

GEGENSTANDPUNKT

The Democratic State

Critique of Bourgeois Sovereignty

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Democratic State: Introduction

This book **explains** something. **Bourgeois (capitalist) societies**, in which the production of wealth takes place as the result of economic competition with private property, are ruled by **states**. Why? What is the **reason** for the existence of such states? What **purpose** do they serve? We actually answer these questions here!

Some left-wing professors would call us arrogant for claiming to have figured out what bourgeois states and democracy are all about, since their chief discovery in this field is how “complicated” it all is. Some go so far as to deny even the *possibility* of completing the theory of the state, since each state has a “*different historical development*.” As if the *general* cannot be found in the *particular*! What else is a **theory**? Each of the different states is in fact a *state*, as the name implies. They have common principles, and these principles are what a theory explains. The professors can examine the differences between, say, English and German law, or between Italian and German social provisions, until the cows come home. But as long as they insist on denying the concepts of *law* and *social state* in general, the particular analysis of Germany, Italy or any other state has to come out wrong. And wrong it comes out without fail!

Some other leftist state theoreticians, reading here to find how we have answered their favorite questions, should take heed. We don’t even bother to ask them! “What *could* the state do to...?” Or, “What *prevents* the state from doing...?” These inquiries only serve to announce an *ideological* concern for how the state *should* be, not for how it *is*. The *practical* activity of leftists, to try to improve the alleged “deficiencies” of society, goes hand in hand with their *theories* consisting of lists of “structural and functional problems” of the state. When they ultimately proclaim the “dialectics between reform and revolution,” we have to state flat out that there is absolutely nothing revolutionary in modifying the state to improve its functioning, and nothing dialectical either. Neither the “dialectical” reforms nor the theory justifying them can ever help any proletarian. And finally, we know of no cabal of monopolists preventing the state from accomplishing its alleged mission, nor do we blame the “fiscal crisis of the state.” It’s simply that we do not know of *any* good deeds for the state to perform. Actually, there are none!

Thus *our* explanation is **objective**. We don’t *approach* the theory of the state from **ideals** or **morality**, from what it is imagined states *ought* to be. We just say what the state is. There also exists a plethora of **ideologies** about the state, thinking derived from a *false consciousness* of political life which takes certain aspects *for granted*. We relegate these to remarks at the end of each chapter. Also at the end of each chapter are to be found some brief historical remarks, which are intended only to dispel any lingering notion that anything fought for must be good. They are not intended to make the explanation of the state “historical,” since it isn’t.

One last introductory word. The term “bourgeois” is not used here to mean “lacking in refinement or elegance.” It refers only to the formation, or constitution of the dominant societies of the current epoch, in contrast with, say, the feudal epoch. Other terms used in a special sense are discussed in the text where they occur.

Chapter 1: Freedom and equality — Private property — Abstract free will

The **bourgeois state** (i.e., the modern democratic state) is the political power over a capitalistic society. It forces its rule on all of the competitors in this mode of production without regard to their natural and social differences, thereby allowing them to pursue their conflicting particular interests. This is what **equality** and **freedom** are, nothing else. The state obliges its citizens to respect **private property** in their economic competition. It forces them to recognize that some people have the wealth of society at their disposal while others are excluded from it, and to base their economic actions on this principle. In pursuing their individual advantage the members of a capitalistic society inevitably harm each other, so that they require a power removed from economic life to guarantee respect for person and property. They supplement their negative, competitive relation to each other by jointly submitting to a power that curtails their private interests. As they go about their economic business, they are at the same time political citizens. They want state rule because they can pursue their private interests only by simultaneously abstracting from them. The bourgeois state is thus the **abstract free will** of its citizens that has taken on a form independent of them.

a) How competitors become free and equal citizens

This first determination of what the state is, its conception in the abstract, contains the central reason why this authority exists, and thus also the central purpose that it pursues. Before turning to the specific ways in which the state relates to its citizens, one can already see from this abstract formulation that freedom and equality are hardly an idyllic matter. Firstly, they *owe their existence* to economic conflicts and, secondly, they are aimed at *maintaining* these conflicts by means of the state's monopoly on force. The state uses its power to keep the capitalist economy running, but even without examining this mode of production one can see that this state is a **class state**. By subjecting everyone *equally*, it perpetuates the differences that exist between them. There is consequently no doubt about how it *benefits* the various competitors of a capitalist mode of production.

By treating citizens equally the state guarantees their freedom, which consists in nothing but the not-so-kind permission to try to get hold of some part of the wealth of society with whatever economic resources they may or may not have, while respecting all the other citizens who are doing the same thing at their expense, against them. It is for the sake of this freedom that they need the state, since without it they could not make use of their resources at all. From their practical point of view, state power is the condition for free competition. They thus *want* to be recognized as *citizens* of a state because their economic interests *force* them to.

The bond between all citizens of the state, their common political will, is the result of a forced act of volition on the part of each individual who, in order to reach his or her goal of private advantage, also participates in an *abstract and general* will. "The separation of bourgeois society and the political state necessarily appears as a separation of the *political* member of bourgeois society, the citizen, from bourgeois society, his own actual, empirical reality, because as an idealist of the state he is a being who is *completely distinct*, different from, and opposed to his own reality" (Marx, *Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right'*, Cambridge University Press 1970, p.79). It is no secret how this effort in abstraction has different results for the various characters involved in the capitalist mode of production, how and for whom the state acts forcefully as an *instrument*. The subjection of everyone to state power is necessarily to the advantage of those citizens who are *already* advantaged economically. The following chapters will therefore show what the state demands from and allows the various economic classes as a consequence of making free competition its business.

b) How the state keeps competition in tune with private property

If economic competition is to take place at all, the state must regulate it by force. And this fact sheds some light on the nature of the economy the state is maintaining. The interdependence of the individuals involved in producing the wealth of society is organized in such a way that they *contest* each other's participation in this wealth when pursuing their own interests. Since, in such a system, the satisfaction of one individual's particular interest negates the interests pursued by other individuals, everyone submits to the power of the state, and this submission has a *negative, excluding* effect for each person. This of course does not make their collisions disappear. Rather, the state regulates them by limiting each individual's freedom by the freedom of everyone else.

Since economic competitors exclude each other from the resources necessary for their subsistence, competition is a rather nasty fight for survival. The state responds to the fighting by making this exclusion obligatory while prohibiting assaults on property and life. Everyone must make do with his or her *own* resources while being generally dependent on everyone else, who use their own resources as they see fit. Newly produced goods also may only be acquired by respecting **property** and **person**. Private property, the exclusive disposal over the wealth of society which other individuals require for their subsistence and must therefore utilize somehow, is the basis of individual advantage, and naturally also of disadvantage. It is the source of the modern form of poverty, whereby people must sustain themselves as instruments for other people's property (whose growth is naturally of some concern to the state.)

Finally, it should be mentioned that private property is not a matter of toothbrushes and lemonade, although it does show its effects in the sphere of individual consumption too. The real dependency on things which belong to other individuals exists in the sphere of the production and reproduction of the wealth of society. When there is exclusive disposal over the means of production and therefore over the products themselves, wealth acquires the power to deny people their existence.

c) Historical remarks

The state idealism practiced by antagonistic classes, their *submission* to a political power out of *self-interest*, is no pastoral picnic. Likewise, the "**establishment of the state**" was never a harmonious affair, although it is considered a cause for celebration in every nation when its anniversary comes around. Bourgeois states are the product of choice terror. This tends to be forgotten by their proponents, and not only when it comes to the glorious French and American Revolutions. Antagonistic classes joined forces to abolish pre- bourgeois forms of state power for fairly different reasons. One class regarded the old state and the estates supporting it as a hindrance to its business. The other class was fighting for its existence, which it had to secure by its labor. Of course once their common goal was reached, it did not turn out to the satisfaction of both classes, since what the democratic state protected, the *possibility* of sustaining oneself in the service of other people's property, quickly became a bitter *necessity*. The fact that the workers who fought for the bourgeois republic had to get rid of the old state in order to live, does not mean that they created an instrument for *themselves* when they helped create the new state.

d) Ideologies

Discontent with the hard world of private property is a source of most persistent ideologies.

Leftists tend to interpret the many disagreeable *consequences* of freedom and equality (which will come up in the next chapters) as evidence that these two goals of the French Revolution have not yet been fully realized. In view of the evident differences in society, they doubt the *reality* of equality under state power. They turn equality into an *ideal* and demand that the state make it come true. It

somehow never occurs to them that there must be something wrong with a kind of *freedom* that is maintained by *force*.

The foolish vision of a society which has abolished, not the economic conflicts between people, but their individual differences is a favorite theme for utopian novels and movies. It is also cited by politicians, who like to fend off all criticism of the state by magnanimously rejecting all **nonsense about making everyone equal**. This kind of repudiation of demands on the state is supposed to drum up the *right* kind of enthusiasm for the state. Fatuous comparison with the ancient past (the Soviets were once also useful for this game) has the same purpose, by revealing an idiotic “**conflict between freedom and equality**.” To get more of one you supposedly have to give up some of the other, so that you can’t have everything anyway, so stop complaining and start practicing the third basic value, **fraternity** (which is known as “solidarity” or “unity” nowadays). One can see that discontent with other people’s discontent is also fertile soil for false ideas about the most abstract determination of the state.

Those who take a positive stance towards the state proclaim that the state is “*in everyone’s interest*.” They attempt to make the obvious disadvantages of state actions acceptable by explaining the state as a **necessary evil**. The proof that the state is necessary because of **human nature** is part of the standard repertoire of every enlightened teacher and professor, who in this case cite the conflicts of a capitalistic society, for a change, instead of the lovable differences. This proof only works if one ignores the *necessity to compete* that the state *imposes*, along with all the economic peculiarities this involves, and declares that gratuitous *mutual hostility* is human nature. Man is a wolf to man, ergo some wolves have to make sure the other wolves keep quiet. This is supposed to be why it is necessary for the state to maintain order.

In everyday life, any criticism of the state’s actions which points to a discrepancy with one’s own interests is refuted simply by the remark that there must be order. Where would we end up if everything belonged to everyone? This expresses the willingness to contend against other individuals in pursuit of one’s own interest and at the same time to defend the limits that the political order forces on oneself and everyone else, a self-contradictory will which thrives in a democracy. It also flourishes in its fascist variation that disapproves of competitive self-interest, requiring in the name of true freedom that all individuals subordinate their endeavors entirely to the community.

Public speakers on equality and freedom, who claim to have discovered in their own particular state the kind of order appropriate to *mankind*, can fall back on scientific literature for a detailed and well-prepared elaboration of this brazen lie. None of the social sciences or humanities (true to their name) can pass up the chance to provide a definition of man. The slight variations they offer on the theme, “Man is by nature an animal, but usually proves capable of higher things!” are due to the interest the particular discipline has in contributing to these “higher things.” All these sciences concern themselves with the two sides shown by citizens, their *materialism* of competition and their *idealism* of the state dictated by their dependence on it. And they proceed to transform this historical product, the bourgeois state, into an anthropological constant, making the bourgeois contortions of the will appear to be a *confirmation* of human nature, whether in terms of psychology, educational theory, economics, political science or theories of literature and language. As if these disciplines did not all owe their existence to the fact that individuals *resist* the need to abstract from themselves!

Marx has written all that must be said about the fable that a group of individuals entered into a social contract, as well as about the role of Robinson Crusoe in intellectual history! Evidently, academics just have to pay homage to human dignity, especially since they feel compelled to come up with criteria for distinguishing which deeds, of all those performed by humans taking the bourgeois state for granted, are in fact “*inhuman*.”

Chapter 2: Sovereignty — The people — Constitutional rights — Representation

The people's will for political rule is fulfilled by the **sovereignty** of the state. The power of the *state* originates with the *people* and complies with their political will by enforcing it, as the public interest, *against* all the private individuals. The **constitution** lays down the relations between citizens in the form of valid principles for the state's use of force. **Constitutional rights** define what citizens and the state are allowed to do, while professional **representatives** of the will of the people see to it that all the implied **duties** are performed. Bourgeois society maintains its conflicts by dividing its members into citizens with constitutional rights, on the one hand, and servants of the people obligated to use force, on the other.

a) A sovereign serving the public interest

The bourgeois state is **sovereign**, i.e., it is an independent body separate from its citizens and distinct from all their particular interests. It is a power acknowledged by all citizens solely because it enforces its *own* interest, the common good, against all the private individuals. By using its force to ensure that they use their particular economic resources only in accordance with its interest in person and property, the state serves those interests which derive from the ownership of productive property. In substance then, this sovereignty turns out to be quite relative.

By acting without consideration for individuals and their property, the state ensures the functioning of property in general, a purpose which it can achieve only by being sovereign. Its sovereignty is maintained by the **will of the people**. It is just their common will for a state that makes the individuals of a society into **a people**, this will manifesting itself as *approval* of the state's decisions. The question of whether a state should exist in the first place is never a matter for free decision. Rather, this is decided by force. Everyone wants **representatives**, whether elected by the people or appointed by the state itself, and these representatives are expected to act sovereignly "in the name of the people."

b) Constitutional rights

As a maxim of state sovereignty, *the state* grants its private citizens protection against violent attacks from each other. **Constitutional rights** define the negative relation *between* competing individuals in the form of rights and duties *toward the political power*. Only to the extent that they assume duties toward the state does it grant them the right to be free private persons. The state is therefore a means for society, subjecting its citizens to its sovereignty and requiring them, by way of constitutional rights, to make use of their liberty while acknowledging the state. Constitutional rights formulate general restrictions. By giving permission to do all kinds of things, these rights inform citizens of everything they are not allowed to do, or of how the state is allowed to deal with them. In this manner each constitutional right simultaneously formulates its own conditions. Whoever makes use of a constitutional right must always expect the state to intervene, especially when this right concerns the relation between the state and its citizens.

The philosopher Hegel already knew that constitutional rights imply duties. He preferred to put it the other way around in order to celebrate the state, as if rights were some positive good different from duties. Rights are equal to duties, they are the same thing. By granting rights, the state is using its power to ensure that every relationship between citizens satisfies the principles of its rule, nothing more. Constitutional rights are also called **human rights** (to distinguish them from animal or plant rights) since they are thought to correspond to human nature. The "nature" that demands constitutional rights for humans is the world of competition, in which property does not leave much room for mutual

respect. The *positive* determination of what is *human*, which the state bestows on everyone, has a purely *negative* content. The power of the state ensures competition and respect!

c) Representatives

When public servants, from the highest statesman to the lowest clerk, perform their duties, they **represent** *alongside* society the public interest that does not exist *within* society itself. They act *for* private citizens by taking action *against* them. In so doing, they display the heedlessness that goes hand in hand with their clear conscience. After all, they are executing the will of the people! To representatives of the people, the particular wishes of individual citizens can appear as unjustified hindrances, since the whole point of sovereignty is that the state achieve its *own* aims. On the other hand, it is not always a matter of course for the state representatives to fulfill their duties, since they too have individual interests and their offices present many a temptation. Collisions between the public interest and the private interests of state functionaries are inevitable. This is the reason for the **corruption** of public officials, who have the opportunity to misuse their positions of authority for themselves. This is also the reason why the state attempts to *secure* its servants from the hazards of competition, guaranteeing their **careers** and **perquisites of office**.

Those for whom serving the public has become second nature know that a critical attitude toward the state is incompatible with the proper performance of official duties. Public service is not just another job. To prove it, Germany, for example, maintains a **blacklist** for public service, while America stages the occasional **witch hunt**.

d) Historical remarks

The struggle for the sovereign state involved ending the fusion of political power with the Church, nobility, and landed property in order to subject the *entire* society to its power. Its decisions were disengaged from all particular interests, including those outside its territory. The state was to be accountable only to *its* citizens, but to *all* of them, and vice versa. Thus the fight for recognition of person and property was fought by freeing the old state from all its dependent relations. In the name of the sovereignty of the people, all those parts of society not formerly recognized by the state demanded participation in the public power. All of the decision-making bodies of the state, unlike the old sovereigns, were to respect everyone under state rule by granting them constitutional rights. The old sovereigns were removed, and the declarations of the rights of man ushered in the execution of political power by representatives of the people. Those who had fought for their interests *against* the old state now became representatives of these interests. They no longer spoke and acted *for* the concerns of their people, but *restricted* them with all the means of statecraft. To those who had fought the battles, many a bourgeois revolutionary thus appeared a traitor after victory!

e) Ideologies

For the practical way of thinking of citizens, the inescapability of their submission to the sovereignty of the state is the starting point for all sorts of expectations and disappointments. They consider *themselves* to be constantly overburdened by duties, while *everyone else* gets to enjoy all the rights. Their representatives are now indecisively weak, now recklessly misusing their power. Citizens reconcile themselves to being bound by constitutional rights by forever haggling over the extent to which the state is entitled to restrain other people, who also make use of their constitutional rights. Their interest in state rule is often disappointed in areas such as these, which leads them to pass judgment on the leadership qualities and trustworthiness of their representatives. The demand for *worthy representation* is anything but rebellion, as can be seen whenever intellectuals criticize their leaders for lowbrow blunders. This demand goes along with the attitude that it is legitimate and

understandable for representatives to use their power to increase their own prestige, as long as this serves the national interest. The public also accepts the brutality associated with the execution of political power with the help of the common saying that “politics is a dirty business.” And as for worries about so-called *scandals* ruining the reputation of the state, they evaporate just as soon as the offending bad apples have been removed and replaced (“Watergate” not being the first nor last example.)

The propagandists of functioning rule, the political scientists, regard the relationship between the state and its citizens strictly from the point of view of whether it works. What they like about the sovereignty of the people is the economy of force, the *stability* of political power which is based on consent. Their explanation of representation in terms of territory, population count and degree of political maturity is based on the ideal of a popular will which demands responsibility, both from the representatives of state power *and* from the citizens too. When political scientists extol constitutional rights, they never fail to make the transition from the wonderful possibility of being a free citizen to the necessity of using this freedom properly. Every elucidation of a constitutional right ends up balancing the extent to which people should be allowed to exploit the constitution for their own ends. On the other hand, the different ways that foreign states treat *their* citizens are explained simply by noting that they violate human rights. The “human rights weapon” was especially useful with respect to the former communist states, because it underscored in such a nice moral way the imperialist intention to eradicate this other form of rule. It is still brandished against the few holdouts, and for cleaning up the third world.

Leftist devotees of the true will of the people use the same weapon to strike enormously moral blows in the opposite direction. Year in and year out they demand more rights for workers and farmers, because they want them to have the pleasure of being totally at one with the power of the state. The trouble with the public power, as far as they are concerned, is that the pressure from Wall Street prevents it from genuinely representing the people. In the right hands, the state would finally meet its obligations to society.

Fascist critics also want a closer relationship between the people and their state. Instead of a sovereign power at the service of competition they want a sovereign that organizes competition as a service to the nation. They regard the state’s recognition and regulation of the freedom of private interest as a sign of weakness. They consider constitutional rights to be fetters on the power of the state, instead of the means by which it achieves its purpose. In its representatives they see degenerate weaklings who oppose the true spirit of the people, just because democratic politicians make the citizens’ will for a state the motor of their politics. That is, just because politicians take the exigencies of competition seriously, being the reasons why people want a state and the reasons for the state to exist in the first place. Fascists want private individuals to be exclusively citizens of the state!

Chapter 3: Law — Constitutional state — Democracy

By adopting a constitution, the state satisfies the interest of its citizens in competitive social relations and undertakes to do everything it does **in the form of laws** which ensure that constitutional rights are enforced. The fact that the representatives of the people legitimate their action in terms of constitutional rights and correct their action when it conflicts with the constitution, makes the state **constitutional**, the “**rule of law.**”

As such, it is emancipated from the influence of private interests on its actions, and is accountable only to the constitution in the exercise of its power. **Democracy** is the *adequate* form for the relation between the state and its people in so far as it realizes an abstract identity between popular will and state power, abstract because it does not depend on private individuals consenting to specific laws and their execution. For it is not consent that is required, but obedience. Should citizens cease being obedient, it will be the “rule of law” that is abandoned, not the state itself.

a) Why the bourgeois state is democratic

Democracy is the *adequate* form of state in that state power restricts freedom whenever the use of freedom infringes on the freedom of other citizens. Otherwise the state stands aside. It *acknowledges* the particularity of all private persons subjected to its law. It gives its laws generality, relates *all* actions to itself, and makes no special demands on any party, apart from the demand that everyone act in accordance with their own economic resources. (We will see in subsequent chapters how thoroughly it does this!) Unlike the absolutist state, it does not give preferential treatment to any estate or class. Rather, everyone enjoys all rights and nobody is privileged. It is not by being *partial*, by directly promoting the interests of certain parts of society, that the state serves one class. It is the **law** guaranteed to all, and justice, which result in the advantage of the stronger and the permanent disadvantage of those with fewer resources at their command. The democratic state trusts in the power of private property. It acts in *accordance* with existing social relations when it codifies them as law.

b) Constitutionality

Since its power originates in society, the **constitutional state**, which embodies the “rule of law,” regards it as its duty to use power only in ways appropriate to the aims of its citizens. It performs this duty by making its own collisions with citizens conform to the criteria of constitutional rights. It generously contents itself with only those restrictions on citizens that are contained in the constitution. On the other hand, it is legitimate for the state to transgress these limits whenever its own existence is at stake. If it sees its sovereignty jeopardized by insubordination on the part of those who are continually and quite legally imposed upon, the democratic state permits itself to react to the violation of public duties by safeguarding the political order with no ifs, ands or buts. It will counter the threat to disregard its rules by accusing the “unruly elements” of misusing rights. So it protects these rights by consistently expanding them into **emergency laws**, the lawful preparation for the emergency when a state no longer wishes to bother being constitutional!

c) Democratic and fascist alternatives

The democratic form of state with all its highly praised forms of social intercourse is the **institutionalization of the antagonisms** between state and citizen. State power acts as an instrument for competing citizens by defining the limits on individual freedom. Private citizens are confronted with the abstraction of their own will as an outside force which they must obey. Since they require this force to pursue their individual interest, but accept it only because of this interest, they are staunch democrats only when *they themselves* are not restricted by the activity of the state. They lose

their democratic attitude when faced with someone who benefits from laws which for them are only duties. Then they come up with better ideas about how the state ought to clamp down. In the middle of the finest democracy, “decent” citizens plead for “simpler” forms of political power, while an argument against rule itself is virtually never heard. State officials, on the other hand, come to realize that their service to the public interest hardly ever meets with approval. So it does not necessarily further their careers to go through with all the democratic procedures. After a while in office they grow tired of *democratically* legitimating their actions toward their citizens and stop bothering to refer everything to the Bill of Rights. On fitting occasions, however, they do not forget to proclaim that they acquired their power democratically.

The abstract concept of democracy is also quite useful for explaining **fascism**. The wish for this alternative form of bourgeois rule is always present in a democracy, both by politicians *and* citizens. Its time comes when state and citizen, *in* opposition to each other, agree that all the difficulties of economic life stem from an inefficient exercise of power. The result is an unshameful use of political power that demands a willingness to make sacrifices exceeding the usual democratic standards, in order to do away with faultfinders, with citizens who are not willing to buckle down once and for all in political and economic matters. Anti-fascism as a program to *save democracy* has nothing with which to counter the political weapons of the fascists who are out to save the nation from noxious elements the other way around. There is the legend, which among leftists actually counts as the *explanation* of fascism, that an especially chauvinist part of the bourgeoisie seduced a people of noblest democratic instincts, but only because of the power structure in society. This is itself a piece of nationalistic reverence for a true democracy. To counter the fascist will of the people to sacrifice for the nation, such critics can pose nothing but a fictitious identity between the people and the state.

The transition to fascism does not at all contradict the statement that democracy is the adequate form of state under capitalism. Democracy can “function” as the institutionalization of the *conflicts* of capitalist society only as long as citizens, legally bound to respect the exigencies of private property, compete *properly*. In other words, democracy is dependent upon the *willingness to put up with* the diverse results of competition. This is why people must be well prepared for democracy, and why certain populations are not considered mature enough for such a sophisticated form of state. At the same time, democrats are quite comfortable with fascist conditions which they have created and continue to maintain in foreign lands. The art of self-control is part of democratic rule, its cardinal virtue. But the forms of poverty in the “third world” are no basis for such a virtue, once free will is allowed to assert itself there.

d) Attitudes toward democracy

The collisions between state and citizen, an inevitable consequence of their subjection to the law, lead citizens to complementary forms of approval and disapproval.

One can *take part* in democratic life by disapproving of actions of the state because one doubts their legitimacy. Here one will encounter other people who take a stand in favor of the same measures and stress their legitimacy. Approval and criticism will change sides depending on the nature of the law which is in dispute.

Or one can make it one’s concern to *perfect* democracy. One either invents a general crisis of legitimacy and demands more regard for citizens or more efforts to gain their consent; or one castigates the state for being too unsure of its existing legitimacy, for continually orienting its actions toward the approval of its citizens. In the former case one sees the threat coming from enemies of democracy, in

the latter from enemies of the state. These “enemies of the state,” not having such an easy time of it, keep insisting on their real desire for a state.

One can actually *oppose* the democratic state by *denying* its legitimacy. For the leftist **revisionists of communism**, the clear distribution of advantage and disadvantage among the population is a reason to suspect constant misuse of the people’s consent to the state’s sovereign law-making. They therefore propose a state which lets itself be guided by the “interests of the masses.” **Anarchists**, by contrast, are satisfied with the discovery that the state uses violence against individuals. In the name of the people, they compete with the state by acting violently themselves, only to find the popular will quite in favor of the violence used by public institutions. Being separated from the masses, but not in the same way as the state functionaries, anarchists are hunted and victimized while the anti-terrorist squads become the heroes of democracy. To **fascists**, the legitimacy of the state is nothing but an encumbrance on the performance of its tasks. They demand from citizens not only unlimited consent, but also unconditional submission, that they give up every interest which limits the state. And politics should consist in relentlessly orienting the population toward the purpose of the state: terror in the name of the state.

e) Historical remarks

The emergence of democratic states is based on the fact that classes with opposing interests had *one* thing in common: both classes could use a state which forced respect for their own necessities. The unity between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat was a *negative* one — it was directed against a state which made itself the instrument of an unproductive class. In America, which had no feudal past, a ruling authority was just *created*, more or less from scratch.

f) Ideologies

Extolling democracy has nothing to do with explaining it; people usually resort to citing advantages which not many citizens can enjoy. And when it comes down to defending democracy, they are never squeamish. The easiest way to praise democracy is to “**compare**” it with conditions remote in time (all phases of human history!) or in space (Timbuktu!). And the easiest way to dismiss criticism is to point out that things could be a lot worse.

Serious comparison of bourgeois democracy with the preceding form of society reveals progress — recognition of (abstract) free will, abolition of relations of personal dependency, etc. — but also the force exerted on the great majority of free citizens. All liberties go only as far as the state allows, their restriction has been institutionalized; in fact they are only justified as long as they serve a purpose that has nothing to do with individual well-being. This is where people, especially journalists and revisionists inside and outside academia, start *interpreting* the mission of democracy. They like to jabber on and on about the ideal of democracy versus its reality, about “fighting for” democracy, about “extending” democracy...

Chapter 4: Justice — Protection of person and property — Morality

The state, as a **legitimate power**, subjects its citizens to the law. It enforces **justice**, thereby compelling its citizens to recognize each other's free will. The administration of justice ensures the **protection of person and property** as well as the sovereignty of the state. It *maintains* competition by making the freedom of private individuals dependent upon the correspondence of their actions with the law. The state judges everything citizens do in terms of whether it conforms with the law, and makes its judgment valid by *restoring* the law whenever it is violated. In this way, through the power of the state, the law becomes immanent in the actions of citizens. Citizens in turn recognize the state's commands as ethical standards which they apply to themselves and to other citizens, which is what **morality** is.

a) Why the state provides equal protection

When it *protects* free citizens, their person and their property, by restricting them, the state is *not based only* on the collisions of competition. It is in fact the *only purpose* of the bourgeois state to *preserve a society* in which the augmentation of property, the expansion of the sphere of personal freedom, excludes all but the owners from participating in the wealth of society. By using its power to prevent any party from infringing upon persons and their property, the state ensures that the economic differences it is confronted with continue to exist. It thus also ensures that the conflicts of economic life will have their say, producing more or less guaranteed results.

Fanatics of equality will simply not believe that the *equal* treatment of competitors having different resources at their command is the best guarantee for the continual existence and even growth of their *inequality*. These people think of equality as an ideal with which to measure the differences in society, rather than as what it really is, a relationship of force.

b) Justice

Despite what idealists of equality think, the actual practice of the state is no injustice. It is just the normal **state of law**. By comparing the actions of private persons with the content of the law, the state ensures that individual freedom ends where property begins. There is thus an essential difference between a legal judgment and a scientific one. A scientific judgment is the theory about some object. It explains the object, capturing in thought what it really *is*. By contrast, a legal judgment has nothing in common with an explanation of the actions to which it pertains. Jurists are not concerned in the least with what justice *is*. They know that it *exists* in the form of laws, which are not the result of any scientific efforts, but of **legislative fiats** by the state. Their only concern is to see whether the actions of citizens conform to the laws or conflict with them. Their *theoretical* activity consists simply in bringing each "case" under the appropriate law as preparation for deciding the "case" *in practice*. Their judgments are not knowledge but comparisons. They abstract from the concrete content of the actions of citizens by *relating* them to laws, which are made *objectively valid* through forcible acts against the individuals. This is what **police** are for, and what the **administration of justice** is all about.

c) Subjection to law

By protecting person and property, the state secures a sphere of freedom for individuals which sets limits on the pursuit of their particular interests. The exercise of one free will is dependent upon all the other free wills. It is therefore regulated by law, the state dictating to citizens the forms their social relations must assume. The realization of their *private interests* is their *right*, i.e. it is permitted on the condition that it not violate the law.

The state applies **its monopoly on force** to ensure that the collisions between the interests in society occur **without the use of force**. The subjection of all activities to the law is the basis for the bourgeois definition of force as an unlawful act, which makes capitalist society appear rather idyllic to its many loyal supporters. Bourgeois minds are so delighted about the state's monopoly on force that they easily forget that the validity of the law entails that *all* private acts involve submission to state power, so that an interest in freedom is simultaneously an interest in force.

1. In **civil**, or **private law** the state lays down how mutually dependent private persons are to relate to each other. The state sets norms for those activities in which private individuals avail themselves of their personal freedom and utilize their property.

In its legal definitions of **natural and juridical persons**, the state lays down the conditions under which someone is considered a legal subject and as such is allowed to perform legal acts, i.e., when and to what extent a person's will must be respected. Evidently, this is hardly a matter of course in bourgeois society.

In its laws on **contracts** and **property**, the state lays down different kinds of legal transactions, how they are to be carried out and their consequences. Since private citizens are only interested in their own advantage in their dealings, the state must impose on them the fundamental form of legal transactions, the contract, by most pedantically regulating all aspects of it. The law defines what is considered an act of volition, when an act of volition is valid, what this validity implies (performance) and *how* a promise to perform is to be kept. And since each party treats the other only as a means for gaining his or her own advantage, the state must also make sure its citizens do not make contracts about objects or services which are beyond their authority. By using force, the state brings home to them the exclusive nature of private property, which is desired and esteemed by everyone and therefore always disregarded.

In **family law**, the state lays down the relations of person and property when they are deranged by the relations between the sexes and between parent and child. Special regulations are necessary because the love between man, woman and child tends to get in the way of their duties as legal subjects. The state forces them to divide and share rights and duties in the very sphere in which they abandon mutual exclusion because of individual affection. The state thus declares the happy home a regulated utilitarian relationship, which is why the breach of the holy sacrament of marriage is not only a matter for the Final Judgment. It also has its mundane aspects, which are taken up in the **family courts**.

In **inheritance law**, the state lays down the relations of person and property resulting from the death of a property owner. It guarantees the continuing usefulness of property for the family and therefore limits the free disposition of private property by wills, which is already anticipated during a person's lifetime in diverse prohibitions.

2. In **criminal law**, the state lays down how the law must be restored when it has been violated, how it itself must react to acts which break the law. This is in contrast to civil law, which standardizes the state's definition of private claims with an aim to imposing law-abiding behavior, i.e., nothing is to happen unless it is permitted. Since the state's reaction to law-breaking is also written into the law as the **criminal code** ("*nullum crimen sine lege*," no crime without a law for it), the protection provided by law completely loses the idyllic appearance which comparisons to earlier "lawless" epochs help to maintain. Justice, the restoration of law, has nothing to do with a power arbitrarily responding to a private injury. It treats revenge, feuds, duels, etc., themselves as breaches of the law. Since the judicial point of view is not at all that of an aggrieved interest, but rather that of free will objectified in the state, the administration of justice maintains a society in which every individual acts in accordance

with a principle, the principle of legality, which in itself recognizes and anticipates that there are always plenty of reasons to break the law.

The **principle of guilt** requires not only that wrongdoers be shown to have a free will (responsibility), but above all that they are aware that they are subject to the law they break (intent and negligence). A crime can only be committed by someone who obeys the law.

This is why the **punishment**, which restores the law, is directed against the free will. It is force against person and property and is thus appropriate to the guilty party (confession, or “I deserve punishment”). Prevention and rehabilitation are secondary goals derived from the actual purpose of punishment, and reflect an awareness that punishment has nothing to do with preventing crime, although this fact is of no interest to sociological-minded advocates of useful punishment.

When the **measure of punishment** is fixed by seemingly contradictory standards for different violations (e.g. white collar crimes versus robbery), this only goes to show that the state has a different interest in different offenses. And by making emotional impulse a mitigating circumstance when assessing how deliberate an action was, the law makes allowance for the sad reality of bourgeois society that quite a bit of will power is required to tolerate all the restrictions. This also explains why a calculating will, which is highly appreciated in other situations, counts as a base motive when it breaks the law.

3. The purpose of **public** or **administrative law** (as opposed to private law) is to regulate the state’s subjection of citizens to the law created by ... the state! It is thus concerned with the constitutionality of the form and content of legislation, and the application of laws, dealing with such different spheres as legislative procedure, courts and police, taxes, science, etc. Here the state subjects itself in all its actions to its own law, judging *itself* as a legal subject when passing its laws (legislature), executing them (executive) and dispensing justice (judiciary). While the **ideology of the separation of powers** takes great pride in this ingenious system of mutual checks and balances on state powers, one can imagine how immensely useful it really is. (See Marx’s, “The Constitution of the French Republic Adopted Nov. 4, 1848,” which appeared in *Notes to the People*, No. 7, June 14, 1851.)

d) Historical remarks

The legitimate power of the state, which citizens accept as restricting their interests, resulted historically from struggles against a sovereign whose power over society was not subordinated to the purposes of society. This in contrast to the constitutional state based on the rule of law.

Against a ruler whose word was law, the struggle was waged to universalize justice, to separate it from the ruler’s own personal will. The demand for freedom and equality was accompanied by a fight aimed at committing the lawmakers to the will of the people, subjecting the government to the law and making the courts independent. Hence came the doctrine of the separation of powers.

In some countries the bourgeoisie fought this battle successfully. In Germany on the other hand, where a bourgeois state failed to establish itself, philosophers proclaimed its necessity in treatises on the ideals of this form of state. The philosophy and literature of the Enlightenment promoted the bourgeois state by deducing its moral principles, for example, in the practical philosophies of Kant and Fichte.

The emergence of American democracy differs from that of its European cousins. The seizure of the unowned land brought with it free competition and the right of the stronger, forcing these competitors to establish a state. In this case, the state was the result of the actions of free property owners, who assigned sovereign rights to the state power only in so far as they seemed useful for

competition. It was therefore, from the outset, solely a means of furthering the competitive interests of the people, the first democracy which even today shows its rough practices!

e) **Morality**

Citizens want the law for the sake of personal advantage, despite the fact that it also restricts them. To seek their advantage, then, they also have to want those restrictions imposed on themselves, and this is what **morality** is. Moral citizens justify their submission to a damaging power by citing the ideal of that power, adding their own private **virtue** to the force imposed on them. Thus, they not only abide by the law, they also have a righteous attitude which allows them to endure their obedience. They measure all their actions against the ideal of righteousness, so that whenever they violate their duties in the pursuit of their advantage, they do so with a bad **conscience**. If repeated success leads them to forget to judge their actions as *good* or *bad*, other people's judgments will invariably remind them. Likewise, they themselves will serve as a bad conscience to other people, engaging in **public hypocrisy**.

This area of morality demonstrates remarkably well that the "Good" is a mere semblance, rendering its best services only when upheld as an *ideal*. Those who try to actually *practice* these ideals are therefore contemptuously called "idealists." Citizens allow their young ones a certain attachment to ideals. They can be sure that the hard world of work will transform any such "unrealistic" enthusiasm for ideals into the moral employment of these same ideals in the interest of personal gain. Adult moralism, on the other hand, is considered an annoying trait of character. Terming an adult an idealist therefore always means accusing him or her of being blind to reality or unable to cope, an accusation commonly directed to anyone wanting to make some changes, even *before* presenting any danger to society.

Morality is thus anything but a superfluous accessory to the bizarre spectacle of democratic life. It is the **subjectivization of force** accepted for the sake of success. That is to say, morality is the force of law made into something subjective, the will of the state made into the will of the individual. It is the attitude one needs in order to cope with the forbearance that success requires. It may even last through long periods devoid of any personal advancement, proving true to its purpose both on the sunny side and on the bleak side of society. In the first case it is a welcome accessory to one's success. Successful people proclaim nonchalantly that they have higher aims, the Good, the True and the Beautiful. In the second case its popular forms offer consolation in the face of misery. In both cases the glorification of abstinence is itself abstinence as far as changing things is concerned.

It is therefore no surprise that, in the most modern of societies, the prevailing moralism is a hard nut to crack for radical critics. This moralism is not only a theoretical matter, a form of false consciousness. From the seamstress to the First Lady, people have an urge to *practice* the *ideals* of altruism, modesty, honesty, compassion, charity, etc. Everyone donates to the Cancer Fund, UNICEF and so on. People join associations which promote stupidity in young people, firmly believing that this is an opportunity to experience something workaday life denies them: community of purpose, solidarity, friendship. They compensate for the necessity to compete against each other by forming disgusting groups on the basis of their ideals, even if their idealism demands further sacrifices.

Religion ranks first in all this. **Christianity** was termed by Marx the religion that corresponds to capitalism. The cult of the abstract Christian individual puts into practice the conception of a God who is the supreme, almighty judge, to whom one owes practically everything but from whom one cannot expect any presents, except the gracious permission to be damned careful what one does, in view of one's original sin. Everybody sins, confesses remorsefully, and is modest enough to pose as the judge

of other people's deeds. For an exposition of the duties which a christian free will demands, one can read Martin Luther's "The Freedom of a Christian" (*Luther's Works*, American Edition, volume 31.)

Even in this form of "spiritual submission" in the Community of Christ, there are some small differences which cannot be overlooked. Some people preach and instil the required morality into others, which has become a genuine profession. Other people adopt this morality, their hypocrisy in the sphere of Christian standards being rather amateurish.

The **Church** does not limit itself to propagating morality as a theoretical matter, but turns its congregation's faith into the demand for worldly commitment, which has caused some people to leave the church. This loss of attractiveness of secularized faith is matched by the institution's meddling in public affairs in the manner of an interest group. The idealism of religion, practiced alongside the materialism of capitalist society, can live with this decline in religiousness. All the more so since the state has long since discovered the useful side of faith in the form of Christian nurses and chaplains in prisons, schools and the armed forces. In some countries the state even collects a church tax. As a byproduct, the zeal of Christian charity stirs up hatred for those who neither love animals, nor contribute to the continuation of bourgeois misery by making an additional sacrifice to the ones already demanded of citizens.

f) Ideologies

The **logic of moral thinking** is in keeping with the reason for morality, submission to the state as the price to pay for golden freedom. When citizens in basic agreement with the restrictions imposed by the state are out to gain some advantage at the expense of their fellow man, they will inevitably argue that it would be to the *disadvantage* of the losers to resist, and would also cause *general* harm in society. The normal form of disapproving what other people do differs considerably from a true critique, which would have to deal with the aims favored and prescribed by the state in this great society of ours. Normal disapproval is always directed *against* the freedom of other people, from the standpoint of wanting to take advantage of the existing power for oneself.

This is customary not only in the nasty little things people say to each other privately, but also in the public discussion of basic questions of "human society" and how things in general should be. A decent citizen's social theory shows strong tendencies toward a fascist condemnation of even the smallest liberties which someone might take ("where would we end up if everyone did that!"). Revisionistic moral philosophy has a slightly different way of dividing citizens and their actions into useful/good versus harmful/bad. The firm point of view of the masses that revisionists like to go by has nothing to do with Marx, although they cite him as their authority. Marx criticized *capital* and therefore the capitalists, so that he did not think of forming alliances with any of them, no matter how nice and small. Moreover, he did not consider the masses to be basically good but deprived of rights. Nor was financial capital *unfair* (a nice point of agreement with fascists!) along with all the other unpleasant things in life.

The moral criticism of society, which is summarized in the "Ideologies" section of each chapter of this book, is first-class nonsense when regarded logically, but it makes an immense contribution to orderly life in a democracy. This is noticed by "hippie" types in all countries, who cultivate, in an emphatically *immoral* way, the needs of the individual in opposition to their taming by bourgeois life. That these alternative ideas, especially regarding ecology and sexuality, are promptly assimilated into bourgeois society testifies to the *tolerance* of "our" public order. One is allowed to be a little unconventional, as long as it does not interfere with the course of capital and the affairs of state.

Needless to say, the historical forms by which the modern constitutional state was established are also found in the arsenal of stereotypes for paying critical homage to it. The French Revolution with its tremendous ideas, Kantian philosophy with its moral firmament, and the American Wild West are permanent props of modern morality.

Chapter 5: The ideal collective capitalist — The social state

By subjecting its citizens to the rule of law, the state forces them to maintain themselves as private proprietors, in competition with each other on the basis of the private property which they may or may not have. However, competition has adverse effects on competitors which undermine their ability to continue, endangering the whole system of private property. The state therefore takes **additional measures** to ensure that individuals can indeed maintain themselves in accordance with their own resources. It performs **compensatory activities** in the interests of maintaining the system of private property, which means taking notice of the differences in property and cementing the differences which property creates, a **class society**. As the **ideal collective capitalist** the state provides the real capitalists, the owners of the means of production, with those necessary conditions *for* competition which are not reproduced *in* competition. As a **social state** with social services, it preserves the class of competitors with *no* property, so that it can continue being useful as a means *for* private property.

a) Money and the different sources of income

Securing private property is exactly the same as forcing each private individual to restrict himself to his own property in competition, leaving him dependent on the property owned by other individuals. In this situation, the individual's access to the wealth of society comes from taking advantage of the usefulness of whatever he can call his own. He hopes to effect an exchange by holding something hostage against the other people's needs. In order that resources as qualitatively different as land, capital and labor can be compared, the state guarantees a valid, objective standard, namely **money**, the means for social exchange. In this way the state ties all activities of its citizens to their disposal over money. Since everything can be had for money and only for money, nothing can ever be had except in exchange for money. The availability of this universal equivalent is a basic condition for competition, a condition that must be enforced by a power *separate* from all the competitors if it is to be truly universal and not subject to their conflicting interests.

Individuals thus have access to the wealth of society by using whatever resources they have to augment private property and thereby draw a corresponding income. Since this is the way society's wealth is created and distributed, the state officially recognizes things as disparate as the productive use of land or capital and wage labor as *equally valid* ways of earning a living. When it sees that its citizens' incomes are constantly jeopardized by the effects of competition it takes measures to ensure that the various types of income are sufficient to permit the reproduction of each class. This can only be done by addressing the specific difficulties of those who own the means of production and those who do not. The former it helps by systematically removing the obstacles to accumulation created by their competition. As to the other competitors, they get their income when they render their service to the owners of the wealth of society, and so secure for themselves the pleasures of freedom by giving it up. In this way everyone gets just what their resources can bring in. No wonder that meritocracy is held in such high esteem, when so many members of society have no property but themselves as a means of consumption.

b) What the state does for the owners of productive property

1. Since the use of productive property is based on trade between the owners of the various elements of production and includes transactions between producers and consumers, society is dependent upon the existence of material conditions of circulation. The state provides a functioning **system of transportation and communication** which, being a general prerequisite for the augmentation of private property, also limits this growth. Since these "infrastructural" facilities represent expenses to

all private owners, interesting them only as a means for their individual wealth, they are organized in such a way as to minimize costs. The state, which values the principle of private gain, either compensates for the lacking profitability of such enterprises, which because of the size of the necessary capital outlays are organized as joint stock companies, or constructs and operates the highways, etc., directly. It supports productive property by spreading the infrastructural expenses uniformly over the whole of society by charging user fees or through its own deficit.

2. Once commodity trade is assured not only formally (by law) but also materially, entrepreneurs are able to draw revenue from their private ownership of the means of production only if they are able to produce their products at the least possible cost, since they are faced with a limited effective demand (competition). The amount of profits depends on the volume of sales. It therefore depends on the share of the market they can conquer with their products, and thus on the cheapness of their products. They strive to organize production so as to lower their unit production costs, since whether or not they can make a profit depends on technical progress in their application of labor and materials. The profitability of private property is based on the application of **scientific knowledge**, which entrepreneurs are not directly interested in working out, although they need it. Knowledge of the laws of nature has a bearing on their livelihood only in so far as it helps them to lower their production costs by providing special production methods or instruments. The organization of scientific research is an expensive matter, and does not provide the least guarantee that its results will actually be useful for the purpose of the enterprise. Nobody has the aim of finding out about nature, but everybody has a stake in the private *utilization* of such knowledge. Since knowledge is by its nature rather difficult to make into private property, the research of natural laws is not generally a *profitable enterprise*.

The social necessity of scientific research, which presents itself only as the desire to *utilize it privately*, forces the state to institutionalize a sphere of science *separate* from the material production process. By guaranteeing **academic freedom**, the detachment of scientific research from all particular interests, the state ensures the objectivity and unlimited development of this research, and therefore its usefulness for a mode of production dependent upon the control of nature.

Since the purpose of, and reason for, the institutionalization of scientific research is the *subordination* of society's knowledge to the interests of private property, the state also strives to have research conducted on **technology**, the practical applications of natural laws. In this way it allows for the private utilization of science. However, whether or not it is actually used is subject to the criteria of profitability (see *Capital I*, pp. 392-93 and *Capital III*, p.262.) The state rewards efforts made and expenses incurred by private persons in the development of special methods of production by **contract research**, and by the right to temporary exclusive utilization. The **patent**, "intellectual property," as well as industrial espionage, are expressions of the contradiction involved in the private disposition of society's knowledge.

Citizens, who think highly of science as an indispensable means of progress, and who are continually informed in school and public life about the usefulness of its discoveries, are not only confronted with the many familiar practical devices testifying to the *potency* of science and technology. They also face the uselessness and even danger of science when it comes to solving *those* problems which are created by bourgeois society. Since science actually is a means for the economic purposes of society, it is also held responsible for the positive and negative effects of its application. Since it serves society by formulating laws revealing what *can* be done with natural objects, and is thus the prerequisite for the most varied effects, it itself receives not only praise but also criticism.

This criticism is not infrequently put forward by scientists themselves. After all, it is their profession to *serve* society and the state with their science, to make themselves *useful*. So it is that certain “effects” of their efforts mobilize the citizen in them. Armed with their authority as scientists, they take a stand on political questions and criticize the statesmen for not making full use of the science and technology available. These are the **technocrats** who make suggestions on how to steer society more efficiently.

Or they attribute the negative effects of the capitalistic application of technology to the alleged “two sides” of *nature* itself, declaring the destruction of nature and people to be an inevitable by-product of progress. Therefore they conjure up the alternative of either carrying on the same way and using progress to heal the wounds it inflicts, or foregoing all comforts and restricting the national economy, which means above all that people must tighten their own belts. This is the alternative between **propaganda for progress** and **ideas for saving energy in everyday life**. One or the other ideology is publicly ventilated depending on the climate of the moment. For instance, consider the debate about atomic power, in which criticism of *capital* is virtually unheard of!

Some people attribute the negative effects of the capitalistic application of science to a deficiency of science, questioning the latter on philosophical and epistemological grounds. Or they make philosophical contributions to moral armament, preaching peace and humanitarianism and saying man is a speck of dust.

All these variations of false criticism of the state, society and science are based on an interest in having scientific knowledge utilized better for the purposes of this society, an interest which takes for granted that science must be subordinated to the principle of private property.

3. The industrial application of scientific and technological progress requires that it be mastered in practice by the wageworkers employed by the owners of productive property. The state sets up not only the institutions of research but also that of **apprenticeship**, and organizes courses of training for the abilities required by the various vocations. Since the usefulness of the proficiency made possible by the state is decided by the technical requirements imposed by the utilization of property, the training system promises neither those trained that they will be needed, nor capital that it will be able to use them productively. It is therefore not in the immediate interest of the owners of means of production to conduct education and training, whether general education at the elementary school level, more detailed knowledge at the secondary school level, or specialization at the university level. And this even though they greatly appreciate the *results* of the education process as a prerequisite for making profits. Businessmen regard the practical training necessary for specialized activities within their factory as a necessary evil today just as much as they did the training for limited activity within their factory at the dawn of industrial production. The state has to force them by law to provide it, which they proceed to turn to their own advantage by exploiting their apprentices and by concluding contracts that tie the trainee to the company beyond the training period.

In the U.S.A. training in specialized technical knowledge takes place in trade schools run as private businesses with all the expected scandals of shoddy preparation, or in community colleges. The businessmen on principle refuse to involve themselves in the lengthy and formal training of *their* workforce, and nevertheless complain incessantly of its poor quality, even going so far as to blame it for their own problems in competition.

For citizens, who are interested in the benefits of education, the necessary discrepancies between the purpose and the means are constant cause for complaint about the poor organization of the public education system.

4. With the creation of general prerequisites for the productive utilization of property, the proprietors must not only rely on their own skill and resources for prevailing in the competitive struggle. Their business success also depends on certain indispensable conditions for production which must be available on the market. When competition leads to the result that those industries which provide such conditions cannot be run profitably, the state secures them by socializing the burdens which private property does not carry. It takes over (part of) the costs which interfere with profits. In the interest of functioning property, it assumes the “social duty” of intervening in the course of private business. It *subsidizes* the basic materials industries, energy production and agriculture. In the most extreme case it resorts to **nationalization**, which has nothing at all to do with an *attack* on private property.

For reasons of cost, capitalistic industry disregards the destruction of natural resources, using science and technology solely in order to liberate production from the limits nature sets on the *profitable* utilization of private property. More and more, the progress of science thus gives industry the means to destroy nature and humans. This is why the state forces entrepreneurs, with due tardiness, to observe its regulations on **environmental protection**. These rules take account of the calculations of private business, therefore abound in exceptions, and are only enforced sporadically. In order not to damage those who cause the damage, the state itself makes efforts to protect the environment, using the wealth of society to keep nature usable for capital. Environmental activists accuse the state of failing when it plans the reckless exploitation of nature and protects profit interests, therefore accepting calculated and uncalculated “risks” and catastrophes, and not only in the case of atomic energy.

Depending on their particular social position, citizens are prone to regard these actions by the state as a violation of the principles of a free market economy, unfair protection of economically inept groups, or a necessary obligation the state has brought upon itself due to the destructive effects of its foreign trade policies on these groups. Leftists cite these measures, which are designed for the purpose of protecting private property, as proof that the capitalist mode of production has caused its own perpetrators to realize that private property is obsolete, and ask the state to be more consistent in taking action “against” it. They actually regard it as support for their illusions that those affected by such measures complain about them and accuse the state of socialist machinations.

5. Private proprietors live off the augmentation of their property. They are not only recognized by the state for this kind of livelihood, but also receive from it the necessary *material* prerequisites. However, they restrict *each other* through their competition. The state regulates this by special legislation guaranteeing respect for the property of others even under the special conditions resulting from the ways of doing business in the various trades. It supplements the general laws on private property by laws which protect it in those transactions necessary for its increase through trade and production. Whether these special laws appear separately in the civil code or as an independent body of law differs from country to country. This is however irrelevant for their explanation.

Commercial legislation regulates the purchase and sale of commodities by laws which lay down who belongs to the trading class and is thus allowed to perform the private acts peculiar to it. Aspects of the change in ownership which collide with the purpose of the exercise (brokerage, freight forwarding and storage) are fixed as mutual obligations and expected performance. The parties in question constantly fight over who should bear the costs incurred due to the variable times elapsing over the various distances over which trade occurs. For these reasons the state restricts the parties in such a way that the necessary costs remain a means for their profits. The same is true of trade credit,

by which private proprietors make the continuation of their business independent of the cash at their disposal. The state makes it compulsory to keep a promise to pay.

Industry must temporarily dispose over wealth administered by banks (bank loans) to augment its own wealth. With its **banking legislation**, the state sorts out the conflicting interests of industrial capital and banking capital in such a manner that the profits of the *financial* or *credit* institutions (which exist separately from productive capital) serve as a means for the *productive* utilization of capital. The state dictates to the banks the boundaries within which they may pursue their advantage at the expense of other businesses (minimum reserve ratio, etc.), and imposes accounting rules on the businesses to obligate them to prove their credit standing.

The fact that industry is dependent upon landed property, that it is restricted by other ways of utilizing land, also causes the state to act. Arguing that land is a commodity whose supply cannot be arbitrarily increased, it restricts the free market here by allocating the land with **zoning laws**. Proposals for reforming land law should also be spared the suspicion of being communistic, since the state infringes on landed property only for the sake of private property in general and therefore always respects this limit.

The productive utilization of property is endangered by the efforts of workers in coalition. They fight for higher wages and better working conditions, which diminishes the profits of the property-owners and jeopardizes their free disposal over private property. The state counters these dangers with **labor legislation**, laws which make the worker's right to personal freedom end where the right of property begins. Although the equality of rights for labor and capital keeps workers' demands within limits that guarantee their usefulness for capital, this does not mean that this equality of rights matters much to the owners of means of production. They form alliances to resist efforts to regulate the wage labor relationship, efforts which threaten to impose duties on them and fill their books with red ink. The friends of labor on the left take this as proof that socialism consists in fighting for the rights of workers (to remain workers, of course!)

With **laws against restraints of trade** the state reacts to the tactics of forming alliances by which businesses secure advantages in the competitive struggle. They apply this competitive technique since on the one hand, they see their profits endangered on the market, while on the other hand, they can meet the necessity of making their products cheap only by increasing their capital assets. After all, the size of the capital applied is crucial for how well it can compete. Thus they agree to fix prices or merge their businesses. **Anti-trust law** is directed against the effects of such collusions and combinations on free competition, since they hinder other proprietors from using their property, but it also recognizes their necessity by admitting many exceptions. Finally, with **corporation law** the state guarantees that different owners function as *one* enterprise. By overseeing a free trade in shares, stipulating liability, and so on, the state ensures that the private property invested in a corporation is freely available for its operations, and also protects the company's business from the arbitrariness of its shareholders.

6. The basis of the relation between the state and the capitalist class is that the state, as a separate entity, provides for those necessities of capitalist competition which the individual capitalists disregard or fail to create due to their competitive interests. By administering those *conditions* of business which are *not* themselves businesses for the capitalists, the state as a political institution promotes the capitalist class interest. As the **ideal collective capitalist** it is a means of the capitalist class as a whole, which may very well mean that its institutions and laws conflict with the competitive advantage of particular capitalists. The knights of private property expect only favors, gifts and help from the public power. The small limitations of their accumulation by the state in the interests of this same

accumulation cause them to complain loudly. This in turn is pointed out by democratic statesmen as proof that they could not possibly be agents of a class state! This is the ideology that accompanies the constant lobbying of office-holders big and small, the unswerving struggle of financially strong citizens for special privileges. The inevitable corruption and scandals do not usually get much of a rise out of the democratic public, since the public is quite aware of this business basis of political careers. A regard for “the economy” is the very least one can ask of a statesman, after all.

The school of super-democrats is an exception. We include in their ranks the revisionist parties of the left and intellectuals of the Baran and Sweezy stripe. Their **theory of state monopoly capitalism** is most cunning. They regard the fully developed ideal collective capitalist of today, in contrast to yesterday’s state, as a product of the decay of bourgeois rule. Their complaints about its subservience towards the monopolies (who in turn have unjustly conquered the political command posts because they are economically on their last legs) are the prelude to their **program of an antimonopolistic democracy**, a magnificent concept for replacing declining and malfunctioning capitalism by a form of rule healthy for all of society. Like all “late capitalist” idiocies, this Mr. Clean idea has been discussed in all kinds of variations, so that the above characterization will certainly be rejected as being too simple. May we therefore repeat that the diversity of these theoretical approaches is only appropriate to the common interest they are based on. And this interest is not directed against exploitation and its administration by the state, but against its faulty organization. A look back at the former East bloc societies reveals that a real collective capitalist can in fact stage a state monopoly democracy, but the only efficient aspect of its economic system is the celebration of the wageworkers and their new employer.

Fascists also regard the influence exerted by the capitalists, especially by their “unproductive” section, as the downfall of the state and the people. Their criticism of capitalism *of course* is not directed against exploitation. Rather, they complain that the capitalist class does too little to promote the strength of the state. In their practical dealings with the bourgeoisie the fascists therefore have turned out to be quite benevolent. The conditions for accumulation imposed by the state have amounted to the obligation to accumulate unconditionally in the national interest, which business gladly has consented to do even if they have had to obey certain directives concerning *what* to produce.

c) What the state does for its wage-earning citizens

1. Those citizens who cannot draw an income from utilizing their own property must use their personal freedom in a way very characteristic of bourgeois society. They must perform useful services for other property, **wage labor**, whether directly in production and trade, or indirectly in state institutions. Whether they can draw an income in this way, and how much of one, depends on how much they do for their employers (which does not mean that they are paid for the performance itself.) They compete as suppliers of their services for the existing jobs and the incomes connected with them. They compare **vocations** in terms of the limitations which the conditions of employment itself and the size of the income impose on them. In the hierarchy of jobs based on the twofold measure of effort and remuneration, they attempt to climb as high as possible. The competition among wageworkers presupposes their suitability, corresponding skills and knowledge for the vocations, but the acquisition of such knowledge is of no economic advantage. Therefore, the state organizes an education system alongside this competition, allowing individuals to qualify for working life before they enter it. The **right to an education** enjoyed by youngsters is just the way the state *obligates* its citizens-to-be to acquire the general knowledge equally necessary for all jobs (compulsory education), and then to develop their abilities for a particular vocation, to specialize.

Since the purpose of the education system is to prepare youth for useful functions in the economy and the state, because their specific usefulness is the condition for their income, education in the bourgeois state does not *form* individuality but *limits* it. The state ensures that individuals are fairly distributed over the hierarchy of jobs by making their access contingent on how they perform in school. It regulates the competition of those being educated by institutionalizing the comparison of their performances. Tests, continual evaluation of the knowledge mastered within given periods of time, decide whether a young person must start heading toward the lower rungs of the vocational ladder, or whether he or she can take part in higher education which promises agreeable work and good pay. This is therefore another field of state activity which, by subjecting all citizens to the *same* conditions (equal opportunities!), perpetuates the differences between them. In this case, the differences are those which youngsters show on the basis of their families' economic status.

The **education system** can be divided into the following stages in accordance with its purpose.

The **elementary education** stage is compulsory for everybody. It is for imparting the knowledge required for menial activities, and at the same time selecting those pupils allowed to attend higher schools. Along with the basic reading, writing and arithmetic abilities and familiarity with nature that are required for pursuing a vocation, pupils are taught the attitudes one needs to endure a lifelong existence as a wage-earning citizen.

Depending on the performance pupils show in this stage, they may go on to **apprenticeship**, vocational training for a job in production. In America much apprenticeship is handled by the trade unions. In Europe the state makes private companies responsible for this, which is therefore a steady source of conflict between the state and the firms. The firms are against a broad, thorough technical training and an extensive theoretical education since they are interested in using the apprentices as quickly as possible. The state organizes the indispensable minimum of technical and civic instruction in its **vocational schools**. It grants the right to the necessary training, but not without obligating all those interested in vocational advancement to defray the costs themselves, another burden on the family.

Alternatively, there are **higher** schools (or college preparatory "tracks" in North American high schools) whose graduates get acquainted with additional scientific results. This is a precondition for a number of higher occupations, on the one hand, and for a university education, on the other. Here, too, the curriculum is not directly related to a certain profession but functions as a testing ground for the selection process and a prerequisite for the specialization to follow.

Universities provide education for those professions requiring more advanced knowledge. Science departments teach the knowledge and skills necessary for mastering nature, while humanities and social science departments teach the ideologies of bourgeois society in a scientifically embellished form. For this latter group of disciplines with their unshakable *endorsement* of the foundations of bourgeois society, objective knowledge would be highly *unsuitable*. Instead, they place all knowledge at the service of the most tentative solutions of an unending stream of real or imagined "problems" of bourgeois techniques of exercising power. In the midst of all this, the universities make sure to educate the next generation of teachers.

The state pins its citizens down to earning a living through specialization in a certain vocation and being useful within a fixed system of social labor. It organizes this constraint by making its young citizens compete inside the education system. The selection is a negative one, as low achievement excludes one from further education. Thus, the state forces everyone to be interested in acquiring knowledge only to the extent to which they require it to complete their training and pursue their

vocations. Anything going beyond that is regarded as superfluous both by the educator and by the person being educated. Bourgeois society therefore depends on the existence of knowledge, at the same time having no interest in it, since it is only going after the utility of knowledge for its citizens' various functions within the division of labor.

The **freedom of science**, its protection by the state from particular interests striving to bring it under their influence, is therefore the opposite of what many people like to think. It does not mean scientific activity is removed from the realm of social purposes. On the contrary, this is how bourgeois society, based on competition, organizes science in a way useful to it. Freedom of science guarantees both the attainment of necessary knowledge and its dependence upon the practical needs of society. By being *separated* from the sphere of material production, science is made *subordinate* to it.

This is reflected in the correctness of natural sciences alongside the falseness of social sciences. The **natural sciences** meet the requirements of the capitalist mode of production by discovering the laws of nature and how to apply them. Their independence from particular interests guarantees that they generate objective knowledge that can be used for *mastering nature*. The **social sciences**, with their **biased pluralism**, correspond to the way the state handles the needs, wills and interests of its competing citizens. They are therefore quite *critical* when they give heed to particular interests and generate **false knowledge**. *False* knowledge is useful for supporting the necessary false consciousness of private citizens who subject *themselves* to the laws of capital, laws they bring about themselves without understanding. (Needless to say, some people in addition subject *other* people to these economic laws!) This instrumentalist attitude toward knowledge is ensured by the competition between academics for career- promoting prestige inside and outside the university. And if a thought against law and order comes into circulation here or there, the discussion is broken off.

The humanities are so troubled by the contradiction between their aspirations to be useful and the uselessness of their false knowledge that they start to *reflect on themselves*. Not surprisingly, they find in their **theory of science** that the way they are is the way they have to be, at the same time that their pluralism must leave some things out. Real knowledge *criticizes* bourgeois society, and its application is *damaging* to it.

The state grants the right to education, but not without demanding sacrifices. It bestows on many people the bitter experience of defeat in the competitive struggle even before the start of working life, and does not even guarantee those who complete their education successfully that they will be able to profit from their abilities on the labor market. The state therefore incurs the anger of its citizens who, in their disappointment, insist that education should be a decent means for *their* advancement.

One therefore hears complaints about an **educational crisis** as soon as there are more applicants than "opportunities." The demand for more support of education can be morally underscored by expressing concern about the nation's competitiveness. When the purpose of education, to provide society with the people *it* needs, induces the state to restrict admission to certain university studies, people are sure to take the matter to the Supreme Court. They ironically resort to the law to rebel against realities whose necessity lies in the power of the state and its function. People also like to confront the effects of competition in the educational sphere, that is, the **equality of opportunity** that actually exists, with an *ideal* of it, forgetting that there are always winners and losers when performance is compared. They therefore end up pursuing the very same concerns the state has, with its interest in fully utilizing its reserves of talents.

When critical parents see that their children cannot take **school stress** they call for *better* tests, which, in order to be *objective* comparisons of performance, do not bother testing real knowledge but

are more like crossword puzzles (multiple choice). And when the ignorance being tested has absolutely no relation to the vocation for which the student is twisting his brain, there are invariably complaints about how *remote from actual practice* and obsolete school learning is. The modernized forms of drill cannot escape the fate of the traditional humanistic “dead weight” since people want to see some benefit from it. And young people are called “over-obedient” for lacking the proper “human,” i.e. civic, attitude. Both rightist and leftist critics of education concur that passive citizens are not good citizens, although they end up with quite different curricula. The **emancipatory education** practiced in liberal or reform institutions has the advantage that it spares the students the last shred of fitness for working life, replacing any conveyance of knowledge by an endless debate about having a critical attitude towards one’s job and the state.

The purpose of the education system is to develop individuals in a one-sided fashion, to give them specialized, reduced skills for a job. This means that the state considers it an almost superfluous burden to organize the process of distributing its budding citizens over the hierarchy of jobs by establishing an education system open to all to settle who will be what. Its purpose of giving its citizens lifelong functions within the division of labor had been attained just as well by the medieval way of simply passing a vocation down to the next generation among the common people and giving civil servants a clerical and/or estate-specific education. Like all other democratic achievements, the right to education had to be wrested by industrial wageworkers from the state which had just given them their freedom. Just as their overseers could no longer perform their function by corporal punishment and fines alone in view of the new machinery, they themselves could not meet the necessity to earn a living in large scale industry without an elementary education. The workers achieved what idealistic philosophers, intent on promoting the unity of the nation, could not bring about by their treatises on the necessity of public education. As victims of large scale industry the workers forced the state to meet industry’s requirements, after the factory schools had turned out to be just as useless for generating free workers (that is, workers able to do changing work) as the efforts of enlightened philanthropists. The state met the demand to abolish education as a privilege by establishing compulsory attendance at school as a means of selection. This guaranteed that the workers’ children would be given the minimum of knowledge and civic virtues they needed, while sparing them the burden of superfluous knowledge.

Idealist philosophy accommodated the state’s interest in having modern humanities by adopting this interest as its immanent theoretical point of view. It fought against religious belief by dissolving itself into individual disciplines, each one proceeding instrumentally. A **university** committed to the bourgeois state could meet the task of giving higher officials a learned attitude. However, it was of limited use for the general education the state had to provide to meet the requirements of large scale industry. The freedom of science, i.e. the subordination of professional thinking to the purposes of the state which already distinguished philosophy, guaranteed that social science developed immanently into a reliable instrument of the class state, namely, into a partisan view of social phenomena spread over individual sciences but always guided by an interest in upholding bourgeois society. (This explanation contrasts with those crude materialistic ones that try to prove the usefulness of science for capital without mentioning the state, i.e. *denying* its freedom, or that derive the process of *thinking* from certain “economic form determinations” and similar nonsense.)

2. With the one-sided skills and civic-mindedness they have acquired in the education system, citizens are left by the state to take up the vocation of their choice by competing on the labor market. Forced to find a buyer for their abilities (labor power) in order to earn a living, they continually contribute to an excess supply of labor in relation to the demand. The state, which gives the demand

side the freedom to decide when it is profitable to purchase labor, is well aware that the free choice of careers goes hand in hand with **unemployment**, and sets about providing social security. It obligates those who depend on their wages, but who cannot continuously support themselves by pursuing their vocations, to do so anyway by **mandatory unemployment insurance**. It forces them to restrict their income as a precautionary measure by paying contributions, and grants them in the case of unemployment a reduced income for a limited time (unemployment benefits). These restrictions make them ready to accept worse-paying jobs, which the state promotes by imposing conditions that can be tightened depending on the state of the economy (obligations to report and to accept “reasonably” worse jobs), and by providing incentives (occupational retraining). Here the state is prepared to show special respect for unemployed women by suddenly recognizing that housework is a vocation. The stinginess with which the state calculates unemployment compensation (in accordance with the length of employment and financial assets of the family, available only to one family member, etc.) makes it understandable why wageworkers take such pains to avoid being unemployed.

Those dependent on wages therefore demonstrate a willingness to work hard. They increase their efforts not only to maintain their income at a tolerable level, but also to prove that the purchase of their labor is worth it for the employer and thus to secure their jobs. However, there is not much latitude for such demonstrations since the production process is organized in such a way as to press a maximum of labor out of the workers whether they like it or not. By compelling them to pay for **health and accident insurance**, the state does justice to the inevitable assault on workers’ health caused by their employers’ maximum utilization of their labor. Workers must accept illness as a self-understood side-effect of their labor, and the precaution for coping with it and the resulting inability to work is again compulsory. It diminishes their working income by the premiums they pay. When they are sick they receive their full wages for only a limited period of time, while longer illnesses and lasting disability due to accidents or occupational diseases mean a reduction of their pay. The resulting incentive to go back to work is helped along by checkups from medical examiners appointed by the insurance or welfare agency. Since health and accident insurance thus gives workers no protection from illness but merely enables them to return to the place that makes them ill, the state has come up with some ideas for limiting the inevitable disability. It requires those who take advantage of wage-labor to moderate their use of it by **safety regulations, on-site medical care, and paid vacations**.

Since the state permanently exposes wageworkers to the social causes of illness while at the same time obligating them to be healthy, it must provide **public health services**, the institutions they need in order to regain their ability to work. The efforts of **medicine** are limited by the necessities of wage labor and are therefore not equivalent to a struggle for health. This is demonstrated by all the rules for preventing illness as long as it has natural causes, while medicine is helpless when it comes to the much-lamented social causes of illness. Medicine can’t make wage labor healthy, and it is pure cynicism when experts on **psychosomatic medicine** transform the social reasons for infirmity into a psychological attitude and work out ways to make the ill willing to endure their ruination while maintaining their usefulness.

A worker’s life being a process of ruination, it becomes increasingly difficult to show the required performance on the job as one grows older. Early on, the state starts forcing workers to prepare for the legally stipulated time when they are no longer expected to meet these requirements with **old age insurance**. For the monthly deductions from their working income they are given a reduced subsistence during those years when they must live in forced idleness with their run-down bodies as either premature or timely pensioners. To avoid jeopardizing the usefulness of the active working force

by excessively burdening it with the cost of supporting the old, the state builds homes for them. It builds too few of them, and they also cost people money. This makes families start considering what is cheaper and easier: to pay for a wretched home or drag grandma and grandpa along in their domestic idyll.

The various forms of insurance are therefore *social institutions* which have nothing to do with providing security for those who pay for them. First of all, everyone needs them because at some time or other their usefulness will have to be renewed or be forever lost. The inevitability of distress for wageworkers is what gives these institutions their social character. Their purpose is to maintain wage labor as a means for private property, which fact is not hidden, but revealed, by the obligation of the employers to pay part of the contributions. As for these employers, who for obvious reasons are not obligated by the state to insure themselves, they can satisfy their need for security, over and above their being able to live off their property, by taking out all kinds of voluntary insurance. The latter differ from compulsory insurance not only by the privileges they offer but also by the fact that they can be used to make money!

Since social insurance calls for sacrifices and offers little security, the state is faced with complaints from its citizens. When they see how damaging wage labor is for them, they demand compensation and start *comparing* the cost of their insurance with the benefits. On the one hand, they find it *unjust* that there are so many restrictions on the availability of their insurance, and demand acknowledgment of how *useful* they have been. On the other hand, they like to accuse those who are forced to rely on social insurance benefits of being *useless* and nothing but a burden on their hardworking fellow citizens.

The *unemployed* insist on their *right to a job*, as if there was such a thing as employment in this society without the threat of unemployment. For their helpless attempts to avoid a social drop they harvest the accusation of being unwilling to work and shirking, which they are forced to take to heart.

Citizens' complaints about the shortcomings of health insurance also have two sides. When it comes to their own illness they take their right to help for granted, while other citizens are always *malingering* and driving up the cost of insurance when they draw benefits. Many people therefore find heedlessness of one's own health to be not only a necessity (fear for one's job is justified!), but also a virtue.

Socially useless **old-age pensioners**, who would like to spend the last years of their lives in peace and expect thanks for their former efforts, meet with contempt from all those who subscribe to the ideology that one can only make demands if one shows achievement. This leads to laments about the cold-hearted treatment of the aged, alongside an unabashed praise of young people, who should be given plenty of attention because theirs is the future. And the stupidity of the old, who see their own, faded virtue in the usefulness of youth, competes with the pride of the young, who refuse to see that their vitality is the best way to grow old fast.

The *state* justifies its measures in view of this double discontent by saying the risks of life are inescapable and that everyone must contribute in solidarity to diminish them. It praises its social measures as being a necessary addition to the merit system to give everyone the chance to live a worthy life. It counters laments about the injustice of unemployment by claiming to be powerless against trends in business, contending that those responsible are the entrepreneurs, who can be sure of the energetic support of this very same state. It responds to complaints about the drudgery of wage labor by defending the merit system, or by demanding that work places be "humanized," i.e. that the "necessities" of the capitalist production process be adapted to the workers' physical and psychological

bounds to make their ruination more attractive and more effective. It defends itself against the widespread attacks on its public health system (which are based on the mistaken assumption that the state's purpose is simply to fight disease) by making comparisons with bygone times when plagues and early death were commonplace, and urges its citizens to somehow live a healthy private life. This state complains about its citizens' "obsession with achievement and consumption," accusing them of provoking their own ruination all by themselves. By propagating moderation in consumption and healthy nutrition, it tries to reach into a sphere where it cannot use the force of law, trying to induce them to take account of their usefulness for society by keeping fit. And since the important thing is to show performance although you don't benefit from it, the state praises youth as the ideal of usefulness. It adds that of course one must also not look down on the old, but relieve the state of some of the burden of paying for them by keeping them at home.

When the state makes it clear that it is not willing to make its citizens' social rights into anything other than what they are, namely a compensation forcing wage workers to continue existing as such, **leftist** pro-labor types can't think of anything better than to glorify those rights on the grounds that the workers fought for them! These leftists take the necessity of wresting even the lousiest concessions from the state as a reason for upholding them as holy workers' rights. With this cynical praise they open up the broad field of accusations that the state is "incompetent," as well as the revisionist **fight for rights**.

The alternative **fascists** regard the state's social expenses not only as a burden, just as all democrats do, but also as a danger to the strength of the nation when it comes to the function of these expenditures. They object to maintaining labor-power which cannot be fully used, declaring that the state has an unconditional claim to service and a willingness to make sacrifices on the part of its citizens. They take the necessity to compete under capitalism with all its consequences as a reason for the state to select individuals according to whether or not they are willing and able to do their duty.

3. The workers' reward for their usefulness and willingness is the highly acclaimed free sphere of **private life**, which is respected in a democracy. However, this sphere has its limits. The first limit is given directly by wage labor itself. Private life begins when work ends, and what one can do with it is a question of money. Since wageworkers are allowed to buy anything but cannot afford everything, they buy only what they need. And they divide up their time on the same principle. They are forced to regard their private freedom as a sphere of necessity since they must make sure they maintain the source of their income, i.e. their capacity to work. When attempting to satisfy their wishes they realize not only that they have too little time and money to do so, but also that a spontaneous use of their private freedom always goes against the kind of consumption necessary for continuing their labor. And they even have trouble satisfying those needs which are functionally related to maintaining their working capacity, due to the social conditions their shallow pockets are not equal to.

This calls the state to the scene, which comes up with additional social services designed to prevent the difficulties of private life from becoming a hindrance to working life. These measures are therefore not to be confused with gifts. Their social function consists in inducing wageworkers to use their free time for **reproducing their labor-power** in spite of everything. This means new duties and sacrifices, and subjects the realm of individual freedom and liberty to the necessities of exploitation.

Since workers own no property they must rent a place to live. This elementary condition of life makes them dependent on landlords, who are out to use their property to make money. The state regulates the collision between the necessities of private life and the landlord's right to maintain and increase his property by **laws of tenancy**, which take equal account of both sides and therefore

guarantee the tenant neither a secure abode nor an affordable rent. The state reacts to the shortage of cheap housing, of course not by abolishing private property in real estate! It acknowledges real estate as a source of income and implements **housing policies**. One of these consists in supporting the efforts of those dependent on landlords to free themselves from this burden by aiding **savings** earmarked for buying a homestead, granting **bank loans** and deducting **mortgage interest** from taxable income, which make owning one's own home a lifelong problem once and for all, although not for the banks. The ideological name of this new form of sacrifice for workers is "one's own four walls." Since those in need of a real cheap place to live cannot afford the luxury of saving for a home of their own on top of paying a lofty rent, the state provides **publicly assisted home-building**. The assistance here consists in giving property owners tax relief, subsidies, etc., to induce them to build housing and rent it out for a while at a price that *covers their costs*. Another state measure for mitigating the collision between the need for cheap housing and the justified profit of landlords is to pay **rent subsidies**, thereby transforming tax money into profit which landlords can make despite the poverty of the tenants.

The time and effort required to go from home to work and back detract from the workers' availability for their employers, and this too calls the state into action. It sets up a traffic network that takes account of both the needs of private traffic and the need for mass transportation facilities, since many workers cannot afford to buy and operate their own car. The masses are thus free to choose between prolonging their work hours into their leisure time or spending more of their precious money just to get to work.

Democratic citizens are not simply ordered around all day long. They have next to no choice about how to get through the day, it is true, but in their free time they get to witness the politicians in charge debating about the laws *they* are free to pass, and to form their very own opinion about it all. The state organizes the sphere of the **media**, granting easy access to all information and knowing that its free journalists never fail to supply the ideology to go along with it. The political branch of the media is the news, which constantly presents events at home and abroad from the prevailing national point of view, portraying the latest developments in politics and business as inevitable after a consideration of all the pros and cons, and illustrating by reports about crimes and hurricanes that the state is indispensable. The message is always the same although every measure and every event, whether war, subway construction or the Olympics, is commented on by all kinds of different experts in a great display of pluralism. The media also satisfy citizens' desire for entertainment that is above all a need to compensate the detriment of working life. It seems that people really want to unwind from the pressure of the daily grind with movies and moronic game shows which treat their audience with absolute contempt. And no entertainment can be had without its ideological message, namely, one can't have everything, but we won't be stopped from singing, because at Heaven's gate everyone is equal. Thus, every civilized nation has its **mass culture**.

The state does justice to the need for physical compensation of the stress of wage labor by providing **recreational parks and sports facilities**. This, too, is no present for the working population but is tied to conditions. Admission fees, membership fees, and the restrictions of club life turn the enjoyment of doing sports into the question of how ready one is to make sacrifices. Since most people have had enough exercise due to their one-sided exertion at work and prefer to spend their time and money on other things, the state agitates for health and keeping fit, making it clear that it's not the fun of sport that counts anyway. It tells its citizens to simply *regard* every bodily movement as sport, from shopping to taking a walk, and not to be idle lest they stagnate. And when young people are actually enthusiastic about sport, the state is quick to take advantage of it. It promotes competitive sports (this

redundant term referring to sport as a profession, as is clearly evident from the effect on the athletes), since international success in this field is an excellent means for demonstrating the nation's prowess.

Those intellectuals who express concern about our "**leisure society**" quite evidently assume that the natural thing for people to do is work. Their free time is taken to be a *problem*. Going away for the weekend, perhaps even with a surfboard on the roof of the car, is something working people don't seem to be fully entitled to do. It gives social thinkers the impression that modern capitalistic life consists mostly in free time, and makes them worry about whether the masses are capable of making *proper* use of it. After all, they might be too stupid to realize that their free time is not just for doing whatever they want, but involves the *duty* of at least restoring their physical and mental powers, if not of improving their minds, which would really please the intellectuals.

4. For all who do not make it through the competition at school and at work and who can therefore not sustain themselves, the state has **welfare** measures. It knows that its society constantly produces **pauperism** and declares this a public concern. Public welfare payments are intended to enable the recipient to live independently of it. They are available only to those who do not refuse to take on reasonable work, which does not mean those who refuse are given nothing at all. There is always a place for them in an institution, a stay in prison without any broken law. The way the state treats its citizens when they are in extreme distress thus also makes it clear that it is not there for them, but that they should serve the common good by taking care of themselves (which means being of use to others).

Finally, since even the expenditures for poorhouses, night shelters and meager welfare payments are too high for the state, it remembers how morally minded its citizens are and invents the principle that public welfare is "secondary." The welfare office bestows its boons only on those who cannot be helped by their family or by **private charity**, i.e. organizations and foundations which appeal to the morality of those still able to work, going after their coins on the street, at their doors, at school, etc. The state supports those foundations so that the practice of morality is not limited to the accidental compassion of individuals. Beyond the destitution visible in their immediate vicinity, people are confronted with the organized presentation of distress they are expected to feel responsible for themselves. Thus, even people who are no great believers discover how useful churches are and show solidarity with their fellow citizens. With their donations they save the state money, which it happily acknowledges since it then has all the more for furthering private property.

5. It cannot be doubted that the state is interested in maintaining the class of wageworkers. But it is even less disputable that the way it provides for those citizens who must rely on their labor is not good for them. Everything the state does in this area boils down to forcing workers to practice an art which deserves little admiration. They have to cope with the consequences of their service for property, enduring the effects of the immediate production process and subordinating their private lives to the purpose of being useful manpower. As a result of its freedom-promoting activities the state is therefore faced with the workers' demand that they be allowed to *exist*, which it cannot help acknowledging in the interests of their useful service. It proceeds to **lay down limits to exploitation** and to act as the protector of labor-power to prevent it from being used in a way that threatens to destroy it directly. The statutory determination of the **normal working day** is the state's reaction to the fact that the free play of forces on the labor market would deprive workers of all livelihood. Since there is always a surplus of people forced to sell their labor-power in order to live and employers can therefore dictate the conditions, unhampered free competition will invariably lead to a working day too long for workers to endure and too low-paying to sustain them. The state's efforts to prevent employers from exploiting

the workers' competition to such an extent that their lives are immediately threatened are of course anything but an attack on the basic situation of the working class. This is amply evident from the text of the laws. For example, Article 618 of the German Civil Code: "The party entitled to the services of another shall equip and maintain the rooms and implements he must provide for the performance of these services, and shall organize the services to be performed under his direction, in such a manner that the obligated party is protected against a danger to life and limb so far as the nature of the service permits." A real social state, it takes the fact that employees are forced to work **overtime**, beyond the normal amount, as a reason to fix specific limits for this and to define the conditions under which it is permitted.

These manifold protective measures, which are celebrated as progress under capitalism, all fall under the criterion the public power applies whenever it decides to provide **special rights for wagedworkers**. The effects of wage labor must be limited at that point where they make wage labor impossible as a means of livelihood, and therefore become a "social problem" without yielding any benefit. The point of legislation preventing the reckless decimation of the workers, who are subject to the capitalists' will and the "technical necessities" resulting from this will, was summed up by Marx as follows:

What could possibly show better the character of the capitalist mode of production than the necessity that exists for forcing upon it, by Acts of Parliament, the simplest appliances for maintaining cleanliness and health? (Capital I, p.481).

Safety provisions for workers, including even the "observation of mores and propriety," regulations for prevention of accidents and special rules for the exploitation of young people and pregnant women: this is the miserable way the state acknowledges its citizens' trouble surviving their service for property. This is how it protects their human dignity! The need for the state to restrict the workers' ruination in the production process indicates not only that the owners of the means of production are unwilling to do so of their own accord. It also demonstrates the power their property gives them to achieve their ends against the competing workers.

The regulations the state issues to protect workers from their employers thus prove to be the counterpart of those it issues to force property owners to make their profit without preventing other proprietors from making theirs (section 5 b). The small difference between them lies in the nature of what is being threatened by competition and cannot persist without state intervention in each case. While competition between proprietors jeopardizes the **productive utilization of property**, so that the state imposes restrictions to *guarantee* such utilization, competition between wagedworkers leads to a **destruction of their existence**, which concerns the state because it makes people *useless*.

Free workers sell their labor-power in order to make a livelihood, and if this is rendered impossible they fight the effects of the competition they are forced to endure. They join together to form coalitions to refuse to work and thereby obtain better working conditions. The protective measures mentioned above were wrested from the state by the struggles of the working class, and once instituted they become the starting point for all kinds of attempts on the part of the owning class to avoid sustaining losses from the reduced exploitability of their workers. Every limit on exploitation imposed by the state after militant action by the workers simply challenges the capitalists to make new changes in the relationship between pay and required work in their own favor. It has therefore become a normal occurrence in bourgeois society for workers to periodically fend off their employers' attacks on their existence. Since the interests of labor and capital are *irreconcilable*, the state is confronted with **class struggle**, which continually interferes with the functioning of society. None of the state's efforts to

maintain property and wage-labor can create social peace, since each measure merely gives a new form to the *antagonism* on which the state is based, so that the workers always have a new reason to strike.

The democratic state has no reason to prohibit workers' coalitions since the free settlement of their conflicts with management is the most effective way for the two parties to perpetuate their relationship, which is after all a contractual one. The state therefore responds by **legally regulating labor disputes**. It sets circumscribed limits on them, banishing the inherent danger to private property by permitting them only to the extent that workers recognize the rights of private property. It grants the workers the **right of unionization** and issues laws on how this right is *allowed to be used*. The state makes the hostile classes into **negotiating partners** by granting **collective bargaining autonomy**, the obligation to reach agreements that allow one side to alter the production process as it pleases while obligating the other side to refrain from militant actions until the contract is up for renewal again. The state also passes laws that lay down when a **strike** is legal and when it is not. A strike must be *socially adequate*. It must not be aimed at annihilating the other side (i.e. its property), and it must also show a concern for third parties that are inevitably involved. Here the state even includes itself. The economic state of the nation and the whole democratic constitutional system set limits on the workers' demands to change the relationship between pay and required work. This means that the workers' interest in a halfway decent livelihood is acknowledged only *conditionally* from the start. The ideological fanatics of collective bargaining autonomy regard it as an idyllic *lack of state interference* in wage disputes. However, every article of the relevant laws demonstrates that this right to autonomy is nothing but a **codification of trade union struggle**, whereby the state turns class struggle into a mass of **obligations for workers' coalitions**. (If these obligations are breached the unions are treated the way loyal citizens called for from the beginning.)

In their enthusiasm about collective bargaining autonomy and the right to strike, democrats like to forget that these laws are the way the state intervenes to make sure every wage negotiation is a compromise in the interests of private property. Not even the definition of the "**wildcat strike**," a strike conducted without state supervision of the ritual, prevents democrats from demanding more perfect strike legislation. And the decisions of the diverse labor courts on wage disputes, showing that the only *unequivocal* line of state settlements is that trade unions must be restricted, also leaves fans of democracy cold. With their illusions about the state being *passive* in this sphere, they do not realize that their complaints about a need for better legal codification of labor's *right to fight* (usually with a reminder of the disadvantages of having illegal unions) are ultimately a desire for prohibitions. They do not see that the legalization of labor struggles is the way the state obligates labor to compromise, be loyal and make sparing use of its only means of struggle, the strike.

In advanced capitalist countries, trade unions are often so attached to this illusion that they have nothing better to do than aim for cooperation in establishing social peace, and fight for due recognition of working citizens in this capacity. They even participate in wage disputes as a way of fighting for recognition of the trade unions, collective bargaining autonomy, democratic rights, etc., all at the expense of the workers.

By legalizing the unions' struggle in accordance with the needs of the other side, the state makes it serve *its own* goal of maintaining the class antagonism. In addition to making it harder for the workers' militant organizations to disturb the social peace, the state also enables the proprietors to take full advantage of the compromises (that are usually reached without militant measures) for the duration of the wage agreement. The requirement that labor keep the peace once an agreement is concluded is an open invitation to management to modify the conditions of work. This makes the production process

a continual source of reasons for militant action by the unions. The state responds to capital's violations of the workers' rights stipulated in the collective agreements by issuing laws concerning employees' representation and co-determination in industry. The essence of these laws is that workers are obligated to put up with their boss continually disturbing the company peace. They are allowed to have their interests represented within the company, but this **shop committee** is committed to preserving peace in the shop. It must be heard and kept informed, may take legal steps against violations of the law (which are obviously a matter of course in factories) and see to it that the workers do not drink, smoke or ignore safety regulations. But, it has no authority to decide anything. This institution is designed to have workers react to their mistreatment in the factory, not by turning to militant trade union actions, but by lodging complaints in the nice prescribed way. It is propagated with the ideology of strengthening the employees' position in their perpetual fight with the boss.

Since the shop committee is *elected* by the workers, it is unmistakably a tool for representing their interests as far as democratically-minded trade-unionists and revisionists are concerned. They are therefore most eager to apply for such posts and then, instead of achieving anything for the workers (which is impossible through this institution anyway), they agitate them to give great support to a union-oriented shop committee. They thereby reinforce the propaganda of the other side, that militancy is superfluous. To prove the importance of their brand of shop committee they draw comparisons with corrupt ones that fawn on management (whereby these ones praise their good standing with the bosses as the reason for their effectiveness). With its laws on employees' representation the state has thus managed to carry a very democratic dispute right into the sphere of production, namely, the dispute over the best way of getting along without a labor struggle. And trade unionists, of all people, have nothing better to do than participate in it with their dream of **codetermination**, as if the antagonism between management and labor were an accident.

d) The institution of the bourgeois family

With its measures guaranteeing wageworkers a free and therefore restricted existence, the state is not yet finished meeting its citizens' rightful demands for a livelihood. It even makes sure the freedom to love whomever one wants cannot be enjoyed at will, but is subordinated to people's function for society. The state subjects love to the necessities of its citizens' self-preservation, obligating men to defray the costs of mother and child, while requiring women to bring up the children and also serve the men's domestic needs. By legally stipulating that the relationship between man and woman, which conflicts with the utilitarian principle of bourgeois society, must involve sustenance duties based on a division of labor, the state frees both itself and property from the social burden of caring for those who do not work. It thereby insists that love *serve a useful purpose*, which citizens must pay dearly for. The **institution of the bourgeois family**, which imposes few restrictions on people of sufficient means, rounds off the bleakness of life as a wageworker by offering a marvelous alternative. One can either do without love and children and afford a few more pleasures or prove one's affection by fulfilling family duties and sharing increased worries for the rest of one's life.

With its **family law**, the state turns love into a means for sustaining the *class* of working people. It links the freedom to love with the regulation of love as a lasting matrimonial and family relationship, defining man, woman and child by the force of law as private persons having certain rights and obligations. This makes feelings the basis for a system of mutual claims and restrictions, which destroys them. No wonder a lot of people marry only because a baby is on the way. The state permits a relationship between man and woman only on the terms of a *contract* under family law, namely, **marriage** (including "common-law marriage"!). This transforms love and faithfulness into

the obligation to form a “conjugal community” and provide mutual maintenance, while other relationships are declared to be premarital or extramarital intercourse, which may also lead to obligations. By compelling the husband to draw a sufficient income, the wife to manage the household (or vice versa nowadays) and both to exert parental power over the child, the state makes sure those united in a family lovingly restrict each other to meet the requirements of a working life that shows little consideration for them.

Children, which are one of society’s necessary expenses, are at their parents’ mercy. In other words, they pay for their upbringing to be independent competitors by being directly dependent for years on the resources and expectations of their parents. For their parents they are a burden so they are supposed to be obedient and strive for success in competition to be able to take care of themselves. Consequently, as they grow up they have less and less reason to show the thankfulness and respect their parents demand. In their rebelliousness and longing for independence they invariably see the constraints of society solely as a conspiracy of the old against the young. They are soon disillusioned about the freedom of independent life in competition.

A **man** who settles down with a woman buys, for this cut in his income that was too small in the first place, a cramped domestic existence alongside his job. Instead of finding the relaxation from work there that he desires, he is confronted with the troubles of his wife and kids, who want more than just their allowances from him. The sphere of the family thus becomes an additional burden, its sparse pleasures being continually soured by the unfulfillable demands its members make on each other, which is why men are not only keen on TV and taverns but can even see advantages in work.

A **woman** presiding over the household is locked into an existence in the service of her husband and children, into the monotony of performing tedious yet laborious tasks. Her social function, for which she is publicly recognized, is her personal sacrifice for her family’s well-being, her drudgery with obstinate children, her daily concern to provide her work-worn husband with a comfortable evening and good children despite their small budget, and relieve him of all domestic troubles. As a reward she gets to keep herself attractive and ready to satisfy his need for relaxation.

Since family members have to take care of each other, the state relieves its overburdened finances by making the family pay for all the vicissitudes of proletarian life before its own wonderful social welfare measures take effect. It thus leaves no doubt as to why it subsidizes family savings.

With **additional measures** the state ensures the continuing usefulness of the love which its marriage and family law has subordinated to maintaining the class of waged workers. To counteract the rise in the cost of living, it provides **tax relief** that reduces the pressure on business to pay higher wages and even flows back to the state in part through the family’s additional consumption (in the sales tax). It acknowledges that a worker’s wages are too meager to carry the burden of children by granting **tax exemptions for dependents** and **child benefits**, which still do not make it affordable to have children. The state thus honors the contribution parents make to society without relieving them of their troubles. And when the dependence of children on their families’ resources interferes with their becoming especially useful citizens through higher **education**, the state grants financial aid earmarked for this purpose. And since workers have neither large gardens nor time for trips to the country, the state builds a few dismal **playgrounds** where the kids can be deposited.

Since such support is never sufficient, a working-class family must be maintained by having the wife neglect it, if at all possible, and supplement her housekeeping money by doing badly paid work. The institution of the family thus provides a cheap and willing labor supply for business and price-cutting competition for male workers, while saddling working-class women with the **double**

burden of wage labor and housework, unless they want to devote themselves to their children and do without bare necessities for themselves and the family. The requirements of the family, for the sake of which wives go to work, constantly hinder their ability to work, so that the state takes measures to make mothers somewhat freer from the burden of children and more useful as employees. The additional costs of day care for the family make women even more willing to convert all their free time into working time. The state counters the conflict between the requirements of working life and unprofitable child rearing by issuing laws to protect working mothers, which enable them to devote themselves exclusively to their families for a brief time without losing their jobs. During those times when the surplus of manpower is such that the state would like to see more women unemployed and busy at home again, it supplements these efforts to keep women useful by permitting them to work only if they can prove their children are taken care of. In such times it saves unemployment benefits by rediscovering that housework is an honest profession. When capital can once again use women, the state enables them to work even though they are indispensable at home by running and supporting day-care centers, which take children in custody for a considerable fee and help groom them for their later tasks in society.

By institutionalizing the family the state has created new burdens that constantly jeopardize the emotional ties on which the family is based. It consequently sees to it that families continue on with their useful aspects even after all feeling has vanished, making an institution of mutual torture. It supplements the freedom of private life by providing **marriage counseling and child guidance** in the media and in government agencies, which compete with the Church in giving advice on how to keep from killing one's loved ones. By passing laws on **prostitution and pornography** it regulates surrogate amusements as a rather dubious bourgeois profession, all in the interests of the family. In order to keep up the personal bond together with its obligations even after no bond is left, **divorce laws** make people's separation contingent on legal and financial arrangements that chain society's less moneyed members to each other by making spouses pay for their determination to give up a broken home, each in his own way. When the personal restraint family members put on each other takes the form of brute force against the children, the state sees a need in extreme cases to interfere with parental rights. Then its **youth welfare authorities** complete the job of neglecting the kids. And those who do not want to take the vows of marriage *after* the kids are born are also obligated to provide for them by **laws on paternity and illegitimate children** and in **homes for single mothers**. Children are punished for having no parents or benevolent relatives by being put in **orphanages**.

For those without financial difficulties, the family, like all the social institutions of the state, is not a burden but a benefit. The children, who guarantee the family property, do not encumber their mother but are prepared the whole time by nannies and boarding schools for their careers as successors. One's wife serves as a showpiece inside and outside the mansion, divorce is a matter to be handled by one's tax and investment consultant, and sexual amusement is taken for granted as an accompaniment to one's useful domestic idyll, as an item on one's expense account.

The state makes relations between the sexes its "fundamental unit" and obligates the human means of production to devote their romantic inclinations to maintaining their class. This tends to *destroy* the human material in order to make it *useful* to private property. The institution of the family constantly impairs the restoration of the worker for wage labor. It makes the production and upbringing of potential wageworkers dependent on their parents' arbitrary decisions, and impairs the usefulness of women for private property by limiting them to the domestic sphere, which they are again not supposed to live entirely for.

The family is therefore a subject of **state propaganda** intended to induce citizens to do the impossible by reconciling their family duties with their other duties toward society, whereby more importance is attached to one or the other depending on the nation's requirements of the moment. The oppression of children by their parents, and the specific kind of exploitation reserved for women constitute the bleak reality of family life, a reality which, due to its emotional basis, takes the form of personal torment. This is the reality that is affirmed in the public hymns of praise about the high value of the family for society.

Conservatives like to glorify motherly love, stress the deeper meaning of making sacrifices for one's fellow creatures and praise the fulfillment of having a cozy home in this impersonal and automated world of ours. This shows their interest in having everyone assent joyfully to their subjection to these socially useful brutalities. And they are invariably quick to lament how the family is going to the dogs and falling prey to materialism nowadays. With the support of the churches they preach against the growing immorality, the increasing number of working wives and mothers, the liberalization of gender-specific education, divorce and abortion laws, and demand that the authoritarian structure of the family be saved at the family members' expense since that is allegedly what the state is based on. They also aver that the future of old-age pensions, the economy and the army is at stake, and that nobody is willing to produce the new generation for the nation any more.

State propagandists of the modern woman and family keep on proving that the reason why there is a women's rights issue in bourgeois society is that the special service women are forced to perform *for* competition sets them in opposition *to* this competition. Those in charge proclaim an "International Women's Year" especially for the purpose of propagating phrases about partnership, equal rights and emancipation to agitate women to bear their **double burden** and make the family fit its social purpose better. The agitation in the Year of the Child makes the appropriate corrections.

Such talk is readily accepted only by those people with secure economic positions who can expect their families to bring them few burdens and much joy, by women who are free to leave boring housework behind, and husbands who want more "open-minded" wives, who go through life together with their liberally tolerated extramarital affairs, their marital quarrels and their one or two pampered and (if too much trouble) neglected children, unless they become bored enough to get a divorce. These people, who can afford these easy ways of coping with family destruction and can practice the immorality going along with the family while maintaining their families, are the ones recruited by the **women's movement**. Women's lib deals with the problems of women, their dependence on men due to the forced subordination of love to society's requirements, by advocating that women seek liberation in their usefulness as women, their "capacity for love and understanding," i.e. beyond the *specific* person they love and understand. They consider this mental satisfaction of needs to be liberation, and act as if the whole world of capital and states were nothing but a fight between cocks and pussies. They publish magazines that promote equal rights for women in the army and on the covers of magazines. With its return to woman's real nature, spontaneously fulfilled maternal bliss, the women's movement became generally acceptable once and for all.

Revisionists, by contrast, remain true to themselves and fit the women question into that endless series of scandalous inequalities and injustices that are waiting for real democracy. Never forgetting their beloved working class, they have nothing but praise for the solidarity within a working-class family (citing Engels as a forerunner), while prudishly lamenting the immorality of the upper classes. Their position is strikingly similar to **fascist** ideas about the health of the people and moral purity.

Revisionists thus support the pro-family attitude of those who need a family because they have nothing else.

Workers preserve their families by submitting to the requirements of property even after hours and additionally ruining themselves under their own roof. Equal rights for the proletarian woman means having to take a worse-paid job in addition to drudging at home. To live with such self-sacrifice these people must therefore perform well in the field of morality as well. They do not waste a lot of time dreaming about the joys of love which are supposed to brighten up sad workaday life, but prepare early on for a family life full of self-denial in which nobody can expect much except for duties. Once a working man is stuck with a family, he seeks solace in sights of full-busted women, dirty jokes and going to the bar, while expecting his wife to be efficient, thrifty, tidy, undemanding, well-groomed, etc., i.e. to show all the virtues that make his domestic life bearable. He expects his children to be seen and not heard, to make themselves useful until they *are* useful, which should be as soon as possible. The woman, brought up to be a mother, accepts the fate of working two jobs for the sake of the family, expects her husband and children to acknowledge her selflessness, and comforts herself with TV and magazines when she has a few moments to herself. Since these virtues are dictated by need and thus provide neither benefit nor satisfaction, there are always working-class men who prefer to blow their money in the bar or the whorehouse instead of at home, working-class wives who neglect their homes and children, and working-class children who cause trouble not only for their parents. And alongside certain categories in criminal statistics, alongside family and youth series in the media, there is the daily drone of pop songs about love making the world go round.

e) Social state ideals

Our investigation of the ways in which the democratic state ensures the freedom of all its citizens, whom it *considers equal*, has clarified the concept of the **social state**. It is no coincidence that “social” means both “pertaining to society” and “pertaining to activities designed to alleviate unfavorable conditions of life in a community, esp. among the poor” (Random House Dictionary). The bourgeois state can only preserve its society, which is not just *any* society but the capitalism that makes this state necessary in the first place, by counteracting capital’s ruination of a whole class of people. While the ideal collective capitalist regulates competition between capitalists so as to ensure their business success as a class, its social measures are forms of organizing modern poverty, thereby staving off working-class revolts in the interests of sheer survival and ensuring the continuing usefulness of this class.

The satisfaction with which this organization of poverty is promoted always expresses therefore the tamed and relativized dissatisfaction with the old forms of “Manchester” capitalism. In Germany, the first major social state institutions were set up to accompany Bismarck’s law against socialists, being expressly intended to undermine the social democratic movement of the time. This not only demonstrates what the social state has to do with class struggle, but also that the state’s concessions in this area are very relative. From the point of view of the state’s basic democratic mission (see chapter eight), politicians are most keen on saving money on their compensatory measures depending on the economic situation.

It is not surprising that some citizens insist on appealing to this state to go about creating a *different* society. Citizens are dependent on a public power existing alongside society to protect them in their competition, so they inevitably consider the true purpose of the state to be to serve *their* interests. Thus, when confronted with the practical proof of the state’s uselessness as a *positive* means for their social existence, it is logical for them to consider it terribly unfair for the

state to impose duties on them while granting rights to other citizens. They seek to mold the *advantages* they desire into an **ideal social state**. The next step is the moral transcendence of this false consciousness, the ideal of **social justice**, with the corresponding conviction that *one's own benefit is everyone's benefit*.

The confrontations between the state's real activities and its ideals are a normal part of the squabbling among the bourgeois political parties. And this is perfect for the politicians trying to show that only *they* are the right ones for "dealing" with the diverse conflicts of bourgeois life. Their fight over who is provided the most social security is really about who's best at hitting people over the head.

It's different with those who think the question of making the social state come true can actually break the system, and turn their ideal into a militant program intended to shake capitalism to its foundations. **Revisionist efforts** to realize freedom, equality and social justice keep up the illusion that the state exists to make its citizens happy, denying that its purpose is to secure class society. They push themselves and their followers into battles for social rights which either end in terrible defeats or, if the state is too weak to crush them, lead to workers' and peasants' states. Their crucial argument for fighting for rights is that it *can be done*. Thus, whereas the working class once applied force to wrest concessions from the enemy with regard to its *existence*, today's friends of the workers create a history of attempts to realize ideal rights instead of a history of class struggles. It is a particularly nasty element of this position that its adherents celebrate everything the working class had to fight for just because they fought for it, thoroughly disregarding what the bourgeois state's services for the workers really are.

The translation of this false critique of the state into learned Marxism is almost comical. The people guilty of this fraud have "difficulties" explaining the state as a class state, because they commit the errors of bourgeois science in their own one-sided way. So they can't help doubting whether the class state can be explained at all. They eventually came up with a list of **dos and don'ts for state theory**. One political scientist wants to "take Marxist discussion as far as possible off the one-sided track of the so-called 'correct derivation' of economic processes and political developments from the 'motion of capital.'" Another poses the following brilliant question before (not) dealing with the class state: *If the state is to be understood as an instrument of class domination, how can one interpret measures which are taken by or through the state for the benefit of the working class?*

He adds that "this debate, conducted under the catchword 'social state,' is also far from being concluded." Perhaps we should send a letter saying the debate *is* concluded, to him and all the others who ascribe functions to the state which it does not have and therefore never see its real function, who thus get into trouble with Marx and fumble on with the help of bourgeois political science. Such Marxist discussion of the state is a part of the bourgeois discussion of whether the 19th century class state still exists or whether the state's increased activities in the past hundred years have marked its transformation into a social state. Such theoretical disinterest in *explaining* the state combines with a practical interest in *having* it to produce the most reactionary garbage ever written since the advent of revisionism. The prizewinner is the idea that the workers might have no more reason to play the revolutionary actor in view of the social state!

May we therefore summarize the concept of the social state, the realization of social justice, in the words of the great prophet Martin Luther, who knew what equality and freedom have to do with each other: "What is justice other than that everyone does what befits his station?"

Chapter 6: Taxation

In order to be able to perform its tasks for its citizens, the state demands **taxes** from them. All citizens must give up part of their resources to finance the state functionaries, the enforcement of the law, the support of property and the promotion of wage labor. By obligating all citizens *equally* to pay taxes the state makes one part of them pay for the security of their property, and the other for the insecurity of their existence. As a *condition* for the capitalist mode of production, the state *limits* the wealth of private competitors. By depriving each class of part of its revenue it is only fulfilling its holy duty. The state means extra expenses for capitalist production, serving both to augment property and to ensure the reproduction of the working class responsible for this augmentation. It monopolizes part of the resources of society for the sake of private property, and therefore collects these resources in a way that corresponds to their purpose.

a) The state must raise enough revenue...

The state has the power of taxation, which means that paying taxes is no exchange deal. Taxes are “money payments which are not a quid pro quo for any particular services” (German Tax Code, Art. 1), and the state collects them by force. Everyone is *obligated* to file a **tax return** and there is an extensive apparatus for **tax investigation**.

The first important thing for the state when it comes to its tax laws is that it get its money. It must make its share of the wealth of society big enough to be able to perform its tasks. Since the democratic state follows the principle of equality here, too, it takes from each citizen a part of his *income*. This meets with little enthusiasm particularly among those whose only ‘possession’ is the income necessary for their consumption, so the state has adopted a special way of collecting income tax. It withholds it at the source. By progressive, instead of merely proportionate, taxation of income the state exploits the substantial differences in income among its citizens, showing how much money some people can spare. It also levies other taxes on earned and unearned income. The incomes of “legal persons” (corporations) are subject to a tax on profit, and the part of property not immediately involving consumption is taxed in accordance with its size, notably the tax on capital gains and the general property tax.

With its taxes on transactions the state participates directly in its citizens’ augmentation of wealth, which is the purpose of all their commercial transactions. The value-added tax shows what businessmen do when the state diminishes their profits. They include all their taxes in their calculations as costs, incorporating them into the price. They *shift* them, thereby giving part of the taxes *they pay* the same effect as the sales tax has, to burden the incomes of those who buy the end products. However, property taxes and taxes on transactions can only be shifted onto prices as far as the consumptive power of society allows, these limits being found out in competition. Tax legislation thus proves to be a means for giving new impulses to class struggle. While commercial and industrial companies shift their taxes by some additional efforts in cost-accounting and observation of the market, wage workers can combat this reduction of their incomes by increased prices only by militant action.

b) However, taxation must not foil the state’s efforts...

...to preserve property and wage labor. The state distributes the tax burdens in such a way that

- they do not destroy firms in a weak competitive position (**tax privileges** for special development areas, tax-free allowances, far-reaching tax exemption for agriculture, and so on);
- they do not directly endanger the reproduction of the working class (tax-free allowances, deduction for income-related expenses, homestead saving subsidies, old-age relief, etc.);

- they do not hinder charitable organizations, which are set up in the form of business enterprises, in their efforts to compensate for the necessary pauperism.

Protective measures of this kind are the main reason for **tax reforms**, which are accompanied by public debates about whether this or that tax amendment is equitable. Politicians also take part in these debates in order to burnish their decisions with the sheen of *justice*.

c) Historical remarks

Bourgeois class society *needs* a state which finances itself by permanently limiting this society, which it exists to serve (overhead expenses). Since the accumulation of property cannot be had without a state economically equipped to perform its functions, the state had to build up its economic capacity under conditions in which capital and wage labor were not yet fully developed. It did so by collecting taxes which secured the state *its* continued existence and at the same time acted towards *separating labor and capital*. Although the pre-capitalist state depended on trade and on the possession of wealth in its abstract form, i.e. money, it ruled a society in which economic relations were not devoted to the purpose of creating surplus value. Taxation of peasants was a part of primitive accumulation, which was supplemented by the transformation of state property into private property (see Chapter Seven). The state did this for its own sake, because it needed soldiers, etc., not because it knew that capitalism had to come about. It preserved itself, and had to change!

d) Ideologies

In tax reform debates democrats show their materialistic side. Whereas they are usually quick to transform their advantage into moral *support* of the state, they have no inhibitions about *grumbling* about the state when it wants them to prove their civic loyalty by opening their wallets. The state makes it clear that its performance is directly linked to privations on the part of citizens. That is, they must not only show good democratic conduct but also make economic sacrifices. Citizens respond by measuring the state by the rules of economic life. Everybody considers his taxes the price for services the government performs for him. The state promotes this view by explaining the fairness of taxation with reference to its good deeds whenever it goes collecting. At times it even goes so far as to levy taxes earmarked for special purposes from those who “profit” from their use (road traffic), while everyone discovers that he has made a bad deal, i.e. paid *too much*. In this critique of the state’s economic behavior citizens retain their false consciousness, dictated by the cost-benefit calculation of those who compete, and become *radical* on the basis of this consciousness. The “radical bourgeois,” whose home Marx made out to be the realm of tax disputes, is someone who does not want to change anything but only to increase his advantage under unchanged conditions. That is why the general disapproval of tax legislation does not lead to a revolution, but is merely the basis for all kinds of **fraudulent tricks**. Everyone cheats the state on his taxes if he can, without the least moral scruples. In fact, it is considered normal business practice to wriggle out of paying taxes, and this even provides a whole profession with a handsome livelihood. The only problem is that most people cannot make use of tax consultants, and illicit work only makes sense, if at all, in addition to a regular job (with the tax already deducted from the paycheck) because of the insurance swindle it involves. The state is aware of its citizens’ stratagems and reacts with snoops, auditors, and a **tax penalty legislation** which forgives a lot. Fascists and revisionists share a concern for proper collection of taxes, and demand special fiscal treatment for parasites, especially “anonymous stock corporations” and Jews.

Chapter 7: Financial policy — Budget — Government debt

Taxation enables the state to serve its citizens, but it also directly hampers their economic pursuits. Consequently, the state's resources and therefore its services are limited by its citizens' economic success, which it must not jeopardize by ruthless taxation. It must fulfill its tasks, but with limited means to do so. In the **budget** the state regulates its functions for which limited revenue is available. It *allots* its revenues in such a way that it can still maintain the antagonistic mode of production. Since its activities are indispensable it does not keep to the funds actually available but maintains its ability to function by going into **debt**.

a) Budgetary principles are established...

In the legal regulations the state issues against itself it acknowledges the *economic* limits on its actions. These laws are aimed at preserving its ability to function, which is continually endangered by the limited means society puts at its disposal. In keeping with this goal, the state has established the principle of **budgetary unity** whereby all receipts are fundamentally funds for all expenditures. This effectively bars its citizens from making legal claims for specific expenditures. However, once the expenditures have been decided upon by the state (appropriated) the funds are **tied** to these purposes. The state prohibits itself from using general revenue funds (slush funds!) which while not tying state moneys to certain areas also make them inaccessible regardless of current needs. Another budgetary principle is to fix the amount of an expenditure for a certain purpose for a set time period. All these fine budgetary principles are intended to prevent the government from neglecting functions which it could well afford (and squandering the funds on unnecessary things), as well as from manipulating its accounting to transform deficits into a sound budget.

b) ...only to be circumvented!

When the state plans its budget it must consider the “extent and composition of anticipated expenditures and the possibilities of financing them in their interaction with the projected development of macroeconomic capacity” (*Report on the State of the Nation* [Germany] 1972). Since this prognostic activity is difficult in view of all the freedom the state grants the economic actors, it offers itself a way out for false forecasts. It circumvents all the glorious principles it has set up itself with the help of the **savings clause**, which enables balancing of surplus and deficit between different items, and the **transfer clause**, which allows payment during the following fiscal year. Necessary tasks must be taken care of even when those in charge have made mistakes when planning the budget, so that “extraordinary” and “off-budget” expenses are also allowed. And since the necessary money is not available when all receipts have already been budgeted, the state goes into **debt**. In America, for example, legislation is passed to raise the “debt ceiling,” while in Germany, Article 115 of the Constitution states the conditions which must be met. Debts are part and parcel of bourgeois state financial policy because the functions of the state must be carried out regardless of the competing citizens' ability to provide it with funds.

c) The result is inflation.

As the “ideal collective capitalist” (Chapter 5 b) the state makes sure that the interests of banking capital do not endanger the functioning of the credit system for industrial accumulation, and sets limits on the accumulation of money capital by regulating the expansion of credit. However, it contributes to increasing credit by its own debt. When it comes to its own economic existence it does not mind in the least that debts circulate and are used for the fictitious realization of capital. It accepts the fact that national debts, by circulating as credit money “backed” by the state, influence the relation between

supply and demand so as to result in **inflation**. It can also live with the resulting aggravation of conflicts between the classes whose buying power is diminished by inflation.

d) Historical remarks

By using government debt as a means to carry out its functions for the preservation of class society, the state acknowledges that its powers in relation to its citizens involve an economic dependence on them. Its **financial sovereignty** is based on *forgoing any direct economic powers* itself and turning into a power that serves the economic goals of its citizens. The early bourgeois state was itself an economic actor, but became more and more dependent on trade and industry and was forced to make one concession after another. Only after the state relinquished its own wealth and allowed it to be used by capitalists, did it become the modern state which serves *its* society while ruling over it. The indebtedness of the state, which meant that it no longer existed as an independent economic power, became one of the levers of primitive accumulation.

e) Ideologies

The loss of price stability concerns citizens only to the extent that their bank accounts or wallets signal that everything *they* must buy has become more expensive. They always grumble that taxes are not used enough for the items they favor. All they usually have to say about the budget is how unnecessary they think the expenditures are. Some like to take a stand for the social state and against national security and to deplore the high salaries of state officials. Others use Sweden as a counterargument to stress the high cost of social programs, and even discover that it's the citizens who have to pay for it all. Hence, "Down with the control of the individual and his happiness by the welfare state!" The ultimate in this kind of "critique" comes again from the *revisionists*, with their demands such as, "Education not arms!" However, their adversaries are more successful with their demands for a cut in social expenditures in favor of more direct and indirect support for their profits. The pure form of civic virtue is exhibited in the desire for "sound finances" as such. This desire is shared by the *fascists*, who always complain about the "laxness" of the democratic administration of office. Once they reach power, of course, they are more generous in their use of money than any democratic bureaucracy. Their policies of a "free" people's state "independent" of the economic conditions of society lead to a sovereign use of funds, to the creation of economic means without an economic basis (e.g. printing money). The political power proves itself by continually entering debts on the asset side of the balance sheet.

Chapter 8: The common good — Economic policy

Since the state is limited in the fulfillment of its functions by the resources of society, it plans its budget with a view to decreasing its tasks and increasing its revenues. Its concern is therefore the economic success of all citizens, and it evaluates its activities according to their effects on the **wealth of the nation**. It regards all its measures as means to augment the **common good** (“promote the general welfare,” preamble to U.S Constitution.) By means of **economic policy**, the state makes the necessary functions of its power for society contingent on how they contribute to economic growth.

Since economic growth is the same as the accumulation of capital, or the productive use of private property, economic policy is a simple and one-sided affair. While the state sees its efforts for property owners (Chapter 5 b) as being quite useful instruments for achieving a “socioeconomic optimum,” its measures for maintaining wageworkers (Chapter 5 c) strike it as being expenses which detract from the wealth of the nation. By augmenting the common good, that noble abstraction from class antagonisms, the state promotes the interests of the capitalist class. It does not content itself with securing the *conditions* for capitalist business, but also tries to remove the obstacles to business arising in the course of its own programs of assistance to business. It procures the necessary funds by skillful cutbacks in social programs. It frees the voluntary or involuntary savings of the working class from the fetters of their particular intended purposes and makes them useful for the *economy*.

Since state intervention in the economy means the *submission* of the public power to the needs of capital, it also enforces the laws inherent in the accumulation of capital. The state sees to it that the entire monetary wealth of society is transformed into capital, allowing capitalists to accumulate without regard to the limitations of the market. And by contributing mightily to reducing the capacity of the masses to consume, the inevitable *crises* force it to adapt its economic policy to the *business cycle*. Business-cycle policy consists in turning the disturbances caused by accumulation into a means for more accumulation. The state *overcomes crises* by applying its “economic policy instruments” to make investment profitable *again*. This means not only making gifts to the capitalists but also applying massive doses of morality and force to keep its damaged exploitable citizens in line. The state thus makes up for its *powerlessness* against the crisis-prone course of accumulation by using *power* against its victims.

a) Economic growth as the criterion for all state measures

When state power supports the *wealth of the nation*, upholding the standpoint of the common good *against* all of its citizens, it forces its people to pursue their purpose of acquiring *private wealth* by making themselves a means for the wealth of *society*. The wealth of society therefore proves to be both an abstraction from the needs of citizens and an affirmation of their efforts to exclude others from the wealth that is produced. Since the state makes its business the augmentation of the wealth of society in a private form, its measures are unambiguous acts of support for those citizens whose profession it is to accumulate wealth. This includes the practical critique of those representatives of the capitalist class who do not stand their ground and, not making profits on their own account, make a negative instead of a positive contribution to national accounts. This is how the state acts as the ideal collective capitalist. It asserts the economic interests of the capitalist class apart from this class, since this class pursues its interests itself only in competition.

The state treats the working class in its economic policy as what it is, material for this kind of wealth. Although the state cannot avoid taking the steps necessary for maintaining this class and keeping it useful, it always considers working people’s efforts to be too little and their demands on the state too

great. From the point of view of economic policy it is obvious why the state's social measures, which are tied to all kinds of disciplinary conditions, must be wrested from the state with great difficulty by the workers. The state makes such measures contingent on their usefulness for growth, so its interest in them is strictly *negative*. Everything the state does in this area is intended to avoid disturbances in the accumulation process which might be caused by unusable workers. Since individual capitalists do not care about such disturbances as long as their own business goes well, the state is compelled to enforce the maintenance of the most important condition for business against the bourgeoisie itself. The state criticizes the competition of the capitalists from the point of view of the class as a whole, restricting this competition when it takes no heed of its own means of existence. On the other hand, it criticizes the class interest of the workers from the point of view of their competition, forcing them to be heedless of themselves, i.e. to cope individually with all the consequences of wage labor, which can only be avoided by conscious refusal of the whole class to continue competing.

When the state subordinates all the tasks it performs as the *political subject of the economy* to the criterion of economic growth, making all its functions contingent on this goal of economic policy, the *reason* for the bourgeois state, free competition, coincides directly with its *purpose*. It becomes the subject, or conscious agent of what this competition is all about, the freedom, not of individuals, but of capital. Every single state decision depends ultimately on its relation to economic growth, and this is also why the state upholds the ideals of competition.

These ideals have a different meaning for citizens who grapple with the wealth of the nation out of their own interest. All citizens expect economic growth to provide *them* with some economic benefit. Using the identity of the wealth of society and private property as an argument, they demand economic policies from the state to increase their own private wealth. In doing so, one kind of citizen is certain of *being* a representative of the wealth of the nation, while the other kind defensively moralizes that his contribution to the flourishing of the economy ought for once to be rewarded by something other than forced self-denial.

The disappointed expectations of those competitors excluded from wealth is the principle of *revisionist* criticism. Revisionists uphold the wealth of the nation against its social form, private property, and accuse the state of impairing the efficiency of the national economy by its one-sided distribution of wealth. They propagate the ideal of a state which makes the exploitation of proletarians more efficient by concentrating economic decisions in its own hands. Revisionism coincides in this point with the criticism of the *fascists*, who want to sacrifice not only useless workers but also useless capitalists to the unlimited growth of national wealth. Fascists want the state to force society to accumulate without regard for the negative side effects of accumulation.

b) Economic policy and classes

The state, whose **economic policy** makes it the “motor” of economic development, is not willing to consider its functions positively useful just because they are *necessary* for the capitalist mode of production. It finds that its efforts dedicated solely to *maintaining* capital are unproductive expenses, since they secure the augmentation of private property only by depriving it of means to grow. The state therefore measures its performance in using the wealth it has socialized against the effects on the business of private proprietors. It treats its activities as *factors* of the economy, organizing them in accordance with their usefulness for *profits*. By converting one group of these functions into economic policy instruments and reducing the rest to a reluctantly carried burden, the state not only gives them the distinctions it is interested in, but also ensures that it, the state, cannot possibly be misused as an economic means *for* its citizens.

Thus, the state organizes the sphere of scientific research and education with consideration of the momentary needs of trade associations. It provides for mass transportation and telecommunications with its eye on the financial burden they imply for business. It is lax about enforcing all its regulations against ruthless competition. This does not mean it diminishes its *independence* of the competing capitalists. Rather, it lessens the *limits* on its own functionality caused by the separation of politics from the economy. It is cautious about wielding its power against private property because of the purpose it pursues with its economic policies. Being intent on augmenting the wealth of society in the form of *private property*, it uses its power against private proprietors only if this favors the augmentation of private property.

The coerciveness of the compensatory measures the workers must avail themselves of is also due to the state's economic policy goals. It subordinates any concessions to the working class to its goal of promoting the growth of private property. While thriftiness is called for in its services for the propertied class only in so far as it furthers their interests, it is the dominating principle when it comes to serving the working class. It is the guarantee that the *social state* the workers need is a means for *capital*. This is why the state is not very eager to utilize compulsory savings for the benefit of those forced to hand them over, and furthermore demands a high price for its other blessings.

c) The various branches of economic policy

1. To provide money for society, a prerequisite for business activity, the state must not only *deprive* society of part of its private wealth for its own necessary functions, but also run up a lot of *costs*. It therefore economizes on the circulation of money by using credit, having credit perform the functions of money in general, not only its limited functions in private business. The state sets up a **central bank** in order to utilize credit money without interference from private interests. It saves by issuing bank notes instead of minting bullion. Carrying it one step further, it simplifies payments between banks, making further pecuniary resources superfluous.

2. The saving for costs of circulation which the state achieves by guaranteeing the validity of circulating credit notes lowers its expenses and therefore the unproductive costs for capital, but makes no positive contribution to economic growth. The state has even saddled itself with a new institution, a central bank. Although the central bank integrates all the monetary and credit operations of society and sees to the technical administration of the budget (as the "government's bank"), it is not in itself an instrument supporting economic growth. The state therefore uses the money at the disposal of the central bank in such a way that its employment in private hands serves *the economy*. It participates as a *creditor* in the augmentation of private wealth. In its lending operations, however, the central bank serves notice (as the form of credit already does) that the *economic* benefit of the capitalists is not really identical with that of the state. It takes the trouble to grant credits for reasons of economic *policy* (credits which no private banker could reconcile with his business plan). Whether the state invests in a corporation or provides private banks with guarantees for extraordinary credit undertakings through the central bank, it always qualifies its own economic benefit from the standpoint of the collective capitalist, making use of the economy only in order to serve it. Just as it declares an enterprise to be indispensable for the *national* economy by buying an interest in it, it *reacts* to the *needs* of capital for credits by determining the bank rate. The way the state deals with its finances is therefore to do all it can to clear up the difficulties that capitalists bring to its attention. Out of its concern for growth it supports private property even when the latter has created bounds for itself in the money market and capital market, in which case the funds collected from the working class prove to be most convenient.

3. Private businesses gladly utilize the wealth of society that the state makes available to them in order to augment their own wealth. They increase their production to the point where the return flow from their capital comes to a halt and it no longer pays to employ workers. When its favorite citizens start suffering from a shortage of orders and problems of liquidity, the state realizes that too much capital has been accumulated. However, it has no interest in taking this inability to pay for what it truly is. Fully committed to the standpoint of the business world, it considers the *crisis of capital* to be a problem of *scarce money*, which can also be interpreted as too little willingness to employ credits that are *too expensive*. The fact that the theoretical formulation of this standpoint involves a host of tautologies does not bother conscientious economic policy-makers. On the contrary, the tautologies of cause and effect inspire them to perform feats of business cycle policy.

Thus, since the state wants to remove the constraints the money market places on the capitalists' readiness to invest (but not the reason for these constraints), it offers them cheap money through the economic policy instruments of *required minimum reserve ratio*, the *bank rate* and *government securities*. Furthermore, it encourages this cherished readiness by making special offers ranging from investment aid to purchase orders, and granting tax rebates.

4. It provides the necessary funds even when it does not have them. Its interest in growth obliterates any misgivings about the inflationary effects of higher government debt, especially since it can demonstrate its will to save well enough with regard to the part of its budget reserved for social services. Economic policy-makers thus distinguish between "consumer expenditures" and ones which allow capital to make progress, and they even know two ways of lowering their "consumer expenditures." When the workers' entitlements to social benefits (unemployment pay, pensions) swell during a recession, the state sees good reason to raise the premiums, increasing their forced saving. And for the legitimate recipients of state support it dictates new, tougher conditions for qualifying. When it claims that the workers' social contributions are being employed productively this is quite true. But it is not true that their money is only temporarily illiquid. It has become capital and will never again be available for their living expenses, and this also applies to their future contributions. The indebtedness of the state, which is already wisely provided for in the constitution, demands continual exhibition of this kind of thriftiness. The other side of this divergence of revenue from its purpose is the effort to have the working population cover the inevitable cost of social programs by paying continuously rising contributions. This is why the state is also interested in **full employment**, which strikes it as being a proven remedy for achieving the monetary, or price *stability* its *growth policies* destroy.

5. Since full employment is merely a means for growth-promoting measures, it is neither an absolute goal of economic policy nor is it incompatible with unemployment. After all, full employment is officially defined as a certain percentage of unemployed, while an entire "underclass" is not even part of the official statistics. For realistic economic policy-makers, full employment is above all an ideal which one must approach indirectly by fully employing capital. Jobs are available if business can afford them, which firstly turns state support for the necessary investments into the indispensable precondition for jobs. Secondly, these aids make it necessary to remove additional obstacles to the readiness to invest caused by the level of wages. Companies must not only be given money, they must also be able to make their production profitable by a thrifty use of labor. Their profit and loss calculations must improve *now* so that they will create jobs in the *future*. The investments of today are the workers' contribution to their full employment. Workers are subjected to rationalization of the workplace, the use of more labor but fewer workers, which is the goal of the initial investments of capital to overcome a crisis. The unemployed can thus look forward to the "expansionary investments"

which come about when the new relationship between wage and output makes it advisable to absorb parts of the reserve army of workers as a means for further growth. The state therefore not only aids in rationalizing the workplace, which it finances through its deficit, but also makes efforts to maintain the *social peace* which it is always endangering. For the state, it is a necessity of rational business cycle policy to make labor struggle a matter of rights and duties.

6. In pursuing its economic policy as **business cycle policy**, the state has adapted itself to the fact that its intervention does not avoid crises but carries them through. It *consciously* plays its part as a servant of an economy which is *free*, and performs its measures as a **submission to the cycle of capital**. What it wants is the functioning of the free market economy, with all its manifestations so rich in conflicts. It knows that when it helps overcome a crisis it paves the way not only for the next boom but also for the next depression. That is why it is not out to reduce its budget deficit as a *purpose in itself* but in order to preserve its *function*. Even in boom times the state *steers* competition in accordance with the necessities of competition. This is a contradiction in terms which all its cyclical measures during this phase testify to.

- When capital's demand for credit increases in an expansion period the state sees fit to limit the money market. It notices that its support to further the recovery has led not only to price increases but also to a "loss of monetary stability," indicated by the credit volume of the banks. Its relief about its improved budget vanishes in face of the consequences of the recovery which announce its end. Unlike the capitalists, who try to benefit the best they can from the easy business conditions, the state becomes concerned about the indispensable workability of the financial system, which is about to be ruined by the industrial capitalists. The state makes the latter give up part of their wealth in order to preserve monetary stability, i.e. it forces them to take account of the precondition for their business in the interests of continuing it. By canceling its "policy of easy money" the state only introduces the crisis, but this is the way to make sure the crisis runs its course in a manner appropriate for a means *of capital*. The state's order of the day is to *limit accumulation*, since if it were to continue unrestrained its interruption would ruin the conditions under which it could continue at all.
- Because the state makes it its duty to inform the capitalists in practice that they have prepared the next crisis, it also demands that they give up part of their profits in addition to the usual taxes in times of boom for the purpose of overcoming the inevitable crisis. "Countercyclical reserves" in Germany and similar taxes elsewhere are a compulsory insurance for the capitalists' future business. Unlike the workers' social insurance, it really does offer some security since the state may only spend this money for this one purpose.
- The state warns the workers not to *take advantage* of the rising demand for labor during the recovery, i.e. not to undo the nasty consequences of rationalization. However, since the competition between capitalists promotes such senseless uneconomic thinking among the workers, the state sees to it that wages cannot be simply squandered for personal consumption. Increased buying is undesirable in times when buying power is somewhat improved. It is expected to make room for individual precautions for the inevitable hard times to come. For economic policy-makers, the virtue of buying is not to buy at all, but to save! The only problem is that this virtue cannot be depicted as an advantage for those who are supposed to practice it. The state therefore gives material incentives for saving.

7. Every bourgeois state implements economic policy in this manner. In other words, the state acknowledges that the growth of private wealth inevitably involves disturbances and strives to turn them into a positive basis for securing this growth. Since the state's "countercyclical measures" are *reactions* to the endangerment of free competition arising from free competition itself, the state

also demonstrates with its economic policy that its abstract principles (Chapters 1 to 4), which serve to secure the *form* of competition by force, are means by which the state brings the *purpose* of competition to bear against the barriers inherent in this competition. Separated from society, the state forces the *accumulation of capital* upon society, using its power to assert the purpose of the actions performed by the *active participants* of the capitalist mode of production without their knowing this purpose.

The goal of policy is the accumulation of capital. The state forces both private proprietors and those excluded from private property to earn a living by utilizing each other in competition. In this way they augment private property by using their sources of income and pursuing their own interests. The state thus relates *positively* to the conflicts of competition and the antagonisms between the classes, but also *negatively* to all competitive efforts which hinder the productive cooperation of the participants in the process of production. It does not prevent conflicts from arising in the course of the business cycle. Rather, it is only concerned that all the mutual damage pays off. The state regulates the destruction of labor-power and capital in a way which guarantees their productive use.

- Whether it formulates its **economic legislation** in such a way that the competition between banking and industrial capital takes forms which are useful for both, or takes **control**, etc., to act as the regulating advocate for the particular capitalists in danger at the moment, it always tries to minimize the risk the “free market economic system” takes when competition runs wild. In any case the state shows understanding for a basic law of capitalism, namely, that the accumulation of wealth regularly demands sacrifices to maintain the *form* of this wealth.
- Whether it puts a **legal corset on the labor struggle** to ensure that trade unions function as a means for competition among the workers, or enlists the cooperation of trade union leaders for its economic policies; whether it leaves self-help to the victims’ own charity organizations or plays social state, it always betrays the secret of all economic policy. The antagonisms between the capitalists themselves can only be resolved profitably if the state succeeds in accustoming those whose source of income is their labor-power to the fact that *this* source of income is rotten. Such things as codetermination, wage contracts in tune with the business cycle, and the struggle for political recognition of the unions all demonstrate the success of the state’s moral attacks preaching moderation, the riskiness of life, economic sense, goodbye to materialism and hello to your industrial “partner,” etc.

d) Historical remarks

If the state’s dependence on the wealth of the nation forces it to employ its resources to augment private property, economic policy developed out of its efforts to compensate for the loss of its own economic potency by promoting society’s economic progress, which it also participates in. The state had to subject its traditional methods of preserving power to the criterion of the accumulation of wealth. It was not enough to utilize the resources taken from society, i.e. taxes, for furthering productive property. It had to further organize all its activities in accordance with their economic effects. This was made clear to the state by the loss of its role as an *economic* actor and the negative effects of its ensuing reckless attempts to enrich itself. The cyclical convulsions of the business cycle also forced it to become the **political subject of the economy** for the sake of its own self-preservation, and to make itself the advocate of accumulation by its reactions.

The growing need for credit on the part of productive capitalists (for industrialization) accustomed the state to the necessity of providing a legal framework for speculation in stocks. It also became used to making its money available, directly and indirectly, for profitable business ventures whose gains became the object of further speculation. The conflicts between productive capital and money capital,

in pursuit of their own economic advantage, damaged both groups and therefore also the economy as a whole. This induced the state early on to settle the dispute in favor of productive capital, and to institute its own bank as a means of maintaining the functions of credit. Experience with the periodic cycles of business and the permanent effects of its own debt also familiarized it with the inevitability of sacrificing both society's and its own wealth as a means for growth, and suggested that the workers' economic resources are excellently suited for this purpose. It therefore took care to arrange its concessions to the workers in such a way that they serve the economy and obligate the workers to keep social peace, which the state has realized to be the basic precondition for unimpaired cyclical growth.

e) Ideologies, both scientific and popular

1. The practical difficulties faced by the state as it attempted to master the economic contradictions of its society gave rise to the science of **economics**. Economics is the bourgeois science par excellence, the first science of the state, both logically and historically. It therefore illustrates how the state's interest in social processes both arouses and then destroys any interest in explaining them.

Since wealth exists in capitalist society in the form of private property, which is known to be exclusive, the starting point for economists is not wealth but the scarcity of goods. The "learned interpreters of common knowledge" speak of the **factors of production** which, apart from being available only to a limited degree, also have the peculiarity that they go together like "lawyer's fees, beets, and music" (Marx). This does not bother economists, who are only interested in the usefulness of these fine factors. **Microeconomics** is devoted to equating every economic category with the *benefit* which its representatives or its owners can draw from using it. Money is when you buy something, and it's as much as you can buy with it, which you can't do without money, because everything has a price, which it would be too much trouble to set without money. Land cannot be increased at will, but capital can if you don't spend it. The cost of a commodity, a square meter or capital depends on the price they fetch. And so on. **Macroeconomics** considers all this once again, asking to what extent all the small elements of economic life lead to results corresponding to the state's desire for growth. **Growth theorists** dream up models combining the factors of growth in such a way that there are no disturbances, which is why these remain models, their lack of realism being supposedly due to the unpredictability of human saving, consumption and investment habits. **General equilibrium theory** explicitly adopts the idealistic point of view of avoiding all the nasty economic disproportions, and gets advice from the **theory of income** since it regards the attainment of its ideal as a distribution problem. So it is not surprising that when economists try to explain the crises which they are so sorry to find in their highly esteemed capitalist mode of production, their crowning accomplishment is their **theory of business cycles**. Citing the results of all their other theories, they reach the conclusion that the disgusting ups and downs of the economy cannot be caused by anything in the economy. The list of parties to be blamed for messing up the only humanly adequate way of solving economic problems includes both human nature itself and sunspots. There is only one way out, namely for the state to implement economic policy, i.e. protect prices, money, equilibrium, etc., from being destroyed. Every single branch of economics arrives at the important conclusion that even the most insignificant aspect of economic life, once it has been explained in circles by competition, requires the government's protective hand. In their stupidity economists speak the truth about the condition for their existence. They say their theories are worth nothing unless the state ensures the continuing existence of the objects they do not explain but glorify.

The real theoretical achievements of economics are a thing of the past. They were made when the capitalist mode of production was asserting itself over the previous one. In those days, truth was an

instrument for promoting the interest in capitalism, which was expressed polemically against the ruling classes of precapitalist society. Smith and Ricardo upheld capitalism using *explanations* of value, capital, etc., and Ricardo got into *theoretical* difficulties whenever he realized that his esteem for the new mode of production did not fit well with the explanation of it. But he did not simply abandon the explanation in favor of his wish for capital's success in practice. The accusation of being a communist was not long in coming (see the remarks throughout Marx' *Theories of Surplus-Value*, and *Capital I*, "Afterword to the Second German Edition.") The spread of modern economics therefore made the science fit its function.

2. Since the state's economic measures act against all citizens, i.e. criticize in practice both the competitive interests of capital and those of the workers, there is no dearth of ideological trimmings to justify its actions. Although these notions are the basis for all kinds of civic objections, they can by no means count on unconditional approval from any one of the hostile camps of citizens. The fundamental agreement to be had in disputes between the state and its citizens as long as they relate to abstract spheres, cannot be had here because economic policy is not merely a matter of principle but affects people's *material* interests. While the state and its agents never tire of spreading the word that its measures only *seem* to be directed against citizens, the latter refuse to see that the state's actions are in their *favor*.

The economic technicians first stress that economic policy is terribly difficult because it has to wrestle with conflicting goals. They lament that economic policy "in a market economy system should contribute at the same time to the stability of prices, a high level of employment and equilibrium in foreign trade while ensuring steady and adequate economic growth." The state declares the unpopular effects of its powerful intervention for competition to be the consequence of its powerlessness. It recalls that it only wants to *react* to arbitrariness, and accuses various segments of its population of having no economic sense depending on the phase of the business cycle, whereby one group is *inevitably* mentioned. The state always knows who or what to blame for the fact that the people do not get everything they want. As for itself, it claims to be the only one far and wide to be interested in a balance of interests. The necessity of the state continuing as before is proclaimed by the authority of science, which has long since adopted the state's point of view and makes forecasts to justify its measures. In the end, the conditions under which it reaches its goal are portrayed as a natural law, whose real force is disguised by the cloak of science.

Citizens do not take the state's reproach lying down. They show economists that they also master their method of arguing. Of course, the citizens' metamorphosis into economic policy advisors, representing their interests as the common good, has quite different practical consequences depending on whose interests are involved. Whereas the state cannot fail to agree in principle with the capitalists' various proofs that workers' demands are a great hindrance to growth, it simply cannot believe the unions' claim that management is the side to blame for the lack of harmony.

- Entrepreneurs and their associations always find the *taxes* they have to pay too *high*. That is why they are forever trying to show the state how bad their taxes are for their ability to compete abroad, and how disastrous the consequences are for price stability. Taxes are naturally also one reason why they cannot provide jobs (their actual social calling according to all), since the state always deals with money and credit exactly *opposite* to the way it should. They inevitably criticize a state measure for its *bad timing*. It would have been right for the economy during the last phase of the cycle, but now it is harmful. Finally, they summarize their critique to the effect that the state's best policy would be to keep out, by which they mean it would promote their business best by unconditionally supporting it

instead of interfering with it. They are not necessarily averse to state measures to steer labor struggles, for instance. But they always accuse the state of spending *too much* money on *welfare nonsense*, giving the trade unions too much freedom and allowing them to set off the *wage-price spiral*, a mechanism extremely harmful for the economy, which the state sometimes even tries to counteract by assaulting not wages but the freedom to set prices. Instead of sensibly setting the guidelines for economic development together with the qualified representatives of the common good, namely, employers' associations, it has the impudence to ask trade unions what kind of growth they would like to have. It turns into a trade unionist state, sacrificing economic sense to the extortionists on the class struggle front. Furthermore, it does not content itself with granting collective bargaining rights, which cause uncounted dangers to growth. It actually considers democratizing the economy, a thoroughly Marxist idea, and plants codetermination committees in the factories which, without bearing any responsibility of their own, are out to decide how to use other people's property.

- By contrast, the *trade unions'* attitude toward the alternatives of economic policy look extremely positive. When employers' associations proclaim the identity of their interests with the common good, they criticize the state for not doing enough for the capitalists and *thereby* not furthering the economy properly. When trade unions become critical they accuse the state of not taking proper *advantage* of the workers' interests for the economy. They adopt the point of view of economic policymakers, saying they are in agreement with them, and start submitting proposals for improvement on the basis of a harmony between state goals and trade union goals. They react to the biased forecasts from the state's advisors by squandering their strike funds presenting more optimistic predictions from their own experts. They regard their members' wages as economically important *buying power*, and therefore make a case for an optimum distribution of income, flatly denying any contradiction between wage costs and growth. They continually conjure up the possibility of harmony between management and labor, which the state must also be after with its program for social peace. This lie is the basis for the unions' "threats" that they cannot maintain their loyalty toward economic development if their warnings are always ignored. In order to stop being forced to make such unreasonable wage demands, they ask for codetermination in all state decisions, if possible, and make one offer after the other about how trade union regulations could spread out the damage their members must inevitably bear for the sake of the common good. They ask the state to pass laws which make the workers appreciate the sense of *saving* under the guidance of the unions, because this helps save wages, and even indulge in slight transgressions in terms of the direction of *capital investment* since they recognize continuous growth as a condition for full employment. They deny, rightly but unsuccessfully, the accusation of being communists, which they are supposed to be because they want to have a say in *economic growth*. The ideal of harmony which the unions cherish does *not* differ from the one the state has. But the state uses this ideal for itself and the capitalists, while the unions propagate it for interests it is not designed for. Their demand for *just treatment* of the workers is a kind of criticism which not only submits to political necessities but even asks specifically for this submission. The joint *implementation* of economic necessities is the basis for *trade unionist nationalism*.
- *Fascists* are distinguished by their desire to realize the *ideal class state*, which regards the business of the different classes as equally "valuable" as long as it is carried out properly as a service to the whole nation. They criticize competition because of the disturbances it causes in the growth of national wealth. For them, the task of the state is to secure wealth by forcibly establishing the harmony which private property lacks, by deciding itself *instead* of letting competition decide, and commanding growth even when exploitation is no longer worth it for private property.

- The *revisionists of communism* have a different goal. This is to realize the ideal social state, to socialize private property in favor of the victims of exploitation. They would obligate the state to control competition, which should take place *for the state*. This requires the abolition of capitalists (their functions are taken over by state employees) but is still based on exploitation of the workers. The revisionist revolution, which is known to begin with anti-monopolistic democracy, initially makes use of capital for the state in order to benefit the workers. It ends up using only the workers, whose existence the state guarantees. Revisionists have enriched economic *theory* by the ideology of state monopoly capitalism, while in their economic *policy* they uphold state monopoly proletarianism.

Chapter 9: Democratic procedures: Elections — Legislature — Government

The bourgeois state can achieve its economic objectives only if its citizens pursue their material interests within the bounds it sets. It requires that everyone recognize that *its* activities are *necessary* functions for satisfying *their* interests. One group of citizens must accept the simple idea that certain limitations on their pursuit of profit are unavoidable if the state is to guarantee the productive use of their property. The other group must resign themselves to the fact that their very subsistence must be curtailed if the state is to guarantee their wage labor.

Citizens refrain from using force in their competitive conflicts with one another, or, in positive terms, they *consent* to the state's monopoly on force. This is how *the state* has them submit to its purpose, the augmentation of private wealth. Their materialism serves this purpose only if it is tempered by an idealistic obedience to the law, that is, only if the classes make themselves *instruments of the common good*. To guarantee the functioning of its power, the state seeks the consent of the people to its measures.

Of course the state will not have its citizens deciding on which state measures are necessary and which are not. With **elections** they can only pick which representatives they consider most capable of *carrying out* the functions of the state. Since the only purpose of elections is to elicit the consent of the voters to state power, all votes are **equally** important ("one man one vote,") with the outcome decided by **majority** (absolute or relative.) Since the necessity of this kind of expression of the will of the people is permanent, elections are held **periodically**. The state gives citizens who want to run for public office the opportunity to form **political parties** with others of like mind. In this form they can promote their political programs and compete for votes, and thus for the right to conduct state affairs, by shaping the voters' *political will*.

The conduct of state affairs consists first of all in the activities of the **legislature**. By means of majority voting, the elected representatives, responsible only to their consciences as statesmen, issue legal regulations to settle all the inevitable collisions in society as the common good requires. Secondly, there is the **government** that puts through these regulations with the help of the state's machinery of force. Thirdly, the **opposition** raises its constructive criticism, representing a minority of the electorate and channeling their discontent into the form of a **political alternative**, the only form permitted.

One constantly hears of the danger that the institutionalized regard for the will of the citizens might be misused for an attack on the state's purpose. Democracies take care of this eventuality by enforcing adherence to the constitution (outlawing certain political parties, etc.) and by legal provisions to drop democracy if necessary to save the state.

With its celebrated democratic procedures the modern bourgeois state admits that its political rule hinges on the will of its citizens, which means that citizens have the means to make the state superfluous. On the other hand, the state takes heed of their free will only in so far as they abstract from their material interests. Thus, the progress of democracy over all earlier forms of state is that it uses the will of its citizens for an augmentation of wealth which they do not benefit from. The *economic struggle* of the wageworkers therefore leads to a *political struggle* against the state, while the political struggle for *alternative* state policies hinders the economic struggle, preserving both the state and exploitation, regardless of which alternative is chosen.

a) Who's using whom

The abstract characterization of democracy, that the power of the state is based on the will of the people, appears in a somewhat different light from the point of view of the state or its officials, who

administer competition according to the needs of private property. They consider democracy “the worst form of state, except for all the others,” (Churchill) which clearly expresses that it is not the ultimate purpose of the state to *submit to* the will of the citizens. On the contrary, the state can perform its tasks best when it gains the consent of citizens to its actions. When citizens positively support state power (which does not cease being a power over the people by being supported by the people) they demonstrate their will to fight for their interests only through competition, i.e. to use their freedom the way the state wants them to. Democratic legitimation is thus *necessary* for the state since working citizens, by abstracting from their particular wills to give their consent to the state, are by the same act perpetuating their economic duties and thereby guaranteeing the *functioning* of the mode of production. Conversely, when the majority of the people refuse to be loyal to the *state*, when they no longer want their freedom, when they are concerned with less lofty matters of human existence, then the state upholds freedom against these crass demands. In voting for the state people announce their willingness to use the state for themselves as long as they need it. The state responds by passing legislation which demonstrates that needing the state is not the same as benefiting from it. **Democratic elections**, which are hardly carried by the votes of the capitalists, thus allow the state to use the working class, not the other way around.

b) The will of the voter

By staging its bizarre democratic election spectacle, the state is by no means *making itself* dependent on the will of its citizens. Rather, it gives its existing dependence a form in which citizens themselves give up *their* will. When the state only allows them to vote on which politicians should fill the state offices, it leaves no doubt that it is not only the non-elected organs of jurisdiction, administration, etc., which are *beyond* the reach of citizens, but *all* the political decision-making institutions of the state. The question of whether the whole political apparatus needs to exist in the first place is never on the ballot. The state organizes the expression of the will its citizens in such a way that they have no choice but to express their submission to the will of the state.

The highest democratic achievement is that such a violently forced abstraction as being a free person becomes a product of a person’s own will. The check mark beside the candidate’s name signifies indifference toward any considerations the voters may have. Nothing remains but an okay for a representative and therefore an “aye!” to the state. This allows the state to *measure the will of the electorate*, using the **majority principle** to openly disregard any particular will and the reasons for it. Reactionary critics claim that this democratic principle both oppresses the voters in the minority and prevents government by the best, which is not true. The *majority of the people* abandon their own interests for the state, so that the majority, the minority and the nonvoters are all **equally** subjected to state power according to the *class* to which they belong. Since elections institutionalize the antagonism between the state and its citizens, excluding them from rule by procuring their consent to it, the state knows exactly what to do about the continual conflict between its measures and the interests of its citizens. It holds elections **periodically** to ensure that its citizens forever refrain from using force. Election Day is the regular exception to the rule of the state’s day in and day out disregard for its citizens’ interests.

The forced subordination of citizens to the purposes of the state is therefore sealed by elections, as the repeated act of their own political common sense. They are required by the state to exercise their will by making themselves the willing object of state affairs, by making a *political decision* every few years which has the same result as their usual political *abstinence*. The majority of citizens reveal their interest in the state’s purposes by a comparison of their wishes with the various political alternatives

offered for *not* fulfilling them. This kind of game is thus over before it starts. The individual citizen manages to abstract voluntarily from *his* interests and choose among the candidates eager to implement the necessities of *state*, although he is fairly sure this means opting for a continuation of his lousy situation. The persistent willingness to go to the polls demonstrates that the only needs citizens expect to be met by their politicians are ones already transformed into illusions about the state. Workers thus are not abandoning their own interests only on their way to the polls. By voting they are merely giving their explicit consent to the power against themselves which they already tolerate because they need it for their reproduction as wageworkers, and mistakenly regard as a positive means for themselves. As consolation for betraying their own interests, they can always vote for one of the other alternatives next time around to replace the disappointing government they elected themselves this time.

c) Political parties

When the democratic state makes the dependence of its success on the will of its citizens a means of exercising power, it secures its own political existence but makes that of its representatives an uncertain matter. Although anyone can decide to become a politician nowadays, the access to political office depends on whether one can gain and maintain the favor of the electorate. For the sake of their careers those who don the cloak of the state's necessities therefore have the democratic duty of presenting a rosy picture of all the nasty deeds they would be "privileged" to perform. It behooves them to represent the decisions of the state as measures taken for the sake of the voters.

The parties "develop political objectives" with a simple trick. They give citizens (who entertain a self-interested ideal of the state by expecting its actions to benefit them) what they want, namely, a hoax. Politicians use their entire limited imagination, which they do not need for their practical dealings, to assure citizens that the state will continue bestowing on them the blessings befitting their class, in its own best interest. However diversely the candidates compete, the principles they follow are always the same. They promise all social groups, regardless of their conflicts (which the state preserves), that they will choose only those measures from the state's repertory that these groups expect to benefit from. Of course if you put all these promises together you get nothing but the well-known, necessary state program, in the glorified form of a benefit for one and all.

The high art of promising everybody exactly what he wants has its limits of course. Contradictory pronouncements are noted by the public, and the past term of office shows that the state has satisfied almost no one. Therefore the politicians always add some information about the nature of their intentions. They make qualifications, cite the powerlessness of the state and appeal to the political insight that divergent demands can only be satisfied if all remember the limits of what is possible. They even divulge who will be given the possibilities and who are in for the necessities. Controversies between the parties are therefore held chiefly in the domain of *ideals*, which citizens invariably equate with their own advantage, even though those wonderful abstract values dealt with in the first four chapters of this book only serve as the foundation for the brute force examined in the rest. The matters parties love to fight about are democracy's most sacred principles, which idealize the antagonism between the state and its citizens: freedom, human dignity, equality, justice and so on. When political parties deny one another's ability to uphold their common ideals they demonstrate what these ideals are good for. They allow the effects of state *necessities*, which all politicians agree on, to appear as the consequence of *inability* and as a betrayal of the higher aims of the state. Ideals are great to fight about, especially when it is a matter of transforming people's worries into consent. That is why one party fights for personal freedom, family values, Christian responsibility and the market

economy *cum* “safety net” against socialist experiments. Another party is for freedom, social justice and reforms, and a third for freedom and personal dignity...

The triad of **conservatives**, **reformers** and **liberals**, the classic constellation of political parties, represents the necessary ways politicians react to the conflicts between the state and its citizens. Politicians fear popular discontent as a danger to their economic and other policies, and especially to their tenure in office. In their election campaigns, they practice the fine art of turning the discontent into its opposite. Reformers like to blame everything on the inactivity of the state, and portray democratic politics as a matter of “venturing more democracy.” They are always coming up with new tasks for the state. Conservatives look at it from the other side of the contradictory notion that the state is necessary, and turn politics into an ongoing endeavor to save the state, which people would be wise not to disturb all the time with their demands. Finally, liberals try to exploit the frustration of the private citizen who considers the state a means for himself and an obstacle at the same time. They claim the omnipresence of the state is the root of all evil, unfailingly put freedom first and stress the citizen as the ideal human of Chapter One in opposition to the state of the later chapters. In order to gain power they proclaim that the ultimate goal of the state is to restrict itself. It should be noted, because it makes no difference, that these vote-catching labels have been changed around in the United States. To the chagrin of the likes of Milton Freedman, reformers today have the nerve to call *themselves* liberals, “true” liberals are known as “libertarians,” one side calls the other “left- or right-wingers” depending, while everybody somehow is “in the middle.”

Since parties stage these disputes in order to be elected by *all*, the basic attributes of the existing alternatives are nothing but variations on the promise to offer a state for everyone. Democratic parties are **mainstream parties** which anticipate within their own ranks the state’s one-sided decisions on which interests are to prevail. By staging **internal party democracy**, etc., they ensure that the social groups out to gain influence on the state can jockey for position within the party, while at the same time obligating everyone to publicly advocate the party line.

The ongoing petty warfare with great ideals therefore has little to do with the politicians’ practical decisions. When it comes to governing they demonstrate every time that, no matter how they might have disagreed about the best policy, they end up maintaining the best of all possible worlds. And in this world there are no alternatives, at least when it comes to the material interests of the majority. Changes of government do not shake the continuity of the state machinery but rather serve it. And all the conflicts exhibited (and not settled) by political parties during their campaigns to attain power, which quicken the heartbeat of staunch democrats so proud of the liveliness exhibited by their state, suddenly disappear if none of the parties gains a majority. Then they make room for coalitions great and small. Nonetheless, the practical alternatives the politicians face then are still those shown in the earlier chapters, so they sort out their opponents and supporters in each of the coalition parties, or rather depending on whose turn it is to govern and choose them and whose turn it is to be in opposition.

In Germany for example, the continuity of politics takes the form of a laboriously nurtured differentiation between the parties. However this can also be had with much less ado, e.g., in countries where popular parties have not formed from the political organization of conflicting social interests, but have been instruments for competing interest groups from the start. In the United States politics is **pragmatic**, parties are reduced to the function of **machines** for conducting election campaigns, candidates are hustlers, and their competition is over who can deliver raw state morality and his own personality most convincingly.

The continual competition of the parties for votes makes the agitation of citizens a permanent fixture of political life, alongside actual political rule. This is where one finds all those wise sayings presented in the ideology sections of this book, which characterize the various aspects of the state. The parties' propaganda in the months before elections is only a separate and state-subsidized part of the political education they provide every day. They unceasingly present the state-interested citizen with *their* variant of politics as material for his comparison, continually nourishing his civic idealism in order to take advantage of it. Since the *parties* perform the business of the *state* while at the *same time* criticize it as party politics, *they* and not the *state* are the target of consent, disappointment and criticism on the part of the people. They enrich the state's victims by giving them the freedom to choose between alternative forms of *state* success, and enrich the state by giving it the relative certainty of being safe from criticism. By using everything that happens in the state as a means for *their* own advancement the parties make themselves a means for preserving the *state*. This is even usually acknowledged in the constitution, even though their competition shakes people's "trust in the state" every now and then.

The explanation of the democratic state as the concretion of a voluntary relationship of force (Chapter 3) also sheds some light on the species of representatives in charge of making political decisions. These people not only have the task of deciding on the exercise of power, the poor things must also present this business to citizens as being in their best interest, and accuse their political adversaries of being and doing exactly what they themselves are and do. They unite force with morality, by *practicing force* if they get the chance, and by *demonstrating morality* so that they can get the chance. Hypocrisy is their profession and therefore also their character. Corruption and lies are the warp and woof of their political existence. They are also only democrats up to a point, talking as they constantly do about "the people" because "the people" are always getting in their way. In short, they are the true mirror image of their victims!

d) Legislature and government

Elections make the conduct of state affairs dependent on the representatives the people have entrusted with this task. To ensure that they can decide about the collisions of bourgeois society in the interest of the state, i.e. to prevent elections from being misused for forcing the representatives to make concessions to particular interests, politicians are independent of the will of those who give them their vote. This "indirect democracy" means freedom of conscience for members of the legislature and unaccountability of the government toward the people. On the other hand, the performance of state functions cannot be left to the whims of an independent government if the state is to persist. The requirements of economic competition, which are the reasons why citizens need and want the state, have to remain the valid standard for state measures. This is guaranteed by the dependency of those who actually wield the power of the state on the decisions of the representative body about the most efficient way of mastering the tasks that arise. The executive power is bound to the decisions of the **legislature**, in which the people's representatives lay down the principles for treating the inevitable collisions in society, fixing them in the form of laws for the government to execute. By deliberating and passing laws, the legislature ensures that any demands on the state are brought in line with the totality of state actions, and their (non)fulfillment made binding accordingly. **Parliamentary democracy** therefore proves to be a form of state power which maintains the state as a means for augmenting national wealth by restraining the government power from recklessly satisfying momentary needs. It subordinates by means of legislation the various particular problems to the state interest as a whole, which the state pursues with its limited finances. The legislature not only decides

about all state measures and fixes their execution by law, it also decides on the distribution of funds for executing the laws by approving the annual government budget and the grant of government loans.

The role of the legislature is therefore to pass laws to meet the changing requirements for legal, social and economic actions by the government. These laws obligating the state fix the legality of demands on it and the obligations of the citizens toward it. As the **legislative power**, the legislature continually alters the laws which are unalterable for the citizens. It supplements them, amends them and repeals them, thereby giving society the legal code it needs. To prevent legal reforms from running counter to the state purpose laid down in existing legislation, they must meet the requirement of constitutionality. This is determined by a high court which has jurisdiction over constitutional matters.

The people's representatives jointly make their legal decisions on the best way of settling collisions, but employ majority rule in view of their permanent competition with one another. In order to preserve their identity, parliamentary parties obligate their members to vote in accordance with the party line. In addition, all legislative initiatives are procedurally delegated to the parties organized in legislative groups. Thus, the individual representative becomes the agent of his party's will, which is why he not only cites his freedom of conscience vis-à-vis the voters but the parties also cite the voters' mandate vis-à-vis the individual representative. By contrast, in countries such as the USA where the parties did not turn the political demands of the diverse interest groups they represent into a joint political program, but where the individual representative is himself an agent of a certain interest group, the competition between demands on the state is decided by a temporarily formed majority of proponents or opponents of the particular bill, i.e. this competition is settled in the legislature itself.

In order to make sure the governing party performs its legislative acts with consideration of the social interest groups which the state depends upon, the legislative procedure is usually organized as a two-chamber system (**bicameralism**.) In some countries, the second, or "higher" chamber can only exert moral influence on legislative acts through its right to deliberate or object, or it may be a controlling body for the authorities responsible for executing the laws.

Since legislation continually disappoints the expectations of most voters (which are sacrificed to the common good), legislative debates also serve the purpose of agitating the population ("open sessions"). While the legal, economic and political discussions necessary for formulating the bills are held in committees staffed in proportion to party strength in the legislature and supported by specialists and government experts, the public debates serve as a forum for the competing parties. The parties demonstrate that they are voting for or against a particular bill with a view to the welfare of the state and thus fulfilling the voters' mandate. The party bigwigs play on the false equation between the state's interests and the interests of citizens. They deny each other's ability to conduct the affairs of state, tossing around the ideals of state power and trying to capitalize on popular idealism about the state in the cloak of debates about laws that are actually already settled. The legislators' attendance and the intensity of their debates therefore depend not so much on the importance of the new law for the state but on the amount of publicity the parties can generate, i.e., whether the decision in question is a good platform for stressing alternatives that reverberate with some segment of the voters. Favorite subjects for lengthy, publicly effective legislative sessions are therefore the national budget, which permits a discussion of the state's efficiency in terms of the whole ensemble of its measures, as well as matters on which the voters' morality can be mobilized for the government or opposition (such as abortion, capital punishment, or the environment).

While the governing party uses these debates to justify its decisions being binding for everyone, the **opposition** proves itself by constructively criticizing state measures with the state's interest in

mind. It rises to its democratic task of blaming the governing party for the hardships inevitably inflicted on most of the population (which it would rather inflict on them itself) and channeling permanent discontent into the prospect of an alternative government. The opposition votes for or against laws which are passed even without its consent, depending on how it thinks it can appeal to more voters. It thus exploits the advantage it has of not being responsible for governing to kindle popular discontent with the government as best it can in order to attain power itself.

The target for the citizens and therefore the opposition is the **government**, the executive body of the majority party that implements the laws passed by the legislature. Unlike the legislature, in which dispute between the representatives is organized, the government is distinguished by its uniformity of action, with the authority to decide on government policy vested in the president or prime minister, with accountable subordinate ministers. The government is the political head of the administration of the state. Permanent state functions are managed by a tenured bureaucracy irrespective of all changes in political leadership. The government modifies these functions with a view to efficient management, using the bureaucratic experts both as compliant servants and as correctives. The various constitutional forms of dependence or independence for legislature and government are nothing but ways of preventing legislative decisions and their execution from fundamentally conflicting with each other. The government must not act against the compromises among society's various demands on the state that have become law, and the legislature must not issue laws against the concrete requirements of the state's exercise of power. According to how the legislature and government depend on or influence each other, this mutual correction may have the character of peaceful cooperation between the legislative majority and the government against the opposition, or be an ongoing confrontation between the various state institutions (the much-lamented "gridlock"). The government or the administration therefore has the right to concretize the execution of the laws according to the detailed necessities discovered in the course of administering the affairs of state. These **government regulations** are legally binding by constitution, enabling law or common practice as the case may be.

In all cases the democratic "division" of powers (which also includes their "overlapping") ensures the functionality of the state's measures for the collisions of competition, and the effectiveness of the decisions put through by its representatives for preserving the state and the economy. It thus serves to maintain the consent of those affected, which is the condition and criterion for political success.

On the one hand, that is why the democratic instruments of the state are protected by impediments to amending the constitution, as well as by judicial review, which restrict any change in constitutional principles. On the other hand, in cases of national emergency, which include natural catastrophes just as well as external threats or domestic revolts against the state, i.e., in cases when democratic procedures endanger state functions, the continuation of these functions is fixed by **emergency laws**. Without any need for obtaining the representative consent of the people, with open disregard for the will, situation and life of the citizen, the constitution sanctions the necessity to suspend democracy in order to maintain it.

e) Historical remarks

Parliamentary democracy, which organizes the exercise of state power with the help of the consent of the "governed," is the product of a social need for a power that is at the same time sovereign *and* functional for interests which cannot persist without this power, a power which subordinates its decisions to these interests. The democratic state was therefore established through a correction of state power by social interests which gained the upper hand against a sovereign that had become dependent on them but did not serve them. After all, a state gives in to those under its rule

only if it can no longer maintain itself otherwise. Conversely, a social class consents to a power above it (instead of eliminating it) only if it needs it. The credit for initiating the development of democracy therefore goes to the bourgeoisie. But its completion is the achievement of the working class.

With its growing economic clout the bourgeoisie dictated to the sovereign the *proper* use of its political power, preventing the sovereign from acting against their class interests. A parliament of the estates, in which the bourgeoisie confronted the landowners, gained the right to approve taxes. The bourgeoisie used its economic control over the sovereign's decisions as a means for wresting the right to legislate from the absolute ruler and limiting him by a **constitutional monarchy** to the execution of the decisions made by the legislative representatives of the ruling classes. Or he was replaced entirely by a **republic** with an elected government. The use of state power for the ruling classes allowed them to build up large-scale industry ruthlessly and create an ever growing number of wageworkers who could not live by their wage labor and who came in conflict with state power with every effort to secure their existence. Since these efforts of the proletarians endangered the state, it became aware that it could not last without taking account of this constantly growing class, i.e. without granting rights to the workers. Conversely, the reaction of the state showed the workers that they had to use it as a means in their struggle against their exploiters. Success in safeguarding their material interests was equivalent to political success within the state. This involved changing the public power, which was acting as the instrument of the capitalists without bothering about preserving the human material for them to exploit. The struggle for universal suffrage, the promotion of democracy *was* therefore class struggle, although not in the first democracy, in America.

f) Ideologies

1. *Political science: the democratic science*

The reason for the democratic organization of state power is that the state's success depends on the consent of its citizens. Democracy institutionalizes this consent as the basis for political measures against them. This is a contradiction that cries out for a bourgeois science to justify it. **Political science** is the *democratic science* par excellence. It discusses all aspects of the institutionalized antagonism between the state and its citizens from the point of view of functionality, i.e., to what extent these aspects consolidate state power through the consent of its citizens. Its propagandistic portrayal of state institutions and ideals is intended to refute every reason for discontent with the state, period. It offers an arsenal of arguments for why citizens should voluntarily submit to state power, proving its usefulness for civic education in literature, history and social studies classes.

The **theory of democratic institutions** compares election systems according to their fairness versus the resulting ability to govern. It welcomes political parties as agencies mediating between the interests of citizens and state power. It considers two- (or more) party systems, mainstream versus "single issue" parties, in terms of how uniform the conduct of state affairs is, whether there are enough electoral alternatives, or whether they articulate a variety of interests (internal party democracy.) It defends representative democracy against the idea of the people having direct influence on the decisions of the state, and praises the functionality of the division of powers and its necessary limits for the use of power in the interest of citizens. It admits that the state is a relationship of force to which citizens must submit, but points out that state power is constitutional and not arbitrary. It has no trouble idealizing by praising the democratic principles of freedom (which the state brings about by limiting it) and political and legal equality (which is not to be confused with social equality.) Political science has its own version of the fact that the state is necessitated by economic competition. We need it both to harness *and* to fulfill human nature! A look at political institutions and ideas of the *past*, with the

appropriate twisting of what earlier thinkers really meant, serves as proof that today's democracy is the culmination of all human aspirations. With its tautological demonstration that the past was nothing but a striving for the present and the present is nothing but the fulfillment of what was lacking in the past, it gets around answering the question of what freedom and equality are actually good for.

The inevitable conclusion of these scientific efforts is that the precariousness of democracy is the strength of this best of all bad forms of state, i.e., the state functions best as a power if it does not have to keep *forcing* its will on the citizens. This is demonstrated by the branch of political science which carries out a *pseudo-comparison* between *democracy* and *dictatorship*. Here the necessity of dictatorship is regretfully admitted in the case of a *serious* "crisis of democracy." In the course of weighing the diverse advantages and disadvantages of dictatorship and democracy, which always comes out in favor of the latter, political science sees democracy as the way to prevent dictatorship that unfortunately doesn't always work. This provides the transition to stressing the necessary limits of democracy and to rephrasing citizens for their lack of enthusiasm for the state. Democracy is said to be endangered by its critics who always want to make citizens more free and more equal, and democracy more direct and more deeply rooted in all areas of social life. The real problem of democracy, however, is found to be the citizen as such, who participates too little or too much or too ignorantly, who has too little democratic education and who is unwilling to tone down his egotism in the interest of the state because he is so immature.

2. Popular ideologies

Legislative carryings-on exist only if citizens have developed such an interest in the state that they go to the polls, i.e. regularly cultivate the dialectics of expectation and disappointment. Consequently, they never let their disappointment speak against their expectations but are forever looking for shortcomings in the democratic *procedures* which they can blame everything on. Citizens critical of these procedures just keep proving how subservient they are. They complain that their interests are disregarded using phrases borrowed from political science, and are all too willing to admit their lack of rebelliousness by acknowledging the arguments of professional agitators who put them in their place. For them, politicians are people one personally finds likable or unlikable, their propaganda is too one-sided, too remote from their interests, too arrogant, of bad style. The parties' actions in the legislature are not understandable enough, not transparent enough, do not offer enough alternatives, and shake their trust in the Honorable members of the House. On the one hand they want to see real competition between the legislative clubs. On the other they fear it. Democrats feel at home during election campaigns because they overestimate the importance of their vote. But they are irritated by the agitation that bombards them with debates about basic values instead of "solving the real problems." They are often displeased with the excesses of electoral campaigns that are supposedly so foreign to the serious business of politics, and are glad when state power can finally be exerted normally again. Forever disappointed democrats adopt the resigned, know-it-all attitude that it's a hoax they're not falling for, which shows that their disillusionment is really an illusion. Staunch democrats, by contrast, always complain only after the election that the government is now losing its credibility for good, so they sometimes like to take part in the debates about how to bring the people and their representatives closer together.

It is therefore a good idea to criticize the peculiar forms of democratic life in detail, although citizens know it inside out and always tear it to pieces themselves. The morality of popular consciousness does not mean being unaware of the ruthlessness of political dealings, it means nevertheless expecting to benefit from them, *calculating* with them. Citizens regard the struggle for power as comparable to the

struggle of everyday life, and are quick to show full understanding for the necessities and constraints of political dealings. Critical opinions of elections are no more than a compulsory exercise in ideal democracy, and are not even intended to be more than that.

Revisionist and fascist critiques are no exception to this well-known democratic hypocrisy, they are just less accepted. For *revisionists*, the legislature does not really represent the people because it is too dependent on the interests and influences of Wall Street and the trade associations (state monopoly capitalism) and not dependent enough on the interests of the majority of the people. In the interests of real democracy, they therefore demand that representatives be bound to the will of the electorate on each and every issue, and that all civil servants be elected by the people. Elections continually betray the progressive hopes of the people, that is, unless they vote for the true alternative, the revisionist party, which already distinguishes itself by the class origin of its candidates as opposed to the degenerate lackeys of the ruling class. In countries where they actually came into power, such as in Eastern Europe after World War II, revisionists therefore proceeded to abolish democracy in the name of democracy. With exploitation nationalized, elections were no longer a means for consent and representation. Nevertheless, they had some utility as forced acclamation.

Fascists also claim to be the only alternative to the run-down bourgeois parties. However they are concerned about the state being weakened by the competition between the parties, the opportunism of the representatives and the politicians' orientation toward the whims of citizens, who think more about themselves than about the state. They consider democratic parties, their leaders and legislative procedures to be one big threat to the state, the unity of the people and the future of the nation. They consistently play off the necessity of the state against its own basis, competitive interests and their manifestations in the political sphere. Their ideals are rigorous virtue and self-sacrifice, which will save the people. Democrats are enemies of the people. When fascists succeed in attaining power with the help of the majority of disappointed citizens, they present to the people the incarnation of their uniform will, since it disregards their particular interests. The leader also has himself acclaimed, not as an executor of interests but as a personified ideal, the nation. This of course presupposes that materialism has vanished from politics, which is why Jews were not the only ones to vanish in concentration camps.

Chapter 10: Public Opinion — Pluralism — Tolerance

The state periodically calls on its citizens to vote for their leaders, i.e., to refrain from influencing the conduct of the affairs of state, while at the same time passively putting up with the corresponding effects. It can therefore keep functioning democratically only if it manages to maintain the disappointment of its citizens as a positive basis for itself, as the desire for a democratic state. It takes the teeth out of the inevitable comparison of its performance with citizens' expectations by permitting all social interests to be articulated. In this way, conflicting demands offset each other and can be rejected as being not simultaneously achievable. A citizen's interest is degraded to an **opinion**. The state charges it with being just one *particular* viewpoint by confronting it with all the other competing interests. It therefore acknowledges the wish only as a wish, with no legitimacy. It welcomes the individual comparisons of wishes with political reality as a *theoretical exercise*, expanding its ideology about balancing interests into the propaganda of **tolerance** and the **diversity of opinion**.

The state promotes these ideals by charging the public news institutions with the task of eliciting all private interests in the form of proposals for the common good. The professionals who cater to the need of citizens for news and analysis are obligated to represent all actions of the state as services for the people, only more or less successful, and to reinterpret every sacrifice as an alternative *state* policy. In addition, the state addresses the public as an agitator itself, permitting itself certain media privileges or directly running media institutions as public firms.

The principle of **bourgeois public opinion**, which the democratic state takes some trouble to institutionalize and utilize, is therefore this. The victims of state power allow their interests to be degraded into opinions, separating the interests from any action to promote them, and thereby give up the truth of their needs in favor of illusions about the state. The consolation is that their false thoughts are at least free.

a) The right to discontent

The democratic state demands more from the majority of its people than that they merely make themselves useful as material for exploitation. They are also required to concern themselves with shaping the power that gives their exploitation its dignity. Democracy is not content that everyone simply *submit* to state power. It constantly reminds the people that this act of submission is their *own* self-surrender. Those citizens who are *forced to want* the state and are continually disappointed in their calculation of being able to make use of the state they need, are in for a special treat. *Discontent becomes their right*, and failure becomes a component of their free will. Despite the limits set by the state, their will remains intact because it treats the *objective* obstacles to its fulfillment as its *own subjective* nature. "You can't always get what you want!" The state plays off the *agreement* with its *existence* implicit in citizens' politicized demands *against* their *dissatisfaction* with its administration of the common good. Its decisions, being the final word, not only deny citizens' expectations but refute them. At the same time, it never misses the chance to misrepresent its obvious goals as helplessness in the face of so many terribly worthy causes.

b) The difference between interests and opinions

The free will that denies itself by determining itself only relative to state actions is the distinguishing feature of a citizen who wants to remain one despite all his disappointments with his state. He has not simply given up his interests, but worked his way to a *theoretical attitude* toward them. He does not *want to achieve* his desires but *would like it if they could be achieved* within the framework of the

democratic order and its necessities. His anticipation of the state's *negative* reply and his resigned acceptance of it not only transforms his will into one which is not exercised, hence theoretical (so that in bourgeois society every wiseacre takes it for granted that "theoretical" means the same as "impossible"). It also makes the *certainty of his needs*, the consciousness of what he wants, a *conditionally valid* matter. The citizen has an *opinion* about what he is entitled to. If he does not manage to stamp everything he says about his interests with the mark of relativity, his fellow citizens will point out that he is *only* expressing *his own* opinion. Strictly speaking, discussions in bourgeois public life make use of only *one* supposed argument, namely that no opinion counts *since* other opinions also exist! The state teaches everyone how to play this game by cutting down everyone's opinions while demonstrating that its own opinion is always valid. The state has the *power* to prove that it is in everyone's *objective interest* to disown their "merely" subjective needs.

c) Tolerance

Tolerance is the **ideal of political power**, directed against all citizens, who each want this force directed against everyone else. In the well-guarded spheres of public opinion the state sees to it that **diversity of opinion** prevails. Genuine polemics has died out, being only feigned in debates over who is the better democrat, etc. However, in the spheres where the state is not immediately present, people quickly realize that their differences are not merely ones of *opinion*. In the intimacy of their family or favorite tavern the voicing of an interest is still cause for a fistfight. That illustrates exactly what the state codifies with its **freedom of speech**, namely the prohibition to treat opposing interests in any way other than as differing points of view. Opinions must be allowed to be *voiced* so that they *remain* opinions. This is all freedom of speech is. And since there is always the danger of citizens taking seriously opinions criticizing the state, and drawing practical consequences from them, every democratic state puts limits on the freedom of speech and press. When it sees fit, a democracy does not hesitate to equate an opinion with a real intent. In all these cases, of course, democrats complain that this threatens the submissiveness of citizens, which also gives away the whole secret of democratic public opinion.

d) The media

The democratic state looks favorably upon the freedom of speech because it **politicizes** citizens. The press and other media perform a *public function* by accustoming citizens to correct their own materialism by submitting to the state, to the point where they start quarreling with each other as idealists of the state. It becomes a public pastime to turn every need left by the wayside into a *failure* of those in office, so that politicians come in conflict with their own media agitators. Political parties therefore compete not only in their *own* organs, as they do in Europe, but above all for the possibility of *media exposure*. This means fighting over who gets how many minutes on public broadcasting stations. On the basis of their joint interest in the state, reporters visit politicians and politicians invite in reporters to tell each other what they think. This boring routine is regularly punctuated by injunctions, libel suits and legal actions for damages with large sums at stake (it's a matter of honor!) And since the mere dissemination of a fact sometimes damages a politician's reputation as much as a malicious interpretation of his political misdeeds would, thereby shaking the people's trust in the state, or even gives spies something for free, many a politician considers the free press a subversive mafia. In retaliation, reporters measure every state and its representatives by the respect they show for the freedom of the press.

The conflicts between *politicians* and *journalists* are based on their common interest in producing *harmony* between state and citizen despite all discontent. Politicians would be happiest if

their propaganda troops concentrated on glorifying their responsibilities, the hardships of office, their dilemmas, their tightrope walk between this and that, their energy, their expertise, their passion, their objectivity, their integrity, and so on ad nauseam. In short, they want to be praised just for being politicians and for having accepted the thankless task of dealing with the problems which society drops at the state's doorstep. They wish reporters would limit their state propaganda to moral exhortations and lectures about citizens' duties. Although journalists do everything their public function requires (at difficult times unanimously regurgitating the free opinion of the official government spokesman), they cannot help touching on the reason for their profession, namely the antagonism between the state and the majority of its citizens. In their concern for promoting the most effective state they are always finding fault with their audience, while admonishing the statesmen for not doing their jobs skillfully enough, at the right time, in the right style, and so on, and thereby shaking people's *trust* in the state. They are proficient in all the forms of loyal criticism mentioned in Chapters One through Nine, and pick out some party line to support as being best for the state. This treatment of the competition between parties is a source of discontent among politicians, who see a need to supplement or correct the products of their agitators by appearing in the media themselves (arranging "sound bites") or even making their own products (conducting legislative debates on radio and TV and waging their election campaigns).

It is therefore no accident that the lively squabbles between the professional representatives of public opinion and those who need them are a favorite topic for newspapers and radio stations. Journalism always involves methodological discussions about itself because of the contradiction it is based on. The **news** is always a *democratically twisted interpretation of the sacrifices* the newest state measures call for. But as agitation it has the flaw that it constantly has to *mention* what it wants the majority to *abstract* from, their damaged or neglected material interests. Not that democratic journalists fear this might lead to revolution. Far from it! For as long as they warn that clumsy political decisions might radicalize the mob there is not much danger of that. Their problem is that their commentaries about the pros and cons of political alternatives are not appreciated enough by the people, who have other things to worry about than turning their abstraction from their needs into political involvement. The willingness to obey and to vote for a gutsy guy for president is just not the same as a passionate preoccupation with the fine points of democratic efficiency.

This too is taken into account in the bourgeois media. After all, the "ordinary guy" is by no means an *apolitical* person. He is called "ordinary" because he has acquired all the necessary accouterments for scraping through, without any need for anything more fancy. He knows very well when to be polite and when to be the boss, when he has to prove his worth as a worker, and when to brag about the drink some big shot bought him. A person like that does not need the complicated agitation of highbrow newspapers and political magazines. His politicized mind only has room for confirmation. Anything else annoys him. This principle is taken to heart by the section of the media which caters to the common man. This kind of press is fascist in nature because it reduces every suggestion of a *democratic* ideal to its real political essence, the *necessity* of state order. It doesn't bother dwelling on the problems of a particular procedure adopted by politicians, or the relationship between a new law and social justice or the constitution. Here, battles between the different wings of a party are signs of either good health or communism. There is nothing in between. Common sense reigns, along with good taste, which has the opportunity to expose itself since the fascist mania for justice even regards entertainment as a chance to fulfill the function of forming public opinion:

1. When the masses have a *positive* attitude toward state power while being *dissatisfied* with the politics practiced, they are on the right track. *Their* newspapers have the task of telling them *who to blame*. In the most diverse corners of society one can find people who only want to harm the community. This includes a lot of politicians, who give away credits for free, make deals with communists, mess up the budget, suck up to the unions, give student grants to criminals, etc. Unmasking this rabble gives the readers the consolation that *they* at least are worthy citizens. The moral of this political reporting is that every decent citizen should not let up being decent, i.e. in favor of the state and intransigent toward its enemies and parasites.

2. This civic morality is also cultivated by paying great attention to **crime** of all sorts, which proves to everybody how difficult it is for the state to tame human beasts who threaten good citizens, and how much support it deserves. This proof and the one that crime does not pay, are not enough for those out to sharpen their readers' sense of justice. One must also remember that certain modes of behavior just beg for trouble, that there are good and bad motives, and that anyway some victims just get what they deserve.

3. Thus, a wife cannot expect sympathy if she is stabbed by her husband for cheating on him while he, a dentist, is very popular with all his patients. Since the frustrations of family life give so many people crooked ideas, **love** is an important matter in and outside the halls of justice. Because of state regulations and their shattering effects, this theme plays a central part on many pages of the mass press. They show naked women along with tips on how to deal with the guy at home.

4. It was already noted in Chapter Five that **mass culture** is an institution of morality and therefore exhausts the dialectics of love, sex, patriotism and crime. The people who produce this culture need not know anything about what their service for the state actually consists in. They need only follow the taste of their audience, which is their own after all, to illustrate the ideals of the bourgeois world along with the disappointments inscribed in them. The fact that *their* works of art are rather artless, although they contain the same messages as the *greatest* of bourgeois art, only goes to show that beauty cannot be had without *some* truth.

5. What the highbrow and lowbrow levels of political and cultural agitation have in common is that they affirm all the *ills* and the *sacrifices* they deal with. The interest of journalists thus coincides with the reason for their existence. Their moral agitation welcomes the harm it wants people to accept. They are virtuosos in applying sociological and psychological thinking (see subsection f below.)

e) Historical remarks

Since the principle of bourgeois public opinion is that all public *criticism* presupposes a basic *consent* to the purpose of the state, freedom of speech and press could not and did not exist as long as criticism by certain interest groups aimed at *changing* the relationship of the state to the classes. This freedom is the last element of the democratic paraphernalia, both conceptually *and* historically, except in the United States where the point of departure was free competition and not the feudal state.

f) The bourgeois sciences of sociology and psychology

Sociology is just as recent as **psychology**, even though both branches of bourgeois science claim they go back to Plato and Aristotle. When the Greek philosophers examined the state or the soul they had no interest in dreaming up justifications of bourgeois antagonisms.

Sociology has no real subject matter. Instead of taking a look at bourgeois society or even different societies in order to make generalizations about society in general, it starts out from an imaginary abstract **system** whose **functioning** depends tautologically on all kinds of **conditions**. State **institutions** have the function of making it possible for individuals to perform their **roles**, these

roles result from **norms** and the norms result circularly from social expectations of what is normal. Everything people do as economic actors or political subjects is lumped together, regardless of its particular nature, as **behavior**. Actions, stripped of all intentions, are transformed into functions, into components of a working system. Not surprisingly, actions that are not acceptable as functions are explained as deviant behavior. All real relationships, whether between landlords and tenants, husbands and wives, employers and employees, are transformed into **interaction** per se. There are no real conflicts, just problems of **communication**. With its transformation of all social processes into vacuous parts that have no other quality than to contribute to a functioning whole, sociology produces a nice collection of attitudes for living with capitalism. How unfair that it is so often suspected of offering only useless or, even worse, revolutionary theories!

From the beginning, **psychology** has avoided the charge of being indifferent to the practical difficulties of bourgeois life. It deals with the same problem which the state takes up in its public agitation, namely, how to get the *will* of the citizen to give *itself* up. However, it presents this problem as care for human beings. Psychology deals with nothing except the *performances* which bourgeois individuals (competitors) repeatedly *fail* to deliver, promising therapeutic aid. In the view of this science, the individual consists of a bundle of *mental faculties* which have to be used in order to cope with reality. As for those individuals who do not cope, the psychologist comes up with the lie that the fault lies with *them*. If you can't make it, with all your *faculties* for working, thinking, learning and loving, then you have to *get normal*. All the psychological theories, whether Freud's or Skinner's, are therefore nothing but programs to domesticate a reluctant will. It is no coincidence that everything carried out by the psychological community under the guise of helping people is financed by the state in its schools, prisons, courtrooms, and in the military. In the media, the general attitude of psychology against individuality is the daily fare, a collective psychoanalysis for the common man.

g) Popular ideologies

The state's public agitation is relentless in its insistence on "constructive criticism," that its citizens worry themselves silly about the problems of the institution whose leading lights they must select. This agitation itself meets with constructive criticism from those who comply with the demand. The constant praise of freedom of speech and thought is countered by some citizens (and also occasionally by journalists, who get reprimanded) with the pitiful objection that free opinion needs no censorship but should be a matter of responsible and mature use. These critics, who agree entirely with the content and purpose of bourgeois public opinion, get all excited about any formal limitations on mass communication or other form of interchange. It is a scandal when they are not given a chance to participate in a debate although they have raised their hands. The newspapers are all owned by one company. People are only listened to *before* elections. Communication is too one-sided, people should be transmitters and receivers at the same time. Information is falsified or hushed up, suppressed. In short, there is **manipulation** everywhere, the people are being misled. This accusation takes the cake for stupidity in view of how clearly people are told in public what is expected of them.

Right-wingers regard anyone who discusses a matter with any sign of commitment as a communist, who has the audacity to interfere with the course of state affairs which is already awkward enough with its democratic procedures. Whole editorial boards are infiltrated, and there is much too much discussion instead of getting down to business.

All this leaves the bourgeois state cold. It repudiates the attacks from both the right and the left by stressing the diversity of opinion prevailing in democracies and comparing it with states in which its critics are in power. It will not be accused of manipulation. In fulfilling its mission to raise up a good

crop of citizens, the schools even treat criticism of manipulation as a hot issue. The state sees to it that the media discuss *themselves* and their public function with their audience, whereby each side castigates the other for imaginary failures. Letters to the editor and musical request programs are splendid additional demonstrations of how much people are given their say.

The only thing that bothers the state sometimes is when citizens form action groups instead of merely wanting to be heard. Politicians then see a need to say they will not, and cannot, bow to “pressure from the street.” When such action groups are successful, it is never due to any “pressure.” Rather, it is because they conjure up the question of the citizens’ trust in the state and occasionally invite the opportunism of a political party if their demands serve an actual state purpose. When protesters think of their protest, not as a demonstration of powerlessness, but as *the* way to succeed in wringing benefits from the state, they are asking for the police to refute them. They may get their day-care center, but squatting in vacant buildings gets a club to the head or worse. They hardly think twice about “selling out” to politicians, who use them to demonstrate how grass-roots their politics is, even when the state is directly ruining their lives (e.g., by nuclear power plants.)

Someone who “speaks his mind” and at least is proud of not letting anyone take away his humble opinion, since his interests are surely going to be ignored, is a **mature** citizen. He receives this seal of quality from the highest authorities because he has made *himself* fit for the democratic exercise of power by proving he understands that freedom means self-restraint. He has learned to accept the necessity of every constraint imposed on him by the state. When confronted with other people’s discontent he takes sides with political rule, taking for granted that national politics must not make itself *dependent* on any particular opinion, and that politics must serve the economy on which everybody depends. The starting point in Chapter One was how private interests come to terms with an *external* constraint. It has been shown above how this collision takes the form of a responsible handling of one’s own needs. And the illusion that the state is a means *for* the citizen to pursue his interests logically develops as the realization that the only way to preserve this means is by exercising self-restraint. Nothing else pays off!

It need not be mentioned for whom the democratic state makes self-restraint worthwhile, i.e., for whom it isn’t one. It will be equally clear that mature citizens are also willing to support “their” country against all the barriers it encounters *outside* its national territory (even if this means sacrificing their very lives.) Democracy and nationalism (along with its ideals of cosmopolitanism) are anything *but* incompatible. Democracy and communism *are*. Every argument communists put forward is immediately identified by the discontented but opinionated citizen as a non-opinion, an uncompromising insistence on the interests of *one* class with all its consequences for society. The fact that communists make use of freedom of the press and freedom of speech does not mean that public opinion is a means for *them* to achieve their goals. On the contrary, they are raked over the coals when the rules for the proper use of free speech are invoked, not to mention court judgments outlawing communist parties. Opinions which do not express how relative they are the moment they are voiced thus meet with great hostility. This has also become a permanent institution among democratic leftists, who hurl the **accusation of dogmatism**. *This* needs no refutation.