.

After the Tet offensive of January 1968, it was generally recognized that the United States must shift to a more "capital intensive" effort, relying on technology rather than manpower. The American expenditure force was beginning to collapse from within. The American command was coming to learn a familiar lesson of colonial war: A citizen's army cannot be trusted to conduct the inevitable atrocities; such a war must be waged by professional killers. After 1968, the war dragged on for seven long years, with unspeakable barbarism and major massacres, such as Operation Speedy Express in the Mekong Delta in 1969. Popular

opposition peaked in the early 1970s, and continued, despite press efforts to conceal U.S. initiatives, until the very end. Throughout this period, too, there was barely a whisper from Eugene McCarthy.

Why then has McCarthy been elevated to the liberal Pantheon? The reason is simple. His brief appearance in 1968 symbolizes quite accurately the opposition to the war on the part of the liberal intelligentsia. Riding to national prominence on the wave of mass opposition to the war, McCarthy slipped silently away after failing to gain the Democratic nomination at Chicago in August 1968. He did succeed, briefly, in diverting popular energies to political channels, and came close to gaining political power by exploiting the forces of a movement that he had played no part whatsoever in mobilizing. His utter cynicism was revealed with great clarity by his behavior after he lost the nomination. Had he been even minimally serious, he would have made use of his undeserved prestige as a "spokesman" for the peace movement that he had so shamelessly exploited, to press for an end to the American war. But little more was heard from McCarthy, who demonstrated by his silence that he cared as little for the issue of the American war as he did for his youthful supporters who were bloodied by police riots in the streets of Chicago as he was attempting to win the Democratic candidacy, through their efforts on his behalf. He is, in short, a proper figure for canonization by the liberal intelligentsia.

The general attitudes of this group are reflected in the material now being produced on the "lessons of the war." To cite just one of many examples, the well-known Asian specialist Edwin Reischauer of Harvard writes that the real lesson of the Vietnam war is the tremendous cost of attempting to control the destiny of a Southeast Asian country against the cross-currents of nationalism. Southeast Asia simply is not open to external control at a cost that would make this a feasible proposition for any outside powers.³³

The clear implication is that if the costs were less, the effort to impose "external control" would be quite legitimate -- if exercised by the United States, that is; obviously not by China or Russia. The United States, in short, is once again unique: The obligations of the U.N. Charter, though part of "the supreme law of the land," do not apply to a state devoted with such selflessness and honor to the Wilsonian principles of freedom and independence.

Reischauer proceeds as well to repeat familiar fantasies about the origins of the American intervention in the alleged belief that Ho Chi Minh was "merely the front-line agent" of a unified international Communism. To him, "the tragedy of U.S. involvement in Vietnam is that this picture was never really correct," not the consequences of this "involvement" for the people of Indochina, a lesser tragedy. As is standard, he chooses to ignore the substantial documentary record which reveals that planners had full awareness of the nationalist commitment of the Viet Minh and that after they had decided on intervention they sought long and hard, without success, for some evidence to establish what they needed to justify that decision: that Ho Chi Minh was a puppet of outside forces. This documentary record is plainly unacceptable, therefore eliminated from the record of sober scholarship. "Error" and "ignorance," however, are socially neutral categories, and are available for use by critics among the secular priesthood.

These examples illustrate some rather important general points about propaganda and the intelligentsia. In a totalitarian society, the mechanisms of indoctrination are simple and transparent. The state determines official truth. The technocratic and policy-oriented

intellectuals parrot official doctrine, which is easily identified. In a curious way, this practice frees the mind. Internally, at least, one can identify the propaganda message and reject it. Overt expression of such rejection carries a risk; how serious the risk, and over how broad a range, depends on just how violent the state actually is.

Under capitalist democracy, the situation is considerably more complex. The press and the intellectuals are held to be fiercely independent, hypercritical, antagonistic to the "establishment," in an adversary relation to the state.³⁴ The trilateral analysts, for example, describe the press as a new source of national power, dangerously opposed to state authority. Reality is a little different. True, there is criticism, but a careful look will show that it remains within narrow bounds. The basic principles of the state propaganda system are assumed by the critics. In contrast to the totalitarian system, the propaganda apparatus does not merely stake out a position to which all must conform -- or which they may privately oppose. Rather, it seeks to determine and limit the entire spectrum of thought: the official doctrine at one extreme, and the position of its most vocal adversaries at the other. Over the entire spectrum, the same fundamental assumptions are insinuated, though rarely expressed. They are presupposed, but not asserted. According to the press, the hawks and doves share a commitment to the fundamental unspoken principle that the United States has a legitimate right to exercise force and violence, where it chooses to do so (see Chapter 4). And the "realist" criticism of American foreign policy, which marked the outer limits of respectable controversy until the impact of the student movement forced the doors of academia to open slightly, adopts the basic assumption that U.S. foreign policy is one of benevolence -- misplaced benevolence, the critics say. Across the entire spectrum of debate it is presupposed that the United States, alone in modern history, acts out of a commitment to abstract moral principles rather than rational calculation by ruling groups concerned for their material interests.

There are many other examples. The democratic system of thought control is seductive and compelling. The more vigorous the debate, the better the system of propaganda is served, since the tacit, unspoken assumptions are more forcefully implanted. An independent mind must seek to separate itself from official doctrine, and from the criticism advanced by its alleged opponents; not just from the assertions of the propaganda system, but from its tacit presuppositions as well, as expressed by critic and defender. This is a far more difficult task. Any expert in indoctrination will confirm, no doubt, that it is far more effective to constrain all possible thought within a framework of tacit assumption than to try to impose a particular explicit belief with a bludgeon. It may be that some of the spectacular achievements of the American propaganda system, where all of this has been elevated to a high art, are attributable to the method of feigned dissent practiced by the responsible intelligentsia.

A final task of the propaganda system is to restore the faith in our transcendent purpose. It is not enough to demonstrate the evil of our enemies, and to transfer to them the responsibility for the atrocities committed against them. It is also necessary to reestablish our own moral purity. Here, events have proceeded with an almost mythic quality. I do not suggest that it was planned; merely that the propaganda system rose magnificently to the presented occasions.

The drama unfolded in two acts: Act One may be entitled "Catharsis"; Act Two, "Rebirth," or "Spiritual Regeneration."

In Act One, the evil was personalized and expelled. Richard Nixon had a

point when he claimed that the press was mounting an unfair campaign against him, but he failed to comprehend the role he was playing in the unfolding drama. In fact, the charges against Nixon were for behavior not too far out of the ordinary, though he erred in choosing his victims among the powerful, a significant deviation from established practice.³⁵ He was never charged with the serious crimes of his Administration: the "secret bombing" of Cambodia, for example. The issue was indeed raised, but it was the secrecy of the bombing, not the bombing itself, that was held to be the crime. Again, the crucial, tacit assumption: The United States, in its majesty, has the right to bomb a defenseless peasant society -- but it is wrong to mislead Congress about the matter. The secrecy of the bombing was indeed remarkable. I have been privately informed by a high military officer who was involved in planning the Cambodian "incursion" in April 1970 that even top commanders were denied photo-reconnaissance intelligence, apparently because the government was unwilling to reveal to these officers the devastation from American bombing in the countryside that they would soon traverse. But any criticism of the Nixon Administration on these grounds remains within the permissible bounds of tactical debate.

We might ask, incidentally, in what sense the bombing was "secret." Actually, the bombing was "secret" because the press refused to expose it. Like the bombing of northern Laos before it, the American attack on neutral Cambodia must have been known to the press. A few days after the Nixon-Kissinger "secret bombing" began, Prince Sihanouk -- whose government was recognized by the United States -- called upon the international press to denounce American attacks on peaceful villages and the murder of defenseless peasants. There was no outcry, because the press was committed to secrecy, exactly as in earlier years, when the peasants of northern Laos were mercilessly bombed, hundreds of miles from the nearest zone of combat or even supply routes. It was years later, when open season was declared on Richard Nixon, that the press had the gall to accuse him of having imposed a veil of secrecy over these atrocities -- which are rarely recognized as atrocities, since even now (1977) the press prefers to believe that the attacks were directed against North Vietnamese and Viet Cong military targets.³⁶

In these and other ways, Act One was successfully completed and the evil, now identified and localized, was expunged. Next the curtain rose on Act Two: "Rebirth," the discovery of Human Rights, our new transcendent purpose. As Arthur Schlesinger explained in the Wall Street Journal, "In effect, human rights is replacing self-determination as the guiding value in American foreign policy."³⁷

In a perverse sense he is right. That is, to the exact extent that self-determination was the guiding value in the past -- in the era of Nicaragua and Cuba, Guatemala and Iran, Vietnam and Laos and Cambodia, the Dominican Republic and Chile -- to exactly that extent, human rights will be our guiding value tomorrow. The fact that such sentiments can be seriously expressed, and greeted with respect, is itself a remarkable indication of the intellectual and moral degeneration that accompanies the triumph of the awesome propaganda system.

There is much more to say about these achievements, and I have not even mentioned domestic analogues that are certainly required to complete the story. But I think it is fair to say that the secular priesthood, relying on the method of feigned dissent characteristic of democratic propaganda systems, has very largely succeeded, within only a few years, in destroying the historical record and supplanting it with a more comfortable story, transferring the moral onus of American aggression to its victims, reducing the "lessons" of the war to the socially neutral

categories of error, ignorance, and cost, and reconstructing a suitable doctrine of the civilizing mission of the West, with America in the lead.

To appreciate fully the range of these accomplishments, we may conduct a simple *Gedankenexperiment* along lines already suggested. Imagine that World War II had ended in a stalemate, with the Nazis driven from France and the Low Countries but remaining a major world power, intact among the ruins. Imagine that a stratum of dissenting intellectuals had emerged who criticized Hitler for his errors in attempting to wage a two-front war, destroying a valuable source of labor power with the death camps, reacting with too much brutality to the intolerable burdens placed on Germany at Versailles, and so on. How might they have proceeded to reinterpret the contemporary scene? Perhaps like this.

First, they would have explained the historic need for German power to be resurrected, perhaps invoking Martin Heidegger's theory that Germany alone can defend the classic values of humanistic civilization from the barbarians of East and West, not to speak of the hordes of Asia and Africa. They might then have turned to the situation in what they would have called "occupied Europe"; say, France, calm and peaceful until the Anglo-American invasion of 1944 abetted by Communist-led terrorists within, and now under American occupation: Recall that Eisenhower had "supreme authority" and the "ultimate determination of where, when and how civil administration . . . shall be exercised by French citizens" under a directive from Roosevelt issued with Churchill's approval.³⁸ They would have observed with horror that before and during this occupation the terrorists of the resistance carried out a great massacre of collaborators, amounting to a minimum of thirty to forty thousand murders within a few months, according to the assessment of the French historian of the resistance, Robert Aron, basing himself on a detailed analysis of the French gendarmerie, and amounting to no less than 7 million killed, according to the detailed studies of Pleyber-Grandjean, whom Aron calls a "victim of the Liberation."³⁹ Appalled by these monstrous events, the German dissidents might even have produced a judgment not unlike that of the editor of the *New Republic*, who explained recently that "the American collapse [in Indochina] will read in history as among the ugliest of national crimes" (June n, 1977) -- not what the United States did, but its failure to persist, is criminal. Comparably, the Nazi failure to withstand the Anglo-American invasion -- a foreign invasion from abroad, not a general uprising within⁴⁰ -- will read in history as the ugliest of crimes, as attested by the millions of helpless victims; we may assume that the "7 million victims" story would have prevailed within the domains of Nazi influence. Continuing, these analysts might have observed with dismay the terrible suffering of the people of France and England -- not to speak of Russia -- in the fierce winter of 1946-47, with production stagnating and the United States unwilling even to grant a loan except under conditions that reduce Britain to American vassalage, while the massive atrocities in Greece supervised by the conquerors (see Chapter 7) would have roused them to impotent rage. Perhaps, as moral men, they might have objected to an annual reenactment of the events at Auschwitz, as indecent, much as some Americans feebly protest the annual reenactment of the Hiroshima bombing, by the pilot of the *Enola Gay*, for example, in October 1977 in a Texas air show, before an audience of twenty thousand admiring spectators.⁴¹

What we have witnessed in the United States and the West generally in the past few years is in some ways a grim parody, in the real world, of this invented nightmare. It has proceeded with little articulate protest -- again, a testimony to the effectiveness of the institutions of propaganda and ideology and the notable commitment of large segments of the

intelligentsia to established power, even as they occasionally combat its excesses.⁴²

I mentioned before that ruling groups throughout the First World of industrial capitalism require a system of beliefs that will justify their dominance. The "North-South" conflict will not subside, and new forms of domination will have to be devised to ensure that privileged segments of Western industrial society maintain substantial control over global resources, human and material, and benefit disproportionately from this control. Thus it comes as no surprise that the reconstitution of ideology in the United States finds echoes throughout the industrial world, sometimes in surprising places. To cite only one minor example, the outstanding foreign correspondent Martin Woollacott of the *Manchester Guardian* expresses his dismay and astonishment that the Cambodian Marxists who studied in Paris never absorbed the "essential humaneness of French life and thought."⁴³ How this "humaneness" expressed itself in Indochina under French rule I need not discuss -- those interested might turn to a gripping study by Ngo Vinh Long.⁴⁴ Nor is there any need to speak of the humaneness of Western imperialism elsewhere, or the humaneness of European civilization itself, culminating in two mass slaughters. I have already mentioned the humaneness of the Paris where these Cambodian Marxists studied, as World War II came to a bloody end; and I could have gone on to describe its humaneness a few years before, as French authorities were vigorously rounding up Jews for shipment to death camps.⁴⁵ But it is an absolute requirement for the Western system of ideology that a vast gulf be established between the civilized West, with its traditional commitment to human dignity, liberty, and self-determination, and the barbaric brutality of those who for some reason -- perhaps defective genes -- fail to appreciate the depth of this historic commitment, so well revealed by America's Asian wars, for example.

Over twenty years ago, a rare study of the political economy of American foreign policy was published by a group sponsored by the National Planning Association and the Woodrow Wilson Foundation.⁴⁶ They observed, quite accurately, that the primary threat of Communism is the economic transformation of the Communist powers "in ways which reduce their willingness and ability to complement the industrial economies of the West." It is the recognition of this threat that has inspired American counterrevolutionary intervention in the Third World, though the specter of Russian or Chinese aggression in Western Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America has been dangled before the public as a more acceptable threat. The problem remains, and will continue to evoke Western antagonism to independent development, which is often led by a state socialist leadership that follows the model of Bakunin's Red bureaucracy. In an era of growing material shortages and resource competition, the "North-South" conflict may lead to new forms of still unimagined horror, while those who preside over stagnating economies in the industrial societies that are unable to absorb a superfluous class of workers without appropriate skills, concerned over popular opposition to the international terrorism they organize and support, will search for ways to implement the proposals of the trilateral analysts as to how to impose passivity and obedience in the interests of something called "democracy."

Those who may be concerned about unemployment for intellectuals need not worry too much, I believe. Under circumstances such as these, there should be considerable need and ample opportunity for the secular priesthood.

NOTES

1. The quotes that follow are taken from several of Bakunin's later essays, translated by Sam Dolgoff, *Bakunin on Anarchy* (New York: Knopf, 1972); in order, pp. 319, 295, 332, 284, 275, 329, 337, 338, 284. Another excellent collection in English is Arthur Lehning, ed., *Michael Bakunin: Selected Writings* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1973).
2. David Noble, *America by Design* (New York: Knopf, 1977).
3. Anton Pannekoek, *Lenin as Philosopher* (New York: New Essays, 1948), translated from the 1938 German original; *Workers' Councils*, Melbourne, 1950, reprinted in part as *Root & Branch Pamphlet #1*, Left Mailings, 275 River Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02139 (1970).
4. Daniel Bell, "Notes on the post-industrial society (I)," *The Public Interest* (Winter 1967). He goes on to say that "the leadership of the new society will rest, not with businessmen or corporations as we know them (for a good deal of production will have been routinized), but with the research corporation, the industrial laboratories, the experimental stations, and the universities. In fact the skeletal structure of the new society is already visible." To some perhaps, but not to me.
5. John K. Galbraith, *The New Industrial State* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1967).
6. Cited by Maurice Brinton, *The Bolsheviks and Workers' Control* (London: Solidarity, 1970).
7. Robert S. McNamara, *The Essence of Security* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968).
8. Cited by Clarence J. Karier, "Testing for Order and Control in the Corporate Liberal State," *Educational Theory*, vol. 22, no. 2 (Spring 1972). On Berlin's usage of the term "secular priesthood," see Chapter 2, note 17.
9. Harold D. Lasswell, "Propaganda," *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, vol. 12 (New York: Macmillan, 1933).
10. James P. Selvage, "Selling the Private Enterprise System," *Vital Speeches of the Day* (November 1942).
11. Cf. Alex Carey, "Reshaping the Truth: Pragmatists and Propagandists in America," *Meanjin Quarterly* (Australia), vol. 35, no. 4 (1976); Carey and Truda Korber, *Propaganda and Democracy in America* (forthcoming).
12. Cf. Carey, op.cit., for discussion of his role. Also Thomas P. McCann, *An American Company* (New York: Crown, 1976). See

Introduction, note 42.

13. Earlier, Walter Lippmann had written of "the manufacture of consent," an art which "is capable of great refinements," leading to a "revolution" in "the practice of democracy" which is "infinitely more significant than any shifting of economic power," as "persuasion has become a self-conscious art and a regular organ of popular government." *Public Opinion* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1932), p. 248; originally published in 1921.

14. Cited by Carey, op.cit.

15. M. J. Crozier, S. P. Huntington, and J. Watanuki, *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission* (New York: New York University Press, 1975).

16. Ithiel Pool, "The Public and the Polity," in Pool, ed., *Contemporary Political Science: Toward Empirical Theory* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967).

17. Johan Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages* (London: Arnold, 1924).

18. Henk L. Wesseling, "Reluctant Crusaders: French Intellectuals and the Dreyfus Affair," *Stanford French Review* (Winter 1977).

19. The quotes that follow are cited by Clarence Karier, "Making the World Safe for Democracy," *Educational Theory*, vol. 27, no. 1 (Winter 1977).

20. Later published as a book: Michael Charlton and Anthony Moncrieff, *Many Reasons Why: The American Involvement in Vietnam* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1978).

21. Cf. H. C. Peterson, *Propaganda for War: the Campaign against American Neutrality* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1939), for discussion of the gullibility of the intelligentsia and their rush "to join a cause that was intellectually fashionable" as they "repeated with a great show of wisdom" material prepared for them by the British propaganda services, while "in contradistinction to the easy surrender of American leaders was the stubborn pacifism of the great mass of the people."

22. Carol S. Gruber, *Mars and Minerva: World War I and the Uses of the Higher Learning in America* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1975). See also the (rather sympathetic) account of the Creel Commission by Stephen L. Vaughn, *Holding Fast the Inner Lines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980).

23. Jesse Lemisch, *On Active Service in War and Peace: Politics and Ideology in the American Historical Profession* (Toronto: New Hogtown Press, 1975). Lemisch cites another clear evocation of the necessity for the engineering of consent, by historian Thomas A. Bailey in 1948: "Because the masses are

notoriously short-sighted and generally cannot see danger until it is at their throats, our statesmen are forced to deceive them into an awareness of their own long-run interests. Deception of the people may in fact become increasingly necessary, unless we are willing to give our leaders in Washington a freer hand."

Lemisch himself was dismissed from the University of Chicago on the grounds that his "political concerns interfered with his scholarship." Comment on those who have not been subjected to this interesting judgment would be superfluous.

24. Compare Robert Keohane's criticism of Richard Barnet's "naive notion that U.S. military forces are necessarily a source of disruption and conflict"; the "real lessons of the Vietnam war" were, rather, "that military power has only limited usefulness, and should not be employed to fight revolutionary social change" -- "the use of military force must be carefully circumscribed and tightly controlled if it is to be effective," so we learned from the failure in Vietnam. *New York Review*, November 6, 1980.

25.; Discussing Dewey's social science project aimed at socializing the Polish-American community along lines that he felt appropriate ("a precursor of the think-tank operationalism with which the liberal intellectual has been engaged throughout the twentieth century"), Karier argues that Dewey conceived of democracy as "a process by which the intelligent minority can become a majority in influence," a standard doctrine of the new class.

26. For one example, see Chapter 2, p. 106. For further discussion of historical backgrounds, see Introduction.

27. Hans J. Morgenthau, *The Purpose of American Politics* (New York: Vintage, 1964), reprint of 1960 edition with new introduction dated December 1963.

28. Cf. Chapter 2, note 53.

29. Cf. Nayan Chanda, "New Delhi Wants to Offer Help," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, February 25, 1977. See also Chapter 7, pp. 209-10, and the Introduction, pp. 26-28.

30. Cf. Chomsky and Edward S. Herman, *The Political Economy of Human Rights*, vol. 2 (Boston: South End Press, 1979).

31. Charles Kadushin, *The American Intellectual Elite* (Boston: Little Brown, 1974).

32. For references, see my *For Reasons of State* (New York: Pantheon, 1973), p. 25.

33. Edwin S. Reischauer, "Back to Normalcy," *Foreign Policy* (Fall 1975). Reischauer is generally regarded as a "dove" on Vietnam, and accurately, as the term is generally used.

Reischauer's Harvard colleague John K. Fairbank, perhaps the most distinguished China scholar in the United States, took a

stronger and more consistent stand in opposition to the American war, and was one of the few senior scholars in the field who gave encouragement to young dissident voices, much to his credit. His own analyses, however, fall strictly within mainstream ideology, a fact that reveals very clearly how narrow is the spectrum of tolerated opinion in American academic circles (though rare exceptions may be found). Thus in his December 1968 presidential address to the American Historical Society, which was far from uncritical of U.S. foreign policy, he characterized the Indochina war in these terms: This is "an age when we get our power politics overextended into foreign disasters like Vietnam mainly through an excess of righteousness and disinterested benevolence." "Assignment for the '70's," *American Historical Review*, vol. 74, no. 3 (February 1969).

Later, in discussing "the reason for our failure" in Vietnam, Fairbank explains that one factor "was the absence in our minds of an historical understanding of the modern Vietnamese revolution. By degrees, when it was too late, we began to realize that it was a revolution inspired by the sentiment of nationalism while clothed in the ideology of communism as applied to Vietnam's needs. . . . The result was that in the name of being anti-communist, vague though that term had become by 1965, we embarked on an anti-nationalist effort," a serious "error," one of many: "Our role in defending the South after 1965 was first seen as an equivalent of our defense of South Korea fifteen years before. It was also aimed at forestalling a southward expansion of Chinese communism. . . . Having so inadequate a picture of our role on the scene, we had great trouble in convincing ourselves that it had a purpose worthy of the effort."

There are three comments to be made about this analysis. First, with regard to the factual claims: Policy planners knew perfectly well in the late 1940s that they were combating the forces of Vietnamese nationalism; our anti-Communist effort hardly began in 1965; it is absurd to say that we were "defending the South" after 1965, or ever -- rather, we were at war with the rural society that comprised the large majority of the South; and there is no evidence that the United States thought it was "forestalling a southward expansion of Chinese communism," though that claim was naturally invoked in propaganda that is to be taken as seriously as comparable Soviet propaganda about forestalling Western aggression in Afghanistan. Second, with regard to the moral level of the presentation: Are our acts properly described merely in terms of "failure," "error," the result of a meager understanding of history? Was the problem really that the Bundy and Rostow brothers hadn't had good college courses in Vietnamese history? Or are stronger words in order? A third comment has to do with the time and place of these statements, which appear in the Newsletter of the Harvard Graduate Society for Advanced Study and Research (June 1975) under the title "Our Vietnam Tragedy" (is it properly described as "our" Vietnam tragedy?), announcing a new professorship of Vietnamese Studies to be named for Ambassador Kenneth T. Young, who presided over the early stages of the American war in the 1950s, when the Diem regime was conducting a merciless campaign of terror and violence that virtually decimated the

anti-French resistance, finally eliciting a response that then brought on the full-scale U.S. attack in the 1960s. Surely Fairbank, of all people, should see that there is something obscene in this, even if it is beyond the comprehension of most of his Harvard[^] colleagues.

34. The examples most frequently offered in defense of this view are the reporting of the Vietnam war and Watergate. Both examples demonstrate the opposite, as does the regular behavior of the media on other issues, despite occasional exceptions. For ample documentation, see the reference of note 30 and earlier books by the same authors, among many other sources. It is a striking and important fact that even the examples offered as the "strongest case" in favor of media independence clearly undermine the thesis. On Watergate, see references of Chapter 2, note 7. As for the Vietnam war, the general behavior of the media was exactly as described in the case studies that follow in Chapters 3 and 4. See also Chapter 13 and the sources cited.

One institution that has been much exercised over the alleged adversary character of the press is Freedom House, which published a two-volume study by Peter Braestrup (one volume of analysis, a second volume of supporting documentation) demonstrating that by the standards of Freedom House, the press was too critical of the American war in Vietnam, contributing to the failure of the United States to achieve its (by definition) noble aims; Peter Braestrup, *Big Story: How the American Press and Television Reported and Interpreted the Crisis of Tet 1968 in Vietnam and Washington*, two vols. (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1977, Praeger), published in cooperation with Freedom House. Braestrup's study has impressed many commentators, who describe it as "conscientious" and "painstakingly thorough" (Edwin Diamond, *New York Times*); with its "endless attention to accuracy," it constitutes "one of the major pieces of investigative reporting and first-rate scholarship of the past quarter century" and should lead to a congressional investigation of the press (John P. Roche, *Washington Post*). See also Introduction, note 173.

In fact, Braestrup's analysis in volume 1 grossly misrepresents even his own documentation, while omitting obviously relevant material from the media and government sources. When the amazingly shoddy and incompetent treatment of documentary evidence is corrected, nothing remains of his case, which is a very narrow case to begin with. What Braestrup's evidence demonstrates is that the media accepted the framework of state propaganda without serious question, including the legitimacy of the U.S. attack on South Vietnam, both in editorials and, more importantly, in the implicit editorializing in news reporting. Braestrup's basic criticism is that the press was too pessimistic about the likelihood of success for American arms -- though the media tended to be less pessimistic than internal government documents or U.S. intelligence, a fact that Braestrup never mentions, and one that is hardly surprising when we observe, as the documentary record shows, that the media tended to rely uncritically on the more optimistic public pronouncements of the state propaganda system. By the standards of Freedom House,

then, the press must not only adopt the basic assumptions of state propaganda without critical analysis in its news reporting and editorial comment, but it must also display a proper degree of enthusiasm and optimism for the noble cause of advancing freedom by demolishing the rural society of South Vietnam. This study in itself provides dramatic evidence of the subservience of the media to the state, and the remarkable standards of Freedom House.

For details, see my review in *Race and Class*, vol. 20, no. 1 (1978), and an abbreviated version, in *More* (June 1978). Cf.

35. Cf. references of Chapter 2, note 7.

36. For details, see *The Political Economy of Human Rights*, vol. 2, pp. 288-89; and on Laos, *ibid.*, chapter 5 and sources cited there; see also Chapter 6, below.

A. J. Langguth, formerly bureau chief of the *New York Times* in Saigon (where, incidentally, he was responsible for some outstanding reporting), offers a defense of the failure of the *New York Times* to report the savage bombing of the peasant society of Northern Laos in his review of *The Political Economy of Human Rights*, *Nation*, February 16, 1981. He argues that this charge is false, because the *Times* did report the bombing of the Ho Chi Minh trail in southern Laos, concluding that "The *Times* is in the business of selling news, not suppressing it." The example however, demonstrates the real commitment of the *Times* quite precisely. The bombing of northern Laos, and its ferocious character, were not in doubt after the eyewitness reports of *Le Monde's* Southeast Asia correspondent Jacques Decornoy, which was repeatedly brought to the attention of *Times* editors and others, who also refused to print the facts. It is quite true that the *Times* reported the bombing of southern Laos. The latter, an extension of the Vietnam war, was tolerable to the propaganda system on the generally accepted assumption that the U.S. intervention in South Vietnam was legitimate, in which case bombing of the enemy's supply trails was arguably legitimate as well. But the bombing of northern Laos was much harder for the system to assimilate, since it was -- as the government acknowledged -- basically unrelated to the war in South Vietnam (or Cambodia) and involved the destruction of a defenseless peasant society by extraordinarily brutal means. The difference in treatment by the press is quite instructive.

37. Reprinted in the *Boston Globe*, March 13, 1977.

38. Cf. John Ehrman, *History of the Second World War, Grand Strategy*, vol. 5 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1956).

39. Robert Aron, *France Reborn: The History of the Liberation* (New York: Scribner's, 1964), chapter 5; translated from the French. See *The Political Economy of Human Rights*, vol. 2, chapter 2, for further discussion.

40. Robert Paxton, in his study of Vichy France, concludes that probably about "as many Frenchmen participated in 1943-4 in putting down 'disorder' as participated in active resistance";

earlier, Vichy had actively sought to become a partner in the creation of Hitler's New Order, though it was continually rebuffed (Paxton observes that "Vichy was more the creation of experts and professionals than of any other social group, and to judge Vichy is to judge the French elite"). He estimates that resistance participation at its peak, "at least as officially recognized after the war," involved about 2 percent of the French adult population, while perhaps 10 percent were willing to read a resistance newspaper. The Nazis were pleased with the French refusal to offer resistance. For example, after the failure of the Canadian landing at Dieppe, Germany freed all citizens of Dieppe who were prisoners in POW camps "in recognition of their city's failure to rise in support of the Canadians." No doubt the Nazi press exulted in this demonstration of the lack of popular support for de Gaulle's "Free French," merely the puppets of Anglo-American aggressors. The reader may supply current analogies. Robert Paxton, *Vichy France* (New York: Knopf, 1972).

41. *Boston Globe*, October 19, 1977. Japan had "condemned the show attack as being in bad taste and offensive to the Japanese people" the preceding year, but to no effect.

42. For extensive discussion, see *The Political Economy of Human Rights*.

43. Martin Woollacott, *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, September 18, 1977; excerpts in the *Boston Globe*, October 2, 1977.

44. Ngo Vinh Long, *Before the Revolution: the Vietnamese Peasants Under the French*, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1973); see also his *Peasant Revolutionary Struggles in Vietnam in the 1930s*, Harvard University Ph.D. dissertation (May 1978). On French "humaneness" in Cambodia, see, for example, the comments by Milton Osborne, *Before Kampuchea: Preludes to Tragedy* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1979): "In a way that I believe goes far beyond the attitudes adopted by the British in India or Malaya, to take only two 'Anglo-Saxon' examples, the French thought of themselves as not only ruling but also as possessing Indochina. It was *theirs* and this allowed them to adopt a clear-eyed view that they were present as colonisers essentially for *their* own benefit. ... In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries French officials had seen nothing extraordinary in the pursuit of policies that they judged would lead to the extinction of a Cambodian national identity as the result of Vietnamese immigration into Cambodia. It was the same cast of mind that allowed French observers -- devotees of Cartesian thought, supposed connoisseurs of Angkorian civilisation -- to dismiss Cambodians as a force to be seriously reckoned with in terms of a history that had led them to think like slaves." The record of French rule adequately reflects this perception of their victims.

For an interesting view on French racist attitudes towards the "insufferable Annamites," particularly de Gaulle's delegate Jean Sainteny, in the early post-World War II period, see Archimedes L. A. Patti, *Why Viet Nam? Prelude to America's Albatross* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

45. According to Paxton (*op.cit.*), Louis Darquier de Pellepoix, perhaps the most virulent anti-Semite of the interwar years, was appointed French Commissioner for Jewish Affairs from 1942 to 1944.

Meanwhile, President Roosevelt approved General Eisenhower's dealings with Admiral Jean Darlan, who happened to be in Algiers at the time of the American invasion of North Africa, recognizing him as head of the French North African Government. Stephen Ambrose observes that "Darlan was bitterly anti-British, author of Vichy's anti-semitic laws, and a willing collaborationist. . . . The result was that in its first major foreign-policy venture in World War II, the United States gave its support to a man who stood for everything Roosevelt and Churchill had spoken out against in the Atlantic Charter. As much as Goering or Goebbels, Darlan was the antithesis of the principles the Allies said they were struggling to establish. ... [In French North Africa after "liberation"], Jews were still persecuted, unable to practice professions, attend schools, or own property; Arabs continued to be beaten and exploited; the French generals who had co-operated with the Nazis and fought the Americans lived in splendor amid the squalor that surrounded them." Stephen E. Ambrose, *Rise to Globalism*, vol. 8 of the Pelican History of the United States (Baltimore: Penguin, 1971).

This was, incidentally, typical of the behavior of the Anglo-American conquering forces when it was found necessary as a means to restore the desired social order and to destroy the popular forces that had resisted fascism. For example, in Italy, the United States immediately restored the fascist regime in 1943. In Greece, the British invaded after the Nazis had evacuated the country, imposing the rule of royalist elites and Nazi collaborators and initiating a "white terror" against the Communist-led anti-Nazi resistance, which was taken over by the United States under the aegis of the Truman Doctrine when the British proved unequal to the task (see Chapter 7). The same was true in Asia, where the United States backed the Japanese collaborator who had declared war on the United States in Thailand, undermining a democratic government; and in the Philippines, reinstated the rule of Japanese collaborators while organizing and arming them to suppress the anti-Japanese peasant organizations. In Indochina, the British took the first steps in overcoming the nationalist movement that had cooperated with the United States during the war, then turning the task over to the French, backed by the United States. On Europe and Asia see Gabriel Kolko, *The Politics of War* (New York: Random House, 1968), and Joyce and Gabriel Kolko, *The Limits of Power* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972). On Thailand and the Philippines, see *The Political Economy of Human Rights*, vol. 1, and sources cited there; also my *American Power and the New Mandarins* (New York: Pantheon, 1969), chapter 1. On the Philippines, see Stephen Roskamm Shalom, *The United States and the Philippines: A Study of Neo-Colonialism* (Philadelphia: ISHI, 1981). On Indochina, see Patti (*op.cit.*), among many other sources.

46. William Y. Elliot, ed., *The Political Economy of American*

Foreign Policy (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1955). For further discussion of this revealing study, see my *At War with Asia* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970).