

Academic Ethics and the Radical Left

GUENTER LEWY

According to a widespread view among radical social scientists, agencies of socialization in America such as schools disseminate the values of the ruling class. The objective of primary and secondary education is "to propagate a devotion to the dominant values of the American system," to encourage an uncritical view of American political and economic institutions.¹ The schools "reinforce deprivation by propagating rationalizations or by avoiding pertinent discussion"; individuals and groups therefore "cannot recognize what is in their interest and that of the population at large."² Higher education, so the argument runs, for the most part, involves simply "more sophisticated extensions of the same socialization." It provides little encouragement to socially heretical elements, and if students occasionally participate in protest activities it is not because of, but in spite of, the education they have received.³ Scholars and intellectuals function as managers of legitimation; political scientists serve as "high priests of the system, teachers who propound the truths and glories of American democracy to the young and thereby generate and sustain its myth."⁴

This appraisal of education in contemporary America is, I submit, tendentious and largely false. First, it should be pointed out that to the extent that American schools indeed succeed in inculcating a positive attitude toward the democratic system of government — and the evidence on this is mixed at best — they do thereby encourage adherence to the values of a pluralistic society, a society not dominated by any one elite group and open to change. An affirmation of the principles of pluralist democracy, therefore, is inherently different from an acceptance of capitalism, socialism, communism, or any other ideological creed. It is indicative of the western democracies' loss of self-confidence that many of their intellectuals today hesitate — considering it naive patriotism — to de-

1. Michael Parenti, *Power and the Powerless* (New York, 1978), pp. 117–18.

2. Klaus Mueller, *The Politics of Communication: A Study in the Political Sociology of Language, Socialization, and Legitimation* (New York, 1973), p. 23.

3. Parenti, *op. cit.*, pp. 159–62.

4. H. Mark Roelofs, *Ideology and Myth in American Politics: A Critique of a National Political Mind* (Boston, 1976), p. 150.

fend the merits of a political system fervently admired by dissidents in the communist world who cannot take "bourgeois liberties" for granted.

Second, while in the past American schools have often been doctrinaire—for example, in identifying democracy with free enterprise—during the last two decades elementary and secondary education in America have begun to reflect new currents of thought and much openness to heterodox ideas and values, and this change is especially pronounced in higher education. One measure of this new situation is the fact that college and university teachers today are distinctly more liberal in their political outlook than the population at large. Survey data, taken in 1969, for example, reveal the following political self-characterization (the figures represent the percentage of those who identified themselves with a specific political ideology)⁵:

	Faculty	U.S. Public
Left	5	4
Liberal	41	16
Middle-of-the-Road	27	38
Moderately conservative	25	32
Strongly conservative	3	10

The percentage of left-liberal views was highest in the social sciences and humanities and among the more scholarly and highly achieving faculty. In the 1950s, the presence of a non-conformist maverick like C. Wright Mills at an elite institution such as Columbia University was considered a unique demonstration of academic freedom in America. Today the academy holds a sizable community of Marxists and radical teachers; those who complain the loudest that the university is merely a tool of capitalist interests cannot really explain their own presence in it. Seldom, it would seem, has an establishment spent so much money to support its own detractors.

Questioning Traditional Values

Many college courses today, especially in the social sciences, exhibit an adversary posture toward the operative ideals of American society; the questioning of traditional social institutions and

5. Everett C. Ladd, Jr., and Seymour M. Lipset, *The Divided Academy: Professors and Politics* (New York, 1975), Table 2, p. 26.

values is often the new orthodoxy. The last few years have seen a weakening of the radical impulse on college campuses, but an attitude of general scepticism about many aspects of society and of political cynicism continues to be widespread.

While Marxists and radical college teachers persist in arguing that the colleges and universities of the country are pillars of the social and political status quo, many of them are at the same time busily engaged in using their position in the academy for the purpose of undermining this same status quo. The issue of political indoctrination that arises in connection with these activities, it should be stressed at the outset, is not one that involves radical academics only. Indoctrination is wrong and unprofessional whether it is carried out by the Left or Right, and radicals are undoubtedly not the only ones to abuse academic freedom. This essay concentrates on the radical professoriate because at the moment radical professors represent the most active and vocal group using the classroom for political propaganda, and because both administrators and faculty in the face of these practices often tend to look the other way.

The candor with which radical professors admit their political proselytizing may be one reason why these activities often go unchallenged. Since all teachers have political values, so academics often reason, bias is least harmful when it is openly acknowledged. In a recent volume, *Studies in Socialist Pedagogy*, several radical authors indeed openly affirm their commitment to political indoctrination. "It is not the accumulation of Marxist knowledge that is our aim for our students (or ourselves)," writes a sociologist, "but the development of revolutionaries, free of bourgeois values . . ." and free from the "false consciousness" from which students suffer.⁶ The well-known political scientist Bertell Ollman notes that many obstacles stand in the way of students developing an appreciation of Marxism. The major hurdle "is the bourgeois ideology, the systematic biases and blind spots, which even the most radical bring with them." Also, "the very presence of a Marxist teacher who is allowed to teach Marxism is conclusive evidence to some that bourgeois freedom works—just as students from moderate backgrounds often take their own presence in class and in the university as proof that extensive social mobility and equality of opportunity really exist under capitalism." Nevertheless, Ollman affirmed,

6. Theodor Mills Norton and Bertell Ollman, eds., *Studies in Socialist Pedagogy* (New York, 1978), pp. 276 and 278.

bourgeois ideology can and must be countered, and Marxism, the science of society and “the only adequate analysis of capitalism today,” can be taught successfully. “If non-Marxists see my concern with such questions as an admission that the purpose of my course is to convert students to socialism, I can only answer that in my view — a view that denies the fact-value distinction — a correct understanding of Marxism (or any body of scientific truth) leads automatically to its acceptance.”⁷ Presumably, therefore, a student who does not agree that Marxism represents a scientific theory of society reveals a faulty understanding of scientific truth and should be graded accordingly.

In a review of this same book, two radical academics noted that while the radical thrust of the 1960s seems spent, in reality “radical ideas have spread and deepened. Nowhere is this more true than in the colleges and universities. There are hundreds, perhaps thousands, of openly socialist professors and many more ‘fellow travellers.’ There is hardly a conventional idea that is not under radical attack.” Radical teachers now have an opportunity “to help their students to understand the bourgeois culture which oppresses them, to confront it, and to begin to construct the outlines of a new socialist society.” They can get students to abandon their pseudo-values. “Obviously, when only the children of the rich and powerful attended college, radical professors, as teachers, could have no such expectations. . . . Now, however, college teaching itself can be an important radical activity and not simply a way to earn a living.”⁸

Another sympathetic reviewer of *Studies in Socialist Pedagogy*, a radical political scientist, found some of the contributions to the volume weak, but he affirmed the central importance of “socialist pedagogy.” Campus protests can dramatize oppression in the United States and strive to transform colleges in a progressive direction. But “the key college arena where teachers struggle . . . is our daily workplace: the classroom.”⁹ In an article, “Marxists and the University,” a zoologist has called the “primary function of Marxists in the university” to “take part in what is, in fact, a class struggle.” Universities, he argued, make ideological weapons which

7. *Ibid.*, p. 248.

8. James Scofield and Michael Yates, “Teaching Marxists to Teach,” *Monthly Review*, vol. XXX, no. 9 (February 1979), pp. 60–61.

9. Mark Kesselman in *New Political Science*, vol. I, no. 2–3 (Fall–Winter 1979–80), p. 120.

legitimate bourgeois rule. As workers in "a weapons factory engaged in the manufacture of instruments of class domination — our chief task must be to disrupt production . . . and attempt to create other weapons — counter-weapons — that can be put into the hands of people on the other side of the class struggle."¹⁰

"Indoctrination"

Among the arguments which radical academics use to defend their political proselytizing is the notion that *all* teaching is indoctrination and that their approach to instruction is simply more honest than that of their "bourgeois" critics. One can readily concede that the education of young children, especially the teaching of morality, involves elements of indoctrination in the sense that such youngsters are taught moral principles or are made to act in certain ways without being given detailed explanations or reasons for doing so. The child must learn certain elements of moral behavior before he can understand them, and it is only much later that a young person, having reached a degree of intellectual maturity and sophistication, will be able to assess critically the ideals and mores, part of his cultural heritage, acquired in his youth. But not all teaching is indoctrination. When students are taught to make valid inferences, to critically assess evidence and beliefs by rational means, to detect logical fallacies, to be aware of appeals to authority, and so on, we have education that is the exact opposite of indoctrination. The fact that not all teachers fully live up to these lofty standards of their craft does not eliminate the conceptual distinction between education and indoctrination. As Sidney Hook argues correctly:

If all teaching entails indoctrination, what would the opposite of indoctrination be? Nonteaching? Ordinary English usage requires a distinction between teaching that indoctrinates and teaching, however rare, that does not. Even if all teachers indoctrinated, it would still be necessary to differentiate conceptually between indoctrination and its absence. Otherwise we could not even identify indoctrination. Even if all men were dishonest, there would still be a conceptual difference in the meanings of "honesty" and "dishonesty."¹¹

Another argument enlisted by radical academics in defense of

10. Richard C. Lewontin, "Marxists and the University," *ibid.*, p. 26.

11. Sidney Hook, *Education for Modern Man: A New Perspective*, rev. ed. (New York, 1963), p. ix.

political indoctrination is the claim that *all* teaching is political. To a large extent, the assertion that everything, including teaching, is political involves a platitudinous slogan. Of course, the university is a political institution because it is an integral part of society, because its members—administrators, faculty, and students—have economic interests and political biases, because what the university does has political and social consequences. The university is also political in the sense that when it decides to be pluralist and non-political and to oppose its politicization it makes a political judgment and engages in a political act. But this does not mean that the university is political in the same way that, say, a government agency is an instrument of public policy. Despite all human weaknesses and failings, the world of scholarship and teaching is not identical with the world of politics and its partisans and propagandists. It is only the recognition that we are dealing here with analytically distinct aspects of human conduct that allows us to think about the *proper* relationship between these two spheres.¹²

Radical academics also invoke the denial of the possibility of scientific objectivity, especially in the social sciences. Since everyone is subjective and biased, so the argument seems to run, everyone can be as happily partisan and partial as he likes. This position, it cannot be pointed out too often, is as destructive in practice as it is logically deficient in theory. It is, of course, generally recognized that a scholar may decide to study a certain problem as a result of very different motives—sheer intellectual curiosity or, at times, to further ideological commitments and concerns. But, as Ernest Nagel has pointed out, the fact “that the interests of the scientist determine what he selects for investigation . . . by itself, represents no obstacle to the successful pursuit of objectively controlled inquiry in any branch of study.”¹³ Indeed, the assertion that a scientist’s values may color his conclusions is intelligible only on the assumption that there exists a distinction between factual and normative statements and that, in principle, it is possible to distinguish between them. It makes no sense to say that all knowledge is subjective unless, in line with the principle of significant

12. Cf. Heinz Eulau, “The Politicization of Everything: On the Limits of Politics in Political Education,” in Vernon van Dyke, ed., *Teaching Political Science: The Professor and the Polity* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J., 1977), p. 59.

13. Ernest Nagel, *The Structure of Science: Problems in the Logic of Scientific Explanation* (New York, 1961), pp. 486–87.

contrast, there exists at least the possibility of objective knowledge.

In a suggestive analogy Karl Popper has compared the status of truth in the objective sense, as correspondence to facts, to that of a mountain peak which is permanently, or almost permanently, wrapped in clouds:

The climber may not merely have difficulties in getting there — he may not know when he gets there, because he may be unable to distinguish, in the clouds, between the main summit and some subsidiary peak. Yet this does not affect the objective existence of the summit, and if the climber tells us 'I have some doubts whether I reached the actual summit,' then he does, by implication, recognize the objective existence of the summit. The very idea of error, or of doubt (in its normal straightforward sense) implies the idea of an objective truth which we may fail to reach.¹⁴

Similarly one cannot assert that bourgeois ideology is biased without accepting a distinction between biased and unbiased thinking and thus admitting that such bias, in principle, can be overcome.¹⁵ It is somewhat paradoxical that while Marxists deny the possibility of objective knowledge in the social sciences in general, they claim that Marxism can produce just such scientific truth since it represents *the* science of society.

Dealing with Bias

To be sure, many of the categories used by social scientists are indeed not value-free. When economists or sociologists speak of the "hardcore unemployed," for example, they make the implicit judgment that it would cost too much money to find work for such members of the under-class. Similarly, terms like "democracy" or "revolution" or "genocide" have evaluative connotations. Yet in principle as well as in actual practice it is possible for the social scientist to employ terminology that is essentially value-free.¹⁶ Or, to put it differently, while complete objectivity and impartiality are probably never fully attainable, the scholar should pursue

14. Karl Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth of Scientific Knowledge* (New York, 1968), p. 226.

15. Cf. R. F. Atkinson, *Knowledge and Explanation in History: An Introduction to the Philosophy of History* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1978), p. 79; W. G. Runciman, *A Critique of Max Weber's Philosophy of Social Science* (Cambridge, 1972), p. 58.

16. For some examples see Felix E. Oppenheim, " 'Facts' and 'Values' in Politics: Are They Separable?" *Political Theory* I (1973): 55-59.

these goals of scholarship as if they could be realized and he will be judged by his success in achieving the disinterested pursuit of truth.¹⁷

The degree to which the scholar has overcome his biases can always be a matter of debatable more or less. But the self-corrective mechanisms of science as a social enterprise go a long way toward minimizing the problem of bias. The scholar is subject to certain canons of correct reasoning and technical competence which will help determine the validity of his results—he must take into account all material relevant to his topic, his findings must be in accord with evidence open to independent (intersubjective) check, he should always ask himself what rival interpretation of the evidence might alter his conclusions, and so on. To the extent that a scholar abides by these rules of his craft he will be considered a good, indifferent, or bad scholar. It is the existence of these rules and the expectation that they will be followed which distinguishes the social sciences, or even the writing of history, from the creative arts.¹⁸ As the former Marxist, Leszek Kolakowski, has pointed out, one should, of course, not expect too much from the observance of such formal, technical requirements of scholarship:

Such a humble code cannot eliminate disagreement derived from fundamental biases; it can, however, eliminate a good deal of purely ideological or simply dishonest work. To be satisfied with the general assertion that everything in the social and human sciences is purely and simply determined by political preferences and interests—as is common among those who advocate the subordination of the university to political assignments, said to be in any case inevitable—is to deny, against the obvious evidence, the ability of human reason to act according to the rules that it has itself created. This kind of protestant belief in the irreversible corruption of the human mind, is however, self-destructive; it can only avoid the antinomy of the liar if it is supplemented by the belief in another, incorruptible source of knowledge or divine origin, though the advocates of the totalitarian university today rarely seek this kind of assistance.¹⁹

17. Cf. Alan Montefiore, ed., *Neutrality and Impartiality: The University and Political Commitment* (London, 1975), p. 27.

18. Gordon Leff, *History and Social Theory* (Garden City, N.Y., 1971), pp. 109–10.

19. Leszek Kolakowski, "Neutrality and Academic Values," in Montefiore, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

Finally, radical academics question the objectivity of the results of scientific inquiry by alleging that the consequences of such work are always political and hence ideological and partial. Here again, we deal with a logical confusion, for the fact that a certain finding of science or an historical account favors the interests of a certain group says nothing about the truth of these conclusions and does not establish that they lack objectivity.²⁰ The recent findings of some historians, for example, that the *Reichstag* (the German parliament building) in 1933 may indeed have been set afire by the Dutch communist Van der Lubbe and not by the Nazis undoubtedly has been a bonanza to neo-Nazi groups in Germany who have used these accounts to cast doubt on other charges of wrongdoing against the Hitler regime. But whether these findings are true or not, whether they are objectively demonstrated and established to be true or not, has absolutely nothing to do with their political significance. Too much of the evidence may have been lost and we may therefore never be able to reach final certainty on the question of who burned the *Reichstag*, but in principle we know how to pursue such an inquiry and its outcome need not and should not be affected by the question whose interests will be advanced by one conclusion rather than another.

Not all arguments against the possibility of objective scientific knowledge are politically inspired, but the attack of some segments of the Left on the objectivity of "bourgeois science" indeed appears primarily to serve to justify and excuse political indoctrination. Instead of proving that higher education promotes the interests of the dominant class and that their disregard of objectivity and impartiality is therefore perfectly in line with ongoing practice in the academy, many radical academics have revealed their contempt for what at one time were uncontested and generally accepted standards of professional conduct and scholarly integrity. This charge does not, of course, apply to all radical or Marxist scholars. Marxist premises can be very fertile for historical inquiry in particular, and in the hands of scholars like Christopher Hill, Eric J. Hobsbawm, Maurice Dobb, Eugene D. Genovese, and others the economic interpretation of history has been a valuable tool of analysis. On the other hand, for less capable minds this same materialist approach to history will often lead to uselessly vague or impossibly precise findings. This means that, in

20. Cf. Göran Hermerén, "Criteria of Objectivity in History," *Danish Yearbook of Philosophy*, XIV (1977): 28.

the first case, they will lack any definite implications for historical reality, and, in the second, they will achieve testability at the price of falsity.²¹

Testability and falsifiability as criteria of scientific knowledge and truth are scorned by most Marxists, and for good reason. Their basic concepts have become for them unfalsifiable dogmas; Marxism, while claiming to be a science, has turned into a faith. Hence, like all believers, many Marxists will oppose the test of falsifiability. "If you insist," the philosopher Ernest Gellner points out, "that a believer specifies the conditions in which his faith would cease to be true, you implicitly force him to conceive a world in which his faith is *sub judice*, at the mercy of some 'facts' or other. But this is precisely what faiths, total outlooks, systematically avoid and evade."²²

The commitment of science to rationality and respect for evidence can also be said to be an article of faith. "The means available to our science," acknowledged Max Weber, "offer nothing to those persons to whom this truth is of no value."²³ But a belief in the value of scientific truth is in a class by itself because it is essential for the acquisition of knowledge; there exists a *prima facie* case for rationality. Without a strong conviction concerning the value of a "due regard for truth" there can be no rational defense of any knowledge whatever.²⁴ Non-evidential ways of believing may have a place in religion and philosophy, but they are manifestly self-defeating in the sciences. Indeed, on the level of theory, even Marxists will embrace the value of rationality though many of them oppose the use of this same rational method as a test of their own dogmatic beliefs.

"A Due Regard for Truth"

Many radical academics today no longer practice a "due regard for truth." A sociologist who discusses the issues of crime and pollution in America as if they were a direct result of capitalism disregards data from other social and political systems which reveal the

21. Atkinson, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

22. Ernest Gellner, *Legitimation of Belief* (London, 1974), p. 176.

23. Max Weber, "Objectivity" in Social Science and Social Policy," in Maurice Natanson, ed., *Philosophy of the Social Sciences: A Reader* (New York, 1963), p. 417.

24. Cf. Thomas F. Green, "Indoctrination and Belief," in I. A. Snook, ed., *Concepts of Indoctrination: Philosophical Essays* (London, 1972), p. 42.

same social problems and thus conveys a tendentious point of view rather than engaging in scholarly analysis. To praise life in the communist regimes of Cuba and Vietnam without mentioning the plight of political prisoners in these countries amounts to disrespect for evidence. To discuss leftist theories in terms of their ideological claims and slogans and without assessing their costs and consequences in terms of human suffering—something that is invariably and properly done when dealing with rightist and fascist ideologies—represents a breach of scholarly integrity.²⁵ When a Marxist political scientist, Bertell Ollman, writes, “People play no greater role in their political life than they did in Marx’s time Socially, class, nation, religion and race remain prisons from which each individual must escape in order to establish truly human relations,” he not only makes a fairly meaningless political judgment, to which he is entitled, but he also comes perilously close to the kind of polemical overkill which a true scholar should disdain.²⁶

Departments of astronomy do not teach courses in astrology, and departments of chemistry do not offer instruction in alchemy. In the social sciences scientific standards are less clearly defined, but this should not mean a practice of complete *laissez faire*. Just because the social sciences lack a generally accepted theoretical framework, there is need for methodological pluralism; the claim pressed by many Marxists that their approach is the only correct one and that Marxism alone represents a science of society must be rejected categorically. Academic freedom is freedom to *teach* the truth but only in the sense of freedom to *seek* the truth.²⁷ Nobody has a monopoly on the truth and nobody is infallible; no ideological perspective can be granted preferred status.

Second, there is need for defining standards of practice and malpractice. Faculty and administrators should draw up codes of professional ethics that are based on the values of open-mindedness, impartiality and objectivity and which distinguish between instruction and indoctrination. For example, a teacher’s discussion of

25. This example is given by Henry Novotny in a contribution to Sidney Hook et al., eds., *The Ethics of Teaching and Scientific Research* (Buffalo, N.Y., 1977), p. 68.

26. The quote is from Bertell Ollman, *Alienation: Marx’s Conception of Man in Capitalist Society* (Cambridge, 1971), p. 245. My attention to it was drawn by Thomas H. Magstadt, “Can a Marxist be a Political Science Chairman?” *Chronicle of Higher Education* (February 20, 1979), p. 21.

27. Sidney Hook, *Academic Freedom and Academic Anarchy* (New York, 1970), p. 35.

controversial and disputed issues should not make the assumption that there is only one right answer. Similarly, to study and expound a philosophy or social theory for the purpose of approving or denouncing it is not to study it with an open mind. The aim of these codes of professional conduct, enforced through peer judgment, should be to create a climate of opinion in which violators would feel out-of-place.

In its 1915 "Declaration of Principles" the American Association of University Professors had stated that a college used as an instrument of propaganda and indoctrination in the interests of a religious faith is not truly a university.²⁸ The same principle should hold for indoctrination in a secular faith like Marxism. The abuse of scholarship for the sole purpose of promoting specific ideological and political goals should be regarded as unprofessional conduct.

The "true teacher," wrote Max Weber in opposition to nationalistic scholars like Heinrich von Treitschke who indoctrinated their students from the rostrum, "will beware of imposing from the platform any political position upon the student, whether it is expressed or suggested. . . . the prophet and the demagogue do not belong on the academic platform."²⁹ This rule of professional conduct followed logically from Weber's distinction between fact and value and his insistence that "it can never be the task of an empirical science to provide binding norms and ideals from which directives for immediate practical activity can be derived."³⁰ It is the prerogative of Marxist and radical theorists to reject Weber's view of a value-free science, but in their teaching they should nevertheless be bound by the injunction not to mix cognitive statements and political and ethical beliefs.

Third, in some extreme and clear-cut cases — and only in those — peer decisions on appointment, promotion, and tenure may well have to take account of the ideological commitments of candidates. Radical academics who avow their disregard of objectivity and openly declare their intent to use the classroom for the education of revolutionaries lack the professional integrity and compe-

28. Cf. Charles E. Curren, "Academic Freedom: The Catholic University and Catholic Theology," *Academe*, LXVI (1980): 128.

29. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds. and trans., *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York, 1958), p. 146.

30. Weber, " 'Objectivity' in Social Science and Social Policy," in Natanson, *op. cit.*, p. 358.

tence that should be required of all members of the academy. To appoint such a person, especially in the humanities and social sciences, makes no more sense than it does to hire a hardline Catholic for a position as gynaecologist in charge of the birth control and abortion clinic.

In many cases, it will be difficult to make judgments about professional integrity and competence; there will be gray areas where it will be best to resolve any doubt in favor of the individual whose performance is questioned. But the existence of gray does not effect the possibility of telling black from white. It would be destructive of academic freedom to encourage a systematic probing of the political views of faculty members, but memories of the misdeeds of McCarthyism in the 1950s should not be allowed to paralyze all corrective action aimed at protecting the probity of the educational process in the 1980s. Even if college students are not as intellectually vulnerable as younger pupils, they are entitled to be educated rather than made the objects of consciousness-raising. "Those who are *sold* the myth of revolution, by an educated sleight of hand," an English sociologist has suggested, "need some form of consumer protection."³¹ Both college faculties and administrators must assume responsibility for the prevention of political proselytizing in the classroom. If they fail to keep their own house in order outside forces will do the job for them, most likely with lasting damage to academic self-government.

Political Influence?

We do not know with any precision to what extent teachers are able to influence the political thinking of their charges. Most evidence suggests, writes a student of the subject, "that college experiences do not rework youth so that their initial characteristics are totally obliterated; what an individual is when he enters college amounts to most of what he is when he leaves."³² And yet it would be surprising if young people were to remain entirely unaffected by a consistent questioning of the values of objectivity and rationality. When such radical scepticism is coupled with a pattern of unmitigated faultfinding concerning the workings of American society, the door is opened to political disillusionment and cynicism, attitudes displayed by many students today. The severe

31. Julius Gould, *The Attack on Higher Education: Marxist and Radical Penetration* (London, 1977), p. 47.

32. Dean Jaros, *Socialization to Politics* (New York, 1973), p. 128.

problems which this society has faced in the last decade or so — the deterioration of the cities, ghetto riots, the war in Vietnam and the Watergate scandal — might well have created a crisis of legitimacy in the best of circumstances. But this crisis was blown out of all proportion by those who saw these difficulties not as challenges to be overcome but as proof of our moral depravity. It may well be, writes the political scientist Stanley Rothman,

... that those in the general population who suspect that the deterioration of our social life is related in some degree to the fact that the intellectual community (including academics) has been telling us for some years how rotten we really are, are not entirely in error. The influence of one or another teacher is unimportant, but when the loudest voices in the intellectual community are committed to exposing the falsity of the values which sustain us, and documenting every wart on the body politic, it is not unreasonable to suspect that they may be helping to create the malaise they claim to be documenting.³³

The number of radical academics in American colleges and universities remains relatively small, but, together with some of those who call themselves liberals and who often hold very similar negative attitudes toward the traditional values of American society, they do amount to a strong influence, especially in the humanities and social sciences and in elite schools. In whatever way one may wish to assess the long-range consequences of all this, one thing is rather clear: American higher education today is not a stronghold of capitalist domination and its impact means anything but a strengthening of the status quo. The great expansion of the college population has created millions of new "intellectuals," many of whom hold an adversary posture toward the society in which they live. Indeed, since the end of the 1960s it is no longer clear which attitudes represent conformity or non-conformity: the traditional support for existing social institutions and values or their reflexive disparagement.³⁴ The cultural hegemony of the capitalist class, if it ever existed, no longer exists today. In all too many instances, the American system of education now encourages the kind of self-doubt that, left unchecked, may seriously undermine democratic values and institutions.

33. Stanley Rothman, "Mainstream Political Science and its Discontents," in Van Dyke, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

34. Cf. Paul Hollander, *Political Pilgrims: Travels of Western Intellectuals to the Soviet Union, China and Cuba 1928-1978* (New York, 1981), p. 24.

Over There

After Sadat

A month has passed since President Sadat's death. The most persistent question since then has been, how much of Sadat's policy can his successor, President Mubarak, follow and how long can he carry it? In view of the shocking lack of public grief and mourning over Sadat's death and during his funeral, can he be as blatantly pro-western, i.e., pro-American?

Throughout this time, President Mubarak has tried to convince Egyptians, Arabs, the rest of the world, and particularly the Israelis that peace does not depend on the life of one man; that the peace treaty with Israel is not only vital to Egypt's interest, but also remains the main hope for a wider peace in the region.

Even though Sadat's peace policy enjoyed the support of the vast majority of Egyptians, including the armed forces, it would be perverse to assert that his domestic policies earned him great popularity. In the last four years, his oscillation between, on the one hand, the desire to allow Egyptians greater political freedom and, in view of a worsening economic situation, the bold challenge to the state's authority—its very legitimacy—by militant religious groups and the communal clashes between Muslims and Copts, the need on the other to repress them worked against him. So did a 30 to 40 percent rate of inflation, the glaringly inequitable distribution of wealth, the inequality of incomes, the breakdown of public services, and the inefficiency of a massive, creaking bureaucracy. That he gave the Egyptians and Arabs credibility in the West, especially after the tarnished image they projected abroad from 1967 to 1973 cannot be gainsaid. That he made the Egyptians and, more importantly the other Arabs, think of the unthinkable, that is, peace with Israel, is also true. Perhaps his exclusive concentration over a decade (1971–1981) on achieving military self-confidence (1973) and peace after that prevented him from tackling the urgent domestic problems that plague his country, such as the extremes of poverty and the plight of the small, but relatively significant, middle class. Then his paradisiacal depiction of the economic benefits that would automatically flow from his Open Door Policy and the peace treaty with Israel was injudicious.