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CLASS AND SOCIALIST POLITICS IN FRANCE

By Carole Biewener*
(July 1984)

#17

Carole,

An excellent start! A well-written, thought-provoking essay. I hope that my (few) marginal comments can be of help. But, please, I want this (or another) copy back.

With socialist greetings,

D. J.

*I would like to express my appreciation for the careful and helpful comments and editing that Larry Hartenian has generously offered on previous drafts of this paper.

CLASS AND SOCIALIST POLITICS IN FRANCE

Need introductory section that discusses potential benefits of socialist government in France and how those potential benefits are compromised and/or undermined by their particular conception of class (?)

The French Socialist Party was created in the early 1970's out of a complicated set of alliances involving different political clubs, parties and tendencies.[1] In broad terms the new Party was made up of three parts. Two major courants came out of the common political experiences of the Algerian war and the Mendès-France Government in the 1950's. They were: Rocard's technocratic modernists heralding individual competence, rational planning and the end of ideology; and Mitterand's independent radical republicans calling for a large popular gathering (rassemblement) opposed to Guallist elitism.[2] These two 'tendencies' joined with the waning Section Francaise de l'Internationale Ouvrière (SFIO), the "old" socialist party, to form the body of the "new" Parti Socialiste (PS). The SFIO was itself an alliance of at least three major political factions: the municipal socialists of Pierre Mauroy, located in the industrial North and resting on local party notables and parliamentarians; the anti-communist Gaston Deffere and those supporting his attempts to organize a "third force"; and the emerging closely-knit CERES (Centre d'Etudes, de Recherches et d'Education socialistes) which early on was concerned with economic problems, nationalization and industrial policy.

This paper will address aspects of the French Socialist Party's analysis, strategy and government program in light of their formulation and use of class concepts. It contributes to the discussion of issues raised by the recent experience of socialist organization, struggle and

government in France. In this paper I will first discuss how the Socialists' conceive of class, showing that for them it is ultimately a social relation of power and domination. Then I will begin to outline how this concept shapes the PS's vision of socialism, enabling them to define it solely in political terms of democracy. The third section discusses aspects of the overdetermination of the Socialists' class concepts. Here I will show that the way the concept of class is used in Socialist discourse effects the nature of the class concept itself. This section begins an (incomplete) analysis of why such a power-based approach for defining class has been developed by the PS. The final two sections (IV & V) look at the PS's analysis of the current crisis and the broad outlines of their governmental program to renew capitalist growth and move towards a socialist transition. I argue, finally, that the nature of the PS's class concepts has provided ideological, cultural and political conditions for the emergence of a "modernist" alliance and economic strategy within the PS.

My analysis of the French Socialists' concept and use of class is situated in a Marxist framework which has developed a different understanding of class from that of the PS's. Briefly, this alternative class conception begins by defining class processes in terms of the performance, appropriation and distribution of surplus labor-time.[3] This approach is concerned with understanding the many aspects of social life--cultural, political, economic and ideological--which are necessary conditions for the continued extraction of surplus labor-time from productive capitalist workers. I use this Marxist class approach to discuss and criticize the PS's conception of class relations, socialism

and the working class. I will show some of the consequences that emerge from the PS's class conceptions in terms of this alternative class theoretic. In the last section I develop a Marxist class analysis of the modernist alliance and show that it may be more concerned with securing capitalist "fundamental" and "subsumed" class positions in the state (see footnote three) than in abolishing these capitalist class relations altogether.

I. Class and Power

The PS has laid out the broad outlines of its notion of the working class and its political struggle most fully and explicitly in discussions of a "class front". This front is "the thesis upon which the strategy of the Socialist Party has rested since 1971." [4] A phrase first officially used by the Socialists in a letter to the Communist Party, the concept came to be a distinguishing aspect of the PS's strategy to build support for a non-Communist Left. [5] It allowed the Socialists to ally with the PC and to appeal to its industrial working-class supporters, while also defining a broader socialist constituency for the PS.

The class front is generally understood to include all wage-laborers, those who sell their labor-power in exchange for a wage. The 'traditional' strata of industrial workers occupies a special place "at the heart" of the front. But those working in exchange for a wage in offices, banks, retail stores, social services, public agencies, entertainment, etc. are also to be included:

The staff personnel [cadre] is a wage-laborer. Remuneration for his work thus rests upon the same logic as that of all other wage-laborers: it enters into direct confrontation with the remuneration to capital.[6]

part of the theory of the working class

Strong divisions and differences within this wage-earning working-class on the basis of hierarchy, remuneration, gender, education, and skill are recognized by the Socialists. Yet, they argue, the shared condition of selling labor-power in exchange for a wage serves to unify this otherwise diverse population into an objectively-defined class front.

In sum, those who are concerned with the distribution of material and cultural goods, with the management of services, with technique, with research, are growing in number and importance. Their objective situation is comparable to that of workers, engineers, cadres, teachers, researchers, clerical workers, and technicians, selling their competence and skill for a wage; they are thus placed under the dependence of those who employ them.[7]

Defining class by the sale of labor-power[8] allows several interpretations of this "objective situation" to coexist within the PS. Two general approaches can be sketched depending on which aspect of the sale of labor-power is emphasized. For some in the Party (CERES, Mauroy, Poperen and, possibly, Mitterand) it is wage-laborers' separation from the means of production that provides the crucial condition for their exploitation as wage-laborers. Private ownership/property is understood as the primary obstacle to overcoming the irrationality of capitalist production for profit. The very structure of capitalist property relations must be changed in order to provide conditions for an end to capitalist exploitation. Others in the Party (Rocard, the CFDT union and many Catholics) emphasize the subjective experience of having to sell one's skill, competence and knowledge for a wage, while at the same time not having any control over

the labor process. The alienation of one's labor-power in the form of a commodity is understood as leading to a deeper psychological alienation as a human subject.[9]

Regardless of which aspect is emphasized, property or alienation, for Socialists the decisive nature of wage-laborers' exploitation is that they are dominated, dependent and generally powerless. Those who sell their labor-power are dependent upon those who pay their wages--monopoly capitalists, financiers, the State and large-scale merchants. The significance of this economic dependence is that it renders workers powerless and places them under monopoly capital's domination. The condition of being exploited is understood primarily as a political relation of social domination.

The fundamental contradiction [of capitalism] lives on, that is, the opposition of interests between a minority which dominates social life and the immense majority of men, exploited and dominated.[10]

Class exploitation is understood as one element ^{deriving from?} within a larger set of relations of domination and power. Capitalist exploitation is not discussed in economic terms of the production, appropriation and distribution of surplus-value, but rather in political terms of powerlessness, lack of control and dependence. Capitalists are vilified for their arbitrary (property-based) power, authority and domination, not for appropriating and distributing the surplus-labor of productive workers, nor for cutting expenses by extracting more labor from unproductive wage-laborers.

In sum, two points need to be emphasized concerning the PS's concept of capitalist class relations. First, by defining class positions in

Need for.

terms of wage-labor the PS abstracts from differences between productive and unproductive wage-labor and ignores the class processes of appropriation and distribution of surplus labor-time. In a Marxist

1st or exchange relations

analysis the wage-labor relation is understood as a condition necessary for capitalist appropriation of surplus-value. However, this exploitative process is not identified with this one condition. A class position is not identified solely by any one of its conditions of existence. Rather, a myriad of conditions, their character and configuration are examined to define one's class position. In such an analysis those who sell their labor-power for a wage may occupy a variety of class and non-class positions. Indeed, this common status of wage-laborer may be a condition shared by people in different class positions. The Socialists' definition of class solely by the purchase and sale of labor-power allows them to abstract from crucial differences among wage-laborers as to whether they produce capitalist commodities or work to secure conditions of commodity production. They ignore issues of which wage-laborers produce a surplus product, which are distributed a portion of the surplus to provide conditions of its production and appropriation, or which are working in return for payment from non-class revenues (i.e. wages not paid out of a portion of surplus or necessary labor-time).

Doesn't their notion of class fail to recognize this?

This brings us to the second crucial point concerning the PS's conception of class. Class defined by the wage-labor relation has led to an almost total disassociation of this concept from that of surplus. As discussed above, capitalism is not systematically analysed in terms of the appropriation of producers' surplus labor-time in the form of

surplus-value and the subsequent distribution of this surplus-value to secure conditions of its reproduction. Wages, for instance, are not analyzed in terms of the value of labor-power, the amount of labor-time necessary to reproduce workers. No distinction is made between wages paid to productive workers and wages paid to unproductive workers.[11] Hence there is no conception of a portion of wages being paid out as the value form of necessary labor-time, while another portion is paid out of the value form of surplus labor-time.[12] The portion of the social product, of capitalist total worth, distributed to workers therefore becomes primarily determined by the relative strength of wage-laborers versus non-wage laborers (those whose income derives from property ownership). Wages are often defined tautologically as that share of the national product that goes to wage-laborers. What is emphasized is how the national "product" is divided, and this division depends on relative power relations. For the Socialists the distribution of income becomes a matter of political relations of power, manifested in property, hierarchy and control. There is no discussion of the class conditions for the production of a national income or national product.[13] There is no explicit recognition of the need for productive laborers' expenditure of necessary and surplus labor-time to create a surplus to distribute. Capitalist exploitation is not discussed in class terms of the production, appropriation and distribution of surplus-value, but rather in political terms of powerlessness, lack of control and dependence:

The particular quality of advanced capitalist society seems to reside in that men, producers and citizens are increasingly dispossessed of power.[14]

Based on
bourgeois
(i.e. non-
Marxist)
national
income
accounts.

II. Socialism and Democracy

Class exploitation conceived of as domination and dependence has broad ramifications for the various visions of socialism within the PS. Just as capitalist class relations are discussed as domination relations, so a socialist transformation of class relations is discussed as changing relations of power and domination: "The overthrow of the relations of force between classes in twentieth century France, for the socialists that is the major imperative, the priority of action." [15]

Socialist transition becomes cast in terms of overthrowing capitalist relations of dependence and building social relations of independence. The struggle is to extend liberty and freedom on the basis of equality: "The only socialism is that of freedom, the only freedom is that of socialism...we ask to be judged on our capacity to enlarge the realms of freedom." [16] The radical element of the Socialist's project is to overthrow capitalist power relations in order to liberate the dominated majority. The means for realizing such liberation and freedom is by instituting democratic processes throughout social life, thereby equalizing political power relations. (Thus, the Socialists' proposals for decentralization, national planning and workers' self-management as will be discussed below.) Democratic deliberation and decision-making are not just understood as necessary conditions for socialist transformation. Rather they become the definition of socialism, the incarnation of this transformation. [17] The struggle to alter capitalist social relations becomes simply a struggle to institute a "socialist democracy".

definition ?

In France the conception of what such a democracy is and the conditions for its realization comes out of a variety of different socialist humanist traditions--from those of the French revolution and utopian socialists (St. Simon, Fourier and Proudhon), to that of existentialism, humanist Catholicism and the "New Left". All of these traditions are represented within the PS. Perhaps it is the 1980 Projet Socialiste (Socialist Project) that serves to best illustrate a contemporary socialist vision of radical change. The Projet should be understood as a compromise statement designed to incorporate and accomodate the diverse courants within the Party.[18] In it socialist democracy is described as a pluralistic process in which separate particular sectors within French society are represented in a decentralized, democratic planning process designed to define a collective will.[19] Workers' self-management (autogestion) is socialist democracy in the workplace, while national planning and decentralisation provide conditions for it in a broader social realm. Transformation in how certain forms of deliberation and decision-making are carried out is to alter radically the nature of capitalist power relations.

Such a vision depends on the responsible action of enlightened individuals. The Projet offers many references to responsibility as a crucial moral (cultural) condition for the realization of socialist democracy:

The choice of democracy is an act of confidence in workers' and citizens' spirit of responsibility.[20]

The restoration of collective values is inseparable from the great ideal of responsibility which is at the heart of socialist existence, just as the idea of property and acquisition has been and remains the fundamental value upon

which capitalism was built and perpetuates itself.[21]

The diffusion of power is founded upon a culture which imbues responsibility.[22]

Coupled with this existential and Christian morality of individual responsibility is a strong faith in the creative powers of humanity.[23] "Socialism...is also belief in the power of men over their destiny, confidence in their creative powers." [24]

For Rocardian modernists (currently the dominant faction within the PS, though ironically without their "leader", Rocard) this exaltation of creativity takes the specific form of worshipping rational informed thought, educated inquiry and competent planning. This courant incorporates what H. Portelli describes as a St. Simonian technocratic discourse of efficiency with a refusal of ideology. Extolling competence and knowledge, it affirms rationalisation, innovation and efficiency along with democratisation of economic and political relations by the decentralisation of decision-making.[25]

Such conceptions of socialism--which privilege political relations in the form of pluralist democracy and responsible initiative, while virtually ignoring class relations of surplus production, appropriation and distribution--are dangerously close to bourgeois conceptions of democracy, freedom, liberty and equality. Or, perhaps at best, they are expressions of a utopian socialism. For these visions and aspirations do not develop class knowledges and class conceptions of democracy, freedom, liberty and equality. They do not adequately address the class bases or content of these political processes. This equality is that of political citizens with equal participation in deliberation and

decision-making, rather than an equality which is defined in class terms.

The issue here is not that force, power and domination, as well as democratisation in many realms of decision-making, are not crucial aspects of any adequate theory and practice of socialist politics. The problem is if power relations alone are considered and, further, if they are not systematically related to forms of surplus-labor appropriation and distribution. Changing various power relations is of course crucial for changing the nature of class relations. But, this is not to be confused such that class exploitation is reduced to political domination. For the PS the hope for socialist transition appears to be that, in itself, the institution of a decentralized, democratic process of planning and self-management will overcome the capitalist nature of surplus-labor extraction. However, in order to make this a convincing strategy and project the PS must carefully address how such changes in political relations will fundamentally alter capitalist class relations. For changes in political relations may modify conditions of capitalist exploitation without overthrowing them.

| | ✓
strengthen or weaken

Before showing more concretely some of the consequences of the PS's formulation of class for a project of socialist transition and capitalist growth, I will discuss how class concepts are employed by the PS and how this influences the nature of the concepts themselves. The next section should be understood as a contribution to developing a knowledge of the overdetermination of the PS's class conception, i.e. developing a knowledge of the historical conditions determining this

concept in the PS's discourse. Then, in the final two sections, I will develop ways in which such a formulation and use of class concepts effects the PS's theory and practice of socialist politics and their analysis of capitalism.

III. Class as a Category for Political Action

The concept of class front was taken up by the PS at a time of growing commitment to a political strategy of "Left Unity". Evolving initially out of ad hoc municipal electoral alliances in the mid-to-late 1960's, the rapprochement between French Socialists and Communists culminated in the signing of a Common Program of Government in 1972 and an agreement to put forth one United Left presidential candidate in the 1974 elections.[26] The strategy of gaining state "power" through electoral victory, as developed by Mitterand since the mid-1960's, was translated politically into the formation of the Socialist Party and an alliance with the Communists, and ideologically into the concept of a class front. A 1975 Party Congress motion stated: "The left union is, for us, the political translation of the class front...."[27]

As this suggests, the PS has developed and used the concept of a class front primarily to designate a majority constituency that would vote for candidates of the United Left. Determination of class position by the wage-labor relation enables the PS to address itself to a large wage-earning working-class whose interests the Party is to represent. Rather than developing either a more limited definition of working class (as the Communists do by focusing only upon productive industrial workers[28]), or a more complex and overdetermined understanding of its

constitution (as a set of alliances among individuals occupying a variety of class and non-class positions), the PS has privileged the condition of wage-laborer as sufficient to create a large (dominated) working-class constituency. The shared condition of having to sell labor-power in return for a wage is used to identify common experiences, interests and aspirations of a ^{supposedly single} class of wage-laborers.

Further, because class exploitation is understood as a particular form of domination, the Socialists are able to call for wage-laborers to ally with all of the other sectors of society which are dominated within capitalism. The criterion of a common experience and position of powerlessness in the face of multinational/monopoly capital's ubiquitous domination serves to widen the terrain for alliance and unified action. Hence capitalist and independent farmers; artisans, merchants and commercial agents; and "small and medium" capitalists are all called upon to join in the Left Alliance to overthrow oppressive power relations in French society. Some Party statements go so far as to consider all those who are dominated not just as allies, but also as part of the class front:

Building socialism supposes unity of action by the constitution of a true class front of all those who have an interest in destroying capitalism's economic, social, ideological and political domination....A large class front must found itself first upon the working class, the very great majority of wage-laborers who all undergo exploitation.

It rests equally upon those who capitalism's evolution has dispossessed of their tools of labor: peasants, individual laborers. Other social categories, notably small and medium entrepreneurs, find themselves equally struck by the power of the dominant enterprises.[29]

in the same way? You could go to town with this.

This "dominated majority" is further extended by recognizing the struggles of women, ecologists and urban dwellers as part of the common

struggle against capitalist authority, control and domination.[30]

How can one not see that, whether latently or explicitly formulated, the claim (revendication) to power is present today throughout our country. It is that which more than anything else was manifested in 1968. It is that which today forms the common denominator of union, urban, feminist and ecologist struggles. It is that alone which can mobilise the youth in the path of socialism.[31]

Just as the conception of class exploitation primarily in terms of power relations has furthered the PS's political strategy of winning elections, so also this electoral strategy has shaped the nature of the Socialists' class concepts. The electoral majority is identified and "forged" by building alliances and sympathies on the basis of domination. Hence the particularity, the specific character of class relations is further abstracted from. Class exploitation (even if cast only in political terms) becomes important to the extent that it is a relation of domination, one among many other forms of social domination. There is thus an implicit tendency not to focus upon the distinctive aspects of class exploitation, but rather to focus on what those who are exploited as wage-laborers share with those who are dominated as consumers, artisans, small merchants and entrepreneurs, citizens, women, etc. That is, there is a tendency to focus upon domination and not upon exploitation.

Characterization of the working class by the "objective" class position of dominated wage-laborers therefore enables the PS to appeal to a large constituency of supporters (cum voters). The Party's "majority appeal" is further bolstered by arguing that this is an ever-growing constituency. For as monopoly capitalism expands and centralizes it also "proletarianizes" new segments of the French

population. Hence for the PS the class front expresses the realities of capitalist development, especially since the late-1950's. "The notion of class front...corresponds to profound changes in French society over the past fifteen years, changes in its structure and in its representations." [32] The post-war decline of farming families, along with that of artisans and merchants, and the growth and concentration of capitalist commodity production, merchanting, money-lending and retailing, along with state non-commodity "service" production, is understood as swelling the ranks of the class of wage-laborers. It is monopoly capitalism's inherent process of development that produces this sociological majority.

[T]he acceleration of capitalist concentration in the Fifth Republic [since 1958, C.B.], the extension of the capitalist mode of production to sectors which up until then had been unscathed (from agriculture to culture, including the household and leisure-time), and the reduction of all the products of labor to commodities has plundered and liquidated the traditional middle strata of small entrepreneurs and small producers...

To a growing concentration of the production apparatus and capitalist domination corresponds a simplification of the confrontation. The growing polarisation of society into two antagonistic classes tends to be accentuated. Simultaneously the internal composition of these two classes is modified. [33]

Oddly enough, what is usually taken to be one of the most orthodox of Marxist / Communist "predictions"

Thus Mitterand has felt justified in calling upon a "sociological" majority of the population to support the PS (or United Left) electorally. The Socialists' concept of class provides ideological conditions for their ability to carry out a successful electoral strategy by theoretically justifying the Party's appeal to a majority of the population as "objectively" a part of their constituency.

But, for the Socialists, the existence of an objectively-defined majority constituency is not sufficient to guarantee its political

victory. The class front is not spontaneously offensive--its realization depends upon the existence of a political party to unify wage-laborers and the dominated majority into a common struggle, to provide a voice for them, to coordinate and organize them politically and to represent their aspirations, hopes and interests. The concept of class front not only identifies the objective class (and non-class) basis of the PS's constituency, is also expresses the necessity of the Socialist Party itself in order for this class front to be realized.

Thus this class front, spontaneously defensive, anti-monopolistic, must, by clarification of its short and long term political objectives, become offensive, anti-capitalist. To carry out such a strategy of struggles, to cement the class front, a large socialist party is indispensable.[34]

This voluntarist conception of the Party's political role conflates the issue of the overdetermined relation between class positions (defined according to some "objective" criteria) and political actors (organized as class parties or around class issues, or acting upon a perceived class interest). This conception of class remains within a class-in-itself/class-for-itself problematic. As Adam Przeworski shows, by posing the issue of the relation between class positions and class subjects or actors in such a dichotomous fashion, there are only two available means to bridge the gap: Either through a deterministic vision which posits the inevitable necessity of those occupying objectively-defined class positions to subjectively recognize, act upon and realize their shared objective interests; or through a voluntaristic vision in which classes are politically formed only as a result of the active intervention of an external agent, i.e. the Party.[35] The

French Socialists close this gap in the latter manner:

The PS, with its unitary strategy and project of worker self-management, wants to be the privileged instrument of the transformation of the class front as an objective reality into a class front as a subjective reality.[36]

Rather than enter into the debates concerning the nature and role of a political party, I am concerned here with developing an analysis of how the PS has employed the concept of class. In this respect then I would argue that the PS has developed the concept of class primarily as a means to influence, presage and structure the nature of political behavior in elections. Class concepts are used to appeal to people (voters, citizens) to identify with a particular party, to support a particular platform/program and to vote in a particular manner. Thus the PS can be understood as developing a concept of a class or a working class as a historical actor, a political subject. The concept is used as a means for influencing, predicting or ascribing political concerns and behavior. As a result the identification of class positions is subsumed to the identification of class actors, organizations, and political behavior. Class position is deduced from a concept of class as political actors, just as it is reduced to being merely a political relation.

Certainly a Marxist project is quite concerned with understanding the overdetermination of the constitution of any particular working class. However, the constitution of a working class would not be reduced to that of objectively-defined class positions, nor would class positions be deduced from expected or desired class organizations or political activity. On the one hand, Marxists cannot simply deduce how

→ end of "political agents/actors"

people organize themselves politically, vote in elections, conceive of their interests or understand their "class" status from the particular class position(s) that we, as Marxists, understand them to occupy. Political views, concerns, behavior and organization are all overdetermined processes in which one's class position(s) influences and effects the 'outcome', but does not act as a unique and sole determinant. On the other hand, a non-essentialist Marxist conception of any working class would recognize that such a group is comprised of people occupying a variety of class and non-class positions. What must be examined is the complex set of relationships whereby those people who are direct producers, unproductive capitalist workers and "non-class" wage-laborers understand themselves as part of a working class, participate in "class" organizations and act upon perceived class interests. As A. Przeworski has argued, the notion of class--what it is understood to mean, how it is used and what it refers to--is itself a product of ideological and political struggle.[37] There are struggles over the notion of what class is before there are struggles about class and between groups organized around class and as class organizations.

IV. Crisis of the Falling Rate of Profit

For the Socialists, capitalism since the late-1960's has been in an overall state of crisis encompassing many aspects of social life: work, values, culture, science, authority, family, education, leisure, government, etc. The economic crisis, bringing stagnating production, growing unemployment and rising prices, is understood as an expression of capitalism's inherent long-term tendency for a falling rate of

profit.

As with former crises, this one is a crisis of profit. The decline in the rate of profit is a fundamental tendency of capitalism, linked to the process of accumulation. For a long while [capitalism] victoriously counteracted this tendency. But, periodically it ends up prevailing; then there is crisis.[38]

Many different causes can be located to explain a declining profit rate, depending on what one understands as the nature of a capitalist process of accumulation. Thus, explanations range from monopoly capital's domination, declines in productivity, rises in the organic composition of capital and growing international competition to overproduction/^{under}consumption, working-class resistance, Third World struggle and a crisis of a whole "social structure of accumulation" (e.g. "fordism").

The current crisis finds its origin in the exhaustion of productivity gains and resources of "relative surplus-value", in the growing resistance of the working class (notably in France, in Great Britain and in Italy), in the will of Third World countries to use their political independence to put an end to the pillage of their wealth and, finally, in the exacerbation of competition between the principal capitalist countries (USA-Europe-Japan).[39]

Whatever the cause of the falling rate of profit, proximate or structural, the result is considered to be a decline in the amount of surplus appropriated relative to the capital expenditures made (a decline in the rate of surplus-value). Often this is also understood as a decline in the absolute amount of surplus appropriated. The rate of surplus-value is thus reduced to (identified with) one of its component parts: the enterprise's rate of profit. As Stephen Resnick and Richard Wolff have brilliantly shown, in Marx's analysis of the political

economy of capitalism, an appropriated surplus-value is distributed by an extracting capitalist to secure a myriad of conditions necessary for the continued existence of that surplus-value. Capitalists must pay out portions of surplus to secure conditions of their reproduction as capitalists. Thus portions might have to be paid out as dividends, rents, taxes, interest, unproductive capital and labor expenses or merchanting fees. A portion also remains to the industrial capitalist as profit of enterprise. The surplus that the enterprise is able to retain is itself distributed to secure conditions necessary for the capitalist's reproduction, including unproductive capital and labor expenditures for supervisors, managers, cleaners, clerical staff, counselors, accounters, etc. The money-capital distributed for purchasing productive capital and labor (accumulation) is just one category of surplus-value expenditure.[40]

But lacking a class knowledge of profit or surplus the French Socialists are unable to recognize that surplus is not synonymous with a profit accruing to the enterprise, which itself is not synonymous with expenditures made for accumulation. Rather, with a two-class vision of the world the national product is understood as divided between wages and profits, with profits as that income accruing to capitalist enterprises for investment. A decline in the "profit rate" (of capitalist enterprises) is understood simply as a decline in the rate of surplus-value, which necessarily produces, then, a crisis of accumulation. The Socialists pose a dialectical process whereby production for profit brings about a crisis of production. Thus, a crisis of falling profit rates expresses itself in a global crisis of

investment (accumulation), leading to falling growth rates in output, employment and income.[41]

If one sees that the Socialists have developed a concept of class based on notions of power, domination and dependence, rather than on those of the performance, extraction and distribution of surplus labor-time, then the consequences of this power-based vision for their economic program are strikingly clear. By not developing a class knowledge of such economic concepts as national product, surplus, values/prices, wages, profit, income, etc. the Socialists are left with bourgeois conceptions of these categories, whether they be in a Keynesian or neo-Ricardian form. Class understood as a category describing political power relations and determining political behavior helped the Socialists in their electoral battles, but it has not enabled them to address adequately the class nature of economic relations, nor therefore the contradictions and struggles arising out of these relations. Where the Socialists posit non-contradictory class relations and interests, such as those shared by the "class of wage-laborers", or the "class of dominating capitalists", Marxists would see contradictions and tensions between direct producers and unproductive wage-laborers; or between extracting capitalists, money-lenders, merchants and managers. Where French Socialists posit "non-class" categories of product, income and prices, Marxists develop class concepts of surplus-value, value of labor power, shares of the surplus and exchange-values/prices of production. The Socialists are unable to recognize and address adequately the class nature of what is produced, who produces it, how it

is appropriated as surplus-value and how much of the capitalist total worth is distributed to whom. There are contradictions and tensions present in the process of class exploitation and the subsequent distribution of surplus-value which the Socialists do not address. They are therefore limited in their ability to undertake explicit radical changes in the nature of these class relations.

The PS's proposals for economic amelioration and structural transformation will now be addressed. We can now understand how conceiving of class exploitation as a domination relation conditions the character of the PS's governmental program for rejuvenation of capitalist growth and socialist transition. After drawing out some of the relationships between the PS's class conceptions and their economic proposals, I will end by developing a Marxist class understanding of how these strategies for government have provided conditions for the current modernisation tendency of the Mitterand government. We will see that, in class terms, the PS's program has facilitated a struggle over the nature of a variety of capitalist (subsumed and fundamental) class positions as well as a number of non-class economic and political positions.

V. Modernisation for Capitalist Growth and Socialist Transition

Though French Socialists would argue that they are engaged in a struggle to transform the very nature of capitalist social relations, they acknowledge that this will take time, patience and diligence. The immediate priority of a socialist government is "to bring France out of crisis". And, "to get out of crisis, we must get out of capitalism in crisis".[42] The 1981 government program was designed therefore to reform capitalist social relations and to reinvigorate capitalist production. Reform was to be carried out by redistributing income (via transfer payments) and reducing social inequities. The economy was to be reinvigorated by providing conditions for a renewed capitalist growth. After the 1981 elections the economic priorities for action were to provide jobs, income and better working conditions within existing society. For the new Socialist government redistribution of income while promoting investment depended in part upon a larger social product (surplus?). Capitalist growth was considered necessary for future socialist transformation of the economy.

With the crisis cast as one of a declining profit rate the way to stimulate capitalist production, investment and employment was, most simply, by increasing profits: "Entrepreneurs invest only if the prospects for demand and profitability lead them to." [43] The Mitterand/Mauroy government's initial short-term program was based upon a Keynesian model and strategy for promoting economic growth. The state was to redistribute shares of income to stimulate demand, thereby bolstering profit expectations and investment spending. The hope was that the stimulus of realization would lead capitalists to invest

Also, they attempted to deal with questions of "uncertainty" and "expectations," i.e., guarantees to Kist production by the State.

(accumulate), produce, innovate and employ more. As Mitterand suggested in an interview:

In the immediate, it will be necessary first to declare a moratorium and then to try and unblock the system. I don't see a way out of these problems if we don't decide to do what I propose in a realistic manner: to move towards growth, to retool industrial production, movement, life quite simply. Then, with the national wealth growing, we could redistribute better: I'm thinking naturally of a redistribution divided between capital, labor and investment.[44]

The Program also contained more radical proposals for changes in the structure of capitalist social relations: nationalisation of major industries and banks, reemphasis upon national planning, decentralization of the state apparatus and extension of workers' rights in the enterprise. These measures were to provide both the initial conditions for socialist transition and further conditions for restoring profitability. With socialism defined in terms of democracy, socialist transition was portrayed as altering the structure of capitalist power relations by changing the social processes of consultation, decision-making, management and control. One of the first steps in changing capitalist relations of domination was for the Party to conquer state power:

[T]he conquest of State power is not the sufficient condition for opening the process of transition to socialism, but it is a necessary condition. In the power of the State the working class movement has always recognized the instrument of class domination.[45]

The electoral race is seen as a decisive political battle for gaining power in capitalism.

In this struggle over "power", extensive nationalization of the means of production was considered to be crucial for redressing monopoly

capital's domination of wage-laborers. For, as discussed above, many Socialists argue that private property provides the basis for wage-laborers' dependence and exploitation.

Nationalisation of dominant groups in the economy particularly remains as one of the essential preliminary conditions for a durable reversal of the relations of force between classes and the putting into place of a new logic of development.[46]

Arguments for decentralization, national planning and workers' self-management (autogestion) are also cast in terms of restructuring power relations, instituting new forms of decision-making and providing for the democratic determination of a collective will.[47]

Rather than discussing structural changes in terms of transformations in the conditions necessary for capitalist surplus-labor extraction and distribution, the PS only addresses changes in power relations. By not explicitly considering the class processes of surplus-labor extraction and distribution the Socialists are unable to formulate adequate proposals to change the nature of these processes. Thus, from a Marxist perspective they are left with proposals to reform capitalism without transforming it. Further, without carrying out a class analysis of the conditions for capitalist exploitation the Socialists are unable to recognize the class nature of their own struggle to win and wield state power! This is the final point that this paper will develop: A Marxist class analysis of how the Mitterand government's radical proposals for "structural" change have provided conditions for the current regime of "modernists". We can now understand these modernists as individuals allied to win class (and non-class) positions in the state. The socialist political struggle for

"state power" can be understood in part as a struggle over capitalist fundamental and subsumed class positions, rather than between "dominated" and "dominators", or between "exploited" and "exploiters".

From a Marxist perspective the French nationalisations of major industrial and financial enterprises involved a struggle over the subsumed class position of owner/shareholder. The state came to provide this condition of capitalist exploitation previously provided by private property owners. The Socialists' success in this struggle over ownership depended in part upon first winning state legislative and executive positions. Electoral victory provided the means to prevail in establishing state ownership rather than private ownership as a condition for capitalist commodity production in electronics, telecommunications, transportation, pharmaceuticals, steel, energy, chemicals/petroleum and armaments.

By altering the nature of ownership the Socialists also were able to change the conditions required for occupying other capitalist class and non-class positions. The state's monopoly position as a capitalist owner enabled "civil servants" to occupy a variety of new (subsumed) class positions within the central state bureaucracy as managers, administrators, planners, researchers and money-lenders (particularly in the Ministries of the Economy and Finances, Industry, and Planning). As Karl Korsch has shown, nationalization entails "...taking the means of production away from the jurisdiction of individual capitalists (expropriation) and...placing them under the jurisdiction of public functionaries..."[48] State managers have been substituted for privately-employed ones.

But there are stringent prerequisites for working within the French state bureaucracy. In addition to having to win elections to gain access to or control over various legislative and executive (administrative) positions, in France the cultural process of education provides crucial "credentials" for becoming a state manager. Many authors have shown that to occupy the "highest" positions in the the French state one must have graduated from one of a few elite universities.[49]

The elite institutions and organizations that we are dealing with are essentially the grandes ecoles and the grands corps. The first are the state institutions that train and nurture the state elite. The second represent the various organized elite structures (Inspection des Finances, Corps des Mines, Corps des Ponts et Chaussées, Conseil d'Etat, Cour des Comptes) whose recruits come almost exclusively from the grandes ecoles. A successful academic career in one of the top grandes ecoles leads to a career in one of the grands corps, which then facilitates the choice of a number of other possible careers within and outside state service.[50]

The Mitterrand government's nationalisations thus added to the class positions occupied by highly-educated state functionaries who provide a whole host of managerial, administrative, distributive and financial conditions for capitalist exploitation. The 'rationality of educated decision-making' has overcome the 'irrationality of property-based search for profit'.

The modernists' belief in the virtues of education, competence and expertise reinforces the meritocratic order of the state bureaucracy. It also ideologically justifies the reemphasis upon state administration, planning and policy-making. The Party calls for an entrepreneurial state of sorts which can overcome the "irrationalities" of capitalist production for profit through informed planning, competent

coordination, innovative spirit, creative insight and responsible management.[51] State ownership will "create the best conditions for the blossoming of the enterprise spirit and applied initiative in production." The nationalisations will "be accompanied by the emergence of responsible men at all levels", who will "feel themselves to be invested with a true social mission." [52] Jacques Delors, the Minister of the Economy and Finances, expresses the view of an enlightened manager as follows:

On our part, what we want is, beyond all doctrinal quarrels, to make our economy healthy, to absorb the second petroleum shock and to give an impetus to our people. In this the qualities of imagination, invention and work constitute an extraordinary resource.[53]

The modernists' blueprint for the economy is to be spelled out in an "industrial policy" developed and carried out within the framework of national planning. Here state managers, money-lenders and planners negotiate over and decide upon various allocations of surplus and aspects of the social division of labor. As incomplete, contradictory and fragmented as this process of industrial policy-making may be, it is indeed an attempt by state managers to gain greater access to and control over the distribution of surplus-value in France. Socialist managers have increased their control over decisions concerning what surplus expenditures to make, what conditions of capitalist class and non-class processes to secure and in what manner.

Broadly the economic policy developed has called for providing conditions for capitalist growth by channeling surplus toward the productive accumulation of capital in the short run and enhancing "productivity" through technical innovation in the long run. Efforts to

promote (immediate) accumulation have been carried out on a number of fronts. First, as discussed above, there have been Keynesian demand-management policies aimed at inducing "investment" through the stimulus of growing sales. Here domestic income redistribution to boost "consumption" and "government spending" has been coupled with money-lending to Africans, Asians and South Americans to finance purchases of French exports. (What A. Granou and B. Billaudot have termed France's "Marshall Plan" to the Third World.[54]) Second, the state's virtual monopoly over money-lending has enabled it to allocate money-capital directly for investment in particular industrial sectors. Given the importance of credit rather than equity as a means to externally finance productive and unproductive capital investments in France, and the historical alliances between money-lenders and state managers, the state's control over credit serves as one of its most powerful levers to further accumulation. Third, there are policies to "mobilize resources for investment" by cutting back on various non-accumulation subsumed class payments. Thus, the state as owner/shareholder requires small to nil dividends and state money-lenders can offer the money-capital commodity at low rates of interest. In the past year of "austerity" government spending has been curtailed and support has been growing for reductions in state taxes on enterprises, with one article after another lamenting the heavy burden of "charges d'entreprises".[55] Also, by reorganizing industrial enterprises into "groups" and by coordinating research and development, training, marketing and planning among them, state managers hope to cut down on a whole range of unproductive capital and labor expenses. Even

the Auroux reforms to enhance workers' participation in the workplace have been seen as a means for improving "efficiency". The 1982-83 Interim Plan stated: "Only the existence of structures for dialouge within the firm will permit negotiation to replace conflict. This is not merely a matter of equity but imperative for efficiency." [56] All of these measures can be understood as aiming to increase the amount of surplus available for accumulation by reducing surplus expenditures made to secure other conditions of capitalist commodity production.

The final and most recent policies to allocate surplus toward productive investment also involve some of the most radical steps to restructure France's division of labor. Thus the Mitterand/Mauroy government has endorsed eliminating "socially unuseful" expenditures in steel, shipbuilding, automobiles, textiles and, possibly, coal. Yet, while modernists have developed many plans for using the "capital" freed up by this decision, they have not been so successful in providing alternatives for the thousands of unemployed and threatened wage-laborers in these industries.

For future years the Socialist government is counting on technological innovation to guarantee international markets, full employment and growth. Technological change is to provide the basis for rapid advances in labor productivity which, in turn, are to render French commodities competitive in international markets. [57] Scientific knowledge and inquiry will be harnessed to develop industrial technology, while responsibility and creativity will be cultivated to encourage entrepreneurial innovation. Overall the aim is to maintain and expand existing markets and to capture and create new ones by

privileging accumulation in the "high technology" sectors of telecommunications, electronics, chemicals, weapons and nuclear energy. To this end the Socialist government is also increasing expenditures for industrial research and development while promoting a "culture of high technology".[58] Thus enlightened, socialist state managers are seeking to realize a modernisation defined as technological innovation, an old ploy in capitalist competition.

In sum, then, we can see that how French Socialists have developed and used class concepts has had significant implications for their socialist vision, theoretical analysis, political practice and economic policies. By defining class in terms of wage-labor Socialists emphasize workers' dependence, alienation, domination and separation from the means of production without an analysis of the social conditions for the appropriation of workers' surplus labor-time in the form of surplus-value. Class categories are therefore disassociated from value categories of surplus, profits, wages or income. In their concern with gaining state power through electoral victory the Socialists effectively used class concepts and references to build political support but neglected using them to develop an economic analysis, strategy and program for socialist transition.[59] This has left the PS with bourgeois economic models with which to develop an analysis and program. Indeed, we have seen the Mitterrand/Mauroy government recently embrace the tenets of a conservative program of "austerity" in face of the inadequacies and contradictions of the previous Keynesian-based economic policies. Increasingly concerned with and committed to renewing

↓ Is my "austerity" program inherently anti-socialist or are we concerned of different "austerity" programs, with different class and neo-class consequences?

capitalist growth the socialist government is seeking to maintain and strengthen capitalist class and non-class relations. Rational administration, coordination and planning by "public servants" is to reorient a French economy which "consumes too much and doesn't invest enough".[60] The PS under Mitterand thus aspires to radically transforming capitalism but can only plan to rejuvenate and reform it. If capitalist growth is to be undertaken as a socialist strategy then how this will provide conditions for future socialist transformation must be addressed. But here the PS is increasingly silent. There is virtually no discussion of how contradictions between maintaining capitalist class relations and promoting a socialist transition are to be resolved. Socialism as a distant goal has become an abstract ideal for there is not any explicit program or dialouge concerning how to materially realize it.

In part this is due to the Socialists' understanding of class exploitation as a social relation of domination. Radical change becomes equated with transforming political power relations. The socialist vision is portrayed as a political project for pluralist democratization. The concern is not that a class of people work producing commodities and are paid only a small portion of the value of the commodities they have produced. The strategy is not to overthrow such class relations of exploitation. Rather, it is for workers to be represented in their workplace, to participate in decision-making and to be able to undertake responsible activity. This democratization is not understood in class terms. It is a citizen's democracy rather than a proletarian one. A telling illustration of this is Mauroy's description

Nice

of the 1981 Auroux reforms which legislated new workers' rights to deliberation, discussion and consultation in the workplace as aiming to introduce workers' "citizen rights" in the enterprise.[61] At best when discussing the need to transform social relations within capitalist factories the Socialists have focused upon changing hierarchy and "arbitrary power". They remain silent with respect to issues of the performance and appropriation of surplus labor-time. In order for democratization of decision-making to provide conditions for overthrowing capitalist exploitation, collective debate and deliberation must include discussion and definition of who performs productive and unproductive labor, in what concrete forms, under what conditions and how much of the 'social product' they are allocated.

The French Socialists focus upon redistribution of income without addressing its origins. They argue for an egalitarian and democratically-determined ^{capitalist} distribution of "revenues", with the expectation that a publically-defined orientation for investment will reshape a capitalist society of private-appropriation. Political aspects of planning, production and distribution are recognized. Yet, without a class analysis of these processes the French Socialists are left with abstract principles of democracy, equality and freedom without means for realizing them in class relations. This, in turn, has jeopardized such freedom in non-class relations that the Socialists have, for awhile, established!

They are at fault, then, not for focusing on political issues, etc. but for not seeing them, and other aspects of society, as COEs of the capitalist (and other) class processes. The end result is to undermine both the immediate and long-run changes involved in socialist transition.

FOOTNOTES

1. For further information concerning the PS's origins and the post-war political history of the French left see: Hugues Portelli, Le socialisme français tel qu'il est (Paris: Presses Universitaires Françaises, 1980); R.W. Johnson, The Long March of the French Left (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981); Pierre Guidoni Histoire du Nouveau Parti Socialiste (Paris: Tema-Action, 1973) and Bernard E. Brown, Socialism of a Different Kind: Reshaping the French Left, (London: Greenwood Press, 1982).

I have relied primarily on H. Portelli's work for the following discussion.

2. As Portelli describes it, in the 1960's the modernist project was developed within the Parti Socialiste Unifié and in various select clubs, the most prestigious of which was the Jean-Moulin club. The left republicans also were organized into clubs, but theirs were of a jacobine nature (indeed, the largest and most influential was the Club des Jacobines of Charles Hernu.) Mitterand formed the "Ligue pour le Combat républicain" (League for Republican Combat) in 1959, and later played a leading role in constituting the "Conventions des Institutions républicains" (Convention of Republican Institutions). The CIR provided Mitterand's basis of support until he joined the Socialist Party in 1971.

See Portelli, op. cit.

3. As there is a distinction made between the process of surplus production and the subsequent distribution of the appropriated surplus, so there is a distinction made between those individuals involved in the production and appropriation of the surplus and those who are distributed a portion of it. Thus, in a capitalist class process those who produce capitalist commodities through productive labor are understood as "fundamental" capitalist direct producers. Those who appropriate the surplus produced by these productive workers are understood as "fundamental" capitalist extractors. These two classes together then comprise those involved in the capitalist fundamental class process of surplus production and extraction.

In order for this process of surplus-labor extraction to take place there are a variety of economic, ideological, political and cultural conditions which must be present. Some of these conditions can only be secured by capitalists by paying out a portion of the surplus appropriated. For example, within the enterprise a capitalist may hire supervisors and managers to try and ensure that productive workers produce as many commodities as possible. Others may be hired to account for, collect and sell the capitalist commodities produced. A capitalist may distribute a portion of the surplus to the state in the form of taxes to ensure certain legal, cultural and political conditions of the fundamental class process. Or s/he may pay rent to the landlord for

access to land or a factory. All of these people receive a cut of the appropriated surplus in return for their providing a necessary condition for the extraction of surplus-labor from direct producers. On this basis they are defined as occupying "subsumed" class positions.

Thus, this particular understanding of Marx's class analysis not only distinguishes between productive laborers and capitalists, but also designates another (subsumed) class of people who receive a cut of the surplus in return for providing necessary conditions for the surplus to exist. This subsumed class is a heterogeneous group, involved in a variety of different concrete activities--from money-lending and selling commodities, to education and administration. Their labor is certainly necessary for the continued production of commodities and the realization of a surplus. But it is considered unproductive in the sense that it does not contribute directly to the value of the commodities produced. Thus, in many ways, the distinction between direct producers and subsumed class workers can be understood as a distinction between productive and unproductive labor.

In the text I refer to non-class wages and wage-laborers in non-class positions. This "non-class" category is basically defined by exclusion. It refers to those wage-laborers who work in exchange for wages which are not paid out of either necessary or surplus labor-time.

One final comment, the capitalist form of surplus-labor extraction is but one means for producing, appropriating and realizing a surplus. Depending on the various economic, political and cultural conditions within a society, a surplus may be produced and realised under feudal class relations, slave, ancient or communist. In the text I refer to "ancient commodity producers". Basically I am referring to a non-capitalist form of surplus-labor appropriation and realization based upon the private, independent labor of individual productive workers--i.e. an independent commodity producer.

For a more complete elaboration of this Marxist class perspective see: Karl Marx, Capital, Vols. I, II & III (especially Volume III), (New York, Vintage Books, 1977 and 1981); Stephen Resnick and Richard D. Wolff, Marxian Theory: Epistemology, Class, Enterprise and State; "Classes in Marxian Theory", The Review of Radical Political Economy 13, no. 4 (Winter 1982); and "Marxist Epistemology: The Critique of Economic Determinism", Social Text 6 (Fall 1982).

For a French scholar's formulation of class and an interpretation of Marx's work in Capital which is quite close to that discussed above see: Gerard Dumenil, La Position de classe des cadres et employées: la fonction capitaliste parcellaire (Grenobles: Presses Universitaires de Grenobles, 1975).

4. Parti Socialiste. Projet Socialiste: Pour la France des Années 80 (Paris: Club Socialiste du Livre, 1980): p. 368.

5. The phrase "class front" was not used in the PS's declaration of principles approved at its founding Alfortville Congress in May 1969 and confirmed at the June 1971 Epinay Congress. These principles stipulated only that "the Socialist Party includes...all intellectual and manual workers, rural and city residents, who have made their own the ideal and

principles of Socialism," (Parti Socialiste, Declarations de Principes et statuts, brochure, p. 1). It was not until later in 1971 that the concept of the "class front" was employed in a letter sent by the PS's Directing Committee to the Communist Party's Central Committee. Prior to this the theory of a "class front" was solely used by Jean Poperen's courant.

Paul Bacot, "Le Front de Classe," Revue Francaise de Science Politique 28, no. 2 (April 1978): pp. 277-78.

6. R. Guillon, "Questions sur les cadres et le mouvement socialiste," La Nouvelle Revue Socialiste (1975): p. 83.

7. Alain Meyer, "Pourquoi le front de class?" La Nouvelle Revue Socialiste 29 (1977): p. 37.

For discussions of the concept of a "class front", its history and its implications for the PS see works written by Paul Bacot, the foremost Socialist theorist on this topic, as well as one of the most sophisticated. Also see the series of discussions sponsored by ISER in 1976 and reprinted as articles in La Nouvelle Revue Socialiste throughout 1977.

8. This is basically a Marxist way of describing the wage-labor relation. The term "labor-power" is rarely used by Socialists when discussing wage-labor. Rather, there is talk of selling one's skill, competence or knowledge for a wage (as in the quote cited above in the text).

9. "Intellectual workers" encounter forms of alienation specific to their life situation, that is, an "alienation of knowledge" and "alienation by their way of life". The development of the capitalist enterprise has led to an increasing division of labor among cadres such that they too become "an anonymous corps of workers, in the exercise of their tasks they are dependent, in the end, upon a logic which they no longer control: the logic of the market."

R. Guillon, op. cit., p. 86.

10. Assises du Socialisme. Pour le Socialisme (Paris: Editions du Stock, 12-13 October 1974): p. 17.

11. When a distinction is made between productive and unproductive labor it is often one which paints unproductive labor as unnecessary labor, a waste. Therefore, such work is especially alienating. See, for example, A. Meyer, op. cit.

12. See Fred Curtis, "The Value of African Labor-Power in South Africa: 1948-1978" (UMass: AESA Working Paper #2, Spring 1983), for a discussion of the complex class character of wages.

13. The concept of national income or national product must be problematized and reconceptualized from a Marxist class perspective. See Stephen Resnick and Richard D. Wolff, "A Marxian Reconceptualization of Income Distribution" (UMass: AESA Working Paper #25, Spring 1983).

14. PS, Projet, p. 124.

15. Ibid., p. 128.

16. Ibid., pp. 10-11.

17. Defining socialism in terms of democracy has been an important means for the PS to distinguish its theory and politics from that of the Communist Party's. For the PS can reject the Communists' vision of socialism à la USSR as "totalitarian". This term is quite comparable, though as its opposite, to that of "democracy". They are thus able to characterize two extremes of a spectrum of political (state) relations.

18. The Projet was formulated and written after the devastating break-up of the Socialist/Communist Alliance in 1978. It was thus in part devised to redefine a Socialist program in face of the collapse of "Left Unity". Jean-Paul Chevènement and CERES were the authors of this Party document. They were granted this task in reward for their support for Mitterand in his struggle with Rocard over leadership of the Party.

19. Unfortunately, this vision of pluralism appears to be for "citizens", rather than for "workers". "Workers" appear as one particular "basic unit" participating as one actor/subject among many in the collective determination of a general interest. There is a recognition of distinct interests particular to those who work as wage-laborers (or, more broadly, as "producers"), those who consume and/or use, those who take part in civil society (citizens), etc. There is no coherent application of class distinctions within each category nor among them.

Thus, the particular interests to be represented throughout society remain separately defined, isolated from each other rather than understood in terms of each other. The Projet does not present an analysis in which those who are workers are also consumers, women, youth, immigrants and citizens. In other words, the PS does not develop a class analysis of consumers, women, citizens, etc. such that participation is defined in terms of capitalist workers acting in the different spheres of consumption, culture, leisure, politics, etc. relative to occupants of other class positions acting in these spheres. Instead, each realm of activity and/or experience is understood as involving distinct groups of individuals with common interests and concerns evolving almost solely out of that realm.

The one shared characteristic is, perhaps, that all are dominated. Thus, pluralism is a means to empower each "sector" or "basic unit" of society.

20. PS, Projet, p. 132.

21. Ibid., p. 153.

22. Ibid., p. 233.

23. A thorough investigation and analysis which can historically describe the complex relationships between the "socio-economic" composition of the PS's membership and the development of these socialist cultural values and ethics needs to be undertaken. For the Party's membership is comprised of well-educated and highly-skilled state functionaries, university professors and schoolteachers, along with technicians, engineers, researchers, "professionals" and executive managers. There are certainly a number of fascinating and important points to develop concerning this membership's class, intellectual, familial, religious and political history and the diversity and strength of humanist socialism in France.

See Carole Biewener, "The Class Composition of the French Socialist Party in the 1970's" (UMass: July 1983, unpublished), for a class 'typology' of the PS's membership and electorate.

24. PS, Projet, p. 147.

25. See Portelli, op. cit., pp. 198+.

Alain Lipietz writes of how articles and pamphlets emanating from the St. Simon Foundation have multiplied in 1982-83. "Intellectuals, business men, CFDT unionists henceforth [are] well represented by the St. Simon Foundation (which also includes men such as MM. Alain Minc, financial director of the St. Gobain industrial group, Serge July, director of Libération, and Pierre Rosanvallon, ex-theoretician of the CFDT)..." ("Un socialisme français aux couleurs du libéralisme", Le Monde Diplomatique, March 1984.)

26. For further discussion of the development of Socialist/Communist electoral alliances see: R.W. Johnson, op. cit. and H. Portelli, op. cit.

27. "Document d'étude et de réflexion," Annexe to Pau Congress Motion, 2 February 1975, Le Poing et le rose 36 (January 1975): p. 11; as quoted by P. Bacot, op. cit.

28. A case can be made here that the PC's definition of class has also effected the nature of its political alliances and strategies. By limiting their conception of the proletariat to industrial wage-laborers, electoral alliances with administrative, clerical and service-sector workers have often been understood as "outside" alliances. This therefore "objectively limits" the nature of the alliance. For only the working class can bring socialism about. Alliances with the "petty bourgeoisie" can only be made to overthrow monopoly capital's domination.

29. Assises du socialisme, op. cit., p. 38.

30. Like the concept of class, the PS's notion of "oppressive" gender relations (patriarchy) is formulated almost solely in terms of political relations of power and domination. The complexity of gender relations, their economic, psychological, sexual and cultural dimensions/processes are often reduced to the single experience and condition of powerlessness and dependence.

30. Assises du socialisme, op. cit., p. 38.

31. PS, Projet, p. 232.

32. A. Meyer, op. cit., p. 34.

33. Ibid., pp. 36 and 38.

34. Assises du socialisme, op. cit., p. 39.

35. Adam Przeworski, "Proletariat into a Class: The Process of Class Formation from Karl Kautsky's The Class Struggle to Recent Controversies," Politics and Society 7 (1977): pp. 348-49.

36. P. Bacot, op. cit., p. 291.

37. A. Przeworski, op. cit.

38. PS, Projet, p. 37.

39. Ibid., p. 37.

40. See S. Resnick and R.D. Wolff, Marxian Theory: Epistemology, Class, Enterprise and State., op. cit., and "Classes in Marxian Theory", op. cit. Also, Bruce Norton, "The Accumulation of Capital as Historical Essence: A Critique of the Theory of Monopoly Capitalism," (UMass: Working Paper #9, Spring 1983).

41. Marxists however would have to ask: Whose rate of profit? The capitalist enterprises', or the banks', or the merchants'? What is accounted for as "profit" and what is accounted for as "costs"? We would be wary of concluding too quickly that declining enterprise profit rates means a declining rate of surplus-value. For enterprise rates of profit could, in a Marxist class analysis, decline for a variety of different reasons. For example, claims to the surplus by subsumed classes outside the firm could rise, such as interest payments, taxes, or merchanting fees. More surplus may then have to be distributed in order to secure those conditions necessary for the reproduction of a surplus-value. This would be a drain on the capitalist's surplus, possibly leaving him/her with a smaller retained portion as profit of enterprise. In another case, unproductive capital and labor costs within the firm may increase, such as supervision or security expenses;

clerical staff equipment; a growing accounting, planning or financial department. Thus, the capitalist must distribute a larger portion of his/her retained surplus (profit) to secure these conditions necessary for the class process of surplus-labor extraction and appropriation. If these expenses were counted by the capitalist as costs of production, then his/her perceived rate of profit would fall--not because the amount of surplus-value appropriated and realized had declined, but rather because of a redistribution of how this surplus is spent and accounted for.

42. PS, Projet, p. 172.

43. Ibid., p. 90.

44. Interview with Francois Mitterand, "Comment je compte rassembler les Francais" in Le Nouvel Observateur (5 May 1981): p. 20.

45. PS, Projet, p. 126.

46. Ibid., p. 129.

47. See Carole Biewener, "The French Socialists' Strategy for Capitalist Growth and Socialist Transition" (UMass: May 1983, unpublished), for a more developed elaboration and analysis of these proposals.

48. Karl Korsch, "What is Socialization? A Program of Practical Socialism," New German Critique 6 (Fall 1975): p. 69.

49. See Ezra Suleiman, Elites in French Society: The Politics of Survival (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978) and Politics, Power, and Bureaucracy in France: The Administrative Elite (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974). Also see Christian Baudelot, Roger Establet and Jacques Malemort, La petite bourgeoisie en France (Paris: Francois Maspero, 1975).

Luc Boltanski gives a fascinating and brilliant analysis of the overall segmentation of educational institutions and advanced degrees according to future "careers". See "L'Université, les entreprises et la multiplication des salariés bourgeois, 1960/1975," Actes de la recherche en science sociale 34 (1980).

50. E. Suleiman, Elites in French Society, p. 11.

51. For echoes of this among American liberals see the works of Stephen Cohen and John Zysman. In addition to working together at Berkeley, they are both "institutional" economists and have specialized in studying the role of the state in France's political economy.

52. PS, Projet, pp. 196-97.

Not unsurprisingly the "extension" of class positions within the state through nationalization of industrial and financial enterprises has

brought conflicts among people in various subsumed and fundamental class positions within the state sector. This is especially apparent in the conflicts between state managers and managers of nationalized, capitalist industrial enterprises over the "autonomy" of the enterprises relative to the state bureaucracy.

53. Interview with Jacques Delors, "Jacques Delors, nos armes pour la relance" in Le Nouvel Observateur (1 June 1981): p. 29.

54. Andre Granou and Bernard Billaudot, "La Gauche et la crise," Les Temps Modernes.

55. See, for instance, the article from Le Monde of 15 October 1983, entitled "Le revenu disponible des entreprises s'est considerablement dégradé depuis dix ans," (Enterprises' disposable income has been considerably diminished over the past 10 years), p. 26.

56. Plan Intérimaire: Stratégie pour deux ans, 1982-1983 (Paris: La Documentation Française): p. 30, as cited by Mark Kesselman in "Socialism Without Workers: The Case of France." Kapitalistate 10/11 (1983): p. 27.

Kesselman also cites the Minister of Labor's declaration that the reforms were mutually beneficial to capitalists and workers. They made employers aware of the "human dimension of the firm and [workers] aware of its economic dimension. Plant-level democracy will rapidly raise efficiency, thereby absorbing any increased production costs."

57. Rarely are the contradictory implications of such a strategy for employment and national income discussed by the PS. For by raising the productivity of labor, existing levels of commodity production could be maintained with fewer workers. This poses a potential problem of unemployment in those industries undertaking extensive technological innovation. Further, many socialists are confused when asserting that an increase in the productivity of labor necessarily entails a growth in national wealth. This confusion basically arises out of their not recognizing the crucial difference between exchange-value and use-value. Productivity increases will raise the number of use-values produced by a given number of workers over a particular period of time. There may not be any increase in the total exchange-value produced in that working day. Thus, the same amount of capitalist total worth is divided over a larger number of commodities, thereby lowering their unit exchange-value per unit use-value. In this case an increase in labor productivity would not bring any increase in the capitalist wealth produced. Certainly the production of capitalist commodities embodying less abstract labor-time than is socially necessary may enable a capitalist to realize super profits by the sale of these commodities at their higher social value. But this realization of a larger surplus-value than what is embodied in the commodities produced should not be confused with more surplus or capitalist wealth being produced. Rather, the realization of a super profit is a redistribution of surplus-value among capitalists. Following Marx's argument concerning capitalist

competition (Vol. I of Capital, chapter 25), to the extent that the increase in labor productivity is generalized within any particular industry, there may be an actual decline in the capitalist worth produced and realized.

58. David Dickson reports that the 200th anniversary of Denis Diderot's death is currently being used to "encourage broader public appreciation of science and technology." A "new, technically sophisticated French culture" must be developed in order for France to effectively compete in international markets. As Bernard Jeannot, a spokesman at the Ministry of Culture stated: "There is a general concern at the political level to find ways in which the Ministry of Culture can help address the current economic programs being faced by the country. Encouraging a greater interest in science, and placing it in its social context, is one way that we can do that." See David Dickson, "France Invokes Memory of Diderot to Promote Technology", Chronicle of Higher Education (April 18, 1984).

59. Ironically the inadequacies and contradictions of a socialist program shaped by bourgeois conceptions is breaking the PS's "objective" electoral alliance apart. Using class only as a category for political organization and support has provided conditions for the recent loss of organization, mobilization and support.

60. See A. Lipietz, Le Monde Diplomatique, p. 1.

61. Kesselman, op. cit., p. 26.

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