

MARCUSISM AGAINST MARXISM A CRITIQUE OF UNCRITICAL CRITICISM

We don't go along with phrasemongering ...
radicals. (Lenin)

This man recently reached the age of seventy; and throughout the entire course of his philosophical and journalistic career he has been a stubborn and irreconcilable opponent of Marxist scientific theory and the revolutionary practice based on it. Even in those works of his in which he does not say a word about Marxism. Even in those cases (and particularly in those cases) where he assumes the character of a restorer of the "true" doctrine of Marx, allegedly defending him against Engels, Lenin and even Marx himself.

Herbert Marcuse's first scholarly work was published in Frankfurt am Main in 1932: "A Hegel Anthology and the Foundation of the Theory of Historicity." The issuance of this book did not mark an epoch in the history of philosophy. It has many words and few ideas, especially not original ones, not to speak of ideas with scientific value. In the author's preface he expresses his deep gratitude to Martin Heidegger (whose existentialist incantations later brought him into the arms of the Führer), and goes the path, a well-trodden one in German bourgeois philosophy at that time, which leads neo-Hegelianism from Dilthey's *Lebensphilosophie* to end in Kroner and those like him.

The characteristic feature of this trend is distortion and falsification of Hegelian dialectics in the direction of irrationalism. Actually, Hegel's philosophical doctrine was the summit of idealist rationalism, not only exalting the greatness and power of reason but also (and this is the fundamental historical achievement of Hegel's philosophy) profoundly disclosing the rational, logical essence of all the forms of being and consciousness that had previously been regarded as illogical, inaccessible to mind because of their internal contradictoriness. It was just because Hegelianism was a dialectical *logic* that it was able to be one of the theoretical sources of Marxism. Whereas Hegel's dialectic was an expansion, even a universalization, of the sphere of reason, a panlogism that left no room for the irrational, the German neo-Hegelians tried to

turn the doctrine inside out, declaring that the logic of contradictions is the triumph of irrationalism.

In the 368 pages of his book Marcuse never mentions either Marx or Marxism. Nevertheless, what we have here is in essence not an ignoring of Marx' criticism of the philosophy of Hegel nor an evaluation of its historical significance, but a deliberately anti-Marxist "new interpretation" (p. 229) of Hegelianism. As against the only historically reliable characterization of the doctrine of the great German idealist, he sets up a falsification of Hegel's views, borrowing from the *Lebensphilosophie* and neo-Hegelianism and transforming the classic panlogism into its direct opposite. Marcuse follows Kroner in asserting that Hegel was "an irrationalist, since he was a dialectician," that "dialectics is irrationalism made into a method."

Following in the footsteps of the neo-Hegelians, Marcuse "interprets" Hegelian logic as "a prelude to the theory of historicity" (p. 217) that Dilthey had worked out. He makes the concept of historicity as development and self-movement, taking place according to the laws of logic of the world reason, identical with the irrationalistic conception of "life." For Dilthey "life" is "primordial," and "nothing is to be found beyond it" (p. 363). And this conception, allegedly, is the focus of all of Hegel's historicism. For both Dilthey and Hegel "historical being is spiritual being," but Dilthey's completely distorted formulation, which glosses over the fundamental contradiction between the rationalism of Hegel's dialectics and the irrationalism of the *Lebensphilosophie*, in which rational knowledge degenerates into intuitional "feeling," is taken as truth by Marcuse. But did not Hegel declare in the *Philosophy of History* that "... we must believe firmly and unhesitatingly that there is reason in world history..." and that "consideration of world history must disclose that its course was rational, that it was the rational, necessary expression of the world spirit...?" Marcuse, distorting the actual content of Hegelian dialectics and the conception of history based on it, not only is in opposition to the Marxian treatment of classical German idealism, but prepares the way for his later criticism of materialist dialectics, which used and revamped Hegel's dialectics, "turning it upside down and setting it on its feet" and opening up new scientific (not unscientific) vistas for it.

Marcuse's first philosophical work appeared on the eve of the seizure of power by the Nazi gang. But there is not a trace in the book of alarm, of any foreboding of the impending catastrophe. There is not a shadow of understanding of the monstrous processes that had taken place in the nation's consciousness, not even an allusion to the menace to the philosophical traditions of the German spirit — the moral savagery and total

cultural degeneration. The book is written as though the author were a man from Mars, not a German, not even a man, a *zoon politicon*.

Nine years passed. The Fascists threw the world into a monstrous, inhuman war. That is when Marcuse's second book on Hegel appeared: *Reason and Revolution; Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory*, New York, 1941. The author was no longer in Frankfurt, but in New York. Now he had not only noted but felt what Fascism was like. The events of previous years had taught him something, but far from all that he could and should have learned.

Seen with the eyes of an emigré in New York fleeing from Fascist villainies, Hegel looked different than he had to the man in Frankfurt am Main following the latest German fashion, neo-Hegelianism. There is not a trace left of Hegel's alleged irrationalism: "His (Hegel's) philosophy . . . repudiated any irrational and unreasonable reality" (p. 325). It would be useless to look for the slightest mention of Dilthey, Kroner, or Heidegger in Marcuse's new book. And although an entire section is devoted to neo-Hegelianism, it discusses English and Italian neo-Hegelianism but not a word about German neo-Hegelianism, of which Marcuse's first philosophical work had been flesh of its flesh and blood of its blood. It is as if no such thing had ever existed. When the subject is English neo-Hegelianism, Hegel's influence on the development of a "rationalist philosophy" (p. 388) is noted. At another point it is particularly emphasized that the opposition of French positivism to dialectical social theory had for its basis that, contrary to Hegel, "society is irrational" (p. 344). In the preface to the new edition in 1960, it is asserted very explicitly that Hegel contrasted his views to "the various obscurantists who insisted on the rights of the irrational as opposed to reason" /retranslated/ (p. xiii).

But Marcuse did not have a word to say concerning the mistakenness of his previous treatment of the Hegelian dialectic in the spirit of Diltheyan "historicism." And not a word concerning the role that the irrationalist falsification of dialectics by the German neo-Hegelians had played as a forerunner of the overwhelming orgy of irrationalism in the subsequent degradation of philosophical idealism.

But still, after all, is it worth while digging up the sins of Marcuse's youth after *Reason and Revolution* had appeared? Had he not given up his errors? Alas, there is not the slightest reason to say so. Quite recently, twenty-seven years after the publication of *Reason and Revolution*, there appeared in that same Frankfurt am Main . . . a second edition of the Hegel anthology. The old Adam was not dead! The thirty-six years that had passed since Marcuse's debut in philosophy had not taught him anything. The absolute idea had come full circle to its starting point.

But let us return to *Reason and Revolution* and see what Marcuse does with various themes in 1941. The interpretation of Hegel's philosophy in this work is healthier and in better correspondence with historical fact, but Marcuse uses it only as the basis for applying his abilities as a falsifier to some one different and more important. "Hegel died, so to speak," Karl Schmidt, the theoretician of German Fascism, once said, adding, "Hegel migrated from Karl Marx to Lenin and Moscow." Herbert Marcuse migrated from Frankfurt not to Moscow but to New York and there engaged in falsification, no longer of the "dead" Hegel but of the living Marxism-Leninism, which had preserved for mankind everything that was valuable and fruitful in the doctrine of the great German idealist dialectician.

Four chapters of *Reason and Revolution* (both nouns belong in quotation marks) are devoted to Marx, one of them especially to "Marxist dialectics." In it Marcuse passes from distortion of one of the philosophical sources of Marxism to distortion and direct attack on Marxism itself, from combating dialectics as the highest stage of idealist rationalism to combating dialectics based on the solid scientific foundation of materialism, against a dialectics that has overcome the inconsistency of Hegel's conservatism and drawn consistent revolutionary conclusions from its principles. And in the process there was one more new and radical distortion of one of the dialectical categories that are of primary importance for the dialectics of Hegel and that of Marx.

This is the category of *negation* as the motive force of movement and development. It is well known to anyone who has even a slight acquaintance with Hegel's doctrine that his conception of negation is basically opposite to the formal-metaphysical conception: the duality in unity of this category, the unity of contradictories that it includes. Hegel himself, speaking of his conception of negation, recalls Spinoza's formulation: *omnis determinatio est negatio*. And it is precisely this duality in unity of negation, which does not exclude the statement but includes it, that is the essence of Hegel's dialectical renovation of this category. On this dialectical insight into the essence of negation is based the concept, crucial for the entire Hegelian triadic structure, of "sublation" (*aufheben*), or double negation, which presupposes a dialectical treatment of simple negation.

It is not possible that Marcuse does not know this. Nonetheless, in flat contradiction with the generally known facts of the history of philosophy, he interprets the Hegelian dialectic as its precise opposite, presenting dialectical "negation" as something which it in fact eliminates, as metaphysical, absolute negativity, contrary to positivity, to assertion.

"His (Hegel's) system," Marcuse says, "can well be called a *negative philosophy*" /retranslated/ (p. xv), inasmuch as negation is its leading principle. And this philosophy is dialectical only because and only insofar as it is negative *and not* positive. Dialectics, which is negative in its very essence, requires the negation of actuality, criticism of it, condemnation, exposure, destruction of the existent ("dialectic thought is destructive by necessity" /retranslated/, we read on p. xii). When Hegel formulates his principle that the real is rational and the rational real, he betrays dialectics. "I am certain," Marcuse says, "that the very idea of reason is an undialectical element in Hegel's philosophy" /retranslated/ (p. xii), since from his point of view reality conceived dialectically can only be irrational. And this "Hegel expert," as he is called, makes this statement without blinking an eyelash, as though knowing he did not know and seeing he did not see that in Hegel's doctrine it was precisely "reason" that was the vehicle and controller of dialectics, its synonym, that for Hegel the "rationality" of reality was synonymous with its dialectical quality. To contrapose the negativity of dialectics to dialectical reason is simply to preclude the possibility of understanding the basic historical achievement of Hegel, his raising of rationalism to the dialectical level.

Here we see the roots of Marcuse's complete failure to understand the dialectical unity of the historical and the logical, which lies at the basis of his first, neo-Hegelian book. What we have is a metaphysician who is incapable of perceiving the unity of the historical and the logical, the real and the rational, and who inadmissibly excludes from the concept of the "rational" just what constitutes its rational core: regularity, logicity, expressibility in the concepts of dialectical *logic*.

It would be a totally unjustified error to identify Marcuse's notion of the negativity of dialectics with the idea that dialectics is the algebra of the revolution. In the first place, to say "algebra of the revolution" is the same thing as saying "logic of the revolution," and not its illogicality, its irrationality. Furthermore, a fully valid, creative criticism is never a one-sided negative, not a metaphysical negation, but an assertion of the new, and thereby positive.

That is why the antithesis fabricated by Marcuse — the negativism of Hegelianism and the positivism of anti-Hegelianism — is a play on words that does not stand up under criticism. The adherents of the positive philosophy called the critics of Hegelianism from the right advocates of the theology of revelation (Weisse, the younger Fichte). What was involved was the relationship of faith and reason; which had the primacy in the system of philosophy; positive or negative attitude towards church dogmatics. As for relationship to the existing order, even Marcuse does

not deny that the political position of Hegel, who was the official Prussian state philosopher, was not at all negative, *despite* his dialectics.

A similar play on words appears in the contraposition of Hegel's "negative philosophy" to English and French "positivism," in the meaning of the term commonly accepted today. When Marcuse asserts that the anti-Hegelianism of the positivists consisted in the fact that "positive philosophy aimed to counteract the critical process involved in the philosophical 'negating' of the given . . . to affirm the existing order against those that asserted the need for 'negating it'" (p. 327), he is false-carding, as usual. The battle line of positivism against Hegelianism did not run along a political dividing line but within the bourgeois, idealist camp, between subjectivist empiricism and speculative objectivism. The focal point of the differences was the relationship of the two forms of idealism to experimental science. As for social and political tendencies, Marcuse cannot but admit that it is impossible to contrapose Saint-Simon, who leaned towards positivism, to Hegel, as a supporter of the existing order opposed to a "negater" of it. In a word, this entire fabrication of a "negative philosophy" is based on a metaphysical conception of negation and trickery with the historical facts, and falls apart like a house of cards.

We did not idly devote so much attention to this misinterpretation of Hegel's philosophy, in the year before the two-hundredth anniversary of his birth. Our interest in the question is not commemorative but relates to today, inasmuch as this sleight of hand is used by Marcuse as a springboard for attacking *Marxian* dialectics in theory and in practice.

In what does Marcuse see the distinction between Marx' dialectics and Hegel's? According to him, it is that Marx "detached dialectic from its ontological base" (p. 314); that in him it lost its "metaphysical" (i.e. universal philosophical) character; that he refrained from "generalizing" dialectics, from extending it to "a movement of all being" (p. 315); that for Marx "the dialectical principle is not a general principle equally applicable to any subject matter" (p. 314). What difference does it make to Marcuse that Marx valued Hegel highly just because, despite his idealistic mystification, "he was the first to present its general forms of movement in a comprehensive and conscious manner" (*Works/Russian*/, Vol. 23, p. 22). Like all revisionists preceding him, Marcuse hopes, by a stroke of the pen, to detach himself from philosophical materialism, from the Marxian materialist dialectics as an all-embracing philosophical doctrine. "Marx' materialist 'reworking' of Hegel . . . was not a transition from one philosophical position to another" /retranslated/ (p. xiii). The revolution made by Marx is alleged to consist, not in the fact that, in

Marx' words, he set Hegel's dialectic on its feet when it had been standing on its head, and put it on the solid scientific ground of philosophical materialism, but rather in that Marx limited dialectics, narrowing its sphere of application from everything existing to merely social, historical being. When Marcuse says that "the Marxian dialectic is a historical method" (p. 315), he is not aiming at historicity as the principle of all motion and development, but he is denying the dialectics of nature. For Marcuse, where there is no society, there is no dialectics.

By way of an example, Marcuse puts before the astonished reader the following hocus-pocus with a glass of water, the same glass of water that Lenin adduces as an example of the basic difference between dialectics and eclectics. As the orchestra plays a flourish, the magician goes to work: "The independent objectivity of the glass of water is thus dissolved." (there was a glass; one, two, three, and it has disappeared. — B.B.) "Every fact can be subjected to dialectical analysis only insofar as every fact is influenced by the antagonisms of the social process" (p. 315). If there are no social contradictions, there is no dialectics. Not only that, there is no objective reality. Materialism evaporates, along with dialectics.

If you think that Marcuse, after denying dialectical materialism (his chief aim), will keep historical materialism, you are greatly mistaken. Nothing of the sort. Historical materialism is a typical product of capitalist society, of class society in general, and retains its validity only with respect to that kind of society. Marx' theory, which is bound up with a determinate social structure, denies not only philosophy but sociology too (p. 321). While denying, go the whole hog!

Now why is the sphere of influence of both historical materialism and of dialectics limited to a definite social system? Because, Marcuse answers, (he has not yet denied his own existence), dialectics, which is inherently negative, is significant only in a society that is to be evaluated negatively, while Marx' materialism does nothing other than "exposing the materialistic character of the prevailing social order" (p. 273), which does not deserve to exist. Therefore, Marcuse concludes, with the disappearance of the "materialistic" and antagonistic society both historical materialism and the dialectical method lose their significance. The adherents of dialectics and historical materialism have the right to exist only within capitalism, since (as Marcuse says expressly) Marx' dialectics is linked only to that phase of social development which the founders of Marxism designated as "prehistory" (p. 316). After the transition to real history, from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom, "the principle of historical materialism leads to its self-negation" (p. 320). And so, Marxists, beware the socialist revolution! It brings with it your

self-negation. It is no wonder that Marcuse's friends and students state that he has a great sense of humor. For how would it be possible, without a sense of humor, to state that putting into effect a scientific prediction based on the dialectical materialist conception of history constitutes a refutation of Marxism? How is it possible to declare seriously that a regular transition from the kingdom of necessity into the kingdom of freedom, into a social formation existing according to the laws of freedom, is a negation of historical regularity and therefore of historical materialism? Or that a *dialectical*, qualitative transition from a social system moved by antagonistic contradictions is the end of dialectics? It is a complete mystery why the entire practice of the socialist countries, based as it is on the theory of materialist dialectics, does not support the brilliant prognosis by Marcuse.

But all this is only the flowers (although malodorous enough); the (poisonous) fruit is still to come. Working at the Russian Institute founded with funds from the Rockefeller Fund at Columbia University, and then at the similar institution at Harvard University, Marcuse raised his negation to a new and higher stage; from a deliberate attack on the founders of Marxism he went over into a malignant attack on contemporary Marxism. This is the purpose of his opus on "Soviet Marxism: A Critical Analysis," written with the premeditated intention of unmasking the "extreme poverty and even dishonesty of Soviet theory," with which he is acquainted primarily from the Jesuit parody of neo-Thomist Gustav Wetter (p. 128).

What is "Soviet Marxism?" Marxism is Marxism. There is Marxism and anti-Marxism, e.g., Marcuseism. "Anti-Soviet Marxism" is as nonsensical as "Soviet anti-Marxism." Marcuse's title is itself an attempt to muddy the waters, to counterpose the doctrine of Marx to the dialectical and historical materialism worked out theoretically in our time and applied practically to the construction of the socialist society and the struggle against imperialism and its ideologues. The Marxism worked out by Lenin and his disciples in the Soviet Union and outside its borders in the other socialist countries and by progressive thinkers and revolutionary leaders in capitalist countries, is the only genuine, authentic Marxism, based entirely on the principles, methods and norms established by the founders of Marxism, and further developed in strict conformity to those principles, adapted to new historical conditions and the new achievements of scientific thought.

Marxism, which is antidogmatic in its essence, requires its adherents to develop it in such a way. Lenin pointed out the direction of that development, which has completely justified itself in theory and practice, showing the vitality, firmness, invincibility and limitless creative perspec-

tives of the doctrine of Marx and Engels. And any and all attempts to contrast Leninism as "Soviet Marxism" to Marxism as such are groundless and sure to fail. Marcuse's attempt is clear testimony to that.

Any such contraposition is impossible without a corresponding falsification (in Marcuse's terminology, "interpretation") of Marxism. In doing so Marcuse resorts, as usual, to his favorite trick, magical "negation." Marx, we are told, denied philosophy, refuted it. He had no philosophy of dialectical materialism. Philosophy was, in general, taboo for him, forbidden fruit, an historical survival. In this respect Marx followed in the footsteps of none other than Hegel. "Neither Hegel nor Marx developed dialectic as a general methodological scheme." This is said on p. 137 by the "expert" in Hegel and Marx.

But on what basis is the universal philosophical significance of Hegel's dialectics denied? For the reason that there is no dialectics of nature in him. Actually, as Engels explained, nature as otherness of the absolute idea does not have any complete dialectical development according to Hegel, since such a development is attainable only on the level of the spirit. But this is an *inconsistency*, which is overcome in passing from idealist dialectics to dialectical materialism. The idealist system limits the universality of Hegel's dialectics in the philosophy of nature, as it does in the conservative inferences drawn from the system. Putting dialectics on a materialist foundation immediately ends both these limitations and transforms dialectics into a "universal methodological pattern," to use Marcuse's ill-sounding terminology.

How can any one who honestly studies the works of the young Marx fail to realize that the words in which he rejects philosophy refer to previous philosophy, to philosophy as it had been? Could an absolute, metaphysical denial of philosophy be the position of a man who proclaimed that the proletariat finds its spiritual weapon in philosophy and philosophy finds its material weapon in the proletariat? Marx would have armed the proletariat well indeed by giving it a philosophy which he had himself rejected and negated! That would have made sense only if Marx' relationship to the proletariat had been like Marcuse's, if he had viewed it not as the revolutionary remaker of the world but as an anti-revolutionary social factor.

And so Marx was a stranger to materialist dialectics as a universal method of philosophical theory. The first revisionist, the original sinner who tasted the forbidden fruit from the tree of philosophy was none other than Friedrich Engels: "The first step in this direction was made by Engels in his *Dialectics of Nature*" (p. 138). Has Marcuse read Engels' correspondence with Marx on matters concerning the dialectics of nature? Does he know that Marx was in essence the coauthor of Engels' basic

philosophical work, the "Anti-Dühring"? Is he aware of the fact that Marx intended to write a special work on the theory of materialist dialectics? But "defending" Engels against the charge of differing in principle from Marx is as idiotic as proving (in Chekhov's phrase) that two times two is not a tallow candle.

Marcuse pursues his profound critique. Soviet Marxists have followed in Engels' footsteps, deepening his divergencies from Marx. Whereas for Marx the sphere of dialectics was limited to human history, Soviet Marxists have extrapolated it to nature as well, converting it "into a universal 'world outlook' and universal method" (p. 137). In Marx' eyes, his doctrine was "synonymous with historical materialism" (p. 145); Soviet Marxists have dreamed up dialectical materialism as a philosophical doctrine.

Hence, Marcuse begins his critique of Marxism by limiting it, by a denial of Marxist philosophy that makes it possible to "supplement" Marxism with any philosophy whatever, e.g., the irrationalistic doctrines, so dear to Marcuse's heart, of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, the *Lebensphilosophie*, existentialism and Freudian psychoanalysis (cf. pp. 224, 228). But Marcuse now, denying the dialectics of nature, returns to the very inconsistency of Hegelian idealist dialectics, which denied dialectical quality to the material, physical "otherness" of the idea and was removed by the founders of materialistic dialectics. But even if we assume, contrary to fact, that dialectical materialism was not elaborated by the founders of Marxism, is not historical materialism based on the methodological principles and *Weltanschauung* of materialist dialectics? Is it not a consistent extension of the materialist philosophy to a higher form of motion — social regularity? Is the very origin of society and man in the developmental process of nature explicable without the help of the dialectical method? does it not presuppose the dialectics of nature? Marcuse himself let slip the statement that "dialectical logic is the cornerstone of Marxian theory" (p. 136). What, if not dialectical logic, guided Marx in his investigation of the phenomena of social life? What is the logic of *Capital* but dialectical logic, Logic with a capital letter?

But Marcuse's attempt, with inadequate means, to confine Marxism to historical materialism, is only his first step in his war against Marxism. The second step is a further limitation of Marxism, reducing it from the materialist-dialectical conception of history as a whole to dealing only with the "prehistory" of human society. Marxism is not historical materialism; it is prehistorical. ". . . its world is that of 'prehistory,' class society . . . There is no Marxian theory which may be meaningfully called a 'world outlook' for postcapitalistic societies" (p. 142). That is, the socialist revolution and the construction of socialist society are the

suicide of the Marxist world view. Marxism ends where socialism begins, since "There is no Marxian theory of socialism because the antagonistic-dialectical laws which govern presocialist history are not applicable to the history of mankind" (*ibid.*). Not only philosophy has to be discarded from Marxism, but the theory of scientific communism as well. Of the three fundamental components of Marxism as formulated by Lenin (and stated before him by Engels in the "Anti-Düring", Marcuse ejects two from Marxism. He is graciously willing to "keep" Marxism, but without its philosophical foundation and without its sociopolitical consequences — a Marxism with no foundation and no roof. The Marxist theory of scientific socialism, replacing the prescientific utopian socialism, is rejected along with the structure of scientific thinking in general. And this pretentious nonsense is proclaimed as an "immanent criticism" of Marxism, as a purge of orthodox Marxism from Soviet "revisionism," in which "while not a single /one/ of the basic dialectical concepts has been revised or rejected . . . the function of dialectic itself has undergone a significant change: it has been transformed a mode of critical thought into a universal 'world outlook' and universal method" (p. 137). As if "a mode of critical thought" does not presuppose the scientific world-view and method but excludes it! As if one were possible without the other! As if the construction of socialism excludes the "mode of critical thought" rather than favoring its development! As if the transition from "pre-history" to socialism meant the end of the dialectical development of society, and did not eliminate the basic obstacles and hindrances to unlimited social progress! As if the transition from the "kingdom of necessity" to the "kingdom of freedom" were not the creation of real motive forces which open unprecedented prospects for renewing social existence and consciousness! As if the qualitatively new, nonantagonistic forms of struggle of the new with the old, set up under the conditions of socialism, were not enormously more dynamic stimuli than the antagonistic contradictions that are eliminated under socialism! To say that the socialism erected and developing on the basis of Marxist theory is incompatible with Marxist theory is only possible for a man whose blind hatred for Marxism and communism has led him into the deep mire, out of which he is trying to pull himself by his hair, as in Baron Munchausen.

This is how it is done. According to Marcuse, the assertion that the transition to socialism entails the withering away of Marxist dialectics is not in any sort of contradiction to the indubitable fact that materialist dialectics has attained its greatest dissemination and development in the USSR; and the reason is that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is not a socialist state. "The Soviet Marxist 'revision' is 'orthodox.' . . . what

is involved is not so much a revision of dialectic as the claim of socialism for a nonsocialist society." This is to be found on p. 154. There is no socialist society opposing capitalism. It remains a mystery why there is an antagonistic contradiction between two social systems confronting each other in the modern world. For Marcuse the "socialist," in full conformity with Walt Rostow, the militant ideologist of American imperialism, the modern world is made up of "two antagonistic forms of industrial civilization" (p. 7), and he is careful to give warning that when he uses the term "socialist" as applied to Soviet society, he does not by any means hold that "this society is socialist in the sense envisaged by Marx and Engels" (p. 8).

On what basis does Mr. Marcuse take the liberty of downgrading socialism in the USSR? Each of the reasons he gives is more absurd than the next one and signify only one thing: an irresistible maniac effort to assert, at any cost, that red is black.

The complete bankruptcy of the myth of the "single industrial society" has been convincingly demonstrated in Marxist literature. In that myth the economic structure of society, which determines its entire social structure, is replaced by technological development, regardless of the form of ownership. In point of fact, the same level of development of productive forces, with a different system of productive relations, gives entirely different, even diametrically opposite, results in every sphere of social existence and consciousness. Society based on social ownership of the means of production overtakes the capitalist countries most highly developed in technology, and in so doing not only is not diverted from the socialist path but, on the contrary, creates the necessary material preconditions for strengthening and perfecting socialist forms of life, and eliminating relics of capitalism in life and ideology.

Marcuse's criticism of the bourgeois world and its way of life and way of thinking is totally vitiated by the fact he extrapolates that criticism and extends it to "industrial civilization," wiping out the boundary between the capitalist and the socialist systems. This means anathematizing the real force opposing and counteracting capitalist outrage, the force that inspires and actively cooperates with every progressive initiative towards the revolutionary transformation of the world.

To give some semblance of credibility to his slander on socialism, Marcuse operates with three basic concoctions. The first one is that nationalization of the means of production is still not socialization of them. He "forgets" that, in the words of Marx and Engels in the *Communist Manifesto*, "Communists can express their theory in a single proposition: the abolition of private property."

Can any rational man deny that as a result of the Great October

Revolution this fundamental question, determining the transition from capitalism to socialism, has been solved finally and irrevocably; that the socialization of the means of production, carried out on the basis of the overthrow of the ruling class and expropriation of the expropriators, has led to the destruction of the capitalists as a class, that is, to the construction of a socialist society. Marcuse ignores the essence of the matter: the class nature of the government system carrying out the nationalization.

The conception of socialism that Marcuse contraposes to the Soviet conception disregards Marx. He asserts that "Nationalization, the abolition of private property in the means of production, does not, by itself, constitute an essential distinction as long as production is centralized and controlled over and above the population" (p. 81). But Marx and Engels, in the *Manifesto*, called for the government to take over the factories, for centralization of credit and transport in the hands of the government, and it was in that precisely that they saw the material basis of socialism. The contrast of centralized planned direction of the national economy by the socialist government to "initiative and control from below" (p. 81) is empty talk. The proletarian revolution turns the "bottom" into the "top," and government direction of the national economy is unthinkable without continual creative initiative and popular control on the part of the workers. Socialist centralization can not be effected except as *democratic* centralism in the broadest and most diverse of manifestations. A decentralized economy, devoid of planning, is not socialism but anarchy doomed to collapse. It is not a national economy but an antinational absence of an economy.

But Soviet society, Marcuse continues, still dragging himself out of the mire by his hair, is not a classless, that is, a socialist, society. The "class of bureaucrats" is the ruling class in the Soviet state. I will not try to decide which has the priority in discovering this "new class," Herbert Marcuse or renegade Milovan Djilas, recently given a prize by an American fund for his anticommunist activity. Neither of the two has even a rudimentary understanding of what a social class is as an economic category. "The bureaucracy," says Marcuse, "constitutes a separate class which controls the underlying population through control of the economic, political and military establishments" (p. 116). With a professorial straight face Marcuse explains that he uses the concept of class in a special sense here: "We use 'class' here as designating a group which exercises governmental (including managerial) functions as a 'separate' function in the social division of labor — with or without special privileges" (p. 105). Hence, our managers of enterprises, shop superintendents, foremen, kolkhoz brigadiers, heads of factory stores, local policemen, not to speak of the millions of deputies to city and raion soviets and members

of people's control committees: all these, it appears, belong to the ruling class of bureaucrats, performing "particular" functions in the social division of labor, even when the only privilege they enjoy is the respect and confidence of the people. If we hold to Marcuse's definition, we shall often have to put husband and wife into two antagonistic classes. As if to lighten the unrewarding task of refuting him, Marcuse is obliged to concede that "naturally, the traditional sources of economic power are not available to the Soviet bureaucracy; it does not own the nationalized means of production" (p. 109). The essential thing, it would appear, is not the particular form of property defining this new "class."

But could it be possible that within the framework of the social division of labor the employees of the government apparatus perform functions required by the interests of the people as a whole? Not at all, says Marcuse. General interests are a fiction. The conception ignores the antagonistic contradictions of the interests of men and women, city and country dwellers, skilled and unskilled workers. It actually says that on p. 117. To this might be added the antagonistic contradictions of those of the "physical" and "lyrical" types, of mothers-in-law and sons-in-law, of fans for different teams, of the clever and the stupid. After all, no "general interests" are involved. In conclusion, Marcuse informs us that with matters in such a state the transition to communism in the Soviet Union cannot be effected, since it can not be carried out from above by "administrative measures" (p. 167): a helpful and original idea! Apparently the shrewd Marcuse is sure that it has never occurred to Soviet leaders that this might be so.

Finally, the last trump (and a weak card at that) to be played in the game against "Soviet Marxism" is "the individual and society." In the same absolute, metaphysical way in which Marcuse contrasts the negative to the positive, freedom to necessity, the particular to the general, he contrasts the development of the individual to social development. As a firm enemy of collectivism, he preaches a "new form of individualism" (*Reason and Revolution*, p. 286), which has no shadow of conception that it is only in man's *social* action that he can manifest his *individual* capacities and endowments. How far Marcuse is led by his "communist individualism" is shown by his ridiculous criticism of the compulsory education, social insurance and social security in the USSR as violations of individual freedom (*Soviet Marxism*, p. 207). And even the equality of women, which opens the way for women in socialist society to all forms of labor and social activity, is regarded by this sorry apology for a socialist as enslavement of women (p. 253). Obviously, he prefers the laws, prevalent in the capitalist world, which enact the inequality of women and which Lenin called "infamous laws" (*Works*, Russian, Vol.

29, p. 395). Marcuse is careful not to see that in socialist society real facilities are created "which in actual fact are capable of *emancipating women*," a broad network of public restaurants, nurseries, kindergartens, which Lenin, half a century ago, called "*sprouts of communism*" (*ibid.* p. 396).

That is not all. In Marcuse's eyes, the universal right to work, and socially useful work as the first duty of the citizen of socialist society, are a violation of Marx' commandment of the liquidation of labor, although one does not have to be a professor to understand, after reading what Marx says, that this relates to servile, forced labor. Did not Marx write, as to the liberation of labor under socialism: "My labor would be a *free manifestation of life and therefore a pleasure of life . . .* In labor, therefore, I would assert my *individual life and, hence, the inherent peculiarity of my individuality*" (*Notes on the Book by James Mill*). Marx regarded the elimination of private ownership as the indispensable precondition for any such labor.

Marcuse's anti-Marxist doctrine is powerless, because it is false. His "negative dialectics" with its metaphysical conception of negation has nothing in common with real dialectics. Dialectical negation is "not bare negation, not idle negation, not *skeptical* negation . . . but negation as a factor of linkage, as a factor of development, with retention of the positive . . .," Lenin says, and such a conception of negation, he adds, is "extremely important for understanding dialectics" (*Works*, Russian, Vol. 38, p. 218). Social practice that is based on an undialectical conception of negation is not revolutionary, not constructive, does not transform and renew the world of practice, but is destructive, mutinous anarchism, bringing out the petit bourgeois, nihilistic nature of the ideology of its adherents. A freedom that is not based on the knowledge and mastery of necessity is not a freedom that can be actually realized, but a baseless voluntaristic illusion.

Marcuse's devotees have given the collection of essays they have published in his honor the title of: "The Critical Spirit." /retranslated/ But criticism for the sake of criticism, without a positive program, without a basis in real social forces attaining positive results, is only idle chatter.

Marcuse's "critical spirit" is nothing more than "a totally uncritical relationship to oneself" (Marx, *Iz rannikh proizvedenii* /Early Writings/, p. 622).

More than a hundred years ago, and in Frankfurt am Main, the first joint work by Marx and Engels appeared, under the title of *A Criticism of Critical Criticism*, attacking and ridiculing the emptiness and sterility of the revelations of Marcuse's spiritual ancestors.

"The ontical theory of society," says Marcuse in his latest book, "possesses no concepts which could bridge the gap between the present and its future; holding no promise and showing no success, it remains negative. Thus it wants to remain loyal to those who, without hope, have given and give their life to the Great Refusal" (*One-dimensional Man*, p. 257). Marcuse's "critical criticism" drags socialism back from science to utopia. It disorients theoretically inexperienced and politically immature youth, and speculates on its chaotically mutinous negativism. It misleads people who are dissatisfied with the existing situation and are beginning to think about the perversities of existence in the rotting world of capitalism. Like every false theory, it is harmful and dangerous. It pushes people into actions which have no future, which take on the nature of movement of the masses of people. Be cautious! Be critical of "neocritical criticism."*

B. BYKHOVSKII.

Moscow.

* Translated by Henry F. Mins.