

DEVELOPMENTALISM AND THE 'NEW SOCIETY' THE REPRESSIVE IDEOLOGY OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT*

A. R. MAGNO

Department of Political Science

When Martial Law was proclaimed on September 21, 1972 and a "New Society" brought officially to life, new social forces were set into motion and old social forces distilled into new forms.

As some of the old forces died out, others merely split and still others consolidated or merged with entirely new ones. New contradictions became evident. The problem of constructing adequate analytical differentiations has quickly emerged. Central to this problem is the correct formulation in political economy of the specific and definite social mode of which underdevelopment and dictatorship in the Philippines may be both scientifically understood and competently exposed and opposed.

It is correct that the whole social condition is determined in the last instance by the concrete logic of real processes understandable only through the methodological and analytical structures of historical materialism expressed in political economy. It would be wrong, however, to see the problem of ideological formation as entirely peripheral, for to do so would mean to deny subjective disposition as an eventually objective force in the internal logic of a given line of historical development.

The martial law regime in the Philippines — the most consistent and outstanding feature of Philippine politics over the last years — is both common and distinct. It is common in the sense that it partakes of a general political tendency sweeping numerous Third World societies, especially those most closely linked with centers of monopoly capital through tight webs of dependency and underdevelopment. This general political tendency is characterized by the emergence of strong, centrally organized authoritarian states working through expanded military organizations and powerful technocracies operating beyond the old "law and order" line of self-justification and forming a more sophisticated line of ideological argument that vests the

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state with the role of leading instrument for "national development" as a response to the intensifying crises of underdevelopment. While the emergence of authoritarian structures in periphery societies may be explained in terms of the crisis of overaccumulation of capital in the capitalist metropolis, it does not diminish the fact that authoritarianism is also an ideological problem.

The "national development" regimes have so far been unified by their fundamental opposition to the national liberation movements as best expressed by the militarized character of what has already been referred to as the "neo-fascist" dimension of Third World authoritarianism. "Neo-fascism," however, refers not only to the militarism of these regimes but also to their general reliance on powerful technocratic control that, on a fundamental ideological basis, sees the problem of underdevelopment merely as problems of "efficiency" and "manageability." These powerful technocratic systems of domination and control are characteristically not opposed to imperialism, as they perceive Third World societies as "developing" rather than "underdeveloping"; and that "backwardness" may be resolved not by a revolutionary anti-imperialist break but by adequate "planning" and a strong political ability for the "implementation" of these plans. Thus, an attitude holding the primacy of the state in the historical transformation of societies: the familiar "statism" characteristic of the American school of political science.

In seeing the crisis of underdevelopment as simply a problem between "order" and "anarchy," technocrats develop strong sympathies with the military and serve both as allies and as justifications of military rule. The military-technocratic character, then, of the emergent Third World dictatorship develops both out of the real crisis of underdevelopment and constitutes a form of ideological understanding of the nature of the crisis. For close to a generation now, capitalist political scientists have been explaining away the *structural* crisis of underdevelopment as merely transitory conditions of *political* instability due either to the political "immaturity" of the post-colonial societies or to the unsettled legitimacy of the of the new independent states. This is disciplinist distortion, and it has led to the consequent ignorance among social scientists of the fundamental crisis of underdevelopment. The emergent "neo-fascist" understanding of the crisis of backwardness constitutes the logical conclusion of bourgeois-liberal understanding of social processes.

Martial law in the Philippines is a curious case of a regime that alternately insists it is tentative and transitory at one in-

stance and that it is the embodiment of a "new society" at other instances. On the one hand, its language of self-description argues for a "national security" state organized to meet specific and immediate "threats" to the Republic. On the other hand, it sees itself as the embodiment of the future, the principal initiator and guarantor of "national development." This ideological frame we shall refer to in this paper as "developmentalism." These two tendencies of rationalization are summed up in the initial proclamation that inaugurated the regime in the phrase: "to save the Republic and to form a new society."

The martial law regime is a comprehensive political phenomenon, while it has managed to constitute itself into a clear "break" with the government and politics of the Republic, the political coup that set its processes in motion does not represent an unbridgeable chasm in Philippine history. On the contrary, the paper sees it as the ineluctible conclusion of processes already in motion in Philippine history. This includes the objective processes of political economy, the distinct features of the class struggle as it manifests itself in the specific characteristics of neocolonialism and underdevelopment in the Philippines, and the subjective processes of ideological synthesis and political culture as it is determined in the last instance—and pre-eminently in the last instance—by the neocolonial mode.

Ideological formations must not be taken as if they occurred in a historical vacuum, as if they were self-determining—and much less, as if they were determinant in the last instance. To investigate these ideological formations in this way, while it has become characteristic of a large number of social scientists, is to investigate from the standpoint of idealism because such accords the realm of culture a separate and objective existence. A more perverted variation of this line of understanding is to see a whole complex of historical phenomena tumble out of the ideas of one man.

Another, not entirely separate line of understanding that has increasingly revealed itself inadequate is that which considers the ideological formations characteristic of the "New Society" period as being born entirely out of the political demands confronting the regime on a day-to-day basis. The ideological self-justification of the martial law regime is then seen as being premised largely on political opportunism—a conscious effort to deceive without being deceived. Thus, it is perceived, narrowly, as a wholly objectively determined conceptual system reflecting on a one to one basis the objective position, interests and direction of the ruling circle; or as thus:

forming nothing more than a series of consciously formulated deceptions to conceal the antagonistic political motions of the ruling circle perpetrated on the people and yet obfuscating the people's concrete understanding of the ruling circle's machinations.

This line of understanding oversimplifies the "mediative" operation of ideological systems by situating the ideological mediation between the ruling class and the dominated classes thus implying the absence of "mediative" intervention between the ruling circle and their objective class interests. This line of understanding ideological systems derives from a vulgar materialist understanding of the character and role of the state in class-divided societies. To expose therefore this more insidious line of understanding (more insidious because it infects the Left as much as the Right — or, more precisely, because it constitutes a bourgeoisified "Left" understanding that otherwise reconciles heretofore "Left" understanding with the right and subverts genuine revolutionary understanding) emerges as the more urgent task and a task that at the same time requires a more adequate theoretical grasp because it seeks to some to grips with qualitatively unique historical circumstances.

The outcome of the abovementioned line of ideological understanding in terms of scholarly output has been an extremely narrow assessment of the specific phenomenon of the "New Society" whose predominant line of analysis tends more to the consequently vain attempt to show the inconsistency of the regime's "claims" from the "reality" it conceals. This attempt to show the "insincerity" of the regime, while not being entirely wrong, is geared ultimately, whether the commentators are conscious of it or not, to a criticism of the regime and at the same time a validation of its "claims" since it is not the objective character of the "claims" that are subject to radical investigation but the "effectiveness" by which the "claims" are being transformed into actuality. This leaves the basic and objective ideological "moment" unexamined and eventually — and often unwittingly — reconciles the "critics" of the regime with the regime's own basic assumptions and subjectivities, with its "mission" of national emancipation. The outcome, therefore, consists not of "objective" assessments but ultimately of subjective concurrence with the essential presumptions of the dominant self-justification of the ruling classes and therefore of the myopic assessment of the historical processes it sets into motion and a non-recognition of its objective historical "moment."

In the last analysis, these types of assessments of a concrete phenomenon in history is treated in a manner that differs very little from the positivist, technocratic self-justifications and reproductions of the dominant consciousness that have already been discredited with finality and transcended by the most advanced modes of social understanding generated by the "critical" social sciences.

"Clearly, the main theoretical problems emerging in the course of constructing an objective assessment of the ideological characteristics of a concrete "moment" in history boils down to the need for an adequate clarification of the nature of the state in relation to the objectively formed and scientifically investigable characteristics of the social mode and the subjectively developing and objectively determined ideological formation as it develops and clusters around a definite social mode.

The laws of history (historical materialism) explain the development of a social mode and situate it in the larger context whereby the historical essence of a social "block" may be understood. It does not, however, provide a consistent "guide" to the subjective formations accompanying the emergence in history of social modes. It does not explain from an external logical the subjective determinations that at certain historical "moments" *seemingly* play the determinant role in the turn of historical circumstances.

The state under any condition should not be understood as a totally mindless, reflex expression of production relations especially in the warped class circumstances of underdeveloping societies. It is not literally and simplistically the "executive committee" of the ruling class which otherwise connotes the absolute self-consciousness of the ruling class, and thus also of the underclasses', requiring the outrightly violent imposition of class rule without the consoling and mollifying mediations and fetters of a "civil" culture. The state rather than being directly an expression of production relations is an expressions of the specific social mode and therefore the specific nature of the class struggle in a society at a given instance with all the dimensions of determinations and contradictions contained herein.

It is important to situate the investigation of ideological formations within a general understanding of the state in underdeveloped societies. Otherwise the attempt to reflect on the ideological traditions shall sum up into mere summarizations of policy statements rather than a comprehensive understanding of the functions of ideological formation in the specific context of an underdeveloped society.

An ideological mould forms in the context of concrete political circumstances and cannot be fully grasped apart from an understanding of the structural conditions determining these circumstances. While it is beyond the scope of this study to determine the *exact* function of the "New Society" regime in the context of underdevelopment, it must by necessity operate on a definite and conscious set of propositions concerning the "periphery" character of the martial law regime. The state *must* be seen in terms of the role imputed to it by conditions of underdevelopment — not in terms of political scientism that is capable of seeing only functions in themselves without the dimension of epochal essence, and thus in a consequently affirmative way that has in fact rationalized authoritarianism.

More definitely, however, the study must treat as its object the ideological view of the state as the material embodiment of such abstracts as "nation," "sovereignty" and "national destiny" which are precisely, as taken in this paper, the very subjective dispositions of the self-justification, the specific ideological formation it investigates. On this basis, it shall attempt to trace the development of the bourgeois-liberal theory of the polity up to its maturation in the self-justification of authoritarianism in its basic military-technocratic forms and its developmentalist rationalization. It must then consider the political pressures that determined the transformation of the "referee" conception of the state with its pluralist implications to the "interventionist" conception of the state and its authoritarian political practice. Therefore, the theoretical view that the bourgeois "interventionist" state is not ideologically inconsistent with the bourgeois-liberal view. It is, in fact, its ideological conclusion. This essential transformation in the ideological mold of bourgeois statism as it occurs within the dominant political circle in the Philippines shall be the main task of this description.

This Nation Shall Be Great Again

The distillation of bourgeois-liberal understanding of politics and government from the nebulous pluralist theory to the more cogent statism of authoritarian self-justification did not simply occur in the Philippine context when Presidential Proclamation 1081 was declared. The process of distillation in the political consciousness of the ruling circle — conditioned both by the necessities of crisis and the legitimation of specific political responses to necessity — has been in motion perhaps as early as President Quirino's suspension of the writ of

habeas corpus at the height of radicalized peasant resistance to landlord rule during the early part of the fifties.

The process is more evident, however, in the gradual re-constitution of political rule characterizing the Marcos presidency from 1965 to 1972 and culminating in the Marcos regime of martial law. The distillation of the political consciousness of the ruling circle is best expressed in the ideas of the central figure, and perhaps the personification, of this process whereby Philippine society entered into a definite line of development where the state apparatus overdeveloped as the social mode underdeveloped to contain both fundamental resistance to the condition of underdevelopment and to promote an ideological notion of "development" without an anti-imperialist revolutionary break.

Even before the Marcos years, "enlightened" economists and businessmen were beginning to clamor against the "high cost of politics" while at the same time demanded a "stable" political order that would provide a "healthy climate" for capital. Liberalism as social theory sets the premises for the theory of a "popular" revolution emanating from "above" in the institutions of state authority. This ideological theme rests almost in its entirety on the assumption of the non-ideologicality of the state. The state is "popular" because it is the embodiment of the "general interest"—specially the general interest "in the last analysis," meaning the fundamental basis of a society that may not, in the Rousseauan sense, be perceptible by all, or, in the Hobbesian sense, a common interest made evident by necessity. In this sense, the Aristotelian notion of "constitutionalism," the underlying "mean" unaffected by the whole range of "passions" which is merely presumed in liberalism, becomes the expressed and cogent logic of self-justification in authoritarianism. The logic as well as the rhetoric of liberalism plays a crucial role in authoritarian self-justification.

Utilization of the social contract framework for rationalizing the authoritarian state is explicit rather than merely implicit in the discourses of the President. The state is then to be understood as a natural mechanism for social regulation and, therefore, an inherent component of society. While this myth of the social contract has been debunked as anthropologically baseless, the ideological attitude deriving from this naturalist theory of the state continue to be pervasive specially as it is preserved in bourgeois legalism.

The basic liberal-technocratic premises thus developed from the essential world-view of bourgeois political theory finds its

logical conclusions in the authoritarianism of the state — authoritarianism built on the autocracy of one person being merely a variant. Without the framework of social class analysis, liberalism eventually distills into a “classless” view of the state and politics. The state then exists for the “authoritative allocation” of values and is, therefore, standing “above politics” or must ideally do so. Along with the rhetoric on the “end of ideology”, a pure reason of science is held aloft not for scrutiny on a critical basis that assumes ideological relativity but for uncritical reverence. A political authority acting in the name of this scientific reason cannot, therefore, be questioned — and fundamentally it is unopposable. Superimposed on the social contract framework, this scientific delusion reduces the problem of political oppositions into a problem merely of opposition to the state. Since the state is held to be the objectification of the ‘general will’ then opposition to the state is historically, rationally and politically invalid. Thus, the “anti-politics” attitude of technocrats is subsumed into the ideological fibre of authoritarianism — and their uncritical submission assured since it is beyond the technocratic wit to think beyond the logic of the present. Constrained as they are by the logic of positivism, they are merely concerned with trying to make given circumstances “workable”.

On this ideological theme, the ruling circle perceives the crisis confronting Philippine society to be nothing more than a crisis of the political order rather than a crisis of underdevelopment, which would thus require an essentially “political” solution: although exclusively a political solution by the already existing institutional political authority. None of the competing groups represent the “national” solution to the crisis — they are all “particular wills.” Only the “duly established” political authority can provide this kind of political solution. This is the essential character of the claim to “democratic revolution” or the “revolution from the center.”

Even if the competing groups were admitted to be “an accumulation of responses to the ills of society, which were rooted in social and economic imbalances and inequities”, they were categorized primarily as anti-governmental and thus were posed as being all in the same category — as “problems” rather than as alternative solutions: the martial law regime being conversely not an “alternative” solution but the solution in objective form. The regime represents the necessary political precondition for society to realize itself; in Rousseau’s terms, it is the transitory condition marked by the systematic eradica-

tion of all particular wills which is at once the process of self-realization.

The basic line of confrontation is therefore understood as that which divides government and all opposed to it. There is therefore no cognition of "progressive" and "regressive" forces identifiable through some theory of qualitative historical motion because such does not exist in bourgeois consciousness, the basis of the criticism of its "myopic" character. The essence of the "democratic revolution," the declared objective of the martial law regime, is merely to make government work.

Consistent with the liberal understanding of the state, government is taken as an abstract objective hovering over and above the real forces at work in society and not partisan to any of the opposing forces. Government is the neutral arbiter of conflicting forces and social forces in opposition are necessarily considered "abberations and mere disturbances." Social conflict must be *eradicated* rather than *resolved* and a state without "politics" is thus required. The martial law state specifically presents itself as the embodiment of some interest-of-the-whole whose realization of retarded by "partisan" contests. With the mandate of Reason, it does not need the majority.

The Democratic Revolution

The regime in general and Marcos in particular has been consistently trying to appropriate the characteristic "revolutionary" for itself. Presenting itself as the solution to a social crisis which everyone had decided required a revolutionary response, the regime had to take on a "revolutionary" constitutionality required to sustain its legitimacy specially in the eyes of the old forces on which it relies on much of its immediate support. The combination of both "constitutionality" and a revolutionary claim is essential because it must appeal to the broadest sections of a decidedly polarized society. Since the regime has not been equipped by a historical, long-range program of revolutionary social overhaul, it must rest, on the one hand, on its revolutionary claims. Since it must substantially restructure the mechanisms of law and governmental process to eliminate opposition, centralize power and assure its own political survival as well as convince sections of the opposition that it is intent on resolving the political *immobilisme* which had developed in the years preceding the declaration of martial law, it must use, on the other hand, the rhetorics of revolution. The reconciliation of these two aspects still finds hospitable ground in bourgeois-liberal political theory and hos-

pitable quarters in the bourgeois legalism of the old Republic. This ideological synthesis the regime refers to as the "Democratic Revolution" the central argument of which is not the establishment of a revolutionary regime that overthrows in the process the old state but rather a revolution coursed through (it is tempting to say "sublimated") the existing institutional processes.

The theory of the "democratic revolution" intends to draw revolutionary legitimacy from those who could compete politically with the regime of denying the validity of revolutionary movements outside the state apparatus. In order to invalidate revolutionary movements, specially those of an anti-imperialist nature, the regime must appropriate revolutionary legitimacy for itself. This requires extending state monopoly to cover revolutionary transformation and deny the revolutionary validity of those opposed to the state. Since the state is "value-free", in the last analysis, according to the ideological premises of liberalism, only the revolution launched by the state can possibly represent the general welfare. It is also the most convenient since it is presented as the alternative to a "bloody upheaval," a prospect quite distasteful for the middle-class constituency, that would eventually lead to the disintegration of the nation. The "democratic revolution" also represents the most rational undertaking by men in an age of reason and science, as made to contrast with the typified revolutionary war whose violence is to be understood as expressive only of a barbaric past. For the regime to claim a monopoly as the radicalizing force, it combines the "national security" function with that of "national development.

To better secure this monopoly, it is necessary to invalidate both the autonomous "radicalizing" capability of the masses and their inability or incompetence to formulate or even understand a comprehensive line of development beneficial to them in the last instance. This leads logically not only to an elitist attitude which is important to mandate the technocracy but also to a subtly cultivated contempt for mass initiative important for validating the repressive role played by the military.

Bourgeois social science has consistently maintained that sporadic revolution is "disruptive" and patently "dysfunctional". Only when revolution is redefined as a conscious, planned and institutional process which does not result in breaks and discontinuities but occurs within the realm of expectancy and continuity of control it is acceptable: thus within the framework of state persistence and initiative. This redefini-

tion thus castrates revolution of the content of spontaneity and popular initiative.

Contempt for the historical creativity of the masses — the notion that they do not make as well as compose the revolutionary phenomenon — leads to the rationalization of processes of domination and control exercised over the masses by a technocratic establishment that “leads” them down the road of history. This contemptuous view of the masses is the *raison d’être* for a technocratic establishment planning *for* the masses rather than *with* them. It is central for the consistency of argument for the “developmentalist” role of the state — where “public welfare” rather than explicit consent becomes the basis of “mandate.”

Isang Bansa, Isang Diwa

The core of the martial law regime’s effort at political integration and ideological incorporation is a sustained appeal to nationalism — specifically a definition of nationalism that follows a line of least resistance; more precisely, a nationalism that draws from the old bourgeois-democratic revolution close to a century ago an artificially revived attraction. The crude comprador nationalism of the old bourgeois-democratic revolution has, however, been distilled into a glorification of the nation-state, the imagination of some national essence, a *Weltanschauung* of sorts, and a consequent classless view of politics that provides the ideological preconditions for a corporatist political order.

Nationalism is here understood as a conservative, preservative emotive force, one that “builds” rather than “destroys” and its main expression is the “democratic revolution” that is pursued to hold the nation together. Nationalism means recognizing the “general will” that is rendered inevident by the short-sightedness of political competition. The martial law regime presents itself as the main instrument for nationalism and the source of its moral compulsion to sustain “assimilation into political authority.” Political integration on the basis of the nation, nationalism in rhetoric and corporation in substance, is not unique to the ideological distillation of the “New Society” alone: it is the logical conclusion of bourgeois-liberal premises.

By misconceiving nation as *fact* rather than as concept, it is inevitable that it be reduced both in theory and in political practice to assume an abstract corporeality, an ideological imagination that is at the same time the reason of being for an actual authoritarianism. The imputation of a national essence

on the individual binds him on a fundamental basis to his "nationality" and therefore to the national state which is the objective embodiment not only of a national spirit but also of the national destiny. The state thus presents itself, from this ideological standpoint, as the clear view into the future from a vantage point not available to the individual. It denies the "individual" a separate view comparable in significance to the state which is not only benefitted with the historical accumulation of the whole society, its "heritage", but also a profound grasp of the collective historical effort of the society.

The Ethics of Corporatism

The crucial cornerstone of the social ethics of authoritarianism is an absolutist view of man. The one-dimensionality of "reason" in Lockeian and the constancy of "human nature" in the Hobbesian sense form the essential premises of technocratic consciousness and the authoritarian preference for social control and "social engineering."

The unidimensional concept of change is understood as occurring in the framework of "reason" that is in no way historically relative and therefore absolute and non-partisan. The process of change, then, is understood as a completely conscious process, one that technocrats may plan for. Individual men must therefore submit themselves to this singular "reason", and consequently to the "plans" detailed from above to achieve "development" that is known to the reason of the state but not autonomously available to individual consciousness. From the standpoint of this singular reason, men must conform eventually not through coercion but by "free" option on the basis of "rationality." This is the theoretical essence of the call for "discipline."

The reason of science is not merely technocratic rhetoric. It is the very fibre of a new Right ideology that brushes aside all social issues and fundamental ideological differentiations on their resolution by posing the false promise of technology and technological reason as the resolution of the leading problems of human existence. It also posits the infallibility of a political apparatus laying claim to scientific reason. By posing "technology" as the liberating element, technocratic reason invalidates the question of social relations as the focus of any effort at social change; the social structure is therefore not a matter of historically tentative relations transformed by human will on the basis of historically limited consciousness but a phenomenon determined wholly by available technology and changed

by technological alteration. The total and totalizing "reason of science" subsumes even the understanding of "humanism" by denying any form of relativity beyond the transplanted techniques of the natural sciences imposed on the understanding of human society. The simplistic reductionism of technocratic consciousness of every social problem to a problem of "management" puts the primacy of control, operating on the one-dimensional logic of costs and benefits, over independent initiative: the technologized consciousness.

Authoritarianism and "Take-off"

The promise of "national development" is at once the familiar export-led, foreign-investments-fueled dependent industrialization mapped out by the planning institutions of the centers of capital and enforced through the dictatorships in the neo-colonies, as well as the *raison d'être* of the developmentalist authoritarian states. Since the line of "development" articulated by, among others, the IMF-World Bank that emphasizes integration into the world imperialist system rather than self-propelled, self-sufficient development by emphasizing interdependence" rather than independence is more or less standard and not substantially depreciated in its specific enforcement on the Filipino people, more attention must now be paid to its significance as ideology over its significance as policy (an aspect extensively discussed in other studies).

Backwardness, according to the reactionary social science exported from the capitalist centers to the Third World, is merely a transitory condition caused by a rapid infusion of Western *social* influences and the "lag" emerging from the slow "adaptability" of the non-western societies. The solution, then, is the establishment of "strong" political orders that would "stabilize" these societies and allow for rapid adaptability and transition from the "backward" cultural systems that served to "bottleneck" development. The martial law regime sees itself as the "initiator" of development. It sets the political basis for transcending the condition of "backwardness" by establishing the new political structures necessary for it. The regime sees itself often as "development" in its political form, and that "development" is inconceivable outside the framework of the martial law establishment.

By situating the focus of backwardness on the political "paralysis" of society and its "disorientation" rather than on the periphery character of the economy and thus to its neo-colonial linkages, no inconsistency is seen between the "New

Society” and its nationalist guises on one hand and continued foreign intrusion on the other.

Unable to distinguish the industrial functions of an economic system from its nature and qualitative character as well as its long-term qualitative outcomes, the technocracy, ridden by short-sighted liberal economism, operates on a crisis to crisis basis, and in so doing merely reproduces the general crisis of underdevelopment in ever newer mutations. It would be wrong to try to see the regime as subservient to imperialism on a point by point basis. The regime conforms rather to the overall requirements of the world imperialist system in terms of the overall outcome of its projected “New Society.” It may, from time to time, give out semblances of relative national autonomy and independence as well as relative autonomy from the traditional and developing ruling classes. But its long-term direction is definitely the reconstitution of the ruling classes internally on the basis of a neo-colonial society transforming on the qualitatively new premises of monopoly capital at its most advanced, world integrative stage. The antagonism of the regime towards persisting “inefficient” feudal social forms is not from the standpoint of an autonomously developing national capitalism but rather from the standpoint of a dependent capitalist social formation that the regime does not “reflect” on a unilateral basis. Moreover, the regime also creates as a response to increasing neocolonial pressures that, given its ideological debility, perceived merely as “anarchic” forces that will be laid to rest with the imposition of overwhelming “political will” through dictatorship.

Liberalism and Authoritarianism

Third World authoritarianism, in its Philippine expression in particular, is not to be understood merely as a right-wing backlash to the growing tide of national liberation movements. Neither is it a mechanical response of the local, *existing* ruling classes nor is it wholly a self-conscious imperialist plot carried out against the masses through fully aware mercenaries and puppets. It is not even the classic fascist outcome growing out of general distress. It is beyond all of these and at the same time *is all of these*. But only in the last analysis.

To try to explain the martial law regime in terms of the given stereotypes mentioned above would result not in a full scientific understanding but in a caricature of it. The controversial implication, therefore, is that both the straight-forward “dependista” analysis that looks at the “concrete” structural

sources of dictatorship in a merely economic way unenlightened by the advantage of dialectical investigation, and the political scientific "decision-making" analysis that looks for the "objective" influences determining the formulation of policy—and in its oppositionist application, that looks for "actual" imperialist policy "pressure" and decision-making linkages—would prove futile in the task of placing the phenomenon of "nationalist" and "revolutionary" dictatorships in the context of deepening underdevelopment and in terms of a long-term understanding.

The martial law regime, along with the ideological rhetoric it exhales, is, rather, a subjective consensus from a single, distilled ideological standpoint on how to respond to the crisis of underdevelopment not understood as such. It is a backlash, partly, but not from the "right" if this connotes the whole spectrum of the already existing ruling classes, but from those who, feeling threatened by the "disorder" of rising oppositions, want a way out of a social condition that absorbs and transforms, rather than liquidates, old forms of domination. It is also partly a "coup" against the pluralist political expressions of undistilled liberalism, but one that transforms and "reforms" the old process by which privilege is distributed without changing the fundamental source of privilege, in a structural sense, not because it does not will it but because it does not "see" it. It is not classic reactionism in the sense that it does not restore and preserve the social process that feeds the centers of domination by preserving the persons in the process, but a seemingly "progressive" reactionism because it preserves the old process of domination by qualitatively elevating it to a new stage. It is a new fascism peculiar to the underdeveloped societies because it does not merely glorify and render the state metaphysical, it specifically vests on the state the all-mandating distinction of being the instrument of the whole society that would finally resolve the crisis of backwardness and "emancipate" the whole people.

The martial law regime and its "New Society" are not solely by-products excreted by the objective production forces locked in the crisis of underdevelopment. They are, rather, also the products of an ideologically defined way out of the morass of backwardness. They are the sublimated resolutions of the problem of underdevelopment because they represent an incomplete understanding of the nature of underdevelopment.

The dominance of a technocracy working on the premises of the "social science" of distilled liberalism and reliant on the

back-bone of military command structures, the problem of the "relative autonomy" of the state, the possibility of "normalization" after the internalization of technocratic logic on a mass scale, the "splits" in the ruling class, and other such questions are not resolved without first taking into consideration the over-developing state mechanisms and the conscious logic of its development from which both its objective circumstances and its subjective understanding of its circumstances should be investigated. Karl Marx warned us earlier against the dangers of analytical simplification and "non-ideological" pitfalls when doing the type of investigation in which we are involved here:

Victor Hugo confines himself to bitter and witty invective against the man who was responsible for the coup d'etat. The event itself appears in his work like a bolt from the blue. He sees in it only the violent act of a single individual. He does not notice that he makes this individual great instead of little by ascribing to him a personal power of initiative, which would be unparalleled in world history. Proudhon, for his part, seeks to represent the coup d'etat as the result of the preceding historical development. Unnoticeably, however, his historical construction of the coup d'etat becomes a historical apologia for its hero. Thus he falls into the error of our so-called *objective* historians. I, on the contrary, demonstrate how the *class struggle* in France created circumstances and relationships that made it possible for a grotesque and mediocre personality to play a hero's part. (Preface to the Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte).

On the question of the "New Society" regime in particular, the preponderant tendency for authoritarianism and the justification for it falls consistent with the definition of the crisis of backwardness and its proposed resolution put forward by a well-developed technocratic bureaucracy composed of imperialist-trained "developmentalists", "nationalist" and "progressive" nurtured in the liberal social sciences and seriously engaged in the requisite "social engineering" for development.

The social questions confronted by the regime as well as those new social issues emerging as a consequence of the regime's very existence cannot anymore be resolved by the distilled liberalism of conventional social science. It has already become dictatorship's own justification.