

The Great Moving Right Show

Stuart Hall

(The author co-edited a recently published book. Policing the Crisis, which examines aspects of the "law and order" trend. Here he looks at the shift to the right in British politics.)

No one seriously concerned with political strategies in the current situation can now afford to ignore the "swing to the Right". We may not yet understand its extent and its limits, its specific character, its causes and effects. We have so far—with one or two notable exceptions—failed to find strategies capable of mobilizing social forces strong enough in depth to turn its flank. But the tendency is hard to deny. It no longer looks like a temporary swing in the political fortunes, a short-term shift in the balance of forces. It has been well installed—a going concern—since the latter part of the 1960s. And, though it has developed through a series of different stages, its dynamic and momentum appears to be sustained. We need to discuss its parameters more fully and openly on the Left without inhibition or built-in guarantees.

Certain aspects have won attention from the Left: the present Government's tough industrial and economic strategy in face of the recession and crisis in capital accumulation; the emergence of "Thatcherism" and the anti-Left campaigns; the rise of the National Front as an open political force. But the full dimensions of the precipitation to the Right continues to evade a proper analysis. This may be because the crisis continues to be "read" by the Left from within certain well-entrenched and respectable "common sense" positions. Many of these no longer provide an adequate analytic or theoretical framework: the politics which flow from them thus continue to fall far short of their aim.

Thus there are some who would still argue that "worse means better"—i.e. a sharpening of the contradictions. Such a position is often based on a belief in the inevitable rising tempo of class struggle and the guaranteed victory of "progressive forces everywhere". Those who hold it have short political memories. They forget how frequently in recent history a sharpening of the contradictions has led to "settlements" and solutions which favoured capital and the Right, rather than the reverse. The commonest response on the Left is probably to interpret the "swing to the Right" as a simple expression of the economic crisis. Thus "Thatcherism" is—give or take one or two elements—the corresponding political bedfellow of a period of capitalist recession: the significant differences between this and other variants of Tory "philosophy"

being conceived as without any specific pertinent political or ideological effects. And the National Front is the long-anticipated irrational face of capitalism—the class enemy in familiar Fascist disguise.

Specific Features

This position neglects everything particular and specific to *this* historical conjuncture. It views history as a series of repeats. It is predicated on a notion of a social formation as a simple structure in which economic factors will be immediately and transparently translated to the political and ideological levels. It falls under the sign of all "economisms" in supposing that, if you operate on the "determining level"—the economic front—all the other pieces of the puzzle will fall neatly into place.

It thus prevents itself, theoretically and politically, from working on those related but distinct contradictions, moving according to very different tempos, whose condensation, in any particular historical moment, is what defines a conjuncture. It neglects Lenin's reminder of "an extremely unique historical situation" in which "absolutely dissimilar currents, absolutely heterogeneous class interests, absolutely contrary political and social strivings have merged . . . in a strikingly 'harmonious' manner . . ." (*Letters From Afar* (No. 1)). It takes for granted what needs to be explained: how a capitalist economic recession is presided over by a social democratic [party in power (politically) with mass working class support and organized depth in the trade unions; and "lived" for increasing numbers of people through the themes and representations (ideologically) of a virulent, emergent "petty-bourgeois" ideology. These features of the current situation are not so much expressions of the economic crisis (its political and ideological reflection) as they are factors which *have effects*—including effects on the economic crisis itself and its possible solutions.

One also encounters in this discussion variants of "revolutionary optimism" and "revolutionary pessimism". The pessimists argue that we mustn't rock the boat, or demoralize the already dispersed forces of the Left. To them one can only reply with Gramsci's injunction: to address ourselves "violently" towards the present *as it is*, if we are serious about transforming it. The optimists cast

doubt on the doubters: look for the points of resistance—the class struggle continues. Of course, in one sense, they are right. We must look behind the surface phenomena, we must find the points of intervention, we mustn't underestimate the capacity for resistance and struggle. But, if we are correct about the depth of the rightward turn, then our interventions need to be pertinent, decisive and effective. Whistling in the dark is an occupational hazard not altogether unknown to the British Left. "Pessimism of the intelligence: optimism of the will".

Fascism

Finally, there is "fascism". There is a sense in which the appearance of organized Fascism on the political stage seems to solve everything for the Left. It confirms our best-worst suspicions, awakening familiar ghosts and spectres. Fascism and economic recession together seem to render transparent those connections which most of the time are opaque, hidden and displaced. Away with all those time-wasting theoretical speculations! The Marxist guarantees are all in place after all, standing to attention. Let us take to the streets. This is *not* an argument against taking to the streets. Indeed, the direct interventions against the rising fortunes of the National Front—local campaigns, anti-fascist work in the unions, trades councils, women's groups, the mobilization behind the Anti-Nazi League, the counter-demonstrations, above all Rock Against Racism (one of the timeliest and best constructed of cultural interventions, repaying serious and extended analysis)—constitute one of the few success stories of the conjuncture. But it *is* an argument against the satisfactions which sometimes flow from applying simplifying analytic schemes to complex events. What we have to explain is a move toward "authoritarian populism"—an exceptional form of the capitalist state—which, unlike classical fascism, has retained most (though not all) of the formal representative institution in place, and which at the same time has been able to construct around itself an active popular consent. This undoubtedly represents a decisive shift in the balance of hegemony, and the National Front has played a "walk-on" part in this drama. It has entailed a striking weakening of democratic forms and initiatives, but not their suspension. We may miss precisely what is specific to *this* exceptional form of the crisis of the capitalist state by mere name-calling.

The swing to the Right is part of what Gramsci called an "organic" phenomenon:

"A crisis occurs, sometimes lasting for decades. This exceptional duration means that incurable structural contradictions have revealed themselves . . . and that, despite this, the political forces which are struggling to conserve and defend the existing

structure itself are making efforts to cure them within certain limits, and to overcome them. These incessant and persistent efforts . . . form the terrain of the conjuncture and it is upon this terrain that the forces of opposition organize".

(Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*, p. 179)

Gramsci insisted that we get the "organic" and "conjuncture" aspects of the crisis into a proper relationship. What defines the "conjuncture"—the immediate terrains of struggle—is not simply the given economic conditions, but precisely the "incessant and persistent" efforts which are being made to defend and conserve the position. If the crisis is deep—"organic"—these efforts cannot be merely defensive. They will be *formative*: a new balance of forces, the emergence of new elements, the attempt to put together a new "historical bloc", new political configurations and "philosophies", a profound restructuring of the state and the ideological discourses which construct the crisis and represent it as it is "lived" as a practical reality; new programmes and policies, pointing to a new result, a new sort of "settlement"—"within certain limits". These do not "emerge": they have to be constructed. Political and ideological work is required to disarticulate old formations, and to rework their elements into new configurations. The "swing to the Right" is not a reflection of the crisis: it is itself a *response to* the crisis. I want to examine certain features of this response, concentrating on some neglected political-ideological aspects.

Economic Crisis

We must examine first the precipitating conditions. This is a matter of a set of discontinuous but related histories, rather than neat, corresponding movements. In economic terms, Britain's structural industrial and economic weakness emerges in the immediate aftermath of the postwar boom. The 1960s are marked by the oscillations between recession and recovery, with a steady underlying deterioration. These effectively destroy the last remnants of the "radical programme" on the basis of which Wilson won power in 1964, and to which he tried to harness a new social bloc. By the end of the 1960s, the economy has dipped into fullscale recession—slumpflation—which sustains the exceptional "Heath course" of 1971-4, with its head-on collisions with organized labour. By the mid-1970s, the economic parameters are dictated by a synchronization between capitalist recession on a global scale, and the crisis of capital accumulation specific to Britain—the weak link in the chain. Domestic politics has thus been dominated by crisis-management and containment strategies: dove-tailed through an increasingly interventionist state, intervening both to secure the conditions of capitalist production and reproduction. The strategy has a dis-

tinctively corporatist character—incorporating sections of the working class and unions into the bargain between state, capital and labour, the three "interests". Crisis management has drawn successively on the different variants of the same basic *repertoire*: incomes policy, first by consent, then by imposition; wage restraint; social contracting. The "natural" governor of this crisis has been the party of social democracy in power. This last factor has had profound effects in disorganizing and fragmenting working class responses to the crisis itself.

At the ideological level, however, things have moved at a rather different tempo, and in certain respects pre-date the economic aspects. Many of the key themes of the radical Right—law and order, the need for social discipline and authority in the face of a conspiracy by the enemies of the state, the onset of social anarchy, the "enemy within", the dilution of British stock by alien black elements—are well articulated before the full dimensions of the recession are revealed. They emerge in relation to the radical movements and political polarizations of the 1960s, for which "1968" must stand as a convenient, though inadequate notation. Some of these themes get progressively translated to other fronts as the confrontation within organized labour, and the militant resistance it meets develops during the Heath interregnum. For the constitution of the principal thematics of the radical Right, this must be seen as a formative moment. (We have attempted a fuller analysis of this moment elsewhere: the chapters on the "Exhaustion Of Consent" and "Towards the Exceptional State" in *Policing The Crisis* .Hall, Clarke, Critcher, Jefferson and Roberts. Macmillan, 1978).

The Radical Right

The radical Right does not appear out of thin air. It has to be understood in direct relation to alternative political formations attempting to occupy and command the same space. It is engaged in a struggle for hegemony, within the dominant bloc, against both social democracy and the moderate wing of its own party. Not only is it operating in the same space: it is working directly on the contradictions within these competing positions. The strength of its intervention lies partly in the radicalism of its commitment to break the mould, not simply to rework the elements of the prevailing "philosophies". In doing so, it nevertheless takes the elements which are already constructed into place, dismantles them, reconstitutes them into a new logic, and articulates the space in a new way, polarizing it to the Right.

This can be seen with respect to both positions. The Heath position was destroyed in the confrontation with organized labour. But it was also undermined by its internal contradictions. It failed to win

the showdown with labour; it could not enlist popular support for this decisive encounter; in defeat, it returned to its "natural" position in the political spectrum, engaging in its own version of bargaining. "Thatcherism" succeeds in this space by directly engaging the "creeping socialism" and apologetic "state collectivism" of the Heath wing. It thus centres on the very nerve of consensus politics, which dominated and stabilized the political scene for over a decade. To sustain its possible credibility as a party of government in a crisis of capital, "Thatcherism" retains some lingering and ambivalent connections to this centre territory: Mr. Prior is its voice—but *sotto voce*. On other grounds, it has won considerable space by the active destruction of consensus politics from the Right. Of course, it aims for a construction of a national consensus of its own. What it destroys is that form of consensus in which social democracy was the principal tendency. This evacuation of centrist territory has unleashed political forces on the Right kept in reign for most of the postwar period.

The Contradiction within Social Democracy

But the contradiction within social democracy is the principal key to the whole rightward shift of the political spectrum. For if the destruction of the Heath "party" secures hegemony for "Thatcherism" over the Right, it is the contradictory form of social democracy which has effectively disorganized the Left and the working class response to the crisis.

This contradiction can be put in stark and simple terms; considerable strategic conclusions flow from it. As follows: To win electoral power social democracy must maximize its claims as *the* political representative of the interests of the working class and organized labour. It is the party capable of (a) mastering the crisis, while (b) defending—within the constraints imposed by recession—working class interests. It is important here to remember that social democracy is not a homogeneous political entity but a complex political formation. It is not *the* expression of *the* working class "in government", but the principal means of representation of the class. Representation here has to be understood as an active and formative relationship. It organizes the class, constituting it as a political force—a social democratic political force—in the same moment as it is constituted. Everything depends on the ways, the apparatuses and the "philosophies" the means—by which the often dispersed and contradictory interests of a class are welded together into a coherent position which can be articulated and represented in the political and ideological theatres of struggle.

The expression of this representative relationship of class-to-party, in the present period, has depended

decisively on the extensive set of bargains negotiated between Labour and the trade union representatives of the class. This "indissoluble link" is the practical basis for the claim to be the natural governing party of the crisis. This is the contract it delivers. But, once *in* government, social democracy is committed to finding solutions to the crisis which are capable of winning support from key sections of capital, since its solutions are framed within those limits. But this requires that the indissoluble link be used, not to advance but to *discipline* the class and organizations it represents. This is only possible if the link—class-to-party—is dismantled and if there can be substituted for it an alternative articulation: government-to-people. The rhetorics of "national interest", which is the principal ideological form in which a succession of defeats have been imposed on the working class by social democracy in power, are exactly the sites where this contradiction shows through—and is being constantly reworked. But government-to-people dissects the field of struggle differently from class-to-party. It sets Labour, at key moments of struggle—from the strikes of 1966 right through to the present 5 per cent norm—by definition "on the side of the nation" against "sectional interests", "irresponsible trade union power", etc.

This is the terrain on which Mr. Heath played such destructive games in the lead-through to the Industrial Relations Act and its aftermath with his invocation of "the great trade union of the nation" and the spectre of "holding the nation up to ransom", "Thatcherism", deploying the discourses of "nation" and "people" against "class" and "unions" with far greater vigour and popular appeal, has homed in on the same objective contradiction. Within this space is being constructed an assault, not on this or that piece of "irresponsible bargaining" by a particular union, but on the very foundation and *raison d'être* of organized labour. Considerable numbers of people—including many trade unionists—find themselves reflected and set in place through this interpellation of "nation" and "people" at the centre of this mounting attack on the defensive organizations of the working class.

Anti-Collectivism

A closely related strand in the new philosophy of the radical Right is the themes of anti-collectivism and anti-statism. "Thatcherism" has given this traditional arena of conservative "philosophy" expansive play. At the level of organizing theoretical ideologies, anti-statism has been refurbished by the advance of Monetarism as the most fashionable economic credo. Keynesianism was the lynch-pin of the theoretical ideologies of state intervention throughout the postwar period, assuming almost the status of a sacred orthodoxy or *doxa*. To have replaced it in some of the most powerful and

influential apparatuses of government, research and the universities and restored in its place Friedman and von Hayek is, in itself, a remarkable reversal. Neither Keynesianism nor Monetarism win votes in the electoral marketplace. But in the doctrines and discourses of "social market values"—the restoration of competition and personal responsibility for effort and reward, the image of the over-taxed individual, enervated by welfare coddling, his initiative sapped by handouts by the state—"Thatcherism" has found a powerful means of popularizing the principles of a Monetarist philosophy: and in the image of the welfare "scavenger" a well designed folk-devil. The elaboration of this populist doctrine—to which Sir Keith Joseph and Mr. Boyson, leader writers in the *Telegraph*, the *Economist* and the *Spectator*, opinion leaders in the *Mail* and *Express* and many others have given their undivided attention—represents the critical ideological work of constructing for "Thatcherism" a populist common sense. It is a particularly rich mix because of the resonant traditional themes—nation, family, duty, authority, standards, self-reliance—which have been effectively condensed into it. Here elements from many traditional ideologies—some already secured at earlier times to the grand themes of popular Conservatism, many others with a wider popular connotation—have been inserted into and woven together to make a set of discourses which are then harnessed to the practices of the radical Right and the class forces they now aspire to represent.

Aspects of the Repertoire

Two aspects of this rich repertoire of anti-collectivism only should be remarked on here. The first is the way these discourses operate directly on popular elements in the traditional philosophies and practical ideologies of the dominated classes. These elements—as Laclau among others has recently argued—always express a contradiction between popular interests and the power bloc. But, since they have no intrinsic, necessary and historically fixed class meaning, but can be effectively composed as elements within very different discourses, themselves articulated to and by different class positions and practices, it marks the neutralization of that contradiction to have successfully colonized them, for the Right.

The second point is a related one. For what is represented here (again, in an active sense) is indeed the materiality of the contradiction between "the people", popular needs, feelings and aspirations—on the one hand—and the imposed structures of an interventionist capitalist state—the state of the monopoly phase of capitalist development—on the other. In the absence of any fuller mobilization of democratic initiatives, the state is increasingly encountered and experienced by ordinary working people as,

indeed, not a beneficiary but a powerful, bureaucratic imposition. And this "experience" is not misguided since, in its effective operations with respect to the popular classes, the state is less and less present as a welfare institution and more and more present as the state of "state monopoly capital". Social democracy cannot, of course, exploit any of this terrain to its advantage. First, it holds to a neutral and benevolent interpretation of the role of the state as incarnator of the national interest above the class struggle. Second in the representations of social democracy (and not only there, on the Left) the expansion of the state is understood as, in itself, and without reference to the mobilization of effective democratic power at the popular level, virtually synonymous with "socialism". Third, the enlarged interventionist state is the principal instrument through which the party of social democracy attempts to manage the capitalist crisis on behalf of capital. Fourth, in this phase, the state is inscribed through every feature and aspect of social life. Social democracy has no alternative viable strategy, especially for "big" capital (and "big" capital has no viable alternative strategy for itself) which does not involve massive state support. Thus in any polarization along this fissure, Labour is undividedly "with" the state and the power bloc—and Mrs. Thatcher is, undividedly, out there "with the people". It can now be seen that the anti-statist elements in the discourses of the radical Right are key supports for the new populism. It is no rhetorical flourish. To add that it then does some service in making respectable the radical Right assault on the whole structure of welfare and social benefits is only to say that the work of ideological excavation, if well done, delivers considerable political and economic effects.

Education

We might turn to another area of successful colonization by the radical Right: the sphere of education. Until very recently, the social democratic goals of "equality of opportunity" and "remedying educational advantage" were dominant throughout the world of secondary education. The struggle over comprehensivization was its political signature. Contestation in this area has only gradually developed, through a series of strategic interventions. The "Black Paper" group—at first no more than a rump—has moved from very modest beginnings to the point where it could justly be claimed (and was) that their preoccupations set the agenda for the "Great Debate" which the Labour Government initiated last year. In the 1960s "progressive" and "community" education made considerable advances within state schools. Today, "progressivism" is thoroughly discredited: the bodies of a whole series of well-publicized schools—William Tyndale and

after, so to speak—lie strewn in its path. The panic over falling standards and working class illiteracy, the fears concerning politically-motivated teachers in the classroom, the scare stories about the "violent" urban school, about the adulteration of standards through the immigrant intake, and so on have successfully turned the tide in the education sphere towards themes and goals being established for it by the forces of the Right. The press—especially those three popular ventriloquist voices of the radical Right, the *Mail*, the *Sun* and the *Express*—have played here a quite pivotal role. They have publicized the "examples" in a highly sensational form—and they have drawn the connections.

These connections and couplings are the key mechanisms of the process by which education as a field of struggle has been articulated to the Right. There are long, deep-seated resistances within the philosophy of state education to any attempt to measure schooling directly in terms of the needs and requirements of industry. That these were resistances often shot through with ambiguity is not so important for our purposes. However it arose, this reluctance to cash the school in terms of its immediate value to capital was one on which campaigns could be based with some hope of professional and administrative support. These defences have now been dismantled. Clear evidence is supposed to exist that standards are falling: the principal witnesses to this alarming trend are employers who complain about the quality of job applicants: this, in turn, must be having an effect on the efficiency and productivity of the nation—at a time when recession puts a premium on improving both. Once the often ill-founded elements can be stitched together into this chain of "logic", policies can begin to be changed by leading educationists of the political Right, indirectly, even before they take charge. And why?

First, because the terrain on which the debate is being conducted has been so thoroughly reconstructed around this new "logic" that the grounds well for change is proving hard to resist. Second, because Labour itself has always been caught between competing goals in schooling: to improve the chances of working class children and the worse-off in education, and to harness education to the economic and efficiency needs of the productive system. We can see now that this contradiction, even within the social democratic educational programme, is a reworking of what earlier we called the principal contradiction of social democracy in this period. The educational experts and spokesmen, the educational press, sections of the profession, the media, many educational interest groups and organizations have been operating exactly on the site of this dilemma and—in conditions of recession—have convinced the Government. It in turn has now taken up the lead in promoting debates and policies

designed to make this equation—success in education = requirements of industry—come true.

The "Great Debate"

Thus the agenda for the "Great Debate" was indeed set for social democracy by the social forces of the Right—and the Government, which initiated it, is almost certainly convinced that this is a largely "non political debate—like debates about education ought to be". Yet, in order to bring this about, a major restructuring of the state apparatuses themselves has had to be executed. The DES has been set aside, and new state apparatuses, capable of realizing the equation in more immediate and practical forms, have moved into a central position in the field—the Manpower Services Commission, the new TSA re-training programmes in further and technical education, and its ancillary supports etc. Here, training and retraining programmes directly geared in to the demands and movements of industry and the silent de-skilling and reskilling of the unemployed can proceed.

Again, this is no merely imposed or rhetorical strategy. The recomposition of the educational state apparatuses and the redirection of resources and programmes is the site of a very real and profound construction of a field of the state, from above. But many aspects of the strategy also seem to win consent and support from parents. Perhaps because, in a period of scarce jobs, working class parents are glad to see their children undergoing the process of being skilled—even if it is for particular places in routine manual labour or, in many instances, for places which are unlikely to exist at all when and if industrial production revives. Perhaps it is because, if comprehensivization, in the form in which it was implemented, and other radical education programmes are not going after all to deliver the goods for working class children, then they may have to be content to be "skilled" and "classed" in a way that seems appropriate.

The shift in educational strategy thus says, in effect, to such parents: you are in the educational subordinate class; the way out is by moving up, through increased educational competition; what counts in this competition is a standard training, acceptable social skills, respect for authority and traditional values and discipline. In the face of the massive failures of social democratic policies on schooling to turn the tide of educational disadvantage, the positive aspirations of working people for the education of their children *can* be redirected towards the support for a traditional education, programmes of discipline and "relevance to industrial experience". In the 1960s, parental involvement belonged to "de-schooling" and Ivan Illyich: in the 1970s, it is one of the strongest cards in the educational pack being shuffled by Mr. St. John

Stevas, Shadow spokesman for Education.

Law and Order

If education is an area where the Right has won territory without having to win power, two other areas in the repertoire of the radical Right—race and law and order—are ones where the Right has traditionally assumed a leading role. We can be brief about them since they have gained considerable attention on the Left in recent months. They are chosen as examples here only to make a general point. On law and order, the theme—more policing, tougher sentencing, better family discipline, the rising crime rate as an index of social disintegration, the threat to "ordinary people going about their private business" from thieves, muggers, etc., the wave of lawlessness and the loss of law-abidingness—are perennials of Conservative Party Conferences, and the sources of many a popular campaign by moral entrepreneur groups and quoting editors. But if the work of the Right in some areas has won support over into its camp, the law and order issues have scared people over. In some versions of the discourse of the radical Right, moral interpellations play an important role. But the language of law and order is sustained by moralisms. It is where the great syntax of "good" versus "evil", of civilized and uncivilized standards, of the choice between anarchy and order constantly divides the world up and classifies into its appointed stations. The play on "values" and on moral issues in this area is what gives to the law and order crusade much of its grasp on popular morality and common sense conscience. Yet despite this, it touches concretely the experiences of crime and theft, of loss of scarce property and fears of unexpected attack in working class areas and neighbourhoods; and, since it promulgates no other remedies for their underlying causes, it welds people to that "need for authority" which has been so significant for the Right in the construction of consent to its authoritarian programme.

Race constitutes another variant, since in recent months questions of race, racism and relations between the races, as well as immigration, have been dominated by the dialectic between the radical-respectable and the radical-rough forces of the Right. It was said about the 1960s and early 70s that, after all, Mr. Powell lost. This is true only if the shape of a whole conjuncture is to be measured by the career of a single individual. In another sense, there is an argument that "Powellism" won: not only because his official eclipse was followed by legislating into effect much of what he proposed, but because of the magical connections and short-circuits which Powellism was able to establish between the themes of race and immigration control and the images of the nation, the British people and the destruction

of "our culture, our way of life". I would be happier about the temporary decline in the fortunes of the Front if so many of their themes had not been so swiftly reworked into a more respectable discourse on race by Conservative politicians in the first months of this year.

I have looked exclusively at some political-ideological dimensions of the emergence of the radical Right, not to evoke wonder at its extent, but to try to identify some things which are specific to it, which mark its difference from other variants which have flourished since the War. The first is the complex but interlocked relationship of the Right to the fortunes and fate of social democracy when the latter takes power in a period of economic recession, and tries to provide a solution "within certain limits". It is always the case that the Right is what it is partly because of what the Left is: here we are dealing with the effects of a lengthy period of social democratic leadership. The second is its popular success in neutralizing the contradiction between people and the state/power bloc and winning popular interpellations so decisively for the Right. In short, the nature of its *populism*. But now it must be added that this is no rhetorical device or trick, for this populism is operating on genuine contradictions, and it has a rational and material core. Its success and effectivity does not lie in its capacity to dupe unsuspecting folk but in the way it addresses real problems, real and lived experiences, real contradictions—and yet is able to represent them within a logic of discourse which pulls them systematically into line with policies and class strategies of the Right. Finally—and this is not limited to this analysis, though it seems especially relevant—there is the evidence of just how ideological transformations and political restructuring of this order is actually accomplished. It works on the ground of already constituted social practices and lived ideologies. It wins space there by constantly drawing on these elements which have secured over time a traditional resonance and left their traces in popular inventories. At the same time, it changes the field of struggle by changing the place, the position, the relative weight of the condensations within any one discourse and constructing them according to an alternative logic. What shifts them is not "thoughts" but a particular practice of class struggle: ideological and political class struggle. What makes these representations popular is that they have a purchase on practice, they shape it, they are written into its materiality. What constitutes them as a danger is that they change the nature of the terrain itself on which struggles of different kinds are taking place; and they have pertinent effects on these struggles. Currently, they are gaining ground in defining the "conjunctural". That is exactly the terrain on which the forces of opposition must organize, if we are to transform it.

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