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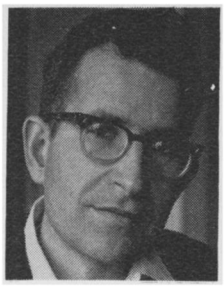

The Carter Administration: Myth and Reality

by Noam Chomsky

In attempting to assess a new Administration in the United States, it is important to bear in mind the extraordinarily narrow spectrum of political discourse and the limited base of political power: a fact that distinguishes the United States from many other industrial democracies. The United States is unique in that there is no organized force committed to even mild and reformist varieties of socialism. The two political parties, which some refer to, not inaccurately, as the two factions of the single 'Property Party,' are united in their commitment to capitalist ideology and institutions. For most of the period since the second World War, they have adhered to a 'bipartisan foreign policy,' which is to say, a one-party state as far as foreign affairs are concerned. The parties differ on occasion with regard to the role of the State, the Democrats generally tending to favour slight increases in state intervention in social and economic affairs, the Republicans tending to favour greater emphasis on private corporate power. Thus under a Democratic Administration, there are likely to be some moves towards 'welfare state' policies along with a more aggressive foreign policy, as the State pursues a more interventionist program at home and abroad. But these distinctions between 'liberals' and 'conservatives' are only marginal in their significance and are at most slight tendencies rather than serious alternatives.

Domestic Sources of Power

The domestic sources of power remain basically unchanged, whatever the electoral outcome. Study after study reveals the obvious: the major decision-making positions in the executive branch of the government, which increasingly dominates domestic and foreign policy, remain overwhelmingly in the hands of representatives of major corporations and the few law firms that cater primarily to corporate interests, thus representing generalized interests of corporate capitalism as distinct from parochial interests of one or another sector of the private economy. It is hardly surprising, then, that the basic function of the State remains the regulation of domestic and international affairs in the interest of the masters of the private economy, a fact studiously ignored in the press and academic scholarship, but apparent on investigation of the actual design and execution of policy over many years.

In fact, if some Administration were to depart in a significant way from the interests of highly concentrated private corporate power, its behaviour would quickly be modified by a variety of simple techniques. Basic decisions concerning the health and functioning of the economy, hence social life in general, remain in the private sector. Decisions made in this realm set the conditions and define the framework within which the political process unfolds. By modifying the economic factors under their control, business interests can sharply constrain actions within the political sphere. But the issue rarely arises, since, as noted, the government, including those who manage the state sector of the economy, remains basically in the hands of private capital in any event.

Extra-governmental sources of ideas and programs are also, naturally, dominated by those who control the basic institutions of production, finance and commerce. The Council on Foreign Relations and the Trilateral Commission, to which I will return, are obvious examples.

The Japanese scholar Yoshio Tsurumi has commented on 'the American myth that the government and business circles of the United States operate at arms-length, if not in outright adversary relationships' (*J. of International Affairs*, Spring, 1976). He is discussing the crucial case of the petroleum industry, but his remark is of much greater general validity.

Ideological institutions

The basic uniformity of policy is clearly reflected in the ideological institutions. The mass media, the major journals of opinion, and the academic professions that are concerned with public affairs rarely tolerate any significant departure from the dominant state capitalist

ideology. There is, for example, no socialist voice in the press, quite a remarkable fact in the mid-twentieth century. While the pressures of the student movement of the late 1960s caused the universities to relax doctrinal rigidity slightly, there has been no significant opening to the left in academic scholarship or teaching. Political criteria are no longer applied in such a blatant fashion as they were in the 1950s to eliminate dissenting opinion from the academic world. Nevertheless, there are numerous and effective barriers that guarantee the dominance of state capitalist ideology within those sections of academia that might have some impact on social thought or interpretation of contemporary affairs.

Henry Kissinger once wrote that the 'expert has his constituency — those who have a vested interest in commonly held opinions; elaborating and defining its consensus at a high level has, after all, made him an expert.' The observation reveals considerable insight into what Kissinger calls our 'age of the expert.' The institutions that produce 'experts' and 'expert advice' have been careful to ensure that the 'consensus' expressed is quite narrow and well within the bounds of the requirements of those who control the economy and State power. People who deviate from these doctrines are not 'experts' in Kissinger's sense of the term, which does capture the social and academic reality, and thus have at best a peripheral role in the institutions 'concerned with the indoctrination of the young,' in the words of an important study of the Trilateral Commission to which I return, just as they are effectively excluded from the formation of social policy or even public debate, for the most part.

Mass Media

As for the mass media, they are major capitalist institutions and it is therefore not very surprising that they rarely challenge 'those who have a vested interest in commonly held opinions,' and that they are furthermore committed to guaranteeing that these 'commonly held opinions' do not stray beyond rigid limits. The business world, however, is not content to rely on the natural process of ideological control that results from the narrow base of ownership. In 1949, the business journal *Fortune* reported that 'the daily tonnage output of propaganda and publicity . . . has become an important force in American life. 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.' There is no reason to believe that the direct impact of public relations departments of corporate capitalism has lessened in the period since.

The report in *Fortune* goes on to conclude 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.' These remarks express widely-held ideas developed within academic social science. Propaganda is essential in a democracy, the influential social scientist Harold Lasswell wrote, because 'men are often poor judges of their own interests.' In a democracy, the voice of the people is heard, and therefore it is essential to ensure that the voice expressed conforms to the needs and interests of those who retain effective power. Hence the emphasis on what has been called 'the engineering of consent,' a term introduced by the leading spokesman for the public relations industry, Edward Bernays, who characterizes this device as 'the very essence of the democratic process, the freedom to persuade and suggest.'

Of course, this 'freedom' is available to those who have the power to exercise it. It is not unrealistic to regard freedom as analogous to a commodity under capitalist democracy. In principle, it is not in short supply, but one has as much as he can purchase. It is no wonder that the privileged often are numbered among the defenders of civil liberties, of which they are the primary beneficiaries. The right to free expression of ideas and free access to information is a basic human right, and in principle it is available to all, though in practice only to the extent that one has the special privilege, power, training and facilities to exercise these rights in a meaningful way. For the mass of the population, escape from the system of indoctrination is difficult. In a sense, the same is true in practice with regard to legal rights. Elaborate machinery is available under the law for protection of the individual against the abuse of State or private power. The study of criminal justice reveals, however, that here too, to a very considerable extent, one has the rights that one is in a position to purchase.

It is not surprising that the business community should understand 'democracy' in the terms explained by Lasswell, Bernays and *Fortune* magazine. What is perhaps unusual about the United States, and important for an understanding of American politics, is the extent to which such views are dominant among the intelligentsia, and the elaborate system of controls that have been evolved over the years to put these principles into effect.

Mechanisms of indoctrination

The mechanisms of indoctrination that have evolved in the United States are entirely different from those that operate in the totalitarian societies of the world. Force is rarely used to ensure obedience, though it is well to remember that resort to direct force is not rare. Recent revelations of the activities of the FBI in disruption and harassment of groups working for social change or even civil rights, the provocation of arson and

bombings, incitement of gang warfare, support and direction for secret terrorist armies, and even in one case direct complicity in political assassination, simply remind us of the long and ugly history of the Bureau, which regularly functions as a national political police, enforcing political conformity and obedience. Nevertheless, the primary mechanism employed is not direct force, but rather 'the engineering of consent,' which is achieved through the domination of the flow of information and the means for expressing opinion or analysis. The system has been effective, and these successes too must be understood if one hopes to comprehend the nature of contemporary American society and its political processes.

The ease with which the ideological system recovered from the damage it suffered during the Vietnam war gives a remarkable indication of the effectiveness of these systems of control. When the war came to an end in April 1975, *Asahi Shimbun* commented editorially that 'The war in Vietnam has been in every way a war of national emancipation.' One heard no such comment in the American mass media. The liberal press was willing to concede that American conduct in Indochina was 'wrong and misguided — even tragic,' but it insisted with near uniformity that the original motives and policy were 'right and defensible': 'Specifically, it was right to hope that the people of South Vietnam would be able to decide on their own form of government and social order' (*Washington Post*). Somehow, 'good impulses came to be transmuted into bad policy,' the editorial continued in the newspaper that had long been regarded as perhaps the most critical among the national media.

Given the well-known historical facts, the editorial judgment of the *Post* is worthy of note. It is not in doubt that the United States first sought to impose French colonial rule on Indochina, and when this effort failed, instituted what the American counterinsurgency expert General Lansdale called a 'fascistic state,' supported massive terror in an effort to crush the South Vietnamese forces that had resisted the French invasion, and finally intervened in force in South Vietnam in an effort to destroy the only mass-based political forces in South Vietnam, a fact always recognized by government experts and planners. All of this took place long before the first battalion of North Vietnamese regular forces was detected in the South, several months after the initiation of systematic and intensive bombing of South and North Vietnam in February 1965 (the United States had been bombing South Vietnam for over 3 years, by that time). Yet the *Washington Post*, knowing the historical record well, is capable of writing that the United States was defending the right of 'the people of South Vietnam . . . to decide on their own form of government and social order.' And in so doing, it simply expressed the general consensus of American liberalism.

Similarly, as the war came to an end, the *NY Times* analyzed the debate over the war in the following terms:

> There are those Americans who believe that the war to preserve a non-Communist, independent South Vietnam could have been waged differently. There are other Americans who believe that a viable, non-Communist South Vietnam was always a myth . . . A decade of fierce polemics has failed to resolve this ongoing quarrel.

In short, the hawks allege that we could have won, while the doves reply that victory was always beyond our grasp. As for the merits of these opposing views, which mark the limits of responsible thinking as the *Times* perceives them, we must await the judgment of history, the editors advise.

There is, to be sure, a third position: namely, that the United States simply had no legal or moral right to intervene in the internal affairs of Vietnam in the first place. It had no right to support French imperialism or to attempt — successfully or not — to establish 'a viable, non-Communist South Vietnam' in violation of the 1954 Geneva Accords, or to use force and violence to 'preserve' the fascistic regime it had imposed or to crush the mass-based political forces of the South. But this point of view, represented by the leading elements in the quite enormous peace movement, is simply not part of the debate. In fact, the *Times* refused even to print a letter challenging its interpretation of the debate, though it was willing to publish quite a range of opinion, including a proposal that we undertake nuclear bombardment in Indochina.

The fundamental position of the peace movement is beyond the limits of responsible discussion because it challenges the basic right of the United States to use force and violence to ensure its international aims. The responsible debate must be restricted to a question of tactics: could we have won, with different means? Other questions were certainly raised during this 'decade of fierce polemics': should we have won? Did we have the right to try? Were we engaged in criminal aggression? But the view that the United States had neither the authority nor the competence to settle the affairs of Indochina is simply excluded from discussion, as the *NY Times* sets the ground rules. It need not be refuted, but must rather be removed from consciousness.

These editorial responses were quite typical of the liberal press. The remarkable resilience of the ideological system is well ilustrated by its success in the two years that have passed since in restoring a badly shattered consensus with regard to the American right of forceful intervention. The official version of the war is that the United States intervened to defend South Vietnam from agression, and was right to do so, though the methods employed are subject to criticism as 'good impulses came to be transmuted into bad policy.' The peace movement, according to this official doctrine, supported North Vietnamese aggression, while the government, perhaps unwisely, came to the defence

of its victims. That such a version of history can be sustained in the face of the absolutely massive evidence to the contrary, virtually without articulate objection, is a remarkable testimonial to the effectiveness of the American system of indoctrination and thought control.

It is important, for an understanding of the American scene, to gain some appreciation of the extent of these ideological successes of the propaganda system. In the course of one of his discourses on human rights, President Carter was asked by a CBS newsman whether the United States 'has a moral obligation to help rebuild' Vietnam. Not at all, he explained: 'the destruction was mutual.' We bombed their villages and they shot down our pilots. Since 'we went to Vietnam without any desire . . . to impose American will on other people' but only 'to defend the freedom of the South Vietnamese,' there is no reason for us 'to apologize or to castigate ourselves or to assume the status of culpability.' Nor do we 'owe a debt.'

Writers of editorials and political commentators find nothing strange in this interpretation of history and expression of Christian morality. When the President says that 'the destruction was mutual' in Vietnam — Khrushchev might have said the same about Hungary — literally not one question was raised, nor was even a qualified objection voiced in the national media in the United States.

It is fair to say, I believe, that the current campaign of falsification of history merits comparison with the more audacious achievements of 20th century totalitarianism, though the mechanisms, as noted earlier, are entirely different. That such a campaign would be undertaken was never in question, and was predicted long ago. It is necessary to restore the faith of the public in American benevolence, and to restore the accompanying passivity and obedience on the part of the population, if new interventions are to succeed. And since the institutional factors that shape American foreign policy have in no way been modified, it is fair to assume that the interventionist policies of the past will persist.

Two years after the end of a war in which the United States devastated Indochina on a scale that has few historical parallels, press commentary virtually ignores the American role in the Indochinese tragedy. When the *NY Times* or *Newsweek* feature articles on postwar developments in Indochina, there is literally no reference to the impact of the American attack. In the *NY Times*, for example, the only reference is that there are 'substantial tracts of land made fallow by the war,' with no agent indicated. Furthermore, the picture they portray is simply one of unrelieved gloom and opression.

There is, in fact, extensive eyewitness testimony, including journalists of international repute, visiting Vietnamese professors from Canada, American missionaries and volunteer workers who speak Vietnamese

and have an intimate knowledge of the country where they worked for many years during and long after the war. This testimony is sharply at variance with the reports presented in the American press. It is ignored not out of ignorance or because of lack of faith in the trustworthiness of the sources, but simply because the account presented does not accord with the requirements of the propaganda apparatus. When the distinguished American radical historian Gabriel Kolko visited Vietnam in 1976, the *NY Times* asked him to submit an account of his trip, which they then refused to print, after having denied *Asahi* the right to print it, Kolko informs me. Had he described the tribulations of the Vietnamese under oppressive Communist rule, the report would surely have been featured and would have received wide comment, as has happened in other cases. But since he portrayed the courage and commitment of the Vietnamese in trying to construct an egalitarian society out of the ruins left by the American attack, the report simply could not be permitted to reach the attention of the public. Similarly, when a Mennonite missionary who worked and lived in Vietnam for many years, remaining for 13 months after the war, testified before Congress on a recent visit in which he observed great progress despite the 'vast destruction of soil and facilities inflicted by the past war,' there is no mention in the press, and his testimony, along with much else that corroborates it, is eliminated from the official version of history.

It does not come as a great surprise, then, that the editor of the *New Republic*, virtually the official journal of American liberalism, can write, two years after the war's end, that 'the American collapse [in Indochina] will read in history as among the ugliest of national crimes.' It is not what the United States did in Indochina, but its failure to continue, that was criminal. And indeed, given the standard version of history, one can draw that conclusion. The ruler of any totalitarian state could be proud of a comparable ideological victory.

The campaign of falsification is undeniably bearing fruit. In the liberal weekly *Newsweek*, one reads a letter by a reader urging consideration for Richard Nixon, on the grounds that 'We forgave the British, the Germans and the Japanese, and are currently in the process of forgiving the Vietnamese.' Since the state propaganda apparatus had been labouring mightily to shift the moral onus for American aggression and barbarity to the Vietnamese, it is understandable that the ordinary citizen should applaud our generosity in forgiving the crimes they committed against us. An editorial in the *Christian Science Monitor*, a leading national daily, which a few years ago was deliberating the relative advantages of bombing trucks and bombing dams (the latter so much more satisfying to the pilots, as 'the water can be seen to pour through the breach and drown out huge areas of farm land, and villages, in its

path') not proclaims that the United States must 'evaluate Vietnam's potentiality as a responsible world citizen.' After the record of the past 30 years, the United States is entitled to stand in judgment over Vietnam.

Any thought of reparations to the victims of American savagery and terror is angrily dismissed as an absurdity. Aid is refused. Even this is not enough. In June 1977 the Senate voted 56 to 32 in favour of legislation sponsored by Republican Vice-Presidential candidate Robert Dole that instructs US representatives in international lending organizations to vote against any aid to Indochina. If such aid is nevertheless granted over US objections, the US must reduce its contribution to these organizations by a corresponding amount. Proposing this legislation, Dole criticized the countries of Indochina for their 'extremely repressive and inhumanitarian character,' as distinct from Brazil, Chile, Indonesia and Iran, for example. That there is an element of 'inhumanity' in the Senate vote would be beyond the comprehension of the mass media. Two months later the Senate defeated a similar amendment to different legislation, motivated, the debate indicates, by concern over US participation in international institutions rather than the intrinsic content of the legislation.

US representatives in international lending institutions are not generally required to try to block aid to repressive regimes. About ⅓ of the $9 billion that the World Bank expects to lend in the fiscal year 1979 will go to 15 of the most repressive regimes, according to the analysis of a Washington-based private research organization that monitors American aid and human-rights efforts, the *New York Times* reports (June 19 1977). The same group observes that US-supported aid through international financial institutions has been increased to compensate for reductions in direct American support, allegedly motivated by the newly-expressed concern for human rights, a matter to which I will return. Congress, in fact, is making some efforts to restrict aid to repressive regimes, taking seriously the Administration rhetoric concerning human rights. The *Times* report just cited explains the problems this is causing the Carter Administration, which 'has been put in the embarrassing position of trying to check the zeal of some lawmakers who say they want to translate President Carter's words into action.' Administration efforts to block these Congressional initiatives tell us a good deal about the good deal about the meaning and significance of the current human rights campaign.

In fact, while the press tries to make its readers believe that malnutrition and disease in Indochina are somehow the result of Communist brutality, the United States not only refuses and blocks aid to Indochina but even refuses assistance under the 'Food for Peace' program to 'any exporter which is engaging in, or in the six months

immediately preceding the application for such financing has engaged in, any sales, trade, or commerce with North Vietnam or with any resident thereof . . .' Furthermore, US agricultural commodities are barred to 'any nation which sells or furnishes or permits ships or aircraft under its registry to transport to or from Cuba and North Vietnam any equipment, materials, or commodities so long as they are governed by a communist regime.' When India sought to provide 100 buffaloes to help replace the herds decimated by American terror, they were compelled to channel even that minimal assistance through the Indian Red Cross, to avoid American retribution (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, Feb. 25, 1977). Evidently, the process of 'forgiving the Vietnamese' for their crimes against the United States still has a distance to go.

It is remarkable, and illuminating, that none of this is ever mentioned, just as the American role in Vietnam is characteristically ignored, when the press pontificates about alleged human rights violations in Vietnam. Again, these facts illustrate the efficacy of the awesome American propaganda system.

Academic Scholarship

There is no space for a detailed review here, but it is worth a mention that academic scholarship is making its effective contribution to the requisite myth creation. In the *Pentagon Papers* and other documents, there is substantial evidence concerning the imperial planning that motivated the American intervention in support of France and the later efforts to crush the popular movements for independence and social change. Since the 1940s, there was never any doubt in the minds of top planners about 'the unpleasant fact that Communist Ho Chi Minh is the strongest and perhaps the ablest figure in Indochina and that any suggested solution which excludes him is an expedient of uncertain outcome,' or that Ho had 'captured control of the nationalist movement,' in the words of a State Department policy statement of 1948. As Secretary of State Dean Acheson accurately explained, French military success 'depends, in the end, on overcoming opposition of indigenous population.' The record reported in the *Pentagon Papers* shows that although American intelligence tried very hard to establish that the Viet Minh was controlled by China or Russia, as required by the propaganda system, they were unable to do so. Yet in the face of this ample record, well-known American Asian scholars such as John King Fairbank and Edwin O. Reischauer not only ignore totally the documentation of explicit and elaborate imperial planning but even claim that US intervention was based on fear of Chinese (later North Vietnamese) expansionism and a failure to understand that we were combatting a nationalist revolution.

The refusal to make reference to the planning documents in the *Pentagon Papers* is a particularly striking feature of contemporary scholarship on the American involvement of 30 years in Indochina.

The 'lessons of the war' are also drawn in terms conforming to basic imperialist doctrine. Thus Edwin Reischauer concludes in *Foreign Policy* (Fall 1975) 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,' currents of which he falsely claims the government was unaware. And Secretary of Defence Harold Brown, a leading advocate of heavy bombing during the war, states in *Time* magazine (May 23, 1977) that 'A lesson we learned from Vietnam is that we should be very cautious about intervening in any place where there is a poor political base for our presence.' This is the typical refrain in scholarship, government, and the media. The United States need not abdicate its role as global judge and executioner, but must be more cautious about the prospects for success, and must carefully consider the costs — to the United States — of forceful intervention in violation of the UN Charter, a valid treaty and thus part of 'the supreme law of the land.' The violation of law, incidentally, was always explicit in imperial planning, for example, in the repeated insistence in the highest level planning documents of the 1950s that American force should be used (even against China if deemed necessary) in response to 'local Communist subversion or rebellion *not constituting armed attack*' (my emphasis; the italicized phrase is repeatedly added to make explicit the direct violation of domestic and international law that is intended). The mythology of resistance to aggression was created for public consumption, and is dutifully repeated by propagandists in the mass media and the scholarly professions.

The Carter Administration

It is against this background of ideological conformism and institutional rigidity that one must assess a new political Administration in the United States. The Carter Administration has sought to convey a new 'image,' namely, a concern for human rights and morality. In a special section of the liberal *Boston Globe* headed 'The Carter crusade for human rights' (March 13, 1977), the well-known historian and former adviser to President Kennedy, Arthur Schlesinger, writes that 'President Carter's promotion of human rights as an international issue must be judged thus far, I think, a considerable and very serious success.' In a facing column, correspondent Don Cook of the *Los Angeles Times* explains that 'Because Europeans have lived with the human rights problem in their midst through centuries of revolution and dictatorship, there is a lot

more inflammable human material on this side of the Atlantic than there is in the United States.' The land of slavery and genocidal assaults on the American Indians is uniquely privileged, in this regard.

Schlesinger is certainly correct in judging the human rights campaign to be a success, but some questions remain: specifically, what is the nature and significance of this achievement?

One answer is supplied by Schlesinger himself. He writes: 'In effect, human rights is replacing self-determination as the guiding value in American foreign policy.' The remark is presented seriously, without irony. It is a dogma of the state religion in the United States that American policy has been guided by the 'Wilsonian ideal' of freedom and self-determination. Again, it is a tribute to the effectiveness of the propaganda system that this faith can still be maintained after the record of American intervention to prevent self-determination, independence, and — crucially — social change, in Indochina, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Chile, and elsewhere, with the well-documented ensuing horrors.

It is not, of course, that the facts are entirely ignored. For example, the diplomatic historian Norman Graebner, a 'realist' critic of alleged American moralism in foreign affairs, after reviewing many incidents of 'American idealism,' observes that 'It was ironic that this nation generally ignored the principles of self-determination in Asia and Africa where it had some chance of success and promoted it behind the Iron and Bamboo curtains where it had no chance of success at all.' This is about as far as 'responsible', academic analysis can go. It is 'ironic' that our commitment to self-determination is manifested only where it cannot be exercised. The fact in no way suggests that the 'commitment' is mere rhetoric, undertaken purely verbally in an effort to gain popular support for the actual policy that has been systematically pursued; namely, intervention, by force if necessary, by more delicate means if they suffice, to prevent the kinds of social change that would be harmful to the needs and interests of US-based corporations, surely the dominant factor in American policy during the postwar period of American global hegemony.

Arthur Schlesinger's real concern for the principle of self-determination is revealed in a recently declassified memorandum that he presented to President Kennedy shortly before the Bay of Pigs invasion, the first of many attempts to overthrow the Cuban revolutionary government by force, to assassinate Castro, and to undermine the regime by terror and sabotage, poisoning of crops and spreading of disease among farm animals. In this secret memorandum, Schlesinger condemns the 'muddling and moralizing conservatism of the Eisenhower period,' which was never sufficiently aggressive in international affairs to please

liberal ideologists, despite planned and actual military intervention and CIA subversion in Guatemala, Lebanon, and Iran. Schlesinger recognized that it would be necessary to lie about the Bay of Pigs invasion. Thus he counselled that 'When lies must be told, they should be told by subordinate officials.' The basic decisions should be made 'in [the President's] absence' so that someone else's 'head can later be placed on the block if things go terribly wrong.' He then outlines a series of answers that the President might give in a press conference. He should deny any knowledge of the facts and describe the invasion as 'a purely Cuban operation' by 'patriots in exile,' rejecting the idea that the US government has any 'intention of using force to overthrow the Castro regime or contributing force to that purpose unless compelled to do so in the interests of self-defence.' Even Schlesinger is unable to conjure up an answer to the question whether the US has 'resolutely enforced the laws forbidding the use of U.S. territory to prepare revolutionary action against another state.' Here, the historian-adviser is reduced to the response: '? ? ? ?' (*Washington Star Syndicate*, April 30, 1977; the report was successfully suppressed in the national liberal media). The President, incidentally, rejected this sage advice.

In his history of the Kennedy Administration (*A Thousand Days*), Schlesinger refers to this and other memoranda he submitted and states that they 'look nice on the record' because they register his purely technical objections to the planned attack, on grounds of political cost and likelihood of failure. The facts just cited nowhere appear.

Returning to Schlesinger's dictum on self-determination and human rights as principles guiding American foreign policy, if we take these remarks seriously we are led to a rather cynical appraisal of the human rights crusade. Exactly to the extent that self-determination was the guiding value in the era of Vietnam and Chile, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic, the Congo and Iran, so human rights will be the guiding value henceforth. In short the human rights campaign is a device to be manipulated by propagandists to gain popular support for counterrevolutionary intervention.

Some Washington correspondents see the point, though they put it in a misleading way. William Beecher of the *Boston Globe* reports that National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski and others have urged Carter 'to continue to take the ideological high ground on human rights not only out of conscience, but also because it may restore American prestige that was badly bruised in Vietnam and during the Watergate scandal . . .' (March 31, 1977). The part played by 'conscience' is indicated by Carter's observations on Vietnam, cited above, and the press response. Or by the case of Brady Tyson of the US delegation to the UN Rights Commission who expressed 'profoundest regrets' for the part

he said some American officials and private groups had played in subverting the Allende government in Chile, only to be quickly reprimanded and called home to 'make sure he understands the ground rules,' in the words of the State Department.

The crusade for human rights

The sincerity of the crusade for human rights, and the role played by 'conscience,' can be put to the test in other ways. It is easy enough for the Kremlin to denounce human rights violations in the United States and the American sphere of control, and it is equally easy for President Carter to condemn the Russians for their extensive abuse of elementary human rights. The test of sincerity in both cases, is the same: how do they respond to violations of human rights at home, or violations that they have backed and for which they share responsibility. In the case of Russian moralists, the answer is plain enough. It is no less plain int he case of President Carter and his acolytes, as the example of Vietnam and Chile clearly illustrates.

To mention one last issue, consider President Carter's response to clear cases of human rights violations in the United States. Take the case of the assassination of Black Panther leader Fred Hampton in Chicago in December 1969 in a 4 a.m. police raid on the Panther headquarters in which Hampton was killed in bed, sleeping and probably drugged (the hail of police bullets was not a response to Panther firing, contrary to police lies that were quickly exposed). The families of the murdered Panther leaders undertook a civil suit in Chicago in an effort to obtain some limited redress. During the case, extensive evidence was produced of FBI complicity in the assassination. It was shown that the chief of Panther security, Hampton's personal bodyguard, was an FBI informer and provocateur who had provided the police, through the FBI office, with a false report of illegal possession of arms as a pretext for the raid, and also a plan of the apartment with Hampton's bed indicated. Earlier, the FBI had sought to provoke a criminal gang in the Chicago ghetto to attack the Panthers with a fabricated letter claiming that the Panthers were planning to kill its leaders. The Chicago Judge refused to permit the jury to consider any of the extensive evidence concerning FBI involvement in this sordid affair. Surely this merits some comment from a passionate advocate of human rights.

The case is perhaps unfair, since the national press has so effectively concealed this amazing case that Carter and his advisers may not even know about it. So let us take another example, which they surely do know, since it has been well-reported. On June 3, 1977, columnist William Raspberry of the *Washington Post* pointed out that

> If President Carter is serious about freeing political prisoners — if he is genuinely concerned about the whole range of human-rights issues — he needn't look to Africa or Latin America or the Soviet Union. Let him look to North Carolina and the incredible case of the Wilmington 10.

In fact, the case of the Wilmington 10 has received international attention, with demonstrations and protest in Western Europe, far more than in the United States. In 1971, a Black minister, Ben Chavis, eight black teenagers, and a white VISTA volunteer working the Black ghetto, were indicted on the charge of conspiracy and arson, following racial disturbances in Wilmington, North Carolina. Chavis received a 34 year prison sentence, and the others too received heavy sentences. Since that time, every significant prosecution witness has recanted his testimony, with allegations that it was given under threat or after bribery by the prosecution. In a recent Court hearing, a White minister and his wife testified that Chavis was with them in their Church parsonage when the arson took place, adding that they were prevented by intimidation from testifying at the trial. The Judge at the hearing refused to grant a new trial. As Raspberry points out,

> President Carter may be as powerless to do anything about the Wilmington 10 as he is in the case of, say, Russian dissidents. But it would be a most useful thing if he could bring himself to speak out on it. Human rights, after all, don't begin at the water's edge.

The opportunity to speak out rose a few days later in a televised June 13 press conference. The President was asked to comment on the case by a reporter who noted that Reverend Chavis and others were 'sentenced to prison terms totaling 282 years for what they contend were human rights activities,' and that civil rights groups and 'several prominent business and political and elected leaders in North Carolina, have implored you for your intervention and comments in their behalf.' The President responded as follows:

> Well, the only comment I am free to make under our own system of Government is that I hope that justice will prevail . . . I trust the system in its entirety . . . I'm not trying to evade the question; I think that it would be improper for me to try to impose what I think should be a judgment in a case that I've not heard tried and I don't have any direct familiarity with the evidence. I believe that justice will prevail.

Carter's plea concerning the 'strict prohibition . . . against the encroachment of the executive branch of Government on the judicial branch' hardly rings true. It is difficult to perceive any impropriety in a properly qualified statement by the President to the effect that if the information reported without serious challenge in the press is accurate, then there has been a miscarriage of justice. As for his objection that he had not heard the case tried and had no direct familiarity with the evidence, it is again difficult to see how this distinguishes the case in hand from many others, in Russia for example, where evidence is far more sparse. As for the expressed belief that 'justice will prevail,' that reveals

considerable innocence, at best, with regard to the treatment of blacks and dissidents in the courts, not infrequently.

What the incident does reveal clearly, however, is that under the New Morality, human rights do begin at the water's edge. Actually, even that is not accurate, as we can see in a column by *NY Times* columnist James Reston, reporting from Bonn, West Germany, on June 15 1977:

> The closer you get to the borders between Western Europe and Communist Eastern Europe, the more the issue of 'human rights' becomes intensely human and personal. In Washington, and even in London and Paris, it is mainly a philosophical question, but here in the Federal Republic of Germany, it is a question of divided families, parents and children, husbands, wives and lovers.

The remark is apt enough with regard to Eastern Europe; violation of human rights there is in a class by itself, within Europe. But it is hardly true that in the Western capitals — particularly Bonn — 'it is mainly a philosophical question.' Consider just West Germany. Here, in the past several years, thousands of civil servants (who constitute about 15% of the work force) have been subjected to disciplinary actions, including termination of employment, for such crimes against the State as participating in demonstrations against the Vietnam war, signing petitions in support of a legal (Communist) party during an electoral campaign, criticizing 'capitalist development' for ecological damage, and so on. The German 'Berufsverbot' ('Ban on professional employment') involves human rights violations that go beyond the worst moments of American 'McCarthyism,' and that have already had a severe 'chilling' effect on academic freedom and the exercise of democratic rights. Furthermore, they have, not surprisingly, raised considerable apprehension in neighbouring countries that have some reason to recall earlier episodes of German history. These events raise more than 'philosophical' questions. True, they have barely been reported in the United States, and may be unfamiliar to the political commentator of the *NY Times*. But if that is so, then the problem revealed by his remarks is far deeper than is indicated by the comments themselves.

The special nature of the human rights crusade is revealed in many other ways. Take the case of Iran, a country which may well hold the current world's record for torture of political prisoners. Iran, however, is by far the major purchaser of American arms, having purchased some $15 billion worth int he past five years. Visiting Iran in May 1977, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance stated that 'No . . . linkage has been discussed' between arms sales and the issue of human rights, in his conversations with the Shah. Joe Alex Morris of the *Los Angeles Times*, reporting on Vance's press conference in Teheran, reports:

> Nothing Vance told reporters after his meeting with the Shah indicated that he had laid particular stress on the [human rights] issue, however. In fact, the secretary

> appeared at one point to be defending the Shah's tough policies against alleged subversives in his one-party state. 'Each country has a responsibility to itself to deal with terrorist problems,' he said. 'On the other hand, the question of dissent doesn't necessarily involve terrorist actions. It depends on the individual factual situation whether the question of human rights arises.

Once again, we see that what counts as a violation of human rights depends not so much upon the act as upon the agent.

It would be inaccurate to suggest that the United States is simply responding to Iranian requests for arms, closing its eyes to gross violations of human rights because of overriding economic considerations. In fact, the Carter Administration is pressing the Iranians to purchase sophisticated arms that they do not want and probably are incapable of using. A case in point is the effort by the Administration to sell to Iran sophisticated radar surveillance planes that are designed to monitor and control air battles, at a cost of $850 million. Reports from Washington indicate that the US Air Force would have to provide technical personnel to operate the system. 'One of the principal reasons behind the Pentagon pressure for the offer to Iran,' according to the *NY Times* (April 27, 1977) 'was to keep the Boeing production line open, thus reducing the cost of the plane to the Air Force and to keep open the possibility of future sales to European allies,' who have so far refused to purchase the planes, because of their price and complexity.

Arms sales to the oil producing countries have been a significant factor in improving the US balance of trade, and although there has been talk under the Carter Administration of reducing these sales, there is so far little indication of any action in this regard. But one thing at least is clear: the issue of human rights can easily be dispensed with, when need be.

Even the case of the Russian dissidents raises some serious questions. Again, protests over abuse of human rights in the Soviet Union obviously indicate nothing as regards the sincerity of the crusade. Furthermore, there seems to be evidence that Carter's crusade for civil rights East of the Elbe has perhaps been a factor in intensifying the Russian attack on dissidents, which is now described as the worst in a decade. Responding to such reports, 'The Carter Administration issued a pointed warning yesterday that it will not be dissuaded from its public campaign for human rights around the world [sic] by the harassment of individual dissidents in foreign countries' (*Washington Post*, June 3 1977). This is a curious response, which raises questions about the purpose of the crusade. If the purpose is to relieve the situation of people who are oppressed, then the nature of the response must surely be a factor in determining whether or how to press the campaign. If, on the other hand, the purpose is 'to restore American prestige,' then the effect on victims becomes irrelevant.

It is worth noting that while the United States obviously is not in a class with the Russians in violations of the Helsinki agreements, still its record is hardly clean. Under the Carter Administration, Tariq Ali of the Fourth International (Trotskyite) has been barred from entering the United States to speak at several American universities. The Justice Department refused a visa to the Peruvian author and peasant leader Hugo Blanco for two years, admitting him only after substantial public protests, and maintains the ban against the Belgian Marxist Ernest Mandel. In the case of Hugo Blanco, the Immigration Service offered the absurd rationalization that no evidence had been submitted to 'establish the preeminence of the beneficiary in a particular field, whether literary, political, sociological or philosophical . . .' Apart from the fact that the claim is grossly false, just consider how many people would be permitted to visit the United States under these conditions. In another case, a Vietnamese nun, visiting in Canada, is reported to have been denied entry to the United States, while the press protests that American correspondents are not authorized to visit Vietnam.

Other actions of the Administration indicate quite clearly how thin and meaningless is the alleged commitment to human rights. Carter's appointment as Ambassador to Iran, a regime established by a CIA-backed coup, is William H. Sullivan, whose best-known accomplishment is his direction of the 'secret war' in Laos, involving a CIA-run mercenary army and a fearsome bombing campaign launched against the defenceless peasant society of Northern Laos, from 1964 to 1969. This was followed by a tour in the Philippines where he was able to oversee American support for the Marcos dictatorship. Sullivan follows Richard Helms, retired head of the CIA, as Ambassador. All of this may make a certain amount of sense, given the origins of the Iranian regime and its role in American global planning, but it hardly has much relation to a crusade for human rights.

Similarly, the Carter Administration, as already noted, has been bending every effort to prevent Congress from enacting a bill that would require US representatives at the World Bank and other international lending institutions to vote against funds or credits for nations that violate human rights. Carter urged that this bill 'would handicap our efforts to encourage human rights improvement.' The logic is not transparent. A more reasonable interpretation is that the legislation would serve to permit some meaningful pressure against client states that are champion human rights violators. For example, US military aid to Argentina was reduced from $32 million to $15 million on grounds of the human rights violations by the military junta, but at the same time the junta received a $105 million World Bank loan, an Inter-American Development Bank loan of $32 million, and an $100-million stand-by

credit from the International Monetary Fund (*Seven Days,* June 6, 1977). By such means, the United States is easily able to undercut any effect of the direct aid reductions. Recall that in the special case of Indochina, harsh conditions on direct or even indirect US assistance have been imposed by Congress, as well as constraints to prevent aid from other countries.

Foreign Policy

The aggressive and interventionist American foreign policy of the postwar period has been quite successful in creating a global economy in which US-based corporations can operate with fair freedom and high profits. But there have been failures, for example, in Cuba and Indochina. When some country succeeds in extricating itself from the US-dominated global system, the immediate and invariable response is to impose harsh conditions (not excluding terror and sabotage) to prevent what are sometimes called 'ideological successes' in internal documents. In the case of China, Cuba and Indochina, the fear of planners has always been that the success of social reform or revolution might influence others elsewhere to pursue the same course. Then 'the rot will spread,' as the planners say, causing further deterioration in the US-dominated system. Such considerations were at the heart of imperial intervention in Vietnam since the 1950s. It was feared that the success of the popular, nationalist, and revolutionary communist forces might provide a model for others. If the rot were to spread in such manner to the rest of Southeast Asia and beyond, Japan — always the centrepiece of American planning in Asia — might be affected. With the loss of markets and sources of raw materials, it might be induced to accommodate itself to Asian communism, thus escaping from the American system. In effect, this would mean that the United States would have lost the Pacific war, which was fought, in large measure, to prevent Japan from constructing a closed Asian bloc that would exclude the United States.

These ideas are quite explicit in imperial planning since at least 1949, though one would never know this from the study of the press or most 'responsible' scholarship.

The business press, incidentally, offers an occasional exception to the general rule. When American power was defeated in Indochina, *Business Week* lamented that the 'stable world order for business operations is falling apart,' noting particularly the dangers 'if Japan cannot continue to export a third of its products to Southeast Asia' (April 7, 1975). As both the secret and public record confirm, a major goal of American policy in Asia 'was to develop markets for Japan in Southeast Asia in

order to counteract Communist trade efforts and to promote trade between Japan and Southeast Asian countries' (Chitoshi Yanaga, *Big Business in Japanese Politics*, Yale, 1968). Today as well it is important to keep the rot from spreading, by maintaining the harshest possible conditions for the Indochinese revolutionaries. It is hoped that along with economic difficulties, internal repression will mount, and the model will seem less attractive. With utter cynicism, American journals now search assiduously for human rights violations in Indochina — of which there are undoubtedly many, just as there were, for example, in liberated Europe under American occupation — often fabricating evidence if need be, and ignoring entirely any indications of social progress or popular commitment, while dismissing the American role. For some examples, see Chomsky and Herman, 'Distortions at Fourth Hand,' *The Nation* (June 25, 1977).

The human rights crusade in the United States is not only limited with regard to place, but also with regard to the concept of 'human rights' itself. In much of the world, the concept of 'human rights' is understood to include the right to a decent job, adequate shelter, medical care, food for one's children, and the like, as well as the right to share in the democratic control of production, in determining the character of labour and the nature and disposal of its products. These rights are never mentioned under the New Morality; no discussion of them appears, for example, in the State Department Human Rights Reports. In fact, it would be stoutly denied that some of these rights — particularly, to democratic control of production — even exist. But in most of the world, including the United States, these and related matters should be at the very heart of any honest concern for human rights. By dismissing these concerns, the New Morality reveals that its commitment is not to human rights, but rather at best to such rights as may be secured under capitalism.

In considering how human rights might serve as a 'guiding value' in American foreign policy, one should not dismiss the historical record, which is ample. There is indeed a close relationship between human rights and American foreign policy. There is substantial evidence that American aid and diplomatic support increase as human rights violations increase, certainly in the Third World. Extensive violations of human rights (torture, forced reduction of living standards for much of the population, police-sponsored death squads, destruction of representative institutions or of independent unions, etc) are directly correlated with US government support (for some evidence and discussion, see Chomsky and Herman, 'The United States versus Human Rights,' *Monthly Review*, Aug., 1977). The linkage is not accidental; rather it is systematic. The reason is obvious enough. Client fascism often improves

the business climate for American corporations, generally the guiding factor in foreign policy. It would be naive indeed to think that this will change materially, given the realities of American social structure and the grip of the state ideological system.

A realistic analysis can hardly lead to any faith in the current human rights crusade in the United States. Its primary objective, as noted above, is to reconstruct the passivity and obedience on the part of the population that is required if the interventionist policies of the past are to be continued, in the interests of the private power that dominates the State apparatus and sets the basic conditions within which political power functions.

Turning from myth and propaganda to reality, what are the special features, if any, of the Carter Administration?

Perhaps the most striking feature of the new Administration is the role played in it by the Trilateral Commission. The mass media had little to say about this matter during the Presidential campaign — in fact, the connection of the Carter group to the Commission was recently selected as 'the best-censored news story of 1976' — and it has not received the attention that it might since the Administration took office. All of the top positions in the government — the office of President, Vice-President, Secretary of State, Defence and Treasury — are held by members of the Trilateral Commission, and the National Security Adviser was its director. Many lesser officials also came from this group. It is rare for such an easily identified private group to play such a prominent role in an American Administration.

The Trilateral Commission was founded at the initiative of David Rockefeller in 1973. Its members are drawn from the three components of the world of capitalist democracy: the United States, Western Europe, and Japan. Among them are heads of major corporations and banks, partners in corporate law firms, Senators, Professors of international affairs — the familiar mix in extra-governmental groupings. Along with the 1980's project of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), directed by a committed 'trilateralist' and with numerous links to the Commission, the project constitutes the first major effort at global planning since the War-Peace Studies program of the CFR during World War II. The latter have received virtually no scholarly or journalistic attention, even though they give a revealing insight into the thinking that lay behind the design of the postwar world. The first serious book dealing with these studies has just appeared (Shoup and Minter, *The Imperial Brain Trust*, Monthly Review, 1977), to a resounding silence in the press.

The War-Peace Studies Groups, like the Trilateral Commission, involved top-level government policy plannrs, industrialists and other

powerful figures in the private economy. It developed the concept of a 'Grand Area' including the Western hemmisphere, the former British empire, and the Far East, to be extended if possible to a global system in which the United States would exercise 'military and economic supremacy.' Careful attention to these plans would have been quite rewarding a generation ago, and remains so today. Like the high level planning documents of the *Pentagon Papers* which they so closely resemble, the reports of the CFR planning groups have been systematically excluded from 'respectable' scholarship. In both cases, the plans developed and motives expressed depart too radically from the main tenets of the ideological system to be made available for public or professional attention.

The new 'trilateralism' reflects the realization that the international system now requires 'a truly common management,' as the Commission reports indicate. The trilateral powers must order their internal relations and face both the Russian bloc, now conceded to be beyond the reach of Grand Area planning, and the Third World.

In this collective management, the United States will continue to play the decisive role. As Kissinger has explained, other powers have only 'regional interests' while the United States must be 'concerned more with the over-all framework of order than with the management of every regional enterprise.' If a popular movement in the Arabian peninsula is to be crushed, better to despatch US-supplied Iranian forces, as in Dhofar. If passage for American nuclear submarines must be guaranteed in Southeast Asian waters, then the task of crushing the independence movemen in the former Portuguese colony of Timor should be entrusted to the Indonesian army rather than an American expeditionary force. The massacre of over 60,000 people in a single year will arouse no irrational passions at home and American resources will not be drained, as in Vietnam. If a Katangese secessionist movement is to be suppressed in the Congo (a movement that may have Angolan support in response to the American-backed intervention in Angola from Zaire, as the former CIA station chief in Angola has recently revealed in his public letter of resignation), then the task should be assigned to Moroccan satellite forces and to the French, with the US discreetly in the background. If there is a danger of socialism in southern Europe, the German proconsulate can exercise its 'regional interests.' But the Board of Directors will sit in Washington.

The founding of the Trilateral Commission coincided with Kissinger's 'Year of Europe,' which was intended to restore a proper order and hierarchy to the trilateral world (specifically, the 'Atlantic alliance') after the Vietnam failure. A particularly ominous development was, and remains, 'the prospect of a closed trading system embracing the

European Community and a growing number of other nations in Europe, the Mediterranean, and Africa,' a system from which the US might be excluded (Kissinger). This is the counterpart of the feart that Japan might strike an independent course in East Asia, in part as a result of Communist success on the mainland. American policies towards the Middle East — in particular, the US support for some rise in oil prices — must be understood in thhis contex, a fact I have discussed elsewhere (see my 'Strategie petroliere ou politique du paix?', *Le Monde diplomatique*, April, 1977). The trilateral arrangements are intended to abort these threatening tendencies and ensure American dominance of the world economy, while laying the basis for a more successful West-East and North-South 'dialogue.'

The Trilateral Commission has issued one major book-length report, namely, *The Crisis of Democracy* (Michel Crozier, Samuel Huntington, and Joji Watanuki, 1975). Given the intimate connections between the Commission and the Carter Administration, the study is worth careful attention, as an indication of the thinking that may well lie behind its domestic policies, as well as the policies undertaken in other industrial democracies in the ccoming years.

Governability of Democracies

The Commission report is concerned with the 'governability of democracies.' Its American author, Samuel Huntington, was former chairman of the Department of Government at Harvard, and a government adviser. He is well-known for his ideas on how to destroy the rural revolution in Vietnam. He wrote in *Foreign Affairs* (1968) that 'In an absent-minded way the United States in Vietnam may well have stumbled upon the answer to "wars of national liberation" '. The answer is 'forced-draft urbanization and modernization.' Explaining this concept, he observes that if direct application of military force in the countryside 'takes place on such a massive scale as to produce a massive migration from countryside to city,' then the 'Maoist-inspired rural revolution' may be 'undercut by the American-sponsored urban revolution.' The Viet Cong, he wrote, is 'a powerful force which cannot be dislodged from its constituency so long as the constituency continues to exist.' Thus 'in the immediate future,' peace must 'be based on accommodation,' particularly, since the US is unwilling to undertake the 'expensive, time-consuming and frustrating task' of ensuring that the constituency of the Viet Cong no longer exists (he was wrong about that, as the Nixon-Kissinger programs of rural massacre were to show). 'Accommodation,' as conceived by Huntington, is a process whereby the Viet Cong 'degenerate into the protest of a declining rural minority,'

while the regime imposed by US force maintains power. A year later, when it appeared that 'urbanization' by military force was not succeeding and it seemed that the United States might be compelled to enter into negotiations with the NLF (which he recognized to be 'the most powerful purely political national organization'), Huntington, in a paper delivered before the AID-supported Council on Vietnamese Studies which he had headed, proposed various measures of political trickery and manipulation that might be used to achieve the domination of the US-imposed government, though the discussants felt rather pessimistic about the prospects. On similar assumptions, he has explained that the American invasion of the Dominican Republic to overthrow the popular democratic Bosch regime was 'a success' (for the United States, though not for the impoverished masses whose income drastically declined, or those murdered by death squads or the forces of order placed in power in this American dependency; cf. my *At War with Asia*, chapter 1, and 'The United States versus Human Rights' cited above).

In short, Huntington is well qualified to discourse on the problems of democracy.

The Report argues that what is needed in the industrial democracies 'is a greater degree of moderation in democracy' to overcome the 'excess of democracy' of the past decade. 'The effective operation of a democratic political system usually requires some measure of apathy and noninvolvement on the part of some individuals and groups.' This recommendation recalls the analysis of Third World problems put forth by other political thinkers of the same persuasion, for example, Ithiel Pool (then chairman of the Department of Political Science at MIT), who explained some years ago that in Vietnam, the Congo and the Dominican Republic, 'order depends on somehow compelling newly mobilized strata to return to a measure of passivity and defeatism . . . At least temporarily, the maintenance of order requires a lowering of newly acquired aspirations and levels of political activity.' The Trilateral recommendations for the capitalist democraciies are an application at home of the theories of 'order' developed for subject societies of the Third World.

The problems affect all of the trilateral countries, but most significantly, the United States. As Huntington points out, 'for a quarter-century the United States was the hegemonic power in a system of world order,' the Grand Area of the CFR. 'A decline int he governability of democracy at home means a decline in the influence of democracy abroad.' He does not elaborate on what this 'influence' has been in practice, but ample testimony can be provided by survivors in Asia and Latin America.

As Huntington observes, 'Truman had been able to govern the country with the cooperation of a relatively small number of Wall Street lawyers and bankers,' a rare acknowledgement of the realities of political power in the United States. But by the mid-1960s this was no longer possible since 'the sources of power in society had diversified tremendously,' the 'most notable new source of national power' being the media. In reality, the national media have been properly subservient to the state propaganda system, a fact on which I have already commented. They have raised a critical voice only when powerful interests were threatened, as in the Watergate episode, or when rational imperialists determined that the Vietnam enterprise should be liquidated. Exceptions are rare. Huntington's paranoia about the media is, however, widely shared among ideologists who fear a deterioration of American global hegemony and an end to the submissiveness of the domestic population.

A second threat to the governability of democracy is posed by the 'previously passive or unorganized groups in the population,' such as 'blacks, Indians, Chicanos, white ethnic groups, students and women — all of whom became mobilized and organized in new ways to achieve what they considered to be their appropriate share of the action and of the rewards.' The threat derives from the principle, already noted, that 'some measure of apathy and noninvolvement on the part of some individuals and groups' is a prerequisite for democracy. Anyone with the slightest understanding of American society can supply a hidden premise: the 'Wall Street lawyers and bankers' (and their cohorts) do not intend to exercise 'more self-restraint.' We may conclude that the 'greater degree of moderation in democracy' will have to be practiced by the 'newly mobilized strata.'

Huntington's perception of the 'concerned efforts' of these strata 'to establish their claims,' and the 'control over . . . institutions' that resulted, is no less exaggerated than his fantasies about the media. In fact, the Wall Street lawyers, bankers, etc., are no less in control of the government than in the Truman period, as a look at the new Administration or its predecessors reveals. But one must understand the curious notion of 'democratic participation' that animates the Trilateral Commission study. Its vision of 'democracy' is reminiscent of the feudal system. On the one hand, we have the King and Princes (the Government). On the other, the peasantry. The peasants may petition and the nobility must respond to maintain order. There must, however, be a proper 'balance between power and liberty, authority and democracy, government and society.' 'Excessive swings may produce either too much government or too little authority.' In the 1960s, Huntington maintains, the balance shifted too far to society and against government. 'Democracy will have a longer life if it has a more balanced

existence,' that is, if the peasants cease their clamour. Real participation of 'society' in government is nowhere discussed, nore can there be any question of democratic control of the basic economic institutions that determine the character of social life while dominating the state as well, by virtue of their overwhelming power. Once again, human rights do not exist in this domain.

Industrial Democracy

The Report does briefly discuss 'proposals for industrial democracy modelled on patterns of political democracy,' but only to dismiss them. These ideas are seen as 'running against the industrial culture and the constraints of business organization.' Such a device as German codetermination would 'raise impossible problems in many Western democracies, either because leftist trade unionists would oppose it and utilize it without becoming any more moderate, or because employers would manage to defeat its purposes.' In fact, steps towards worker participation in management going well beyond the German system are being discussed and in part implemented in Western Europe, though they fall far short of true industrial democracy and self-management in the sense advocated by the libertarian left. They have evoked much concern in business circles in Europe and particularly in the United States, which has so far been insulated from these currents, since American multinational enterprises will be affected. But these developments are anathema to the trilateralist study.

Intellectuals

Still another threat to democracy, in the eyes of the Commission study, is posed by 'the intellectuals and related groups who assert their disgust with the corruption, materialism, and inefficiency of democracy and with the subservience of democratic government to "monopoly capitalism" ' (the latter phrase is in quotes since it is regarded as improper to use an accurate descriptive term to refer to the existing social and economic system; this avoidance of the taboo term is in conformity with the dictates of the state religion, which scorns and fears any such sacrilege).

Intellectuals come in two varieties. There are the 'technocratic and policy-oriented intellectuals,' the good guys, who make the system work and raise no annoying questions. In reference to our enemies, we call them *commissars* or *apparatchiks*. But there is also 'a stratum of value-oriented intellectuals who often devote themselves to the derogation of leadership, the challenging of authority, and the unmasking and

delegitimation of established institutions.' These are the bad guys. We honour them in Russia as the democratic dissidents, but here, they constitute 'a challenge to democratic government which is, potentially at least, as serious as those posed in the past by the aristocratic cliques, fascist movements, and communist parties.'

The authors do not claim that what the value-oriented intellectuals write and say is false. Such categories as 'truth' and 'honesty' do not fall within the province of the apparatchiks. The point is that their work of 'unmasking and delegitimation' is a threat to democracy when popular participation in politics is causing 'a breakdown of traditional means of social control.' They 'challenge the existing structures of authority' and even the effectiveness of 'those institutions which have played the major role in the indoctrination of the young.' Along with 'privatistic youth' who challenge the work ethic in its traditional form, they endanger democracy, whether or not their critique is well-founded. No student of modern history will fail to recognize this voice.

What must be done to counter the media and the intellectuals, who, by exposing some ugly facts, contribute to the dangerous 'shift in the institutional balance between government and opposition'? How do we control the 'more politically active citizenry' who convert democratic politics into 'more an arena for the assertion of conflicting interests than a process for the building of common purposes'? How do we return to the good old days, when 'Truman, Acheson, Forrestal, Marshall, Harriman, and Lovett' could unite on a policy of global intervention and domestic militarism as our 'common purpose,' with no interference from the undisciplined rabble?

The crucial task is 'to restore the prestige and authority of central government institutions, and to grapple with the immediate economic challenges.' The demands on government must be reduced and we must 'restore a more equitable relationship between governmental authority and popular control.' The press must be reined. If the media do not enforce 'standards of professionalism,' then 'the alternative could well be regulation by the government' — a distinction without a difference, since the policy-oriented and technocratic intellectuals, the commissars themselves, are the ones who will fix these standards and determine how well they are respected. Higher education should be related 'to economic and political goals,' and if it is offered to the masses, 'a program is then necessary to lower the job expectations of those who receive a college education.' No challenge to capitalist institutions can be considered, but measures should be taken to improve working conditions and work organization so that workers will not resort to 'irresponsible blackmailing tactics.' In general, the prerogatives of the nobility must be restored and the peasants reduced to the apathy that becomes them.

This is the ideology of the *liberal* wing of the state capitalist ruling elite, and, it is reasonable to assume, its members who now staff the national executive in the United States. We may note finally that the second Carter Administration carries us right to 1984.

The Carter Administration is unlikely to undertake any significant new initiatives in foreign or domestic policy, though there will be some new rhetoric, largely for propaganda purposes. Any American Administration, coming to power in 1976, must face certain challenges. During the Vietnam war, American hegemony in the Grand Area declined, though by now it has been significantly restored. Trilateralism — that is, collective management of the capitalist international order by the major industrial powers, under Washington's supervision — must replace the Grand Area system with its emphasis on exclusive American hegemony. This is entirely natural in an era of multinational corporations with far-flung global interests involving ruling groups in many countries. Nationalist currents in the Third World must be contained, and insofar as possible, elites that will be responsive to the needs of international capitalism must be imposed or supported. Some version of detente must be pursued; that is, an arrangement with the second major superpower, which insists on ruling its imperial domains without undue interference, and will agree to play a relatively minor role elsewhere; an arrangement in which there must, as Kissinger phrased it, be 'a penalty for intransigence' if the junior partner in enforcing world order becomes too obstreperous, but in which the danger of superpower confrontation must be reduced. The major resources, particularly energy, must be accessible to the industrial capitalist powers, and largely controlled by the United States. The crucial American interest in ensuring its substantial control of Middle East oil and its distribution must be maintained. The hopes of rolling back Communism in China, still alive in policy-making circles through the mid-1960s, have been abandoned. The United States will cultivate its relations with China, in part as a barrier to Russian influence but also as a way of imposing constraints on the independent development of Japan. Where independent nationalist forces intent on taking control of their own resources and pursuing their own path towards modernization and development have not been destroyed, as in Cuba and Indochina, barriers must be imposed so as to maximize the difficulties that they will face and to increase the intrinsic pressures, internal to these societies, towards authoritarian rule and repression. Sooner or later, the United States will come to terms with these societies, if they are able to persist in their present course, as it has, after many years, in the case of China, or earlier, the Soviet Union.

Within the trilateral domains, effective controls must be instituted to contain and restrict the pressures towards the extension of democracy. In particular, encroachments on the system of authoritarian private control of production, commerce, and finance must be resisted, and the ideological system must be restored. Insofar as possible, the population must be reduced to the state of compliance and unquestioning passivity of the period before the turmoil of the 1960s which created a few breaches in the system. The fundamental dogmas of the state religion must be restored to their position of unchallenged domination: the United States is a global benefactor, committed to self-determination, human rights, and general welfare, trying to do good in an ungrateful world, though occasionally erring in its naivete; the United States is not an active agent in world affairs, pursuing the interests of groups that dominate domestic society, but rather only responds to the challenges of evil forces that seek to upset world order, to international aggressors, as in Indochina, where China and Russia were successfully depicted in this manner during the period when France and the United States were devastating Indochina.

There are severe problems facing the industrial societies. The crisis of energy, pollution, depleted resources, the massive waste of scarce resources in military production and artificially stimulated consumption, unemployment, inflation, stagnation, and so on, must somehow be faced without institutional modification. It is not obvious that there are answers to these problems, at least within the current social order. It is not unlikely that efforts to resolve them without serious institutional change will lead to further extension of centralized planning on the part of (and in the interests of) ruling groups, using the state as an agency of control and coordination. The system may evolve towards what some have called 'friendly fascism' — that is, social structures reminiscent of the fascist order, but without the brutality, barbarism, and cultural degradation of the fascist states.

There is no indication that the Carter Administration is committed to any different path, and even if it were, persistent tendencies in the private economy would pose serious if not insuperable barriers. These seem to me to be the prospects for the years ahead, unless popular forces that now exist only in a limited and scattered form can be organized and mobilized to introduce really significant changes in the domestic social and economic order.