

CLASS STRUGGLE AND WOL STRUGGLE

Discussion paper for AWL III, Geneva, 22-24 February 1980

Discussion paper for ASS III, Geneva, 25-27 February 1980

By Johan Galtung

1. In Northern Europe, and to some extent in North America, the two major political forces right now seem to be "the blue wind" and "the green wave". Whether in power or not social democracy has been the dominant trend for the last fifty years or so. Its "red" or "rose" solution, (soft) state control over capitalist forces has led to a considerable expansion of the public sector, to a blunting of some class contradictions, to a welfare state system. At the same time changes in social formation and social composition have led to a steady decline in the size of the traditional workingclass. Reactions against the social construction are also towering up: from the right the critique of the state as economic agent, the yearning for more rights and freedoms to dispose over economic means, for the "private" individual; from the further left the push to go further in the same directions, from the new green pole a general critique of technocracy, of clientelism, and so on. At the same time most labor parties are probably split more or less in right wing, blue pole that sympathises with the right, and in green and red factions, particularly among its youth. Thus, the future of these giant parties may easily be very similar to the present of the great liberal parties that preceded them in many countries: a reduction in size down to insignificance, except as some kind of conscience of society.

2. These notes are not concerned with the problem of saving labor parties, but with the fight for human and social development for which the labor parties have been important carriers. But today the green wave is also an important carrier and the problem arises: to what extent are the class/WOL struggle contradictory or compatible? The chart is supposed to give some indications.

<u>Major concern</u>	reducing or abolishing class differences and relations, particularly with regard to conditions of production and level of living, thereby liberating everybody	fight against maldevelopment, ie against patterns of under- and overconsumption, for material and/or non-material needs, for everybody
<u>Major enemy</u>	Capitalism, for some also the state as capitalist. Transition to a socialist society with reduced, without class differences	Technocracy, both capital and state and intelligentsia. Transition to a pluralist/humanist society with smaller units, local self-reliance
<u>Consciousness-formation</u>	working class, wage-earners; "enlightened" people from the bourgeoisie	middle class, particularly among young and educated people; "enlightened" people from the working class
<u>Caricature presentation</u> - shallow level struggle	these are people who do no dispute what is produced, only their share in the consumption and the conditions of production	these are people who do not dispute the distribution of what is produced, only their own pattern of need-satisfaction
<u>Deeper version</u> - easily forgotten in presentations	The struggle against capitalism is also a struggle for new goals for society	The struggle against technocracy is also a struggle for a classless society
<u>Method of fight</u>	demonstrations, strike, <u>solidarity</u> - the gains should be for all, not for a part of the working class	demonstrations and the <u>positive negation</u> , the concrete example, the future now, to gain experience and show concretely what the goal is
<u>Process of transcendence</u>	essentially through national working class control and national solutions; not go ahead locally or in one branch before all can join	essentially through people's local control, even at the micro level (down to individuals, families, communes); not wait for national solution, <u>praxis now</u> .
<u>Counter-strategy</u>	keep them waiting, use their solidarity to prevent them from practising, use their struggle for improved level of living as market stimulus	keep them in small units marginalize them, let them experiment, use their results once in a while, have them as a reserve labor and innovation force
<u>Counter-counter-strategy</u>	PRAXIS NOW	NATIONAL (and international) SOLIDARITY