WEAKENING THE STRONG AND STRENGTHENING THE WEAK: Towards a Theory of Stratagies for Development

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1. Introduction

Strategy, that is politics. And politics, like anything else can be done more or less well. To know whether it is done more well or less well, and above all to have some ideas about how it could be done better, a theory of strategy is indispensable. Much of that exists today, after all this is what key thinkers in the field of politics such as von Clausewitz and Lenin were writing about in very different ways, and more recently there is that remarkable book called Strategy for a Living Revolution, by George Lakey. However, there is no dearth of material in this field.

Rather, there is a tendency, particularly well-known from UN documents and from recent"world models" to stop the analysis where "politics" begins, with formulations like "this, however, is a political question". Of course, that is where the analysis very often should start, leading up to action directives that are clear and justified in terms of the goals to be obtained – at least on paper. It has been the view of the present author for the last 20 years or so – and the work done in the field of peace research is an example of this – that an analysis without policy implications of a strategic nature is no good analysis. There are two reasons for this. First, as has been said by so many – our task is not merely to reflect the world but to do something about it, and to the extent we are exercising paper-and-pencil operations we can at least guide these operations towards policy implications. Second, and less frequently mentioned, when policy implications are spelt out the analysis itself, both its strength and its shortcomings, tends to become much more understandable. Readers can say to themselves and to others "so this is what you mean !" ; the author himself might be one of these readers and feel that his analysis is challenged by his own implications in the sense that the whole thing does not hang well enough together and hence be prompted to revisions. In short, it is a good way of forcing a dialogue, the author with himself, the author with the readers, the readers among themselves.

It is the contention of the present paper that in order to spell out a strategy one has to know not only what the goal of that political

activity is, and why (the justification) – the answers to these two
questions would be nothing but regular analysis of what is wrong in present
society and what a better society might look like. One also has to know
who shall do it (the carriers of the strategy, die Träger, les porteurs),
and how they are going to do it. And more than that, some ideas have to
be given as to where (in social space, possibly also in geographical space)
concrete actions have to be carried out, and when (in social time, in some
cases also in chronological time). It is only by adding the who, how, where
and when to the what and why that a sufficient level of specificity is
given so that at least the thinking of strategies moves from the realm of
goal formulations to the realm of processes.

In saying this one should carefully avoid a too sharp dis-
tinction between goals and processes in the field of politics. Thus, a goal
which is not at the same time a process becomes a dogma, a rigid, ahistorical
final stage of development – hence an absurdity. And a process, such as a
political fight, which does not at the same time have some character of
being a goal in itself is hardly worth participating in. This is so clearly
seen when one is participating in a political fight : the intensity of the
experience, the joy of participation, of doing something meaningful – all
that goes much beyond expectation of goals to be realized, it attaches to
the process itself. In fact, after the goal has been "achieved" – the
enemy is out of the country, the class enemy has been eliminated as a class –
the aftermath does not nearly carry the same range and depth of satisfaction
as the struggle itself. This, however, is not the same as saying that
struggle is the goal of humankind : one will probably come closer to im-
portant insights in human beings if one postulated an undulating pattern
of struggle alternating with goal achievement or at least some respite from
struggle as something worth striving for. And this is perhaps what the
Chinese mean or meant when they talked about "a permanent revolution".

Strategy, then, is the link between theory and practice.
It has to have an element of either to steer clear of the Scylla of actio-
nism without goals and a commitment to goals without any action. But what
a good strategy is we never know before it has been translated into prac-
tice and proven to work.

2. The When

In the list of 6 small words used in the introduction it might have been logical to start with the what and the why - and precisely for that reason we would like to start with the when and the where. In a study of goals the what and the why would dominate, in a study of processes of development the when and the where should so to speak lead the train of thought.

We shall split the time dimension, the when, in two aspects : some reflections about when to start political action in an absolute sense, and when to initiate actions in a relative sense, meaning by that the time order of different types of political action. We shall refer to these two aspects as "the principle of ripe time" and "the principle of correct time order" respectively, and now proceed under these two headings.

(a) The principle of ripe time. Easily this is the point that could best be used as a way of differentiating between politicians and theoreticians. A good politician has a sense of timing, a theoretician may have a sense of all the rest but is not sufficiently attuned to the seismic waves of the political landscape to know when to march forward. There is a good expression in French : attendre son heure , but it is obvious that it cuts both ways. On the one hand it is a warning against he who rushes forward against the tidal waves where a little bit of waiting would have given him tremendous additional energy or momentum. On the other hand it should also serve as a warning against he who does nothing but waiting, using the "principle of unripe time" as a perennial pretext for inaction, letting all the tidal waves pass, occasionally picking out a counter-wave which can be used as evidence that he is correct in adapting his unperturbed waiting posture.

The metaphors used above point to one simple principle : to work with rather than against trends that are present anyhow, especially when they are in the "right" direction, but also when they are neutral and can be steered somewhat. A strategy is a guided or steered process, and should make full use of forces operating in the political landscape anyhow. As a metaphor might serve the way in which women in many "primitive" societies give birth: in a squatting position, making use of the force of gravity in addition to their own muscular forces and contractions; as opposed to women in "advanced" societies lying horizontally, working neither with nor against the pull of gravity.

Thus, the timing question becomes one of knowing when such socially and politically relevant forces are operating. No doubt survey analysis may be an important tool here : trend data showing declines or increases in certain attitudes may be more important than data giving the absolute figures. To be low but on the increase may be better than to high but on the decline - the gradient in public opinion figures may give more information about the political forces operating than the absolute figures. Thus, an attitude which has held a commanding position for a long time but shows indications of slipping, and particularly in the center of political opinion formation in society would be less worth gambling on than a less widely held opinion rapidly gaining adherence, particularly in the center of society.

In saying this it should be emphasized that by center/periphery we certainly do not mean bourgeoisie/proletariate. It is only that societies do have steep gradients of social position, these gradients are strongly corrolated with being sender and being receiver of politically relevant attitudes, and for that reason it would count more what happens among skilled workers in the cities than among uneducated old ladies in the countryside. (In saying so we have already indicated four components of this gradient : age, sex, urban/rural - education - and one could add others   , income, primary versus secondary and tertiary sector, functionary vs. worker, and the geographical center/periphery dimensions of any society).

There is an other, however, much more precise but also more difficult to define component in the question of "when" in the absolute sense. Again a physical analogy might be useful : an eskimo who wants to topple an iceberg into the water will know that no force he can mobilize is able to do so before the iceberg is in a position of highly unstable equilibrium, at the very water front. At that point only a little muscle would be sufficient. The question of identifying when repressive regimes are in unstable equilibrium is a major one - the point would be not to waste forces trying to unsaddle a firmly entrenched oppressor, but rather wait till he is vulnerable.

One might say that the upshot of all this would be to argue in favour of some kind of political jiu-jitsu ; an art of fighting where the two principles mentioned are fully utilized. In so doing one is applying strategies that the weak can also make use of. And an other upshot of what has been said so far is the crucial significance of being ready with the goal once time is ripe so as to avoid being caught in a dilemma between

not knowing what to do when the time is ripe and working against all
social forces with precious, even perfect goals in mind.

(b) The principle of correct time order. We now assume that the total
strategy has a number of sub-strategies, there are many different things
to be done, and the question is : in what order? The general contention
is that this is a much understudied problem in political science in
general and the strategy of development in particular, and hence a field
where some possible new breakthroughs might be made.

Thus, consider the following five elements in almost everybody's
program of development :

    (1) power to the people

    (2) de-coupling, de-linking from dominant world power struc-
        tures

    (3) distribution of access to production factors, more parti-
        cularly   – control over land, water, seeds, and other
                      raw materials ("land")
                   – credit facilities ("capital")
                   – education and health "quality of human resources")
                   – technologies ("means of production")
                   – organization ("mode of production")
                   – transportation/communication (distribution factor)

    (4) agricultural production,
        – of food stuffs
        – of industrial raw materials

    (5) industrial production,
        – for mass consumption
   – of capital goods

Since there is nothing about export in this program it might be
the typical program of an early phase of self-reliance with much emphasis
on self-sufficiency. Most important, however, is the order of implementation
of the 5 points above : if it is not as indicated in this list it might
very easily go very wrong. In short, the field of strategies is not like
conventional arithmetics : the order of the factors is by no means unim-
portant. For instance, if production comes before distribution re-distri-
bution later may be extremely difficult or impossible because of the vested
interests created among those who control the production factors. Similarly,
if de-linking comes before a change in the internal power structure the
masses might even more than before become the victims of internal oppression.
Further, if production comes before de-linking the result may very easily
be export oriented production, with surplus value accumulating on the top

rather than where it is needed. And if, industrial production is stepped
up before agricultural production the result will easily be food dependency.
And so on, and so forth.

The list above should not be interpreted in a too rigid
manner. Above all, it should not be interpreted in a linear manner, meaning
first one starts with point (1), then comes point (2) and so on :
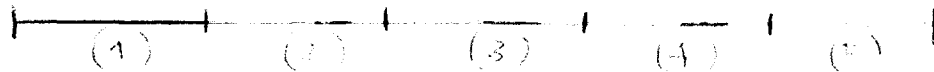
Rather, the interpretation is something like this :
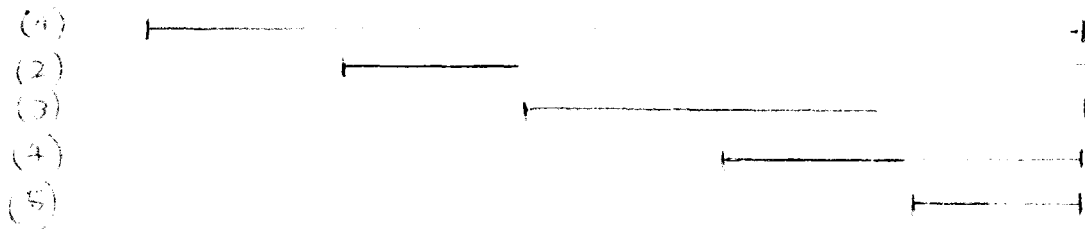
A task is initiated, but it is not concluded – after some time the system
may be ripe for a second step which is not concluded either, and so on.

Thus, the interpretation of what is said above is not the
classical "revolution first, then one can go ahead with the rest". The
point is rather that to do something about number (3) above, the distribu-
tion of access to production factors, some amount of decoupling, of de-
linking from dominant world power structures is probably indispensable.
And for this to happen some amount of power to the people who see themselves
as the victims of the coupling, the link with the dominant world power
structure, is equally indispensable. But here it might well be that merely
the introduction of more genuine popular representation in an otherwise
not too well functioning parliamentary system, or some more freedom to
trade unions would already be helpful – after all, those among the Third
world countries that have a more progressive stance often has nothing more
than that in terms of "power to the people".

A question that now could be raised would be the following:
accepting the idea that there is such a thing as a wrong time order does
not imply that there has to be a ripe time order in terms of the order in
which certain strategies are initiated, whether it is according to the
first or the second version in the drawings above. There is a fourth very
simple possibility : that the strategies are carried out concurrently :

(1) |—— |

(2) |————————————————————————

(3) |——————

(4) |——————————————————

(5) |——————————

In other words, why not simply try to do everything at the same time ?
There are several reasons why, and the problem is an important one.

First of all, one might say that if this is possible by all
means do so. But the point of departure is a country or a region or a
group so steered from the outside through local, oppressive elites that
it is difficult to see that it would at all be possible. Why should that
elite group or metropolitan power be interested in any distribution at
all – point (3) on the list? As this is a rather indispensable part in
a total strategy it sounds unlikely that there would be any political
space for any move in that direction as long as nothing has been done
about points (1) and (2).

But then there is a second argument of a totally different type.
It is quite true as can be observed,that an approach that leaves out some
factors for some time and puts them further down on the agenda by necessity
will be one-sided, disequilibrated, uneven. Thus, in the first stage it
might lead to a society rich in popular assemblies with considerable real
power, still with much outside penetration although the bridgehead for
that penetration, the domestic elites, has been undermined, eroded, done
away with, with a highly asymmetric distribution of all production assets,
and with an economic life based on export of raw materials and processed
or assembled goods for the world market, and import of luxury goods,
capital goods, some consumer goods and some food stuff. One might say that
in such a situation there would be a clear contradiction, evident to every-
body, between the power distribution and the distribution of goods and
services in the society. And one hypothesis would then be that the more
glaring the contradiction, the more momentum is generated for social change.
The reason for that is that the contradiction is not an abstract one only to
be seen in a statistical distribution, it is very concrete. It expresses
itself in the rank disequilibrium of so many individuals in the society
concerned : in concrete persons being high on power and low on goods and
services and resources to produce these goods and services. In other words,
it is inside people, not only between them. The latter is also a substantial
basis of social leverage, but when the former is added it becomes a tremen-
dous social force.

In saying so one might be thinking of the Iranian situation
spring 1979 : there is much more power to the people, but the rest is
still more or less as it was under the shah regime. What one then notices,
clearly, are policies of de-coupling, de-linking from the powers designated
as imperialist : the United States, Soviet Union, Great Britain and Israel.
Continuation along such lines would increase the power level inside the
country and make it possible to have an even more symmetric power dis-
tribution, in so doing the contradictions between the first two and the
remaining three points on the list would be even more glaring. And so on,
and so forth : the basic point is simply systematic use of uneven, unbalanced
development as a driving force.

(c) A note on the relationship to UN strategies. How does this tie in with
UN strategies ? If one should give a very sketchy summary of these strate-
gies it might perhaps be useful to start with strategies in the field of
external economic relations, particularly trade policies. And here it seems
fairly clear that the UN has had 3 major strategies :

I. Import substitution

II. Increased export of commodities

III. The New International Economic Order

Roughly speaking, the import substitution phase spearheaded by the UN Economic
Commission for Latin America had as its center- piece the idea of industria-
lization for the production of capital goods in the Third world itself, so
as to be able to substitute for imports and thus decrease the dependency on
the industrialized countries. The reasoning seems rather perfect, in practice
whatever the reason was – capital goods produced locally tended in that
stage not to be competitive with the capital goods imported from the First
world countries. Operating on the market conditions the strategy became
untenable.

The next strategy, hence, was an effort to be able to import more
by exporting more. The result was in increased drive to produce commodities
demanded by the First world industrial machineries and consumption, at the
well-known risk of substituting cash crops for subsistence crops, of losing
raw materials out of the country without getting the added value resulting
from production, and of exposing oneself to poor, even deteriorating, and
at least fluctuating terms of trade. (Of these 3 arguments against that
second strategy the third one is most often heard and probably least important).

The third strategy, the New International Economic Order, can be
seen as a reponse to the difficulties with the second, with some elements
of a return to the first but this time on the basis of "collective self-
reliance", on the basis of the Third world as a whole or its continental and
sub-continental sub-divisions. The focus is on improving the terms of trade,
and, to a lesser extent, on import substitution. There may, however, be a
time order involved here : first in terms of trade, then a utilization of
the excess funds generated in order to industrialize.

If these are the external strategies, what would then be the internal
strategies ? It is easily seen that the most "progressive" one or at least
change-oriented one would be during the first period,of import substitution.
After all, to bring about that major economic change an equally substantial
social change is needed, and the two welded together could very well pass
under the slogan of a "unified approach". After all, industrialization carried
in its wake major social changes in the First world countries, it would also
do so in the Second and Third world countries

But under the second strategy, and to some extent also under the third
since it is so closely related to the second, much less change is needed in-
ternally in the Third world society. All that is needed is an economy where
production factors are not distributed, but in the hands of a small group that
both controls land, raw materials in general, capital, are healthy and educated
enough to enjoy long lives in which experience can accumulate and be converted
into full-scale exercises of power supported by the skills embedded in education,
over technology, and control organization for production, be it of cash crops or
of industrial, mass produced goods. In this type of structure peasants will
first be made landless by being evicted from land they have been cultivating
because land becomes valuable to the owner when it can be used for cash crops
rather than subsistence crops, after that the landless labourer will also
become labourless labourer because of the introduction of labour extensive
technology. The story is well-known, it is repeated everywhere and the basic
point is the fundamental compatibility between an export oriented economy
(the negation of factor (2) on the stragies list),and a highly underdeveloped
social structure where distribution of power, access to production factors,
and the consumption of agricultural and industrial goods are concerned.
Since the New International Economic Order has so many of the same elements,
except for the international accumulation of proceeds from the exchange process
one would assume in general that NIEO will by and large be compatible with

the maintenance of internal status quo, and even reinforce it.

Thus, the second and third international development strategies of the United Nations are probably by and large internally regressive. They are not related to any acceptable theory as to linkages between external and internal strategies except if one assumes that the purpose of these two trade strategies is essentially to maintain internal status quo. As such it will generate more contradictions between classes inside these countries, but not within individuals because of the consistency of the policies pursued. Internal inequalities will be maintained, only amplified and consolidated. There will be some exceptions to this : as educational and health policies probably will be initiated there will be people who have more education and more health than they have power and economic resources; some of them might be able to use these two resources and generate some political momentum. The likely outcome of that type of political momentum might be a return to the strategy of import substitution but at a higher level, the level of not only collective self-reliance, but also national self-reliance and local self-reliance.

Above all, the leading consideration in connection with this part of a general theory of strategies, the timing part, would be derived from basic human needs considerations. And from these considerations two points emerge immediately : priority to production for basic needs, and distribution of what is produced in such a way that priority is given to those most in need. The points mentioned above (page 5) should in principle be in line with this. There is an assumption : that if people, including those most in need, get access to and even control over production factors then they will give priority to satisfaction of their own needs. In other words, concretely : they will give priority to subsistence food over cash crops, to industrial production for mass consumption and capital goods over luxury consumption, and so on. It should be noted that this is an assumption which is not necessarily valid. It is probably valid if control really is exercised by those most in need, but if they are in a minority or powerless for some other reasons very quickly other production priorities may be set: in favour of, for instance, export oriented agriculture and industries for anything but basic needs, and certainly not for those most in need.

3. <u>The Where</u>

Unfortunately, social science theory is much more related
to the classical discipline dealing with time, history, than to the
classical discipline dealing with space, geography. For that reason
little fruitful thinking has been developed about the relationship
between physical geography and and strategies, beyond a probably
very detailed, but not easily available theory ofrelationship between
nature and the tacticsof, for instance, guerrilla warfare as a way
of overthrowing repressive regimes. The geography of hiding is im-
portant here: the weak have to begood at **hiding** themselves and this
is more easily done in areas where wind and water erosion have made
many and deep caves in soft mountains than in areas with plains or
very hard mountains. Translated into more social terms: medieval
cities present more opportunities than modern "planned" cities, old
buildings more than modern "functional" buildings, and so on.

However, the "where" should here be interpreted in terms
of social space rather than physical space. There is less consensus
as to what the map of social space looks like, but most would pro-
bably agree that distinctions should be made between <u>levels</u> of
 social organization on the one hand - local, national, international-
and <u>mode</u> of organization - territorial vs. non-territorial. To spell
out: there is the territorial organization of human beings in
local communities, states and a **UN system** with some of the charac-
teristics of the ultimate in territorial organization, a world state.
And there is the non-territorial system, the countless associations
of individuals, and also of collectivities, clustering around shared
values or shared interests (or both) - at local, national and inter-
national levels. Thus, there is more to it than the"first system"
of states, the "second system" of intergovernmental organizations
(particularly the UN) and the "third system" of non-governmental or-
ganization, to use that useful terminology. The question is: where
is there some room for maneuver, some political latitude or space in
this social space?

The answer would seem <u>not</u> to be at the level of national
governments, but - possibly - at all the five others. It is at the
national, governmental level that oppressive regimes tend to be best
articulated and to be strongest. Ultimately they will have to be
conquered at that level, but to start a struggle where they are at
their strongest is not good strategy. Revolutionary theory tends to
focus on this level"because that is where the power is"; so does

military theory and, incidentally, also the theory of military
(and other) coups d'etat, with their emphasis on the presidential
palace, the radio and the airport. The latter serves to bring
out another important point: a onesided focus on the national, gov-
ernmental level as the point in social space in which the struggle
is to be fought may also lead to the wrong results not because it
is too difficult but because a victory may be too easy. A rotten
regime at the top may fall, a new one is installed, but so what?
Has there been any real change at other levels?

The set of alternatives to this classical approach has
a comfortable ring of the familiar in post second world war poli-
tics:

(1) Local organization/association - not waiting for a national
     level protest to form.

(2) Local control, but not necessarily over territory; could also
     be over one factory, one firm, to practice another way of
     doing things, to gain experience, to serve as an example --
     the liberated zone in guerrilla theory being the case in point

(3) National organizations/associations - the trade unions, the
     organizations of other repressed groups (the women, the old
     and the young, the ethnic groups.

(4) World organizations/associations - the whole system of non-
     governmental organizations.

(5) World intergovernmental organizations - particularly the UN
     system.

Thus, take as an example the struggle of the Third world countries
for a more just and equitable position in the world order. That
world order is ultimately controlled by the military and political
power of the strongest states. The Third world is not able to,
and probably does not want to either, attack that system directly.
But, to start from the end of the list above, the Third world has
to a large extent conquered the UN system and might/should also
exercise leadership in nongovernmental organizations. To take an
example: the international social science associations, such as
IPSA (for political science), ISA (for sociology), IPRA (for peace
research), SID (for development studies) play some role in shaping
people's consciousness around the world - consequently, they con-
stitute points in social space worth considering.

What the Third world so far has not done is to focus
more on the local level in high income countries. And yet it is
at that level that there might be most support to find: a community
here or there wanting to dedicate itself to a new international
order, eg., by importing Third world goods on better terms by cir-

cumventing national importers/exporters. And there are local initia
tives such as the __Bananafrauen__ in Switzerland. In short, social
space offers so much more political space than can be obtained
from a focus on national governments alone, through persuasion,
bargaining or threats, singly or combined, from the outside and/or
the inside. The weak are almost bound to use more roundabout stra-
tegy, encircling the strongholds of power from below (local) and
above (world

4. The Who

Who are the possible carriers of a basic social transformation? And how can their political space be expanded? These are the two basic questions to be explored below; they are - of course - strongly related.

One possible point of departure is an observation of the obvious: in a vertical (exploitative, repressive or both) structure those on top have the resources - power, money, knowledge etc. - and hence would be capable of bringing about changes, but they would hardly be motivated to bring about any basic structural change. And for those who are at the bottom the opposite would be true: they might be motivated, but would be much less capable. One basic aspect of capability in this connection would be the ability not only to develop tactics of struggle, but also to develop strategies - in other words to connect the struggle with the long range goals. As a matter of fact, very often the people on top might be better in developing images of desirable societies, but they would be much less motivated to do anything serious about it.

This, then, leads to one equally obvious answer to who the carriers of new goals, visions, societies could be: people in-between, neither fully at the top, nor at the bottom; sufficiently motivated by not being at the top, sufficiently capable by not being at the bottom. In sociological terms this does not point to a usually relatively complacent middle class, but to rank disequilibrated groups: those high on some status dimension and low on one or more others. There are many examples. One would be underprivileged intellectuals: high on education, low on income and power, perhaps also on prestige. Another would be minorities high on, say, income, but low on ethnic status. Still another would be the young: low on age-ascribed status, high on education (the students), or on social position (the sons and daughters of the elites). Obviously, in all these cases the high status gives capability and the low status

corrp.]?. the discrepancy between the high and the low status would be for motivation.

Thus, the position taken here would, in general, be that it is naive to assume that the most downtrodden in a social formation would be the carriers of a new social formation. They would be not only motivated for, but also at times capable of bringing about a revolt against the status quo. Their goals, however, might often be that of gaining a better position in the existing social formation, not to change it basically. In this they would be entirely justified - but to carve out niches or occupy positions within a social order is not the same as to change it. People in rank disequilibrium would be better placed for this: they might see more clearly (perhaps particularly the sons and daughters of the elites) that the present order is no longer viable with or without a change of personnel, a rotation of elites (including themselves). They might also have the privilege based on education and sufficient leisure to develop their imagination in the direction of vision of the social relation. They might also be in a position to practice some of these visions, wholly or partly, on a smaller scale. Alone they certainly cannot make any revolt, any revolution, together with the really downtrodden they can make a revolution; in fact, revolutions usually occur precisely when the revolt of the masses is organically amalgamated with the visions of some (rank disequilibrated) elites. Neither is sufficient, both are necessary - that also applies to the person within these elites who crystallizes out of all of this as the leader. The leader, incidentally, probably has to symbolize in his or her person the basic predicament of the society.

The vanguard, this group, this counter-elite group, is in a sense a traitor of its own class and it has to be. But they are usually not members of the dominant class with complete status-sets: as argued above there would be one or more status-dimensions missing. This is not seen by any simplistic, one-dimensional

analysis of social formations, eg. only in terms of where people are located in the capital/labor contradiction, or - such works - in terms of income, education, etc., etc., but also... the "silent majority", if not ill, better analyzed, neither... nor... but just unmobilized, often unaware of their own profile.   It should be noted that the least reliable "class traitors" would be those who are lacking on only one dimension: that of age; for the simple reason that they will catch up with time. Youth radicalism in general and student radicalism in particular is an important, even indispensable basis for social transformation - but as a **category rather** than as a group or as individuals. As the person moves through time that type of rank disequilibrium peters out and with it the radical motivation and energy; but other young people enter that social category, replenishing that reservoir of social energy for change. A person high on, say, education and power but "low" on sex being a woman, would be a much more reliable and long lasting carrier of new goals; but youth/students are indispensable!

Assuming that this in-between group serves as a recruiting basis for a number of individuals both capable and motivated for change the question is how to create more political space within the overwhelming majority of most societies: those at the top and those at the bottom. We shall make use of the simple scheme mentioned at the outset as it gives a systematic basis for the elaboration of some important strategies:

	Motivation for change	Capability for change
Those at the top (equilibrated)	LOW	HIGH
Those at the bottom	HIGH	LOW

All this is... ideal-typical -- or... and statistically speaking it may come out very differently. But the table serves to pose four questions that are variations of the general theme explored in this paper: how to weaken the strong and how to strengthen the weak; in an exploitative, repressive social order.

(1) How to increase the motivation of those at the top. Is it possible to motivate people for a change that implies loss of privilege for them? Of course it is, provided a minimum of political imagination is put to work. There is a difference between a landowner in a feudal structure looking forward to execution or banishment after a basic social change and one who may become the fixed salary manager of a state owned cooperative. Thus, the first condition for a better motivation is the promise of a social life, not only biological life, after change; the second could be an image ofan even better life. The three usual channels of power are at work here: one might try to convince those running the oppressive structure that there are other values according to which they would feel better in a more equitable society; one might try to buy them off by expropriating them at good prices; and one might try to frighten them by "giving them offers they cannot refuse" in case they do not cooperate. In other words, there are the normative/ideological, the remunerative and the punitive approaches to compliance.

One guess here might be that the remunerative approach would be most effective of the three. One thing is to convince people that what they do is wrong quite another to convince them that the opposite pattern is right. The threat of punishment might also invite intransigeance. The assurance of a life after death of "their" social formation might work as a psychological block-buster - even beyond realistic expectations because people might want to hope for a positive future. Mechanism of psychological cognitive dissonance reduction may work on the side of the agents of change, inside the minds of those who would be expected to oppose it. In this connection one should not underestimate the need in people to be socially useful. Realistic measures towards disarmament are impossible without good answers to the question "what to do about the generals"; merely to pension them off is not a sufficiently good answer because they become socially useless.

(2) <u>How to decrease the capability of those at the top</u>. Given their
motivation it is assumed that their capability would be used to resist
change, not to bring it about if it would threaten their privileges.
To reduce that capability through direct violence against people or
resources of various kinds is a well known strategy, including the
basic ways of incapacitating the ruling, exploitative/repressive elite:
killing them, secluding them (prisons, concentration camps, internal
exile), exile from the national territory, or simply marginalization.
Leaving aside any debate in general terms about direct violence one
difficulty is that this type of approach already presupposes consider-
able resources at the disposal of the change-oriented group if it is
to go beyond minor acts of terrorism (that may also serve to rally
the uncommitted behind the banners of those elites, not so much for
love of them as for hatred and fear of the terrorists). Hence the
search for others approaches.

One such approach would be <u>demoralization</u> or perhaps
better <u>delegitimization</u>. The assumption would be that the capability
for anything, to effect change or to resist change, decreases if the
actor no longer believes, or believes less in what he is doing. Faith
is important. The colonial power seriously believing that what it does
is good for the colonized has an additional source of energy. Most
actors, it seems, would try to bolster their inner strength by incur-
ring goals beyond their own enrichment: working for others, for the
downtrodden, for History, for God. To show that this simply is not
so, to demonstrate in words andfacts and deeds that what they do works
contrary even to their own goals would serve both to demoralize and de-
legitimize (the personal and social levels of the same phenomenon).
Possibly such actors may become dangerous at first, but sooner or
later this type of approach will work on them and create a process of
rottening from the inside, making the regime more easy to unsaddle.

(3) <u>How to increase the motivation of those at the bottom</u>. Why should this motivation be increased? Is it not already high enough, the burden of oppression and the urge for liberation sufficient as motivation? The answer is partly given above: one thing is the urge for change, quite another to have answers to the questions of what and how, not to mention the where and when and who - even when the answer to the why is so obvious. In short, what is needed is that deepening of the motivation known as consciousness-formation; and a major instrument here would be the creative development of an ideology, building on existing elements.

It is easily seen what an ideology would have to contain:
- a description of the present, with reasons for rejecting it
- an image of a future, with reasons why it should be pursued
- a strategy of change - from the present into the future
For the part of the world known today as periphery capitalism there is hardly at present any ideology doing this better than marxism with its theory of transition from capitalist to socialist social formations. But marxism can be improved upon. This is not the place to go into any detail, suffice it only to mention that in the description of the present there is a failure to see the positive elements; in the vision of the future a corresponding failure to see the negative elements in spite of the dialectical point that the positive and the negative come together; and in the strategy of change insufficiently flexible answers to the type of questions asked in this paper. Moreover, marxism does not seem to have many answers to the problems of the industrialized countries, capitalist or socialist. Ideology-formation, hence, becomes a major part of a strategy of change towards more equitable and liberating structures; it should not be regarded as a constant awaiting the appropriate moment but as in and by itself a major dynamic force.

(4) <u>How to increase the capability of those at the bottom.</u>   The
general key to that increase is, to start with, not in terms of re-
source power - the assumption being that to be"underprivileged" means
precisely to be without resources - but in terms of structural power.
In general terms it is, of course, a question of building organiza-
tions to overcome the marginalization, fragmentation and segmentation
typical of life at the bottom of vertical societies. The bridge be-
tween consciousness-formation and organization is mobilization: some
kind of crystallization, both at the personal and social levels.
Just to reach out for each other, to form small cells for discussion
of the why and the what are very important beginnings in overcoming
dominance. That this in many societies will have to be done clande-
stinely goes without saying; that modern micro-processor technology
can be used to prevent this from taking place is equally true,
forcing on us all a new problématique: the use of modern electronics
to overthrow rather than to preserve an exploitative structure.

Can one add to the capability from the outside? Can
revolts be exported, even revolutions? - by pumping in hardware and
software, people and arms? A continuum of views on this important
question can be imagined, from an unqualified yes to an unqualified
no - based on such ideas as the"universality of the revolution"
and the "specificity of the local social dialectic". Gandhi seems to
have an interesting in-between position: outsiders can join in the
struggle, but only if they share completely the conditions of the
down-trodden to the point of becoming one of them. In other words,
third parties have to become second parties to the conflict not only
to participate effectively, but to have a right to participate. It
might seem wise to avoid any dogmatic position on this issue: obvious-
there are groups that could never liberate themselves and there are
groups that would only change master if they were "helped" from the
outside, not the least because they would not have to work out their
own situation-specific ideology in the broad sense defined above.

5. The How

Can anything general be said about the means of struggle in overthrowing repressive regimes? Probably not very much, but some general principles seem to emerge from historical experience.

Thus, there is the basic, absolutely fundamental role of the incident that may lead to the type of confrontation that reveals clearly the structure of the whole system. An act of corruption is discovered, a journalist is shot, the regime goes one step too far in its repressive practices. The incident is visible to everybody: if not reported officially at least surreptitiously. A fundamental act of injustice, repression has been committed. It becomes increasingly clear who come out on which side. Even the silent majority becomes less silent. In short, time has come. This is so well known that incidents are often the works of the agent provocateur; knowing this the establishment will always claim that the incident is a non-spontaneous provocation. Much of the work to create political space hinges on this factor, for the structure-revealing incident is a major demoralizer of the repressive regime.

In the theory of non-violent revolution there is a tradition here: to provoke the incidents knowingly, deliberately, accepting the punishment and let that be the incident. The peaceful demonstration is the most elementary form, sometimes leading to killings (and then to second, third generation demonstrations as the victims are buried and their heroism is commemorated). The non-violent non-cooperation/civil disobedience - including such forms as economic and structural boycott but not boycott of persons in their private capacities - is the negative side of the more advanced form; the non-violent occupation of land or other underused resources (such as empty houses) for productive use being the positive side. The important difference between the perennial demonstration or strike on the one hand and the more advanced nonviolent forms is that the

latter are goal-revealing. To walk in demonstrations or to stop
working would hardly be the goal of the social process initiated, for
that reason it is not pedagogical and may even be anti-pedagogical.
Not to participate in an exploitative/repressive structure is part of
the goal; to be an active participant in a better structure is the
goal -- the forms of struggle should as far as possible show excatly
this.   This also makes these forms doubly structure-revealing: acts
of repression against people who simply try to till the soil wasted
by an irrational society not only reveals what kind of structure
the authorities try to uphold but also what kind of structure they
are against.   A strike can never convey this double message so effec-
tively; but it may still be an indispensable tactic - perhaps as a
part of a broader campaign of non-cooperation and civil disobedience.

Violent approaches have built into them the problem
of not being goal-revealing - unless the goal is a general massacre.
For that reason they may not be structure-revealing either: it be-
comes too easy to argue that "all this group wants is violence". The
support for the group, hence, will tend to remain very low - and will
only change under two very different conditions. The first is that
the group wins, militarily speaking and all those who have been sit-
ting on the fence come down from that fence; among other reasons be-
cause they see that the established regime was more demoralized and
delegitimized than they ever believed. The second reason is that
the group does not only engage in violence but practices its alterna-
tive society not in the struggle itself, but in the liberated zones,
which then become parts of the struggle, and very important parts.
The nonviolent struggle is less territorial, it is not based on
areas in geographical space but in carving out niches in social
space where alternative social relations can be practised. The viol-
ent struggle presupposes a territorial correlate of that social
space, a zone in which to practice. In all probability the two ap-
proaches do not exclude each other - the satyagraha and the guerilla

could even go hand in hand. But with that there is not much experience, and certainly not theory - violence and nonviolence usually being conceived of as antithetical to each other (not in gandhian thought, it should be added, hardly in maoist thinking either - but very much so in Western thought).

Thus, confrontation and struggle are inseparable from each other, and they are both inseparable from practice of the alternative now. For that reason the different aspects of a liberating process should not be serialized in a linear fashion, first this, then that; they should be conceived of more holistically, as parts of a whole. Most dangerous is the separation between means and **ends**, between process and goals. It matters _how_ liberation takes place, not only _that_ it takes place; the bird Phoenix, or so it seems, does not automatically rise out of the ashes but has to be nursed during the whole process. Those in power know this, and will tend to prefer the violent goal-blind process against themselvs because it will not so easily lead to a better alternative, thereby possibly paving the way for a return. The more clever, however, may prefer the nonviolent liberation process not only because it looks easier to fight, but also because it may be co-opted, its experiments made use of, its energies channeled inside the existing order precisely because it is so constructive and there will always be some who **can** be bought, for a little money and/or prestige. This problem will always form part and parcel of the struggle, and may also be an argument in favor of the mix of violent and nonviolent approaches.