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HUMAN SECURITY *and* MUTUAL VULNERABILITY

AN EXPLORATION *into the* GLOBAL POLITICAL ECONOMY *of* DEVELOPMENT *and* UNDERDEVELOPMENT

J. Nef

ATIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH CENTRE

Human Security *and* Mutual Vulnerability

An Exploration *into the* Global Political Economy *of* Development *and* Underdevelopment

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In Memoriam

Angélica (1943-1995)

INTRODUCTION

PARADIGMS OF CRISIS AND THE CRISIS OF PARADIGMS

To a casual observer of international events, sitting in the comfort of a corporate office, the post 1989 world order may seem like a string of good news. From a conventional point of view, the present appears to contain few security threats. After all, the end of the East-West conflict meant that the possibilities of a nuclear holocaust have all but disappeared. The disintegration of the Soviet Union and the demise of communism could be seen as the global victory of political and economic liberalism.[1] Some, in the vein of a modern Doctor Panglos have optimistically asserted that "life for the majority of the world's citizens is getting steadily better in almost every category" (Gee 1994).

> The past few decades have seen an improvement in human health, education, nutrition and longevity. The rapid expansion of the world economy, which has grown nearly fivefold since 1950, has raised living standards in all but the poorest countries. Food production has easily outstripped population growth. Democracy has advanced in almost every corner of the globe. International security has improved. (Ibid.)

With the end of the East European bloc, the Third World and its plight (articulated in the Non-Aligned Movement, UNCTAD and the South Commission) have also vanished as a source of nuisance for the West (Lane 1992). Furthermore, the crippling debt burden has finally brought most of the South to accept the conditionalities imposed by the international financial community. And without international socialism to assist local revolutionary movements, insurgency looks rather unlikely.

Moreover, a number of major "hot spots" have cooled off: there is qualified peace in Central America, the Iran-Iraq war has ended, Afghanistan and Cambodia are out of the news, the civil strifes in the Horn of Africa (especially in Ethiopia with the independence of Eritrea and Tigray) have come to an apparent end and Germany has been reunified. The two most enduring problems with potentially destabilising effects, South Africa's apartheid regime and

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[1] A most explicit articulation of this business position is contained in Marcus Gee, a member of *The Globe and Mail* Editorial Board. See Gee, "Apocalypse Deferred", *The Globe and Mail*, Saturday April 9, 1994, pp. D1 and D3. His was a response to Robert Kaplan's "The Coming Anarchy" in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 273, No. 2, 1993, pp. 44-75.

Palestinian self-rule moved decisively towards settlement. In 1993, an ANC government, led by the country's once most notorious political prisoner, Nelson Mandela won the general elections. The following year, an agreement between the PLO and the Israeli government began handing power to an emerging Palestinian entity; the first move towards an independent state. The rebellion in Northern Ireland, was settled in 1994, putting an end to decades of sectarian violence. These developments can result in a reduction of military expenditures (Sivard 1989), a slowing down of refugee flows and in a downturn in transnational terrorism. For the superpowers and their more developed allies, demobilisation, in theory at least, means the possibility of cashing in a "peace dividend." In addition, Western cooperation under US hegemony, as seen in the UN actions against Iraq and the "peacemaking" operation in Somalia, has brought decisive, yet at times unfocussed, intervention to enforce "international law" and "norms of civilised behaviour."

However, there is a more sombre side of the picture. As Pierre Sané, Amnesty International's Secretary General, stated in his 1993 Human Rights Day address:

> Four years ago, when the Berlin Wall came tumbling down, we were promised a bright new future. New accountable democratic governments. New prosperity. New cooperation between the governments of the world .... But what do we see? Far from accountable democracies, we see the horror of civil war and governments resorting to the old methods of repression .... Far from prosperity, we see even more people plunged into poverty, sickness and despair .... Far from international cooperation, we see the world community floundering in the face of human rights disasters (Sané 1993).

The disintegration of Eastern Europe has meant the unleashing of deep and vicious social, political and ethnic tensions, the symptoms of which are persistent civil wars, military intervention and border disputes in Chechnya, Georgia, the Central Asian Republics, in the Armenian–Azari region and the multisided conflagration in the former Yugoslavia. The Bosnian war has meant not only a vicious and cruel ethnic bloodshed, but also a widening entanglement for would-be "peacekeepers": NATO, the USA, Canada and various East European states, including Ukraine and Russia. Conflict has also spread throughout Africa as in the Rwanda and Burundi massacres, while deeply seated genocidal confrontations continued in Sudan, Angola, Mozambique and Liberia. Likewise, the aforementioned negotiated dismantling of South Africa's apartheid system has been accomplished in the midst of persistent violence. The same is true with the more recent implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli accord. Violent ethnic conflicts go on unabated in India and Sri Lanka, with prospects of national

disintegration. With constant turmoil, refugee-producing zones have just been replaced by new and more active ones. Robert Kaplan's apocalyptic 1993 article in the *Atlantic Monthly* summarizes Western paranoia about the "revenge of the poor." In his "premonition of the future" he envisions:

> [a] worldwide demographic, environmental, and societal stress, in which criminal anarchy emerges as the real "strategic" danger. Disease, overpopulation, unprovoked crime, scarcity of resources, refugee migrations, the increased erosion of nation-states and international borders, and the empowerment of private armies, security firms and international drug cartels ... [provides] an appropriate introduction to the issues ... that will soon confront our civilization. (Kaplan 1993)

Instability and centrifugalism in the former Soviet Union and the fragmentation and deregulation of its nuclear arsenals raise the spectre of proliferation, smuggling of atomic weapons, blackmail and, in the mildest scenario, severe environmental hazards. This is compounded by internal problems. In Russia, direct confrontation among power contenders has moved beyond a manageable threshold, in the absence of clear and legitimate rules of the game. The attempted coup against then President Mikhail Gorvachev, but more ominously the bloody confrontation between President Boris Yeltsyn and a rebellious Parliament, not to mention the war in Chechnya have shown a distressing pattern of escalation. Moreover, the December 1993 election which gave Vladimir Zhirinovsky's Liberal Democrats a controlling minority in the internal correlation of forces, have dramatically increased the possibilities of an ultranationalist reaction. Old resentments, racism, power deflation, complicated by catastrophic economic and political conditions, may precipitate desperate imperialistic ventures with serious consequences for regional and world peace. The war in Chechnya represents the crystallization of all these contradictions, moving the weak Russian government into ever entangling and dangerous positions. A resurgence of Russian nationalism is especially destabilising since Russia, as well as some of its possible targets, such as Ukraine, still posses a significant nuclear and conventional capability.

> At this point in the world system of governance, there is no codified approach to this evident need to clarify and tack down regional and universal responsibilities when governments go awry or disintegrate. Response mechanisms have not been developed to mobilize early and equitable external responses before events spin out of control .... But looking at the range of unstable states from Eastern Europe to Central Asia, from the Caucasus to the Cape of Good Hope, the potential for multitudes of such disasters in the next decade seems clear, and we are inadequately equipped as a world community to confront them. (Winter 1992)

There is an urgent need to develop analytical frameworks to understand this seemingly random, turbulent and chaotic period, and the emerging global configurations. There is also a need to construct operational criteria and mechanisms for conflict management based upon that understanding. As we approach the end of the Second Millennium, the many conceptual and ideological structures which we took for granted and gave us a grasp of "reality" have crumbled: the Cold War, "really existing socialism," the nation-state, the "Three Worlds of Development" and the myth of progress. Some observers have gone as far as to make this turbulence synonymous with "end of history" (Fukuyama 1989). I would like to contend that, despite the appeals of this neo-Hegelian metaphor, history has not ended. All that has collapsed is our faith in old dogmas and the particular visions associated with them (Nef & Wiseman 1990). The way we saw the world is no longer the way it is.

With the disarticulation of the terms of reference of international politics, the conceptual foundations which gave meaning to what was referred to as "the world order" have become dated. Much of the assumptive scaffolding underpinning Development Studies, International Relations and Security Studies, all fields of research which emerged in the context of the Cold War, has lost consistency. At the level of hegemonic ideas and discourse, the crisis is one of imagination; as if our capacity to make sense had vanished. Perhaps reality changes so rapidly that only ex-post-facto rationalisations are possible, thus signalling the end of utopias and ideologies. Or perhaps, the opposite is the case and we are moving into a new and "postmodern" age of ideology. Though this crisis of paradigms has had a fundamental impact upon academia, it appears that scholars have been slow in reacting to global transformations and in filling the intellectual void. Samuel Huntington's 1993 article in *Foreign Affairs* is an attempt to resurrect a new imperial Cold War, now between "the West and the rest" under the mantle of a construed "Clash of Civilisations."

> It is my hypothesis that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominant source of conflict will be cultural. Nations will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battlelines of the future. (Huntington 1993)

Yet, this highly metaphysical, ethnocentric and deterministic effort at resurrecting the ghost of Cold Wars past is simply old vinegar in old bottles with new labels. This nostalgic "neorealism" shows a remarkable misunderstanding of

both history and culture and cannot reflect the complex, nuanced and dynamic nature of our age of extremes, while perpetuating the cult of war and Western superiority. Our inability to structure paradigms able to explain and understand the present crisis as part of a global system and process and not as mere "freaks" or abnormalities is precisely at the core of the crisis of paradigms. The paradox is that, irrespective of the present confusion in the conceptual compasses, and the absence of analytical and predictive instruments, decision-makers still have to respond to events, make day-to-day choices and formulate polices in an increasingly chaotic environment. So do ordinary citizens who have to cope with the effects of these policies.

The Changing Foundations of the World System

The momentous transformations of the world system affecting both its overall structure (polarity) and those of its constituting regimes are rooted in changing circumstances. These could be grouped into three main categories. The first set of factors are the broader and long-ranging changes of our age of pervasive technology (Nef et al. 1989). In this case, we are referring to the multiple and profound innovations in knowhow which have occurred since the end of the Second World War. The second set of factors affecting systemic change is the alterations in the ideologico-political matrix which define the cultural polarities in the system. Specifically we are referring here to the sharp divide between Marxist–Leninism and liberal capitalism which characterised the Cold War, followed by the sudden disappearance of one of these ideologies in the late 1980s and the hegemonic role played by neoliberalism. The third, and perhaps most important set of circumstances are those related to alterations in the economic fabric of the world order. Here again, the transformation of world economics from international trade and finance among nations into global and transnational economics comes to mind. We will discuss these in greater detail below.

Long-Range Technological Changes — In the last fifty years, the development of technology has been exponential. It has affected the nature of the world system in two ways. One is the impact of technological innovation upon the instruments of war, both "hard" and "soft." The most striking transformations in military technology included, among others, the massification of air power, "informal penetration," psychological warfare, entangling collective defence, the development of nuclear weapons, intercontinental missiles, the use of outer space and the computerisation of conflict. The nature and pace of technological

innovation since Hiroshima set the parameters of an escalating arms race between those capable of harnessing the nuclear "genie." The USA and the USSR competed in an astronomically expensive search for military superiority: nuclear weapons, delivery and early warning systems, conventional — land, sea and air — forces and the space race. The stretching of natural, economic, social, fiscal and technological resources to their limits in the pursuit of security by supremacy (a "first" and "second-strike" capability) had long and broad-ranging implications. The former USSR was the most catastrophically affected; but the USA too experienced the ill effects of over-readiness. From a broader perspective, the profoundly destructive consequences of the Cold War were suffered by the entire planet.

The other effect of technology on the world system involves the dramatic improvement in the speed and reach of communications and transportation. Information, finance, goods and people have become more mobile than in any previous period of human history. The development of military and industrial technology since World War II to the present reduced the time and space limits of world politics. What once was international relations, understood as "politics among nations" progressively and unavoidably became global politics (Blake and Walters 1976). In this context, domestic concerns have become so intertwined with "external" factors as to make the distinction between national and global merely semantic.

Back in the 1950s, John Herz suggested that technology had undermined the territorial function of the nation state (Herz 1962). Nuclear stalemate among the superpowers, and the subsequent possibility of a ladder of escalation — even under assumptions of "flexible response" — made conventional military instruments less effective for conflict management. Stanley Hoffman put it succinctly: power had never before been so great, but also never so useless (Hoffman 1973). Instead, nonconventional, yet nonnuclear types of warfare (terrorism, clandestine actions, "low-intensity operations") as well as economic instruments became more central. The strategic importance of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear warheads and long range delivery systems, has radically diminished since 1989. Nuclear deterrence theory, "strategic thinking" à la Herman Kahn and what John Kenneth Galbraith called the influence of "nuclear theologians" have become irrelevant. Likewise, the kind of Cold War "realism" that permeated much of the International Relations and Security Studies literature for four decades has been rendered meaningless.

Conventional wars do not seem to pose nowadays the same risk of escalating into nuclear confrontation between the superpowers, or rather between one superpower and the scattered remains of the other. However, as we will discuss

later, this perception may be deceiving. In addition, the development of a new generation of high-tech tactical weapons has made small-scale wars once again "thinkable" options. The prenuclear solution of quantitative continuity between tactical and strategic instruments, as well as between those of deterrence, defence, compellance and offense has been re-established, albeit in a less predictable context. This delinking in the ladder of escalation combined with the end of rigid bipolarism effectively reduced the "patron–client" superpower control over theatre conflicts. Under these circumstances, a resurgence of small and medium-sized conflagrations and a tendency to regional polycentrism could be expected. Yet, the long-range effects of technological permeability on the territoriality of nation-states, and upon the very idea of sovereignty, are bound to remain. A return to an overall pre-World War II type of multipolarity is unlikely.

Changes in the Ideological Matrix — Perhaps more important than the technological changes mentioned above, have been transformations of the ideological parameters since the end of World War II. The period between 1945 and 1989 was defined by a clash of two cultures: liberal capitalism and state socialism. The rhetoric of Winston Churchill and Harry Truman, not to mention Stalin's, constructed the semantic foundations of this binary worldview. Terms such as the Cold War, the Iron Curtain, the Free World, conveyed an inescapable logic: alignment as either friend or foe. Its corollary was a rigid ideological bipolarism between two incompatible camps, referred to by their respective propagandists as the "Free World" and "Popular Democracies." One part of humanity, under the Western Alliance and superintended by the United States, was construed as the embodiment of the ideals of "freedom" and "democracy." The other half followed the Soviet Union, whose leaders had erected themselves as the defenders of self-determination, justice, socialist solidarity and world peace. There was a great deal of self-serving hypocrisy in these labels, for there was not much democracy, nor popular consent in Eastern Europe, while the "free" world included in its ranks notoriously repressive regimes such as Latin American dictators, Third World oligarchies and thinly veiled fascist regimes like those of Generalissimos Franco and Chiang-Kai-Shek.

Culturally, the East–West conflict permeated national boundaries. The emergence of Third World nationalism expressed in Bandung in 1955 was a reaction against this sharp ideological schism. Leaders of new and emerging nations, such as Sukarno of Indonesia, Nehru of India, Nkrumah of Ghana, U-Nu of Burma, Nasser of Egypt and others, with the support of Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia, sought to define a third position. Yet, nonalignment and the attempts to separate North–South issues from East–West confrontations, paradoxically

increased a proclivity for clientelism, entangled alliances and ultimately facilitated the transnationalisation of peripheral states (Nef 1986). Foreign aid, the international transfer of technology, manpower training and the all-pervasive presence of military assistance during the Cold War increased reliance on external constituencies. Peripheral elites were integrated into a global structure by means of manifold linkages of complex dependency (Nef 1983). This patron–client structure was developed by both power blocs, creating structural conditions still existing after the demise of the USSR. Dependency relations, irrespective of who occupied the centre, have had a tendency to persist. External constituencies have become and remain an intrinsic part of the political alliances which take part in the internal public policy process. Besides the aforementioned transnationalisation of states, based upon essentially bilateral arrangements, there have been multilateral forms of transnationalisation. These result from the development and expansion of International Law and organisations. Furthermore, the legacy of collective defence and collective security, not to mention a complex body of international contract law based on trade, has further limited territorial sovereignty. The Wesphalian principle, *Rex est Imperator in Regno Suo*, is no longer a valid descriptor of the world order. The centrality of past elite nationalism has been displaced by elite internationalism.

Correspondingly, in an increasingly unipolar world, a global ideology with hegemonic pretensions, has gained predominance among the core sectors within the Group of Seven countries. This ideology is Trilateralism (Sklar 1980). Substantively, the cultural software of this "New Internationale" is distinctively neoliberal, elitist and monistic. In spite of a seemingly progressive rhetoric of democratisation, the support for individual freedoms and the "rule of law," this new worldview is every bit as Manichean and dogmatic as the old Cold War, national security discourse it replaced (Drury 1992–93). Most important though, is the fact that the Trilateral view has a wide appeal to the affluent, globally integrated and modern elite sectors in what used to be called the Third and Second Worlds. Its intellectual antecedents are partly rooted in XIXth century social Darwinism and partly in the messianic universalism of neoclassical economics. From this perspective, the "triumph of the West," the "End of History," the "Clash of Civilizations" (Huntington 1993) and "Manifest Destiny" blend in a neofunctionalist synthesis.

There is a great deal of optimistic triumphalism among those who espouse this worldview. From the perspective of its supporters, the ideological superiority of this global project is demonstrated by the collapse of Eastern Europe, the disintegration of African societies or Latin America's "lost decade." Yet, the sharp schism of the planet into two worlds — "this" and "the other" — and the

conflict between an expanding Western civilisation and an increasingly fragile, unstable and besieged global and domestic periphery, offers a scenario of violent confrontation: a new phase of World War III. The growing squalor of the many, which makes the prosperity of the few possible, has intrinsically destabilising effects. It is a direct threat to everybody's security. The extreme vulnerability of the South and the East, far from enhancing Northwestern security, are symptoms of a profound malaise of the entire global system. This dysfunctional trend is already eroding postindustrial civilisation's own vitality, not only in what is contemptuously referred to as "down there" but essentially "up here" too.

Changes in the Economic Basis — If we compare the nature of today's world economy with the system to emerge in 1944 at Breton Woods, the most striking feature is the profound restructuring undergone ever since. Globalisation, interdependence, skewness, dynamism and fragility are appropriate characterisations of the aforementioned restructuring. A key vehicle for the transnationalisation of production — and the whole gamut of social transactions accompanying it — is the cosmocorporation, or TNC (Müller 1973). The emergence and consolidation of this relatively new modality of organisation of production over the past two or three decades has created a global neofunctional network of transactions and business alliances enhancing the supremacy of economics over military considerations. TNCs constitute a mechanism not only for the transfer of capital and technology across jurisdictional boundaries, but a most effective vehicle for the extraction of surplus from peripheral sectors, via credit-indebtedness devices, wage differentials, tax advantages, franchises, transfer pricing, and the like (Collinworth et al. 1993) to semiperipheral ones and from there to the various groups at the core of corporate power. In addition, TNCs' play a fundamental role in the integration of elites and their ideologies at the transnational level.

But not only production has become transnationalised. One of the most important developments in recent decades has been a rapid and profound globalisation of trade and finance. New trade regimes and the emergence of dominant trading blocs — the EC, ASEAN and now NAFTA — have facilitated a transnational integration of business elites into extended circuits of trade, capital, information and power, often by-passing national "interests" and regulatory structures. Today is possible to transfer financial resources from one country to another at the flick of key, crossing national borders and affecting the national balance of payments without ever crossing corporate boundaries. In this process of transnationalisation combined with shifting economic policy, from demand-side Keynesianism to supply-side neoliberalism and monetarism, there

have been clear "winners" and "losers." Finance capital, telecommunications, and in general proprietory high-tech cosmocorporations have come up on top. Meanwhile, important sectors in the old post-1930 Keynesian "social contract" such as labour, consumers, farmers, the bulk of the white-collar, employee middle class and nationally based, medium-sized manufacturers have been severely hurt. The ensuing social and political restructuring (Bienen & Waterbury 1973) has affected the nature of contemporary politics, the state, the definition of citizenship and the very essence of governance, both globally and within countries. Macroeconomic decision-making, as in the case of central banks, has tended to scape national and democratic controls. This has brought about a persistent tendency of external constituency involvement (eg. the IMF, foreign creditors, transnational corporations) in seemingly "internal" matters of credit, fiscal and monetary policy. Domestic concerns become peripheral and subordinate to the interests of transnational capital. While consumerism and "prosperity" are peddled by the business elite, this ideology conceals the objective reality of massive unemployment and the creation of a low-wage economy (Standing 1989).

Alternative trading regimes to those controlled by the major trading blocs within the Group of Seven have disintegrated. The dismantling of COMECON has eliminated the presence of a trade arrangement which encompassed all of the former Eastern European bloc and a number of centrally planned economies in the Third World. Before the demise of COMECON, initiatives for a New International Economic Order, or a "Trade Union of the Third World" proposed by Julius Nyerere and endorsed by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) failed to materialise. UNCTAD itself and the Non-Aligned Movement, the latter an offshoot of the Bandung Conference of 1955, lay in shambles, crushed between the death of the Second World and the debt crisis. Thus, the possibilities of South–South cooperation were dealt a mortal blow. Likewise, an improvement in the value of exports for basic commodity producers vis-à-vis imported manufacture is hard to visualise. For the foreseeable future, terms of trade will continue deteriorating for most of the South. Western elites and their external clients are now in a position to dictate the terms of global surrender, not only to the populations of the former Third and Second worlds, but to their own populations as well. As externally imposed "structural adjustment" policies severely affect economic sovereignty, a deepening of underdevelopment — and poverty — are more than likely.

Security in the New Era

During the long period of nuclear stalemate, survival meant the prevention of World War III and the avoidance of military confrontation among the two super powers. Paradoxically, the transformation of a balance of power system into of a balance of terror, acted as a deterrence against war itself. Thus, super power confrontation and deadlock manifested themselves through political and economic conflict in the periphery of both superpowers, in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America. Often, this "cold" confrontation led to surrogate wars in which issues of equity, development and selfdetermination ended up being misconstrued in terms of indirect superpower confrontation. Since the end of World War II, there has been an ongoing — though de facto and undeclared — World War III in "instalments" fought in Southern fields. The heavier human and material tolls have been born by the world's poor. Algeria, the Congo, Vietnam, Palestine, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Angola, Mozambique, Afghanistan, Nicaragua or El Salvador, became the battlegrounds of a North-South conflict cast on an East-West matrix. These conflicts also had profoundly dysfunctional consequences for the Western centre. The Indochinese and Algerian involvements almost destroyed France, while the Vietnam and Afghan wars had deleterious implications in the economy, the society, the social fabric and the cultural pathos of both the USA and the Soviet Union.

With the ideological schism between "Communism" and the "Free World" gone, there was a missed opportunity for a new and refreshing view of world politics without the ideological blinders of the past. Rather, in President Bush's "New World Order" a persistent, albeit convoluted, North-South pattern of confrontation re-emerged. Panama, Iraq and Somalia are recent examples of a new kind of interventionism and confrontation. The collapse of communism was almost automatically translated by Western elites into the logic of a "zero-sum", "winner-takes-all" game: a victory for liberal capitalism and Western civilisation over the rest of the world. Arthur Schlessinger, on the eve of the coming down of the Berlin Wall cautioned about such misguided optimism. He argued that the disintegration of the East had more in common with a crisis of both socioeconomic and political systems — and the world order — than with an American victory.

A redefinition of what constitutes threats to security is in order. Most importantly though, is the question of whose security and whose interests are at stake; or, more specifically, what is the connection between the abstract public, or "national," interest and the specific and concrete interests of diverse national and international constituencies. It also requires a search for the linkages between domestic and global concerns above and beyond facile, dangerous, ethnocentric and now outmoded ideological cliches.

CHAPTER 1

A Framework for Analysis

The central thesis of this book is that the seemingly secure societies of the "North" are increasingly vulnerable to events in the lesser secure and hence underdeveloped regions of the globe, in a manner that conventional International Relations and Development Theory have failed to account.[2] More than ever before in human history we live in a world of **mutual vulnerability** (Head 1992) — a multifaceted systemic echo of the mutually assured destruction (MAD) premise of the era of nuclear stalemate. Mainstream development theory as well as dependency theory, though apparently at opposite ends of the ideological debate, postulated that backwardness was either the legacy of a traditional society to be overcome by modernisation or the negative consequence of Western domination over the Southern periphery. In other words, irrespective as to whether the West was construed as the "problem" or the "solution" to the Third World predicament, development and underdevelopment were perceived as being at opposite ends of a unidirectional and irreversible historical continuum: developed regions were "secure," insecurity being the trademark of the "other world."

We are suggesting, quite to the contrary that, in an increasingly interconnected system, there is neither invulnerability, nor developmental irreversibility. Rather, the weakness of the periphery increases the exposure of the centre, making the entire configuration, including the centre, more unstable. Interconnectedness means that dysfunctions in the weaker components of the global fabric result in self-re-enforcing, reciprocating and destructive vicious cycles of planetary magnitude. Given the retrofeeding nature of these trends, no region of the world can be immune to impending crises of potentially catastrophic proportions (Head 1992).

[2] The main ideas contained in this article resulted from a series of meetings of a special presidential committee on South-North relations at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Ottawa between the Fall of 1988 and the Winter of 1989. In October 1988 I prepared a background document, "South-North: A Framework for Analysis", synthesizing — and elaborating on — a number of propositions contained in five of Ivan Head's speeches and presidential statements. Subsequently Ivan Head's ideas were developed in his book, *On a Hinge of History: The Mutual Vulnerability of South and North* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991. I first coined the term "mutual vulnerability" during the above-mentioned meetings. It was the central proposition of my 1988 "South-North..." paper, constituting the main thesis of the seminar and of Ivan Head's book (pp. xi-xii, 2-22).

This chapter outlines a theoretical framework to study global transformations. The epistemological premise here is that the complex changes currently going on can only be adequately apprehended from the vantage point of an equally complex, yet intelligible as well as comprehensive and dynamic conceptualisation. The approach followed is both historical and systemic. It provides a long-range (Braudel 1980) and holistic point of view rooted both in "historical sociology" (Stern 1959) and in International Political Economy (Staniland 1986). In it, the general and the specific, the micro and the macro, the short run and the long run, the parts and the whole are analytically interrelated, while emphasising the changes and continuities of structures over time.

Although the framework focuses on the intersection between International Relations and Development Studies (Helleiner 1992), the perspective chosen is essentially inter and transdisciplinary, straddling the rigid, and often artificial boundaries of existing, vertically compartmentalised disciplines, such as Economics, Political Science, History or Sociology. The construct used in this type of analysis encompasses a much greater range of interactions, as well as issues, than those examined by the theories that question realism and dependency (Keohane and Nye 1977), namely "complex interdependence" and "dependency reversal" (Modelski 1983).

The Concept of World System

A useful heuristic device to understand the present crises in their context is the notion of world system (Wallerstein 1980; Galtung 1980; Cox 1978). This construct encompasses historical, structural and functional features which make possible to analyze and reassess changing global conjunctures irrespective of the type of polarity in the system. A world system refers to a dominant and integrated pattern of global production and distribution and power whose foundations were laid down in the XVIIth century, but whose expansion and consolidation has evolved during the last two centuries (Bergersen 1981; Wallerstein 1980). It involves an unequal and asymmetrical exchange between a developed core and underdeveloped semiperipheries and peripheries, where systemic and subsystemic development and underdevelopment are functionally and historically, but not deterministically interrelated.

Core, Centres and Peripheries — Despite the use of geographical and spatial concepts, relations in the present system are not so much those between territorially defined centres and peripheries (nations, regions or settlements), but

rather among concrete social actors: groups, classes and individuals living in both, the North and the South. "Core" and "centre" are different concepts. Core refers to socioeconomic elite groups, already transnationally integrated. Centre, on the other hand, refers to the developed geographical regions, which contain, as do peripheral regions, their own elite "core" and a nonelite "social periphery." Development and underdevelopment are conditions experienced by people, not abstract aggregations which define the totality of a territory. The idea of developed and underdeveloped nations, First and Third worlds, North and South, obscures the fact that any society there is a significant degree of transnational integration of its dominant groups as well as effective marginalization of the bulk of its inhabitants. As an historical model, the notion of world system avoids the more simplistic and often mechanistic applications of international stratification and dependency theories; or for that matter, the neofunctional fallacy of global and complex interdependency. It also looks at the underlying logic which links cores, semiperipheries and peripheries as part of **one single structure and process**, both at present and in the longer historical perspective.

Regimes — A world system presupposes the existence of regimes, or mechanisms of governance with structures of decision-making, rules and influence (Keohane and Nye 1977; Hopkins and Puchala 1978). Unlike institutions or "international organizations" which presuppose the existence of differentiated, formally sanctioned norms and mechanisms of governance, regime alludes to the actually existing arrangements for the handling of a particular cluster of issues. Regimes are subsystems of the larger global system. Some are highly institutionalised, with clear boundaries and enjoy a notable degree of concentricity. Others are loose and without a recognizable authority structure. They also vary considerably in terms of their effectiveness in managing the issues falling within their areas of concern. We will examine these regimes in more detail in subsequent chapters.

Power and Governance — One important empirical aspect in the analysis of regimes is to ascertain who governs, since real power structures are not always formalised, nor transparent. Power, understood as the ability of one actor or cluster of actors to induce compliant behaviour in other actors who would not have done so otherwise (Dahl 1970), is, therefore at the very essence of the global system and its constituent regimes. So is powerlessness. But such ability, or inability, is essentially dynamic and multidimensional. For one thing, power entails a fluid and dynamic relationship between ends (what for) and means (with what) and is much more than the sum total of the resource capabilities, or even possible resource commitments on the part of an actor or alliance. In the last

analysis effective power can only be assessed in terms of outcomes, vis-à-vis objectives pursued and resources utilized. In this sense, authority, in the Weberian sense of legitimated power (Weber 1947), requiring minimal amounts of coercion (or conversely, rewards) is both an efficient and effective element of regime governance. The latter, involves essentially the ability for conflict management by both the government and the governed, limiting the use of violence and coercion.

Power and Metapower — A second important aspect in analyzing regimes is the distinction between power and relational control, or **metapower** (Baumgartner et al. 1977). The latter refers to the ability to affect the outcome of decisions, nondecisions, actions and inactions in a given regime by altering the rules of the game. Metapower can be associated to three fundamental concepts, representing diverse intellectual traditions in political analysis. One is the above-mentioned idea of legitimation on grounds of tradition, charisma or legal–rational calculation, as developed by Weber; the other is Gramsci's notion of hegemony (Cox 1978) and the third is Crozier's observation regarding the relationship between power and uncertainty (Crozier 1964). Very few actors at any given time possess legitimacy, or can articulate hegemonic discourses or have established control over the sources of uncertainty. More often than not, those who are able to affect the outcome of the interaction, both within specific functional or regional regimes as well as in the global system are elite sectors within the core.

The Elements of the System

Conceptually, a system can be seen as comprising five major elements: A) There is a **context**, both structural and historical, which defines its basic parameters or circumstances. B) It possesses a **culture**, or various ideological perspectives, cognitions, feelings and judgments which give the system value, meaning and orientation. C) The system has a **structure** of actors with resources which compete and coalesce in the pursuit of valued outcomes. D) Fourthly, there are the **processes**, or dynamic cooperative and antagonistic relationships by which actors attempt to pursue their short and long term goals. E) Finally, there are the **effects**: the intended and unintended consequences of actions, inactions and processes (Nef 1985). For the sake of simplicity, the global system can be seen as a juxtaposition of five major subsystems: a) the **ecology**, or environment, b) the **economy**, c) the **society**, or sociodemographic system, d) the **polity** and

THE GLOBAL SYSTEM

VARIABLES	ECOLOGY (LIFE)	ECONOMY (WEALTH)	SOCIETY (SUPPORT: well-being, affection, respect, rectitude)	POLITY (POWER)	CULTURE Knowledge skill
Context	Natural setting: the biophysical surroundings of social action	Styles of development: economic models	Social expectations and traditions	Internal and external conflicts: capabilities/ expectations elite/mass, sovereignty/ dependence	Images of the physical and social world and collective experiences
Culture	Ecoculture: place of environment in cosmo-vision	Economic doctrines: ways of understanding the economy	Social doctrines: Values, norms and attitudes; identity and modal personality	Ideologies: the function of the state and its relation to the citizen	Philosophy (axiologies, teleologies and de-ontologies), moral and ethical codes
Structures	Resource endowment and spatial distribution: relation between environment and resources	Economic units: consumers/ producers; labour/capital	Status and roles: social structures, groups, classes, fractions	Brokers and institutions: interest groups, parties, cliques, govern-ments, bureau-cracies	Educational structures, formal and informal: schools, universities learning institutions
Processes	Depletion/ regeneration of air, water, land, flora and fauna	Production and distribution of goods and services	Interactions: cooperation, conflict, mobilisation and demobilisat-ion	Conflict-resolution: consensus, repression, rebellion, stalemate	Learning: building of conscious-ness, cognitions, basic values, procedures and teleologies
Effects	Sustain-ability/ entropy	Prosperity-poverty	Equity-inequity	Governance -violence	Enlighten-ment/ ignorance

e) the **culture**. Each subsystem is structured around a cluster of relatively homogeneous and recognizable issues; it reflects the specific nature of its constituent elements (context, culture, structure, processes and effects), and is governed by a particular regime. They are also interlinked.

Regimes, as stated earlier could be highly institutionalized, with formal rules and a recognizable authority structures or be loosely integrated in intermittent networks, or even be marred by internal conflict so as to render them ineffectual. In the classical balance of power system, shifting alliances among ruling elites theoretically produced overall stability, by preventing one national actor to become hegemonic. Conversely, in the multilayered bipolar order of the Cold War, with entangling collective defence alliances and weak universal organisations for collective security, nuclear stalemate created conditions of strategic stability by default. In the former, the multipolar interplay among sovereign nation-states created equilibrium, while in the latter muted bipolarism defined "world peace." In the postnational and postterritorial context, there is a "different" kind of world order; one, based upon the simultaneous interaction among various functional regimes. The interplay among transnational, national and subnational linkage groups gives specific direction and content to each regime, as well as to the broader regional and global orders. The hypothetical relationships among the aforementioned variables could be represented as follows:

The dynamics of the system involves both the actions and the interactions (Holsti 1972) of actors pursuing goals, utilising resources in — as well as having effects over — a given context and upon the system's internal configuration. Changing circumstances, in turn, generate feedbacks. Dysfunctions produced at the dominant core, end up having negative impacts not only on the subordinate actors, but also have a delayed and secondary reaction upon the centre itself. Conversely, cumulative dysfunctions in the periphery are bound to flow "upstream," increasing the uncertainty and instability of the centre and of the entire system of global relations. In this sense, contrary to commonly held beliefs, an increasingly integrated world is also one of mutually assured vulnerability. More than a "zero-sum game" (Deutsch 1968), we are confronted with the opposite of the "prisoner's dilemma": the possibility of a negative-score game where all players stand to lose.

The Present World System as a Complex Conglomerate

Since World War II, the nature of international relations has changed dramatically. It is impossible to see the global scene any longer as just the meeting place for the foreign policies of individual nation-states representing monolithic "national interests" (Mansbach et al. 1976). Although the issue of survival remains the base value of global politics (indeed, of all human agency), its manifestations have varied. More traditional questions of peace and security,

as systemic purposes (teleologies) of war prevention and containment of "aggressive states," have been increasingly been replaced by development, human rights, environmental, peacekeeping, trade and equity issues. We can see this in the changing and still uncertain role of alliances such as NATO, or regional organisations such es the OAS.

As teleologies change, so do the instrumentalities for crisis management. The limited success of reactive instruments of contention has highlighted the need for proactive mechanisms emphasizing prevention. Two dramatic examples are in the areas of epidemics and famines, but other issues such as environmental degradation, limited international conflict, refugees and domestic strife can be seen in a similar light. However, old ideas and cliches die hard. Many seemingly new concepts are simple translations or relabelling of past Manichean categories: North vs. South, "civilised/uncivilised," "us and them." Changing attitudes and perceptions among analysts and decision-makers has been a slow and inconsistent process, still unfolding and surrounded by uncertainly.

The End of an Era — 1989 marked the end of a world order begun forty-five years earlier at Yalta, Breton Woods and San Francisco. The menus and the priorities of world politics were thrown in disarray. Systemic boundaries are nowadays much less territorial or ideological and more functional than at any time since the emergence of the modern nation-state. They are also much more permeable and imprecise (Kaplan 1994). The notion of collective defence as a system of alliances against a would-be external aggressor was predicated on the solution of continuity between "passive" (deterrence and defence) and "aggressive" strategies (compellance and offense). This way of looking at the instrumentalities of global politics was challenged by the end of the Cold War. Increasingly new issues, such as those related to human rights, environment, trade and equity mentioned above, jumped to the forefront of the agendas, making strategic studies less relevant to understand the world. The very idea of national security, under the umbrella of collective defence and centred on a single actor, the nation-state, in an eminently bipolar world, has been replaced by the need to cope with a much different kind of collective and cooperative security. Nor it is possible to assume a resurgence of pre-World War II multipolarity. The new type of security is a much more complex, varied and nuanced concept. Ethnic conflict, cultural diversity, national disintegration, civil war, systemic and subsystemic restructuring, have become paramount. Issues of poverty, trade, finance, health, environment, gender, communications, resource depletion, population, migration, technology, drugs, human rights and refugees have are also part of the equation; and the list could go on.

A significant rearrangement in the structure and the functioning of the world order has taken place. The shape of the global power structure has changed from muted, yet fundamentally rigid, bipolarism to diffuse monocentrism. The Soviet Union and the Warsaw Treaty are no more. The end of the Cold War has also meant a loosening of the collective defence ties in the Western Alliance. Substantively, the fulcrum of systemic relations has shifted from geopolitics to geoeconomics. A comparison of defence spending and military forces between 1985 and 1992 among the major contenders in the East-West conflict is quite illustrative of the end of this era in human history:

Table 1. Defense Expenditure and Military Personal, 1985–1992

	US $millions (1985 prices)			Armed forces (thousands)		
	1985	1992	Change (%)	1985	1992	Change (%)
NATO Europe	92,235	91,520	-0.8	3,151.8	2,753.6	-126
Canada	7,566	7,790	+3.0	83.0	84.0	+12
US	258,165	242,717	-6.0	2,151.6	1,913.8	-111
NATO	357,966	342,027	-4.5	5,386.4	4,751.4	-118
Former USSR	241,500	39,680	-83.6	5,300.0	2,720.0	-487

Source: IISS, *The Military Balance 1992-1993*, (London: Halstan & Company), 1992, p.218; also *The Military Balance 1993-1994* (London: Halstan & Company), 1993, p.224. Figures for 1985 include all the Soviet Republics. Those for 1992 include the Russian Federation only.

New players, such as transnational corporations and NGOs, have gained a relevant foothold. These coexist side by side with functional and regional international governmental organisations (IGOs, such as the UN and regional systems) and a few powerful national actors, like the USA, Japan, Germany, France and various semiperipheries including the four "little dragons" and the overwhelming presence of China. With the shift to geoeconomics, the geographical axis of world politics has experienced a noticeable displacement from the North Atlantic to the Pacific Rim.

The two central polarities that emerged since the Second World War among **national** actors — between North and South and East and West — were replaced, after 1989, by a single core-periphery axis of relations. The Western core, the First World, remained as it was: an interdependent and stratified bloc of dominant trading partners. Yet, the other two worlds collapsed into one heterogeneous conglomerate including "newly industrialising," "developing," "poor" and the "transitional societies" of the former socialist camp. As said earlier, the

core–periphery conflict occurs **mainly between social sectors** both within the developed and the lesser developed societies. It takes place between transnationally integrated and affluent elites and their related clienteles and a large and fragmented mass of subordinate sectors at the margins of the modern and integrated global society (Sunkel 1973). Core–periphery conflicts can remain latent, become open and manifest or evolve into more institutionalised and asymmetrical regimes.

The end of military, economic and ideological bipolarism did not produce either multipolarity or polycentrism. The present complex conglomerate is made of a multiplicity of issues, arenas and actors. The latter include subnational, national, international and transnational groups: ethnic and linguistic minorities, insurgents, NGOs, heads of state, diplomats and functionaries, UN, regional organisations and transnational corporations. This heterogeneous and uneven set of participants operates in an unpredictable and fragile milieu. There is an identifiable and dominant core, centred in the ruling elites which enjoy a significant degree of relational control within the Group of Seven. Despite its hegemonic pretensions, this global alliance lacks institutional legitimacy and concentricity other than in articulating the common interests of the dominant fractions of international capital. Nor is always effective. In their transactions, whether cooperative or conflictual, the players end up being closely interrelated in an increasingly **unipolar** web of interactions, with US paramountcy. This loosely unipolar system is both mutually interconnected, turbulent and intrinsically unstable. It is also highly stratified and differentiated, with hegemonic actors, "power blocs," and subordinate levels interacting in an assortment of overlapping jurisdictions and regimes. The dominant leit-motif, as well as discourse, presented as a categorical imperative in the contemporary world order is no longer military but investment security. With the disappearance of the Soviet "menace," the security of capital, especially finance capital — and that of the social sectors associated with its ownership and management — has become openly the world system's prime directive.

CHAPTER 2

ENVIRONMENTAL INSECURITY

The existence of a world-wide environmental crisis has become a commonplace. The Stockholm Conference of 1972, the Brundtland Report (1986) and the Rio Summit of 1992 are clear testimonies of a growing environmental awareness as well as to the emergence of an environmental point of view. Yet this is not to say that an environmental agenda has become part of concrete policies and actions, beyond the level of often sophisticated rhetoric. The fundamental fact of the current environmental crisis is that it is overwhelmingly and unequivocally man-made. Two aspects of environmental insecurity will be examined. The first is the systemic character of the present problems; the second is the nature of the existing global environmental regime through which these problems are managed.

Reciprocating Dysfunctions

Environmental deterioration includes a long and expanding list of major and multiple dysfunctions which feed upon each other (White 1993), increasing the chain of vulnerabilities. For instance, deforestation leads to land degradation, which makes agricultural production nonsustainable. This affects both staple exports (and the balance of payments) and food security. Food insecurity brings about a deterioration of health standard and social cohesion, often resulting in political turmoil. The latter enhances authoritarianism, violence, political disintegration and creates forced displacements of population. We will examine some of the environmental dysfunctions below.

The Death of Forests — Deforestation is "one of the most widespread and visibly shocking forms of environmental degradation" (Ryan 1991). The loss of rain forest, especially in tropical regions of the Third World such as Brazil, Malaysia, the Philippines and Central America is one of its most publicized manifestations. Extensive subtropical deforestation has also affected parts of Africa, with devastating human costs. To a lesser extent, North America and the Pacific coast of South America (Nef 1995) have been ravaged by an over-exploitation of their natural forests. Every year, the imbalance between natural growth and deforestation costs the planet about 17 million hectares of

tropical forest alone. Canada is "losing 200,000 hectares a year, as cutting exceeds regeneration by a wide margin" (Brown 1993). The comparative data for the 1980s, on a worldwide basis was:

Table 2. Annual Rate of Deforestation

	1000.Ha per.year	%. per. year
World	15,517	0.4
Africa	4,040	0.6
North America	1,1820.1	0.1
Latin America	5,8180.7	0.7
Asia	4,460	0.9

Source: United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), *Environmental Data Report* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991).

The impact of deforestation on climate appear to be significant (White 1993). Massive defoliation and forest devastation has wide implications for the ecosystem and for life on the planet. Part of it has resulted from overexploitation, but also a smaller, yet not insignificant part is a consequence of purposeful destruction. For instance, in Brazil deforestation has been the result of unrestricted growth policies. Ecocide can also become part of military strategy, as in the Vietnam war when US forces resorted to extensive and intensive spraying of highly toxic chemical agents referred to as "orange," "white" and "blue" to clear the jungle. The full impact of deforestation on a planetary scale has yet to be fully assessed. It is well-known to affect oxygen regeneration, rain and river systems, topsoil retention, drought and desertification; all with profound consequences for the quality of life of populations.

The Thinning of the Ozone Layer — An environmental dysfunction, the awareness of which is quite recent, is the damage to the protective ozone layer in the upper atmosphere. This has been the outcome of the uncontrolled use of PCBs and other industrial and household substances. Since the 1950s, the ozone shield in the upper atmosphere has been depleted by 2 percent worldwide. This reduction has lead to increased levels of surface exposure to solar and cosmic radiation, interference with natural photosynthesis in crops, damage to fauna, depletion of ocean plankton — the primary source of the marine foodchain — health risks and climatic alterations (Head 1991). The most affected areas have been those around Antarctica and the Arctic, though the full long-range impact is still being researched.

Air Pollution and Acid Rain — Carbon monoxide and sulphuric acid emissions is another major technologically induced problem affecting air quality, especially in major cities. It results from a combination of combustion-engine technology and the extensive use of carbon-based energy sources and the smoke stacks characteristic of industrial civilisation. The examples of Los Angeles, Tokyo, Bangkok, Mexico City or Santiago are well-known, though practically all major cities are affected by it. Since the 1970s, worldwide atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide (CO_2), the principal greenhouse gas, has gone up by 9 percent.

The developed economies, with slightly over 15 percent of the global population are and have been the major contributors to carbon emissions, with over 46 percent of total output. The major sources are the burning of fossil fuels and cement manufacturing, both strongly correlated to urbanisation and industrialisation. It was estimated that in 1989, for every million dollars of GDP, an additional 327 tons of carbon was released into the atmosphere. On a per capita basis, this meant an average of 0.5 tons for the low and middle-income regions of the planet and 3.36 in the advanced economies. The world average is 1.12 tons per capita. When population is factored in, industrial economies produce over 6 times the per capita carbon dioxide pollution as the rest of the world. However, as industrialisation and urbanisation expand in poorer regions, pollution there has tended to increase at a faster rate than in more developed areas. While Europe North America, Japan and other industrialised economies, though generating a much larger amount of CO_2, are increasing air contamination by roughly 0.5 percent per year, the lesser developed economies are doing so at an annual rate of 3.8 percent: 7.6 times faster. The combined world average increase of these atmospheric pollutants is 1.8 percent per year (World Bank 1992). The immediate result is greater health risks, such as respiratory diseases, and damages to flora and fauna, not to mention the long-range catastrophic implications of global warming.

Table 3. Global Carbon Dioxide Emissions

Region	Total Emissions 1965	Total Emissions 1989	% Annual Growth 1980-89	Tons of Carbon P/capita 1989	Tons of Carbon P/million $ GDP 1989
Low- and middle-income	576	2,0132	3.8	0.50	614
High Income	1,901	2,702	0.5	3.26	186
World	3,012	5,822	1.8	1.12	327

Source: World Bank, *World Development Report* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 204, Table A.9.

Air pollution forms the basis of another environmental hazard, acid rain. Sulphur emissions, the main contributor to acid rain have grown steadily throughout the globe, correlating strongly with the above-mentioned CO_2. It has been estimated that nearly 75 percent of Europe's forests are experiencing damaging levels of sulphur depositions. The effects of water hyperacidity upon flora and in the death of freshwater lakes has been devastating. In Canada alone, 14,000 lakes are reportedly unable to sustain aquatic life as a result of high acidity. Northern Europe and newly industrialising countries have also experienced the destructive effects of acid rain, not only upon the natural habitat, but in buildings, transportation systems and in the corrosion of metallic structures.

Freshwater Contamination and Depletion — A related area where inappropriate technologies and natural fragility converge is water quality, including pollution and depletion. Industrial and sewage discharges into streams extends damage far beyond the original sources of contamination, threatening health and altering delicate environmental balances in river beds and coastlines. Water-related problems vary considerably from areas where water is scarce (and also becoming scarce) to those where extensive contamination makes it dangerous for consumption or irrigation, to regions where a high water table makes flooding and refuse discharges a constant danger. Annual water consumption per capita for 1990 was about 676 cubic metres, with low-income countries consuming about 498 cubic metres, middle-income 532 and high-income 1,217. Low and middle income regions used nearly 85 percent of their water for agriculture, 8 percent for industry and 7 percent for domestic consumption. The OECD group used 39 percent of the water consumed for the irrigation of crops, 47 percent for industry and 14 percent for domestic use.

Out of the proven 40,856 cubic kilometres of fresh water worldwide, sub-Saharan Africa possesses about 9 percent, East Asia and the Pacific 19 percent, South Asia 12 percent, The Middle East and North Africa 0.67 percent, Latin America and the Caribbean about 26 percent. The OECD countries, in turn contain within their territories over 20 percent of the global fresh water (World Bank 1992), while the remaining 13 percent is in the Eastern European region, including the former Soviet Union. Control over water resources is a vital and strategic human security issue. It relates directly to health, energy and food security. Water is an unevenly distributed resource, but distribution alone is not the main question. The central problem for most of the world population is access to clean water. This is where the quandary lies. Consumption increases with urbanisation and industrialisation, yet, on the whole, irrespective of its

availability, water quality has declined with increased use. Therefore, who controls the resource and for what use is extremely important.

Transnational water disputes may provide in the future the basis for confrontation. Issues of siltation, flooding and water-flow diversion in the Nile have pitched Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan. Reduced water flow and salinisation of the Tigris and the Euphrates have increased tensions among Iraq, Syria and Turkey. Syria, Israel, Jordan and Lebanon are confronted with questions of water flow and diversion of the Jordan and Yamuk Litani. These are just a few of the more than a dozen disputes affecting major river systems (Renner 1989). What is important here is that such disputes occur not only among nation-states but that they are taking place in areas of ethnic, regional and subnational tensions, where competing loyalties and sovereignties make politics extremely volatile.

Land Degradation — The issues of soil erosion, desertification and salinisation[3] are three main problems in a long chain of environmental dysfunctions. Their impact on human security entails the loss of arable land, which is directly connected to crop failure, famine and forced migration. East Africa and the Sahel countries have been among the most severely affected. There, the combined impact of desertification, drought, poverty, population pressures, internal strife, fuel scarcity and political inefficiency have strained already fragile ecosystems, bringing about millions of casualties and massive displacements of people. Yet deserts and soil erosion are also expanding all over the globe in regions exhibiting less multiple dysfunctions than those mentioned above.

The causes of desertification are complex, often involving a synergistic and destructive mixture of nature's own cycles and human intervention. The most direct of these causes are overcultivation, the above-mentioned deforestation, overgrazing and unskilled irrigation. These causes are, in turn, conditioned by alterations in the three interlocking factors: population, climate and socioeconomic conditions (Grainger 1982). While drought could trigger a chain of events leading to desertification, the former is a consequence of climatic change and the latter is the consequence of social behaviour. Desertification in the mid-1970s affected directly one-sixth of the world population, 70 percent of all the drylands and 25 percent of the land mass of the world (Spooner 1982). Every year potentially productive territories the size of a small country are lost to erosion. Since land reclamation is a slow and costly exercise, and with population increasing and water resources shrinking, the amount of land available for cultivation on a per capita basis diminishes steadily. Desertification, combined with the exponential

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[3] The worst cases of salinisation in 1987, measured in terms of percentage of irrigated land affected, were: Egypt: 30–40%, Syria: 3–35%, Australia: 15–20% and the USA: 20–25%.

growth of cities which encroaches upon prime agricultural soil and natural reserves is reducing the availability of a vital resource for food production. Land degradation manifests itself in decreased productivity and eventually the creation of wastelands. In the last 20 years, while population has increased by 1.6 billion, close to 500 billion tons of topsoil have been lost through soil erosion (Brown 1993).

Food Insecurity — The above is connected with food insecurity, whose principal manifestations are malnutrition, scarcity and hunger.[4] As reported in the *State of the World 1993*:

> Amidst uncertainty, food scarcity in developing countries is emerging as the most profound and immediate consequence of global environmental degradation, one already affecting the welfare of millions. All the principal changes in the earth's physical conditions — eroding soils, shrinking forests, deteriorating rangelands, expanding deserts, acid rain, stratospheric ozone depletion, the buildup of greenhouse gases, air pollution and the loss of biological diversity — are affecting food production negatively. Deteriorating diets in both Africa and Latin America during the eighties, a worldwide fall in per capita grain production since 1984 and the rise in world wheat and rice prices over the last two years may be early signs of the trouble that lies ahead. (Brown 1993)

However, the root causes of food insecurity are more social and political (ie. associated to poverty, inaccessibility, turmoil, government policies or indifference) than related to purely "technical" or physical factors, such as inappropriate farming, drought or overpopulation. Food insecurity is a combination of many social and environmental factors other than simply the direct result food production. Famine is its most striking expression of food and human insecurity. "The great famines in the 20th century have been caused by deliberate strategies (the Ukraine in 1921 and 1928, China from 1958 to 1961), serious drought and inadequate aid (Bengal in 1943, the Sahel in 1973), conflicts (Biafra in 1968) and often a combination of these factors (Sudan in 1988 and Ethiopia in

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[4] A comprehensive treatment of food security and insecurity, can be found in: Raymond Hopkins, Robert Paarlberg and Mitchel Wallerstein, *Food in the Global Arena* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1982), pp. 1-28, Frances Moore Lappe and Joseph Collins with Cary Fowler, *Food First: Beyond the Myth of Scarcity* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1979), pp. 13-71. George Kent, *The Political Economy of Hunger: The Silent Holocaust* (New York: Praeger, 1984), pp. 3-28; 136-148. William Murdoch, *The Poverty of Nations: The Political Economy of Hunger and Population* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1980), pp. 1-11. On the strategic use of US "food power" to countervail "oil power" and commodity cartels, see Lester Brown's *The Global Politics of Resource Scarcity* (Washington: Overseas Development Council, 1974), pp. 5–48.

1985)" (Jean 1992). At present, depending upon the source or the method of calculation, it is estimated that anything between 40 and 115 million people are directly affected. Undernourishment, however, is a much wider problem. Although the proportion of the world population affected has steadily declined, the total number of people going hungry has actually increased and is currently above the 500 million mark. The estimated figures for the 1969 to 1990 period were:

Table 4. Estimated Number of Undernourished People (World Figures, 1969-1990, in millions)

	1969-1971		1979-1985		1988-1990	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Africa	101	35	128	33	168	33
Asia	751	40	645	28	528	19
Latin America	54	19	47	13	59	13
Middle East	35	22	24	12	31	12
All LDCs	941	36	844	26	786	20

Source: The World Resources Institute, *World Resources 1994-95* (New York: Oxford University Press), 1994, p.108.

Damage to the Oceans — The abuse of oceans and seabeds presents a very serious and likely irreversible environmental problem. Uncontrolled dumping of human and industrial waste and, in general, the discharge of contaminants threatening ocean life, health and food supplies, has been one of its manifestations. Maritime spills from oil tankers or cargoships, such as the much-publicised Exxon-Valdes accident off the coast of Alaska, and defence-related catastrophes, such as nuclear submarines sinking in the Baltic, have become frequent occurrences. Until the signing of nuclear test-ban treaties, extensive nuclear testing was carried out over the oceans and nuclear waste found its way into seabeds. Practically no place in the world is safe from these major threats.

Added to the above, there is the problem of overfishing and uncontrolled commercial exploitation of natural stocks. The "Blue Revolution," from allegedly holding the key to feeding the world scarcely forty years ago, has become a principal cause of ocean depletion by means of gross mismanagement of the sea commons. After expanding at nearly 4 percent annually, from midcentury to the late eighties, catch has actually declined both in relative and absolute numbers. A per capita decline of worldwide fish availability of 7 percent for the next four years has been estimated (Brown 1993). As the cases of the disappearance of cod off the Canadian Maritime Provinces and of various fish varieties, crustacean and

molluscs off the coast of Southern South America, ecological problems evolve into major dysfunctions in the foodchain and the entire regional ecosystem. It results in loss of sources of traditional livelihood, severe unemployment, large involuntary migration and the demise of communities.

Epidemics — The spread of disease constitutes another real and present danger. Epidemics involve a complex pattern of interaction rooted in pathogenic conditions, demographic dynamics, cultural practices and public policies, the result of which is health insecurity. The current global predicament is that of a dysfunctional juxtaposition of "traditional" epidemic manifestations coming back with a vengeance and relatively "new" strains of morbidity, in particular those presenting a threat to natural immunities. Diseases considered in frank decline a few decades ago, such as tuberculosis, cholera, malaria or typhoid are making a come back, as public health expenditures everywhere fall to the axe of structural adjustment. More seriously though, is the fact that the strains of many diseases which had been successfully intervened with antibiotics over the last fifty years are beginning to show signs of resistance to medication. The following tables show the incidence of diseases, the impacts of which are closely correlated with poverty and the presence of inappropriate social policies.

Table 5. Tropical Diseases: Global Population at Risk in the 1990s

Disease	Countries affected	Population at risk (millions)
African trypanosomiasis	36	50
Chagas disease	21	90
Dengue	100	2000
Dracunculiasis	18	140
Leishmaniasis	88	350
Leprosy	87	2400
Lymphatic filariasis	76	750
Malaria	100	2500
Onchocerciasis	34	90
Schistosomiasis	74	500-600

Source: World Health Organization, *The Work of WHO* (Washington: WHO, 1993), p.88.

While the virtual eradication of smallpox over a decade ago could be regarded as the triumph of technology, combined wity international cooperation and modern medical practices, the resurgence of other forms of pestilence points in quite the opposite direction.

Table 6. Tuberculosis: Incidence and Mortality in 1990

	Total TB cases	HIV-attributed TB cases	Total deaths attributed to TB	HIV-attributed deaths
Southeast Asia	3.106,000	66,000	1.087,000	23,000
Western Pacific	1.839,000	19,000	644,000	7,000
Africa	992,000	194,000	393,000	77,000
Eastern Mediterranean	641,000	9,000	249,000	4,000
Americas	569,000	20,000	114,000	4,000
Eastern Europe	194,000	1,000	20,000	< 200
Industrialized countries	196,000	6,000	14,000	<500
Total	**7.537,000**	**315,000**	**2.530,000**	**116,000**

Source: Adapted from P.J. Dolin, M.C. Raviglinе and A. Kochi, "Global tuberculosis incidence and mortality during 1990-2000," *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, Volume 72, Number 2, pp. 215-218. The Western Pacific excludes Japan, Australia and New Zealand. The Americas excludes Canada and the USA. Industrialized countries includes Western Europe, the USA, Canada, Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

In 1991, cholera cases had been reported in 68 countries. Diarrhoeal diseases are still the major cause of mortality and morbidity in children and infants in the lesser affluent parts of the planet. This translates into 1.5 billion episodes of illness and 3 million deaths of children under five years of age.

Table 7. Cholera in the Americas, 1991-1992

	Cumulative Cases		Deaths
	1991	1992	1992
Peru	322,562	212,642	727
Ecuador	46,320	31,870	208
Colombia	11,979	15,129	158
Brazil	2,101	30,054	359
United States	26	102	1
Chile	41	73	1
Mexico	2,690	8,162	99
Guatemala	3,674	15,395	207
El Salvador	947	8,106	45
Bolivia	206	22,260	383
Panama	1,178	2,416	49
Honduras	11	384	17
Nicaragua	1	3,067	46
Venezuela	13	2,842	68
French Guiana	1	16	0
Costa Rica	0	12	0
Argentina	0	553	15
Surinam	0	12	1
Guyana	0	556	8
Total	391,750	353,810	2,396

Source: PAHO, *Annual Report of the Director*, 1993 (Washington: PAHO), 1993, p. 76.

In turn, malaria had spread and its incidence increased in comparison to the previous decade. About 2 billion people, nearly half of the world population are exposed to the disease in nearly one-hundred countries.

In 1991, one and a half billion people, one quarter of the world's population, had no access to primary health care. Three million children and about half a million women die each year from preventable causes related respectively to lack of clean water, information, immunization and proper health care during pregnancy, childbirth (UNDP 1991) and infancy. Declining living and sanitary conditions, as well as the above-mentioned drastic reduction in health expenditures, are closely correlated to soaring levels of pestilence. So are water, atmospheric and soil contamination. Relatively new strains, such as the HIV virus have wreaked havoc in parts of Africa, the Caribbean, Europe and North America.

Perhaps more than other manifestations of human insecurity, the AIDS epidemic illustrates the nature of today's mutual vulnerability. Though the horror scenarios about the spread of the disease developed in the mid-1980s have failed to materialise, the fact remains that reported AIDS cases have multiplied at an alarming rate. According to the World Health Organisation, there was an official cumulative total of 182,463 persons with AIDS in late 1989, spread in 152 countries. In 1989, "AIDS was estimated by the World Health Organization ... to have affected more than 260,000 persons worldwide. The HIV virus, which at present advances in virtually 100 per cent of cases to full-blown AIDS, is present in an estimated 5-10 million additional people" (Head 1991). About 2.5 million of these cases were in Africa, 2 million in the Americas, five-hundred thousand in Europe and about 100 thousand in Asia and the Pacific (WHO 1988, 1990).

Table 8. The AIDS Epidemic

	Number of official cases reported		**Cumulative number of cases reported**
	1991	**1992**	**by July 1993**
Africa	50,944	47,712	241,931
The Americas	59,115	61,893	352,291
Europe	16,749	16,106	89,831
Eastern Mediterranean	447	468	1,720
Southeast Asia	466	882	2,002
Western Pacific	921	665	4,744
Total	**128,642**	**127,727**	**692,519**

Source: WHO, *AIDS: Images of the Epidemic* (Geneva: WHO, 1994), pp. 108-141.

Given the social stigma and prejudice attached to the pathology, it is highly probable that most cases go unreported. Being mainly a bodily fluid transmitted disease for which there is no known cure, ever larger segments of the world than those officially reported population are in serious risk.

Table 9. Estimated Global Distribution of Cumulative HIV Infections in Adults by 1993

North America	1.000,000
Latin America & Caribbean	1.500,000
Western Europe	500,000
North Africa and the Middle East	75,000
Sub-Saharan Africa	9.000,000
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	50,000
East Asia and the Pacific	25,000
South and Southeast Asia	2.000,000
Australia	25,000
Total	**14.000,000**

Source: WHO, *The Work of WHO 1992-1993* (Washington:WHO), 1994 p.108.

Threats to the Genetic Pool — The loss of genetic variability, biodiversity and resistance of plant and animal species is a point of biospheric concern. Growing genetic homogeneity, the latter a consequence of technological advances and hybridisation, tends to reduce the genetic pool to fewer and fewer species. Instead, unreproductible and at times unexpectedly vulnerable strains replace "traditional" ones. Production and reproduction have become two different processes overdetermined by the necessities of the marketplace rather than those of natural genetic codes (which can also be subject to alteration). Biodiversity is nowadays both a genetic condition as well as a legal and economic issue related to the patenting and proprietory rights of transnational corporations in the biochemical business. This is particularly the case with "high-yield varieties" (HYVs) of the Green Revolution period and the present "biotechnological revolution."

The Dangers of the "Green Revolution" — While the phenomenal increase in yields in worldwide agricultural production could be traced back to a "modern" technological package, there are numerous problems associated with it. Green Revolution technology includes heavy use of pesticides, fertilizers, hybrid seeds, high energy inputs, machinery and costly irrigation projects to increase yields and profits. The logic of agricultural production changes from growing food crops which produce profits to growing profits directly. Capital-intensive agriculture prevails over labour-intensive peasant production and the family farm. In fact, the latter, a crucial factor in food security, tend to be displaced by large scale

agribusiness. Heavy reliance on pesticides and fertilizers increases the dangers of persistent contamination of food and water supplies, putting populations of producers and consumers at risk. The most publicised case of massive death by toxicity resulting from agricultural chemicals was the "environmental massacre" following the explosion and release into the atmosphere of lethal substances at a Union Carbide's agrochemical plant in Bohpal, India, in 1984. Over 3,500 people died and 500,000 suffered serious health effects. However, there are innumerable less dramatic but equally serious instances of persistent poisoning of land, water, air, the food chain, and affecting millions of people.

Industry is generally acknowledged to be the major contributor to the present environmental crisis. Undoubtedly industrial practices do play a central role in environmental degradation. Yet, despite widely held myths to the contrary, agricultural practices are, by-and-large no more environmentally friendly than those of industry. In this, the Brazilian small farmer in Amazonia and the large agribusiness conglomerate share a common unecological posture, with the greater risks posed by the more advanced and large-scale forms of production.

Hazardous Waste — Last, but not least, in this list of environmental threats to human security is the problem of waste. The latter refers to those "materials that have no further value for human society" (White 1993). These include industrial refuse (such as heavy metals, chemical abrasives, PCBs and radioactive by-products) and household garbage. While the former are generally managed by national jurisdictions, the latter has been mostly a responsibility of local governments worldwide. With hyperconsumerism, the amount of household disposables has skyrocketed, reaching unmanageable proportions. In many poor regions of the world, precisely on account of extreme scarcity, a great deal of household waste, especially containers, glass, metal, plastic and packaging, is recycled. But that is not enough and garbage keeps stockpiling at nearly exponential rates.

The more serious threat is posed by biological refuse and, of course, industrial and radioactive toxic waste. Nonnuclear industrial refuse, including many noxious and dangerous substances which are difficult to dispose of constitutes a growing and often unwieldy problem throughout the globe. One of the most paradigmatic cases was that of the Love Canal dumpsite in upstate New York in the 1970s; but there are hundreds of such sites in Mexico City alone and thousands over thousands on a worldwide scale that go unnoticed.

Nuclear contaminants reamain the technically most difficult and costly waste to handle. The disposal of radioactive materials is essentially a Northern-generated problem with global effects. However, today's poorer countries — with

the help of nuclear technologies from the North — have also become radioactive-waste producers. Global nuclear waste has proliferated rapidly, fuelled by reactors and the arms race. It illustrates the dangerous discontinuity between the use of a technology with wide energetic, military, industrial and medical applications and its impact. Accidents such as Three Mile Island and Chernobyl are grim reminders of the dangers involved in mishandling the technology.

The nuclear pollution problem, as mentioned above, has to be seen as part of the larger issue of disposal of massive and expanding waste: garbage, sewage and industrial refuse. To further complicate matters, the end of the Cold War has added the question of safe disposal of thousands of warheads. A good number of nominally defused payloads still remain scattered in the territories of the former Soviet Union. Moreover, extremely toxic weapons-grade radioactive materials are finding their way out of the Eastern European region as part of an expanding nuclear black market. In perspective, the USSR and most of Eastern Europe appear as case studies in environmental mismanagement, with nuclear waste and lack of safety being a major concern.

Still, the problem of waste is seen by many in positions of power at the core as a question of transferring dangerous substances among countries or regions rather than as a global affair. For instance, apparently within the World Bank bureaucracy there were suggestions to use Third World countries as dumping grounds for industrial, including radioactive, refuse; a sort of "debt-for-waste swap." This poses insidious and grave environmental hazards. Many countries either strapped for cash, or with corrupt governments, or both, have seriously considered this option. Others have quietly already gone this way. Since these operations are generally conducted in secrecy and without regard to proper safeguards, the global consequences could be truly calamitous.

The Global Environmental Regime

From the preceding analysis, four major characteristics of the environmental crisis can be highlighted. The first is that the crisis is global and widespread. The second is that, given the nature of technology and population pressures, the present rate of exploitation of resources, threatens the sustainability of development itself. The third is that there is a significant increase of the danger of toxicity throughout the planet, resulting from the current style of development. The fourth is that there is a persistent and even expanding trend in morbidity. The common denominator of all these traits is entropy. Though environmental problems have affected first the more industrialized societies of the West and the

former Second World, they appear more dramatic in the midst of poverty. In the lesser developed regions of the globe the rate of environmental deterioration is faster and more difficult to control than that in the West. The root causes of that deterioration lie primarily in "modern" practices generated in, and driven by, the ruling elites in the developed centres. One could argue that, all things considered, the greatest threat to environmental security does not come from poverty, but from wealth.

Context — As mentioned earlier, the worldwide environmental debate has expanded dramatically since the Stockholm meeting of 1972. Likewise, there is a growing awareness of environmental issues and perspectives to understanding development, to the point that the current discourse links development with sustainability. The paradox is that increased environmental sensitivity goes hand in hand with destructive policies and practices. Much that the notion of sustainability is part of the current vocabulary of development, "pragmatic" considerations tend to override it. This contradiction is entrenched in our technological age in which successive human tinkering to control the unintended and undesirable consequences of the application of previous knowhow have become synonymous with progress. Today's environmental crisis is linked to abuse of the natural setting resulting primarily from the application of intensive technology and its implicit cultural codes. Its impact is multiplied by population, with the highest probability of damage related to level of affluence.

Culture — Until now and with few exceptions, "economic trends have shaped environmental trends"(Brown 1990). Most importantly though is the fact that the modern economic ethos towards the environment is imbued with a predatory, engineering-like stance where nature is unquestionably translated into a resource to be exploited (Shiva 1987). Nature is understood as valuable only if it can be used as means to yield measurable benefits for its collective or individual owners. In this, classical liberals, Marxists, Keynesians and neoliberals, despite their apparent fundamental differences, share a common credo regarding agency, history and the use of nature; one rooted in the Judeo-Christian tradition of dominion. True, there is an environmentalist culture emerging, but this culture is at best an alternative one, confined to international organizations, intellectuals and the NGO community. The potential of environmentalism in providing a counterhegemonic discourse to the business-as-usual stand has withered away in recent years as the conventional neoclassical posture has been cloaked in "green." This is not to say that premodern attitudes towards nature are necessarily environmentally friendly. The record of ecocatastrophes in human history is quite

telling. What is new today is the scale of destruction. Traditional values, when combined with highly effective extractive technologies, economic imperatives or heavy population pressures may prove to be far more distructive than productive rationality.

Structure — The material structure of the global environmental regime is the Earth itself: a unified, complex and interacting whole of air, water, land and living organisms. Nature is systemic both in terms of functions and dysfunctions. The global environmental regime, however is highly eccentric and fragmented. It lacks a recognizable, let alone effective structure of governance. Though it has identifiable levels of operation — international, regional, national and local — its constituent parts do not configure a system to deal with environmental insecurity. At the international level the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) has been in existence for some time, but despite the wide recognition that the problem and its solutions require concerted transnational management, the Programme is mainly geared to provide a forum for the analysis of environmental issues. The most recent opportunity to create a global environmental regime was missed at the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit of 1992. This was the largest gathering of political leaders in history, with over 35,000 participants, including 106 heads of state; however, the meeting fell disappointingly short of expectations. A tiny but powerful minority of leaders representing corporate interests in the core, led by then President Bush insisted that a global environmental regime be stripped of any real "teeth." Important protocols were sidestepped or shelved. Regional efforts, with the exception of the European Community, are weak and unfocussed, not to mentioned understaffed and poorly financed. In recent years most countries have established national ministries of the environment as well as environmental commissions and agencies. Environmental state and provincial institutions have been also created. Yet the authority and resources at the disposal of these first and second tier departments are exceedingly limited. Therefore, by default the management of the global commons — air, oceans, water, soil and the biosphere — is generally left to scattered and weak local decision making structures with extremely narrow jurisdictions which are unable to enforce existing regulations.

Processes — Environmental processes such as depletion and regeneration are eminently physical processes conditioned by a complex social, cultural and political matrix. They are affected not only by economic and political decision-making but by the processes of technology generation and utilization. Since all the social components of the process, especially the instances of public

representation, are fragmented, problem solving tends to be incremental, conservative and minimalist. Under these conditions, the correlation of forces between "developers" and "environmentalists," irrespective of the quantum of support or popularity of the latter's cause, has a built-in bias favouring those spousing deregulation and market mechanisms; in other words, the status quo.

Effects — The nonsustainable exploitation of the environment at the national and international levels resulting from nondecisions has catastrophic effects in a scale hard to envision. Environmental destruction is nurtured by inappropriate technologies, the velocity of modern transportation and communications, the declining value of exports of primary commodities and the debt crisis. At one side of the equation of environmental insecurity, the poverty trap creates an entropic environmental trap. At the other side of this vicious cycle, the logic of wealth creation and accumulation generates its own self re-enforcing system of environmental degradation, while simultaneously fuelling the contradiction between poverty and environment. However, the environmental regime is also about learning; anything from popular experiences to scientific research. The conscientization of ever wider sectors of the population about the direct connection between them and their environment can create the conditions for altering the present destructive course. Environmental homeostasis, like entropy is not automatic but mediated by human intervention.

CHAPTER 3

ECONOMIC INSECURITY

One of the most enduring and culturally ubiquitous themes since the 1930s has been the pursuit of economic security through growth. In fact, development theory and specifically modernization theory have been predicated on the basis of the inextricable relationship between the improvement of sociopolitical conditions and the expansion of per capita income. Conventional wisdom postulates that once the society's overall level of goods and services increases in relation to population, a form of automatic "trickle down" of benefits is bound to occur. Likewise, it is assumed that wealth and poverty are at the opposite ends of the economic continuum, each being the reciprocal value of the other. Between the Second World War and the 1970s, most Western economies experienced a prolonged period of prosperity, while global demand for raw materials triggered a unique pattern of commodity-based expansion in peripheral regions. Since 1961, the non-Western countries of Asia, Africa, the Middle East and the Americas have gone through at least three United Nations sponsored "development decades." However, little development, let alone catching up, has taken place. From a long-run historical perspective, it appears that the periods of generalized prosperity were indeed abnormal and that economic crises, volatility and uncertainty are more the rule than the exception. We have moved once again from economic soaring to a state of freefall where insecurity prevails. As in the previous chapter, we will examine both the conditions of economic insecurity as well as the nature of the global economic regime that manages and nurtures such conditions.

The Symptoms of the Economic Crisis

Since the economic recession of the early 1980s the world economic system has been seemingly in disarray. Stagflation, unemployment, indebtedness and declining opportunities are terms commonly associated with the crisis. Yet, in the same period, accumulation of wealth has proceeded at an unprecedented rate; the global GNP has increased and a world system of economic management has been set in place. True, many of the features of crisis persist; but the economic order, globally and domestically seem to have worked to he advantage of those who control capital and production. To ascertain the nature of the crisis and its victims

and beneficiaries, we will examine a number of its symptomatic manifestations. These traits are multiple often are systemically interconnected. At any rate, we should bear in mind that the impact of the crisis tends to be class, gender, age and regionally sensitive and does not affect an entire population in the same way. The opposite is the case.

Persistent and Expanding Poverty — Poverty is the common denominator of economic insecurity. It is seen by many as **the** outstanding economic and social problem in the world (UN 1993). The key issue of real economic development, more than the size of the GNP, the GDP per capita, or the rate of growth is Dudley Seers' question: "What's happening to poverty?" (Seers 1977). The paradox is that poverty is spreading in the most prosperous age in human history. The problem is squarely one of distribution. While there were 157 billionaires and about two million millionaires in 1989, there were also 1.2 billion inhabitants of the planet living in absolute poverty, including 100 million living without shelter (Brown 1993). A 1993 UNDP report noted that the wealthiest 20 percent of humanity receives 82.7 percent of the world's income. The historical trend is even more revealing:

Table 10. Global Income Distribution, 1960–1991

	Share of Global Income Going to		
Year	Richest 20 Percent	Poorest 20 Percent	Ratio of Richest to Poorest
1960	70.2	2.3	30:1
1970	73.9	2.3	32:1
1980	76.3	1.7	45:1
1989	82.7	1.4	59:1
1991	85.0	1.4	61:1

Source: *Human Development Report 1992*, p. 34. Figures for 1991 are from the *Human Development Report 1994*, p.35.

The same global elite also controls 80 percent of world trade, 95 percent of all loans, 80 percent of all domestic savings, 80.5 percent of world investments. They consume 70 percent of world energy, 75 percent of all metals, 85 percent of its timbers and 60 percent of its food supplies. In this context the global middle sectors are shrinking considerably, since the 20 percent of what could be called the world's middle class only receives 11.7 percent of the world's wealth (Robinson 1994). Between one-half and two-thirds of the African population lives in a state of permanent destitution. It has been estimated that "in this decade average per capita incomes fell by about three percent per year in sub-Saharan

Africa and by about 1.3 percent in the highly indebted countries" (IDRC 1992). The cumulative figures of economic decline for the decade are 25 percent for Africans and 10 percent for Latin Americans.[5] In addition, there is the drastic restructuring of the "transitional" Eastern European economies. The movement to capitalism in the formerly centrally planned economies of the East has resulted in declining productivity, dropping living standards, and in an extremely unequal distribution of income (UNDESP 1993). About one-half of the poor in the North live now in Eastern Europe and in the territories of the former Soviet Union. They include social categories virtually nonexistent scarcely a decade ago: homeless people and beggars. In the United States, where a radically regressive distribution of income has been underway, the proportion of the population living below the poverty line was 13.5 percent in 1990 and had risen to 14.2 percent in 1991; a 5.2 percent increase in one year.[6] The estimated figures of people living in absolute poverty in the lesser developed countries, calculated by the Worldwatch Institute for 1989 were as follows (Brown 1990):

Table 11. Estimated World Population Below the Poverty Line, 1990

	Population (Millions)	Percentage
Asia	675.0	25.0
Africa	325.0	62.0
Middle East	75.0	28.0
Latin America	150.0	35.0
Total	**1,225.0**	**23.0**

Source: Brown et al., *State of the World 1990*, p. 139.

The Crisis of Growth — An examination of the historical patterns of world economic growth for the last forty years shows two main features. One is the slowing down of the rate of economic expansion. The other is an entrenched structural crisis. Since 1974, there have been three successive recessions. The first two, in 1974–1976 and again in 1980–1981, were a direct result of oil price

[5] World economic growth per capita for 1990-92 declined on the average 1.1 percent per year. This hides extreme differences in performance in various regions. For instance, while the aggregate world GDP declined 0.5 percent, the developed market economies grew 0.8 percent and the developing economies (including here Asia) 3.4 percent. However, the "economies in transition" in Eastern Europe declined by 16 percent. See United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Development, *Report on the World Social Situation 1993*, p. xvi.

[6] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Poverty in the United States: 1991*, (Washington, 1992), p. vii. Though the definition of "poverty line" is arbitrary and responds to over-all economic profiles (eg. $ 6,393 per person in 1991 in the USA versus $ 370 per person in the lesser developed regions in 1985) it is a useful device to appreciate a phenomenon which is relative and contextually structured.

increases. During these years, rates of growth in personal income dropped sharply worldwide but remained on the positive side. The 1990's recession, resulting from broader structural transformations in the developed economies, has been deeper, longer and much more devastating than its predecessors. Between 1990 and 1992 the average global rate of change in income per person has in fact not only declined but become negative. The comparative figures are:

Table 12. Global Economic Growth

	% Annual Growth	
Decade	**World Economy**	**per capita**
1950–60	4.9	3.1
1960–70	5.2	3.2
1970–80	3.4	1.6
1980–90	2.9	1.1
1990–92	0.6	-1.1

Source: Brown, op. cit. (1993), p. 16.

The per capita rate of income decline in Africa and Latin America between 1991 and 1992 was respectively 0.9 and 0.8 percent. In Africa, per capita incomes were lower in 1992 than in 1971, while in Latin America they were worse than a decade earlier. In terms of the pace of deterioration, however, the once relatively affluent centrally planned economies of Eastern Europe were the most severely affected by the downward spiral. A comparison of the changes in the aggregate rates of GDP would illustrate the growing peripheralisation of the former Second World.

Table 13. Growth of Output (Annual % of GDP)

	1981–1990	**1989**	**1990**	**1991**	**1992**
World	2.8	3.3	1.7	-0.5	0.7
Western	2.8	3.4	2.5	0.8	1.6
Ex Socialist	2.2	2.3	-5.0	-16.0	-14.7
Developing	3.2	3.5	3.4	3.4	4.5
Latin America	1.3	1.1	0.1	2.8	2.0
Africa	2.1	3.0	2.9	2.1	2.3
West Asia	-0.8	3.2	1.9	-0.1	5.1
South and East Asia*	5.9	6.1	6.3	5.6	5.4
China	8.7	3.6	5.2	7.0	10.0
India	5.3	5.2	5.0	3.3	3.0

Source: UN, *Report* ..., pp. xv–xvi
* Excluding China.

Unfortunately, aggregate figures fail to convey the disparate regional and intra-societal impact of reduced incomes. For instance, the Gini Coefficient used to measure income disparities in a range between 0 and 1, rose from 0.69 to 0.87 between 1960 and 1989; "an intolerable level that far exceeds anything seen in individual countries" (UN 1992). Dramatic as they are, these numbers do not show the pre-existing and expanding enormous inequalities, nor the actual growth of poverty. For poverty, contrary to widespread developmental mythology, is not just the reciprocal value of wealth.

While, under conditions of economic deterioration, the absolute and relative numbers of those unable to afford a basic "basket" of goods and services can, predictively, increase, absolute poverty also expands under conditions of economic growth. For instance during the recoveries of the mid and late 1980s and mid 1990s in North America, employment creation has failed to keep pace with economic reactivation. This type of no-employment recovery is also noticeable in Latin America, after the so-called "lost decade." The deleterious impact of pauperization is felt harder on sectors already vulnerable, like women, the young, the elderly, minorities, the unemployed; being more strongly associated with existing income disparities and powerlessness than with composite levels of prosperity.

The Debt Crisis — A principal contributing factor to macroeconomic insecurity is the expanding and unsurmountable indebtedness. The debt burden creates an entangled weak link not only for the bulk of the population in the debtor nations, but also for most of the people in the creditor countries. According to World Bank figures, the total external debt of all debtor nations was equivalent to 14 percent of their GNP and 142 percent of their export earnings in 1970. In 1987, it had climbed to 51.7 percent and 227.9 percent respectively (IDRC 1992:5).

The figures are insufficient to portray the tragedy of the situation, since they include all kinds of debtor countries. It also fails to indicate the differential impact upon the poor, who are the most grievously hurt. The debt crisis affects employment, consumption and credit in the less affluent countries. In industrialised states, the exposure of lending institutions has lead to uncertainty and severe internal dislocations. Financial institutions, attempting to reduce exposure, normally transfer the debt burden to the public sector through government-sponsored insurance schemes or simply pass on losses to their customers at home. Ultimately, the burden falls on the shoulders of salaried taxpayers, those who cannot take advantage of the shelters created to protect the business elites.

The 1988–89 World Bank tables for the seventeen most indebted countries were:

Table 14. Seventeen Most Indebted Countries 1988

	Debt Outstanding		Debt Services		Debt Ratios	
Country	Total	Private (%)	Total	Interest (%)	Debt/ GNP	Interest/ Exports
Argentina	59.6	79.4	17.7	11.4	73.9	41.5
Bolivia	5.7	27.3	1.8	0.8	13.7	44.4
Brazil	120.1	76.8	63.4	21.8	39.4	28.3
Chile	20.8	74.3	7.0	5.2	124.1	27.0
Colombia	17.2	48.0	10.3	3.6	50.2	17.0
Costa Rica	4.8	53.2	2.2	0.7	115.7	17.5
Ivory Coast	14.2	60.2	5.0	2.2	143.6	19.7
Ecuador	11.0	63.6	5.5	2.1	107.4	32.7
Jamaica	4.5	17.6	1.6	0.7	175.9	14.2
Mexico	107.4	78.1	43.5	24.0	77.5	28.1
Morocco	22.0	29.0	9.7	2.9	132.4	17.3
Nigeria	30.5	61.1	16.4	4.6	122.6	23.3
Peru	19.0	61.5	7.4	2.4	40.5	27.2
Philippines	30.2	60.0	11.9	5.0	86.5	18.7
Uruguay	4.5	77.1	1.8	0.8	58.6	17.7
Venezuela	35.0	99.3	15.6	7.8	94.5	21.9
Yugoslavia	22.1	61.9	13.8	4.4	38.9	10.8
Total	**528.6**	**71.2**	**234.6**	**100.2**	**63.1**	**24.2**

Source: Table is adapted with small modifications from World Bank, *World Debt Tables, External Debt of Developing Countries*, 1988–89 Edition, Vol. I, Analysis and Summary Tables (Washington: The World Bank, 1989), p. xviii.

As a liquidity problem, the foreign debt crisis in the periphery translates into equally burdensome indebtedness in the centre. As credit tightens, or as economic recession sets in, material production tends to decline. Bankruptcies of the most heavily indebted firms ensue, bringing about a chain reaction: more defaults, unemployment and shrinking consumer demand. This, in turn, feeds the spiralling productive downturn. The consequences are both extreme concentration and economic decay. An overextended public sector is frequently singled out as the major cause of public indebtedness. While irresponsible public spending is probably the direct and manifest cause in most countries, the root causes of indebtedness vary considerably. For instance, in the USA, the huge government deficits can be traced back to the extensive overspending resulting from the

Vietnam war and the arms race — which, incidentally, bankrupted the former USSR. In other countries, increases in the cost of basic imports (such as oil), growing interest rates on borrowing, declines in the value of exports, government inefficiency, corruption and sunk costs in existing projects, played a major part. Likely, the debt problem is a combination of all of these. Yet the debt crisis is specifically the consequence of national revenues, especially exports, being unable to keep pace with increasing interest rates (IDRC 1992b). In a way, the debt crisis was created by high interest rate monetary policies in the developed countries designed to fight the stagflation of the late 1970s and early 1980s (Sheppard 1994).

Another side of the debt crisis is the use of credit policies by Western elites and their governments to turn the tables against the newly found "oil power" of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and its inspiration for commodity cartels throughout the Third World. The West "won" the "credit wars" of the 1980s; credit resulting from recycled petrodollars generated by the 1970s "oil crisis." The enormous profits created by soaring prices between 1973 and 1980 had accumulated in the hands of transnational companies, such as Exxon, Texaco, Shell, BP or Standard Oil and the ruling sectors in the oil-producing countries: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Nigeria, Iran, Lybia, Brunei, Mexico Venezuela and Indonesia. Petrodollars were transformed into long-term deposits in major Western banks, which in turn, peddled them at low, yet floating interest rates. Third World political and economic elites in both the oil and the non-oil-producing nations were particularly lured by the availability of easy international credit. High indebtedness was the consequence of expanded financial availability. When oil prices sharply fell in 1981–82, on the eve of the Iran–Iraq war, borrowers were saddled with unmanageable debt burdens.

The inability to meet debt payments resulted from the double impact of declining export values for primary commodities, including oil, and higher interest rates. Credit restriction, geared to fight inflation by means of high interest rates, was the trademark of a new monetarist policy relentlessly pursued by the central banks of in the major industrial nations. This manoeuvre had tangible short-term financial and political benefits for the ruling sectors in the West. It had, however, disastrous systemic effects. It further destabilised an already vulnerable periphery, bringing about severe balance of payment deficits. The tight money policies also wreaked havoc among middle and lower income earners in the centre. The credit squeeze sent a second shock wave against salaried sectors barely recovering from the earlier impact of high energy prices and stagflation.

The debt crisis was construed by Western elites and their associates very much as was the "oil crisis" of the 1970s: a pretext to increase accumulation at an

unprecedented scale. The crisis justified belt tightening, antilabour and probusiness policies. Today's financial crisis has been used as a rationalisation to impose massive "structural adjustment" packages in both the North and the South; not to mention the former East. What all this adds up to is the breaking down of labour's share of the economic "pie," generalised unemployment and a concomitant process of transnational accumulation of capital. It has also facilitated a major revamping and concentration of the global power structure.

Deteriorating Terms of Trade — The dismantling of the foundations of a yet unborn "new international economic order" (NIEO), a more equitable trade regime based upon price stabilisation for basic commodities for producing countries, enhanced the historical trend of deteriorating terms of trade extant in traditional export economies (Todaro 1989). The relationship between deteriorating terms of trade, debt and underdevelopment has been noted by analysts:

> [T]he long term deterioration in terms of trade is deeply entangled in the debt situation in a process of mutual causation. A fall in the terms of trade dampens the growth of purchasing power of exports and increases the need to borrow for necessary imports, and a rise of debt puts downward pressures on export price and the terms of trade through devaluation and other measures of forced exports. (Singer and Sakar 1992)

It has been estimated that the effects of deteriorating terms of trade accounted for about $357 billion dollars of the debt in less developed countries in the mid 1980s. By the end of the decade, it had risen to about $500 billion. "More than 70 percent of this increase debt can be explained by a deterioration of the terms of trade of LDCs" (Ibid.). But the negative impact of this secular and structurally conditioned tendency, in the long run has also affected ever increasing numbers of the populations elsewhere. Unstable commodity prices and unfavourable terms of trade in the lesser developed countries have created not only depressed living standards for the majorities there but, most importantly, they reduce the capacity to import. This has had a negative effect for manufactured exports in developed countries, resulting in loss of jobs and marginalisation at both ends.

For instance, it has been estimated that during 1980 and 1986 the USA alone lost $15 billion worth of exports to Latin America. This meant 860,000 fewer, mostly blue collar jobs in 1987. In total, the USA lost some 1.8 million jobs as a consequence of insufficient export performance to the Third World; at least half of these directly attributable to the debt crisis. Estimates for Europe put the job losses for similar reasons between 2 to 3 million. In turn, Canada lost about $ 1.6

billion of exports to the Latin American and Caribbean region during the same period (IDRC 1992c). The entry into the broader NAFTA arrangement and an economic recovery in America have failed to arrest this trend.

The Down Side of Global Competitiveness — The transnationalization of production and the displacement of manufacturing to the semiperiphery, on account of the "comparative advantages" brought about by depressed economic circumstances and the "low wage economy," results in import dependency in the North. This deserves further explanation. The import dependency mentioned here does not mean that developed countries become dependent on lesser developed countries for the satisfaction of their consumption needs. Since most international trade takes place among transnationals, all that import dependency means is First World conglomerates buying from their affiliates or from other transnationals relocated in peripheral territories. The bulk of the population at the centre, therefore, becomes dependent on imports coming from core firms domiciled in "investor friendly" host countries. Via plant closures and loss of jobs, such globalism replicates in the centre similarly depressed conditions to those in the periphery.

Manufacture evolves into a global maquiladora[7] operating in economies of scale and integrating its finances and distribution by means of major transnational companies and franchises. Abundant, and above all cheap, labour and probusiness biases on the part of host governments are fundamental conditions for the new type of productive system. Since there are many peripheral areas with easy access to inexpensive raw materials and with unrepresentative governments willing to go out of their way to please foreign investors, a decline of employment and wages at the centre will not necessarily create incentives to invest, or increase productivity. Nor would it increase "competitiveness." Since production, distribution and accumulation are now global, it would rather evolve into a situation of permanent unemployment, transforming the bulk of the blue collar workers — the "working" class — into a "nonworking" underclass. In the current global environment, production, distribution, consumption and accumulation are not constrained by the tight compartments of the nation state, national legislation or responsible governments. On the contrary, regulation has become anathema. The implicit social contract which was articulated in the system af labour relations and collective bargaining in the industrialised countries has become invalidated by transnational business. The new correlation of forces is one where blue collar

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[7] For an analysis of *maquiladoras*, see Kathryn Kopinak, "The Maquiladora in the Mexican Economy," in R. Grinspun and M. Cameron, ed., *The Political Economy of North American Free Trade* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), pp. 141-162.

workers have lost, and lost big. Figures for the proportion of long-term unemployment over total unemployment for the developed countries are revealing:

Table 15. Long-Term Unemployment as Proportion of Total Unemployment in Developed Countries, 1975–1990

	Average 1975–80	1980	Average 1981–89	1990
Australia	17.8	19.9	26.8	21.6
Belgium	—	61.5	70.9	69.9
Canada	2.9	3.2	8.3	5.7
Denmark	—	36.2	31.6	33.7
Finland	—	27.0	18.8	—
France	27.1	32.6	43.6	38.3
Germany	—	28.7	45.0	43.3
Greece	—	—	43.0	51.3
Ireland	—	38.2	62.7	67.2
Italy	—	51.2	64.6	71.1
Japan	16.0	16.4	16.4	19.1
Netherlands	—	35.9	51.0	48.4
New Zealand	—	—	—	18.7
Norway	3.1	3.3	7.7	19.2
Portugal	—	—	53.7	48.1
Spain	28.4	32.8	55.4	54.0
Sweden	6.0	5.5	9.1.	4.8
United Kingdom	—	29.5	44.4	36.0
United States	5.9	4.3	9.1	5.6

Source: OECD, *Employment Outlook*. July 1991 (Paris: OECD, 1991) and OECD, *Employment Outlook*. July 1992 (Paris: OECD, 1992).

The Global Economic Regime

By contrast to the global environmental regime, the present world economic order is by far, more centralised, concentric and institutionalised at the top. Its fundamental components are trade, finance, and the protection of the proprietory rights of international business. Rules, actors and mechanisms constitute a de facto functional system of global governance where core elite interests in the centre and the periphery are increasingly intertwined. As the Bush administration was ostensibly vetoing a global environmental regime at the Rio Summit of 1992, its representatives, in conjunction with their counterparts in the Group of Seven were giving the final touches to a international trade and financial regime (the WTO to replace GATT) that would come into being scarcely a year later.

Context — The historical and structural circumstances of this new economic order are defined by three fundamental structural parameters, the common denominator of which is global macroeconomic restructuring. The first is the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the socialist "Second World," construed as a victory of capitalism. The second contextual parameter of this new order is the disintegration and further marginalization of the Third World. The third parameter is economic globalization in a scale and depth unprecedented in human history.

Culture — There is also a crucial ideological trait which underpins the present regime. This is the pervasiveness of neoliberalism as a hegemonic and homogenizing discourse. Whether under the spell of monetarism or the so-called "Trilateral" doctrine (Sklar 1980), conventional economic thinking has not only displaced socialism but practically all manifestations of structuralism. Most, important, however is the entrenchment of inequality as a guiding principle of economic life.

Structure — The formal decision making structures of the global economic regime are clearly recognizable, encompassing the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and its successor, the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the various regional banks, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Group of Seven and the established major trading blocs: the E.C., ASEAN, NAFTA. A new crucial development in this regard is the emergence of the aforementioned WTO at the 1993 GATT talks in Geneva. It was designed to substitute a monitoring and enforcement agency for the GATT conference itself. This is tantamount to the establishment of a formal mechanism for the regulation of world trade, thus formalising the leading role of trade — especially the trde of "invisibles" — in both the global economic regime and the overall global order. This global structure finds its correlate inside the internal mechanisms of macroeconomic management within nation states: ministries of finance, treasury boards, central banks. The formal linkage between global and domestic management is provided by international agreements and external conditionalities attached to fiscal, monetary and credit policies; especialy those of debt management. This linkage is, in turn, re-enforced by common ideology and professional socialisation on the part of national and international experts.

Processes — Through these devices, world economic elites manage their discrepancies and negotiate regulatory structures to serve their common interests

and maximise profits. As Huntington rather cynicaly put it:

> Decisions ... that reflect the interest of the West are presented to the world as ... the desire of the world community. The very phrase "the world community" has become the euphemistic collective noun (replacing "the Free World") to give global legitimacy to actions reflecting the interest of the United States and other Western powers .... Through the IMF and other international economic institutions, the West promotes its economic interests and imposes on other nations the economic policies it thinks appropriate. (Huntington 1992)

Effects — But harmony and predictability at the level of the transnational core does not necessarily translate into security at the base. As production, finance and distribution in a rapidly a globalizing economy become transnationalized, so does mass economic vulnerability. After the years of worldwide prosperity during the sixties and the seventies, instability and exposure have become endemic. The effects of economic insecurity, manifested in poverty, unemployment and sheer uncertainty are felt by the bulk of the population in both the centre and the periphery. We will outline some of the linkages of these effects with social, political and cultural insecurity in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 4

Social Insecurity

There has never been a real global society. Nor has there existed a defined global social regime. What does exist is a social construction: an image of social interactions encapsulated in terms such as the global village and similar allegories. There is, however, a process of globalisation, expressed in an increased velocity of elite circulation and communications across national boundaries conveying and strengthening that image. Regionally, the emergence of the European Community has meant the expansion of concrete possibilities of horizontal displacements and exchanges among once tighter national compartments. This has also been the case historically, between Canada and the USA. Perceptions of the global village are grossly distorted by these unique experiences. True, with the disappearance of the Iron Curtain, the theoretical possibilities of travel between Eastern and Western Europe have increased. Yet, for most of the world population, despite claims of an emerging cosmopolitanism, the globalisation of social life means hardly more than the virtual reality of canned media and the advertising of products. This is especially the case among the poor, for whom the globalisation of the market does not effectively translate in expanded choices, nor in enhanced opportunities. Thus, when we talk about the global village, we are referring to a small elite of the affluent, the powerful and the informed, who really possesses a transnational character. The bulk of the world population, while afected by the planetary character of communications, production, distribution and accumulation, does not partake in the new social regime. Rather, the negative consequences of internationalisation have a greater impact on the lives of most people than the promises of a unified and nurturing global social order.

The Sources of Social Insecurity

While internationalisation has meant an increased freedom of movement for capital, and for those who possess it, labour mobility is not an intrinsic characteristic of the present system. For most workers and for the unemployed, globalisation means hardly more than the old notion of international division of labour: capital "shopping" for cheaper wages in various national markets and relocating there as a function of lower costs. It is much more likely that the

affluent go South than for those in the periphery to visit the centre, other than through the fortuitous routes of illegal immigration and exile. A myriad of economic, political, legal, regulatory and security factors gravitates against their doing so. Thus, to talk about a global social order is, at best an illusion, limited by the accessibility to resources and the means to acquire mobility. However, there are a number of interconnected factors that constitute global trends affecting the quality of social life in othrewise emminently national and subnational societies. This globalisation manifests itself in a number of specific trends.

Population Growth — One of the most misunderstood issues of mutual vulnerability is population increase. Western media is replete with explicit portrayals of the connection between birth rates and human misery. From this perspective the populace is presented as either a pasive subject, or worse an objective threat to human survival. Though social and physical scientists within the neo-Malthusians camp reduce population growth (and fertility rates especially among the poor) to being the monocausal explanation of poverty and degradation, a considered analysis would give us a more complex picture. A distinction needs to be made (as in the case of the foreing debt) between population growth, a population problem and a crisis of overpopulation. While population pressures are clearly dysfunctional in already densely inhabited zones, the world as a whole is far from the cataclysmic scenarios of having reached its global "carrying capacity." Nor, as Malthusians argue, is the central explanation of poverty, disease, malnutrition, conflict or injustice.

This is not to ignore that, "rapid population growth in developing countries has been a cause for alarm for many decades" (UN 1992). The 1992 Rio Summit "brought into sharp focus the ecological limits to growth and the dangers posed by large and growing populations driven by poverty to despoil the environment irrevocably" (UN 1992). However, the World Population Council's "population bomb" metaphor is increasingly giving way to a nuanced perception in which the liabilities resulting from population pressures over limited resources have to be balanced with the issues of Human Resource Development (HRD), equity and sustainability. Indeed, rapid and uncontrolled population increase in the absence of economic development, and, most importantly, in conjunction with a skewed distribution of resources, is a recipe for catastrophe. The numbers suggest an expanding global population, though with decreasing speed (1.7 percent in 1990 versus 2.5 in 1965–73). Yet these trends are not uniform. Africa, where the quality of life indicators are the lowest, the population growth rate has accelerated from 2.8 in 1973–1980 to 3.1 in 1980–1990. A similar tendency is observable in The Middle East and North Africa (from 3.0 to 3.1). In other lesser developed

areas (South Asia, East Asia and Latin America), while still exhibiting growth rates larger than the world average, a significant deceleration has taken place.

Table 16. World Population

Region	Population in Millions					Average Annual Growth (%)		
	1965	1973	1980	1990	1991	1965–73	1973–80	1980–90
Sub-Saharan Africa	245	302	366	495	510	2.7	2.8	3.1
E. Asia & Pacific	972	1,195	1,347	1,577	1,602	2.6	1.7	1.6
South Asia	645	781	919	1,148	1,170	2.4	2.4	2.2
Middle East*	125	154	189	256	264	2.7	3.0	3.1
Latin America**	243	299	352	433	441	2.6	2.4	2.1
OECD Countries	649	698	733	777	781	0.9	0.7	0.6
Other Developed	22	28	33	39	40	1.0	0.8	0.6
Eastern Europe	406	442	476	516	523	1.1	1.1	1.0
World (including other territories)	**3,326**	**3,924**	**4,443**	**5,284**	**5,370**	**2.1**	**1.8**	**1.7**

Source: Table calculated on the basis of World Bank's, *World Development Report 1992* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 196, Table A.2.
* Includes North Africa
**Includes the Caribbean

A recent United Nations report gave an estimate of the future scenario of the world situation, by projecting current levels and growth trends: the numbers could double in 35–40 years:

> The world population in mid-1991 was 5.4 billion. Its annual rate of growth is expected to drop from 1.7 per cent per year at present to 1.6 per cent in 1995–2000, 1.5 per cent in 2000–2005, 1.2 per cent in 2010–2015 and 1.0 per cent in 2020–2025 .... The world population is projected to reach 6.3 billion in the year 2000 and 8.5 billion in 2025. (UN 1993)

These figures compound an already bleak scenario, since as mentioned these increases would take place in the poorer regions of the globe. Should these pressures continue to mount in an uncontrolled fashion, population expansion would become a major multiplier to long-term global insecurity. The fundamental variables in the demographic-threat equation, more than fertility rates, are the balance between population and resources (especially land) as well as overconsumption. It is not just a question of more or less mouths to feed to be solved simply by birth-control technologies. In fact, as Commoner has suggested, poverty breeds overpopulation and not the other way around (Commoner 1975). Societies which reproduce poverty will also tend to produce overpopulation. Equitable economic development tends to generate demographic transitions towards older, and stable demographic profiles. This, of itself may generate other problems such as declining productivity, aging of the work force, an increase in

the pasivity/activity ratio and the escalating cost of social services. Yet this "demographic implosion" is more manageable than its conterpart.

Migration — A related issue is that of migration (Dirks 1993). Massive movements of people have been a constant throughout human history. What makes today's migration unique is the speed of the process combined with the density of existing settlements. The aforementioned United Nations' report stated:

> Migration, both from within countries and across borders is mounting. Political and economic disruption are important immediate causes of specific flows of migration, but demographic pressures and growing economic disparities create strong underlying forces for population movements which threaten to become a serious source of international conflict. (UN 1993)

Population displacements into large cities and into developed centres, is at the same time an effect and a cause of systemic dysfunction. Potentially, it constitutes a serious problem for both the migrant generating and receiving areas. The younger and better educated migrate first. With the rural-to-urban and small-to-large migration, there is a net loss of human capital and a inexorable decay of communities. Regular, steady and "absorbable" migrations present no major problem to the centre. It needs to be differentiated from massive, uncontrollable and sudden displacements of the lesser skilled resulting from calamities. In the latter case, the sustainability of migrant-receiving zones can be put in jeopardy. Already strained services, facilities and opportunities may lead to irreversible decline and eventually the socioeconomic breakdown of cities. Other than from a purely ethnocentric perspective, international migration is not a difficulty for the receiving area. Normally, the opposite is the case since as said above, by and large those who leave tend to be among the most skilful and socially mobile members of "exporting" societies. However, as primary groups disintegrate, with a subsequent increase in uncertanty and fear, made more acute by deteriorating economic conditions, xenophobia emerges. Migrants, especially those from a perceived "lower" social standing and visible minorities, are turned into the scapegoats of social discontent. In some cases, elites foment these phobic feelings as a surrogate, or "lightning rod" for internal resentments emerging from exploitation, unemployment and reduced mobility opportunities. When this happens, forceful discrimination, persecutions, "ethnic cleansing" and genocide become likely. Out migration and refugee flows ensue.

Refugee Flows — In addition to the dislocations brought about by the present economic restructuring, social demographic and steady migratory trends, there are

sudden population displacements caused by violent upheavals. The issue of refugee flows is one of the most poorly understood but often discussed themes. These involuntary and traumatic displacements are spearheaded less by natural catastrophes and economic collapse than by bloody political conflicts; though a combination of factors is not unusual. The sources of refugee generation have changed since the Second World War. While until then there was a net transfer from the centre to the periphery, since the 1950s, the flow was reverted. For instance, Latin America, from being a receiving region for European refugees, became a refugee-producing area in the 1970s. North America, Europe and Australia have remained as likely points of destination. Since the more developed countries are also the most likely destination of regular migrants, the image of a "refugee crisis" has been constructed.

Undobtedly massive refugee displacements are bound to have destabilising consequences upon global security, affecting in particular regions near the zones of conflict and only indirectly upon core areas. The figure for refugees living outside their national borders for 1989 was about 15 million (Heffernan 1990). A 1991 UNHCR report placed the total of world refugees at 17 million. In addition to the above-mentioned "external" refugees, there were nearly 4 million individuals in 1993 living in refugee-like situations and other 27 million displaced within their own borders. The figures for 1992 were:

Table 17. Refugees by Place of Asylum

in Africa	5,698,450
in Europe and North America	3,423,600
in Latin America and The Caribbean	107,700
in East Asia and the Pacific	398,600
in the Middle East	5,586,850
In South and Central Asia	2,341,700
Total	**17,556,900**

Source: Calculation based upon figures provided by the US Committee for Refugees, *1993 World Refugee Survey* (Washington: American Council for Nationalities, 1993), pp. 50-51.

These are "official" figures. Actual, that is, unofficial numbers are probably twice, or even three times, as large. The numbers go up constantly, with annual increases in the recent past of about 3 to 6 percent, by any account much higher than the rate of global population growth. As internal conflicts have multiplied since the end of the Cold War — in the former USSR, in the Balkans and in central Africa — so has the number of displaced populations. Despite the formal settling of old disputes as in Cambodia, Palestine or Afghanistan, refugee areas

are far from shrinking.

In addition to the displacements caused by war, in many instances, refugee flows are compounded by rural poverty, natural catastrophes, socioeconomic dislocation and deprivation. Refugee crises in already depressed areas have potentially destructive effects for both the generating and the receiving societies. Contrary to widely held belief, the greatest influx of refugees go to neighbouring territories, usually already troubled regions in poor countries, not to the developed nations of the West. This generates potentially expanding zones of social vulnerability: the direct security threat posed by refugees is to further the destabilisation of the periphery. In other words, refugee issues cannot be seen as purely local issues, effecting specific countries. They could potentially trigger a dysfunctional chain of "ripples" into entire regions. The ratio of refugees to total population in selected contries may help to further understand the nature of the problem:

Table 18. Ratio of Refugees to Total Population

Gaza Strip	1:1	Belize	1:23
West Bank	1:3	Liberia	1:28
Jordan	1:4	Slovenia	1:28
Djibuti	1:4	Azerbaijan	1:29
Malawi	1:8	Sudan	1:35
Croatia	1:11	Zimbabwe	1:39
Lebanon	1:11	Syria	1:45
Armenia	1:12	Mauritania	1:53
Swaziland	1:15	Burundi	1:54
Guinea	1:16	Zambia	1:54
Yugoslavia	1:16	Macedonia	1:58
Iran	1:21	Kenya	1:62

Source: *1993 World Refugee Survey*, p. 53.

Despite the abatement of the bitter conflicts in some of the long-standing areas of refugee generation, such as Indochina, Central America, Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Palestine, new trouble spots have emerged. For instance, "[the] number of people uprooted in the Middle East since the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq ... may total between four and five million, one of the largest mass displacements in recent times, and possibly the most far-reaching in terms of the number of countries affected since the Second World War" (Van Hear 1993). Other trouble areas include several of the former Soviet Republics (Zayonchkosvkaya et al. 1993), the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Haiti; not to

mention the ever increasing flow of "environmental"[8] and "economic" refugees, escaping dramatically deteriorating living conditions (Martin 1993). Major cities elsewhere, even in North America, are already experiencing the influx of "urban refugees," resulting from internal displacements and deteriorating economic conditions in depressed regions.

Hyperurbanisation — The benefits of internal migration, however are less clear in the many overcrowded cities of the Third World such as Mexico City, Saõ Paulo, Bombay, Bangkok, Manila, Djakarta, Cairo, Nairobi or Lagos. The creation of the megalopolis (primate cities) are the immediate results of such population movements, a pattern of life and social decay which started in the 1970s and which has accelerated at a very sharp rate ever since. By 1991 over 61 percent of the world's urban population lived in less developed regions (UN/DIESA 1993), having surpassed both the absolute numbers and the rate of urbanisation of the OECD countries. Urbanisation nowadays appears to be less the result of affluence, as it was the case in XIXth and early XXth Century Europe or North America, than the outcome of poverty, as the enclosed table by Gilbert suggests (Gilbert 1992).

Table 19. Urban Growth by Income Level and Region

	Annual Urban Growth Rate 1965–80	Annual Urban Growth Rate 1980–90	Per Capita Income (US$ 1990)
Income Group			
Low Income*	4.7	5.0	320
Lower-Middle Income	3.7	3.6	1530
Upper-Midle Income	4.2	3.2	3410
Region			
East Asia**	4.3	3.3	1188
China	2.2	13.5	370
South Asia	3.9	3.9	330
M. East/N. Africa	4.6	4.4	1790
Latin America	3.9	3.0	2180

Source: Gilbert, loc. cit.
* Excluding China and India
**Excluding China

[8] The term "environmental refugee," though commonly used, confuses the situation of many forced migrants. It involves a complex relationship among environment, economic conditions, policies, human intervention and the creation of population flows. See Jo Ann McGregor, "Refugees and the environment," in Black and Robinson, op. cit., pp. 157-170.

Studies done a decade ago indicated that the largest cities in the Third World often held between 10 and 25 percent of the total population, over half of the urban-dwelling population and more than four times the number of inhabitants of the next large city (Dickerson et al. 1983). This trend which has become even more pronounced, especially in the poorer contries. In the megalopolis of the future, there may be a strong association between physical expansion and poverty.

To understand hyperurbanisation in its full extent, three interrelated proceses must be clarified. One is the tendency to urban primacy: the domination of the most populous city, which is operationally measured by dividing the population of such city by that of the second most populous centre. Calculations made by Smith and London for the 1960–1970 period indicated that primacy had already been reached in 74 cities in 1960, with the more extreme cases in Africa (8 cities with 1/5.45 ratio) and Latin America (13 cities, ratio 1/6.48). While ratios declined over the next decade, the number of prime cities worlwide increased to 89, with Latin America exhibiting the largest, and most rapidly expanding skewness: 15 cities with a ratio of 1 to 7.32. Another tendency is overurbanization: population increses in urban areas beyond the capacities of the existing structure to cope with them. In 1960, there were 120 overurbanised centres, with the largest numbers of cities in Africa, Europe and Latin America. By 1970, the number of overurbanised cities had climbed to 161 worldwide. The third tendency, urban biases, is both a cause and an effect of hyperurbanisation. It is the proclivity of political elites to channel resources towards cities at the expense of rural areas. The aforementioned study indicated that, although on the whole, urban biases have remained high throughout, there was an accentuation in peripheral countries (chiefly in Africa), contrasting with a significant decline in both core and semipheripheral areas (Smith and London 1990). Rapid migration brings about substandard housing, uncontrollable health hazards, increased pollution, alienation, addiction and crime. Meanwhile the unfulfilled expectations of new dwellers become a potential factor for social unrest. Cities evolve into large, ungovernable and unmanageable nightmares where urban decays feeds upon rural decay and vice-versa.

But the latter is not always the case. The development of an underclass of the poor and the permanently unemployed may provide a pool of cheap labour able to countervail both lower class militancy and social mobilisation against the existing order. Whether we talk about "slums of hope" or those of "despair," the existence of overcrowding and widespread urban poverty by themselves are not a direct contributor to social revolution. Crime, squalor and alienation act, in fact as pre-emptors of social change and political radicalism. Likely, the most persistent problem associated with massive migratory trends and physical mobility

everywhere is not the disruption of the structure of privileges and inequalities but rather, as discussed above, the development of conditions of increased global epidemiological vulnerability. This vulnerability has been enhanced by the speed and permeability of transportation, which has facilitated displacements of populations across continents. Overcrowding and promiscuity, combined with deteriorating sanitary conditions create the objective circumstances for epidemics.

The Decline of Communities — A less visible, but equally important process connected to the globalisation of society is the concomitant decline of communities: villages, neighbourhoods and families. Far from the freedom and self-realisation resulting from the creation of solidarity based on achievement, social policy and market forces, urbanisation, rapid communication, rural-to-urban migration, boom-and-bust cycles, the universalisation of norms and standards and the withering away of traditional forms of authority, have negatively affected the life of primary organisations. Yet, no alternative space of support has been created in the process. Larger forms of association, as noted already by XIXth century social analysts, bring with them a greater propensity for impersonalisation and anomie which affect the very root of human identity. Institutional support and services, which, as in the advanced welfare states were supposed to provide better, more accessible and equitable care than traditional forms, have increasingly broken down, leaving instead an expanding vacuum. In the present situation of extreme uncertainty regarding the predictability of any future social order, the loss of community compounds social insecurity and anguish. In this context, the search for primary-group identity moves to the surrogate communal life provided by fringe organisations: gangs, cults, sects, criminal societies and other forms of modern and alienated tribalism.

The Global Society: Transnational Integration and National Disintegration

What seems to be taking place the world over is a process of transnationalisation of elites, going on side-by-side with a process of growing disintegration of national societies and local communities. The internationalisation of the "low-wage economy" has increased the social marginalisation, polarisation and social disintegration of the wage and salaried sectors, while conversely facilitating the formation of a new global elite. Besides the manifold linkages provided by international networks, international integration is facilitated by communications technology, global finance, trade and transportation.

At the other side of the equation, there is the decimation of organised blue-collar labour. This tendency follows a generalised pattern to deindustrialise the centre and internationalise a new form of transnationally integrated manufacture. Meanwhile, as the pressures for restructuring the administrative state, the educational establishments and the workplace multiply, white-collar sectors also falldown. To a large extent, the processes of globalisation and structural adjustment has brougth about the demise of the middle class and the mesocratic values associated with it: familism, nationalism and "civic duty." Paraphrasing Antonio Gramsci, the crisis consists in that the old is dying and the new cannot be born. The implications and causes of social breakdown are global, though their manifestations are quite specific to each concrete society. Acute disintegration of existing structures and the weakening of solidarity, make smooth social adaptation to externally induced changes extremely difficult. The legacy of economic restructuring is an acute social decomposition with a myriad of morbid symptoms in the centre and the periphery: addiction, alienation and crime. For those unable to acquire extraterritorialities, quality of life tends to decline considerably: poverty and personal insecurity become endemic.

Context — The systems of care and support, where, to use Lasswell's categorisation, well-being, affection, respect and rectitude, are shaped and shared are, in turn, conditioned by traditions and expectations. It is these traditions and expectations which have been drastically disarticulated in the present. Communitarian mores, displaced over the post-war decades by the practices of bureaucratization, the Welfare State and mass society, have lead to a vacuum where neither "traditional" nor "modern" behaviours and expectations exist. Chaos and turbulence become the operational context of contemporary society.

Culture — The basic values upon which solidarity and organization are constructed and the norms which define conduct and identity (the "software") are increasingly replaced by instrumentalities. As in the environmental regime, economic trends determine social trends, whether by quiescence or rejection. Equality as a social goal has been displaced by acquisition. Means become ends as process substitutes for substance. The new global culture is largely defined by commercialism, consumerism and by mass communications. Social belonging is defined in possessive terms: being is a function of having. Homogenization by means of instrumental values tends to disarticulate the chains of signification of existing cultural expressions, leading to anguish and uncertainty. However, there is a noticeable flow in reverse: the re-emergence of fundamentalism, both religious and secular as a counter discourse to instrumentalism and pragmatism.

Whether Christian, Islamic, New Age, punk, skinhead or mystical, the search for an all-encompassing belief system on the surface seems to run against hedonism, the search for social engineering or neoliberalism. But a closer analysis suggests that the new fundamentalism has a strong instrumental side: the pursuit of a rigid way or code of conduct to be adhered to. This attitude can, and does, coexist with the essentially alienating nature of modern and postmodern society.

Structures — Increasingly a bipolar configuration between "integrated" and "nonintegrated" sectors begins to take shape. The former constitute the new establishment. This emerging stratification cuts trough both domestic and global groupings. In fact, transnational networks are mechanisms for elite integration and re-enforcement, facilitated by cosmocorporations, international organizations, professional associations and NGOs. Primary groups like the family, the village, friends and neighbourhoods lose their function as reference groups and as vehicles for social support. Yet, in this postmodern environment, so do inclusive "modern" forms of association such as nations, social classes or state mechanisms, which were once thought of as substitutes for communitarian forms of association. The middle-class myth, so central to theories of social development, has been rendered irrelevant as social divisions become more rigid and separateness evolve into a prevalent form of social life. Stratification tends to follow ethnic, linguistic, functional or religious lines; while gender, age, sexual orientation and socially constructed categorizations (even "tastes") re-enforce, or at least do not challenge, the existing bipolar configuration between global elites and national nonelites.

Processes — Contemporary social processes are essentially the fruit of conventions, rules and norms, affected by technological and economic trends. Unlike environmental processes, they are not unchangeable physical and fatal occurrences. In the globalised social order, migration, urbanisation, social demobilisation and the like are interconnected and continuous processes. As income concentrates, social mobility becomes impaired. Education as a vehicle for overcoming social barriers appears increasingly less relevant. Once again, it is important to stress that social processes operate differently among the incorporated and the nonelite sectors. While among the elite core, merit, productivity or education still serve as criteria for mobility (in fact, one can talk about "international standards"), the gulf between those inside and outside the system is expanding. Access to global networks becomes a modern manifestation of ascription, segregating those who partake in the process of shaping and sharing of valuables and decision-making from the rest of society.

Effects — Inequity and fragmentation ensue and become entrenched in postmodern society. Since social processes are culture, region, class or gender specific, the impact of exclusionary interactions will vary depending of the strata of society or specific role-set affected. A significant consequence across the board is a continuous redefinition of the spheres of the personal, the private and the public. The current globalised social order reproduces in a planetary scale some of the most profound contradictions present in both the "developed" and the "underdeveloped" societies. The emerging social order, far from Rousseau's fantasy, is closer to Hobbes' state of nature, where neither primary groups nor the Leviathan can generate either common or individual security.

CHAPTER 5

POLITICAL INSECURITY

Until 1989, the functioning of the international conflict management regime was based upon the intersection of two patterns of confrontation. The primary contradiction was a bipolar and seemingly symmetrical stalemate between the US and the USSR and their First and Second World allies. The principal source of global insecurity in the East-West confrontation was the nuclear arms race underpinned by contending ideologies, economies and political systems. The bipolar global order had defined spheres of interests and influence. Collective defence agreements, such as NATO or the Warsaw Treaty gave an institutional basis as well as military muscle to the global divide. The secondary worldwide contradiction was that between a developed "North" and an underdeveloped "South." The latter constituted the Third World of "developing," "new" and "nonaligned" nations, or more specifically, their ruling elites attempting an uneasy balance between the two blocs. More often than not this allegedly independent stand was an illusion. Despite rhetoric, non allignment for most of Latin America, the bulk of South and East Asia, Africa and the Middle East, was conditioned by neocolonial patterns of trade and military ties with the West. Some of the new radical regimes, such as Cuba, Vietnam, Angola or Mozambique experienced a client relation with the USSR. In fact, only a few large states (including India, postrevolutionary Iran, China or Iraq) played an intermittent nonaligned role, but with no common bonds among themselves. In other words, the Third World was more a systemic feedback of the confrontation between the First and Second worlds than a consequence of the effort by their leaders to ascertain the sovereignty of their respective nations.

The international system involved a wide array of linkage groups connecting both centres and their respective cores with their peripheries and semiperipheries. This constellation of clienteles found expression in the functioning of formal international institutions. The latter comprised a gamut of organisations: from the General Assembly of the UN, to the Security Council, to the main functional agencies and the regional bodies (e.g. the OAS, the OAU, ASEAN, the Arab League). Though penetrated by the entangling alliances af the Cold War and by the hegemonic vocations of both superpowers, nation states remained the dominant actors of political interactions, both in the global and the domestic scene, as it has been the case before the Second World War.

Without bipolarism, the above described interstate mode of conflict management came to a sudden end. Despite the practical elimination of the possibilities of all-out systemic confrontation between nuclear superpowers, the emerging structure is inherently unstable. Major security threats, though basically subsystemic, are today much broader, unpredictable and fractal. The global political configuration in the 1990s is essentially asymmetrical. In conventional security terms, it is one of loose unipolarism (with OECD and US dominance). The rapid disintegration of other forms of systemic associations, such as the East European bloc, the Non-Aligned Movement and the very idea of the Third World left a systemic vacuum. On the surface, there is a formal multilateralisation of US hegemony in a Western-controlled UN system combined with growing economic polycentrism within the developed world. The latter manifests itself in two directions. One is the emergence of strong economic blocs, namely in Europe (the EC), Asia-Pacific (APEC) and now NAFTA. The other is the apparent decline of the United States as an industrial power vis-à-vis Europe and Japan.

But this polycentrism is deceiving, since US military and economic might within the centre and globally, is still quite formidable. Susan Strange uses the term "structural power" (Strange 1988) to refer to this American paramountcy under a new constellation of global interests which now includes European and especially Japanese elites. Power, in this new world order is functional rather than territorial. Underpinning the geographical poles of growth in Asia-Pacific or Europe, or even in the semiperipheries, there is an expanding concentration of force and wealth in the hands of a global ruling class whose economic and organisational commonalities are stronger than any traditional definition contained under the concept "national interest." In fact, transnational integration and territorial decentralisation, as in the case of the globalisation of production, trade and accumulation, have gone hand-in-hand. The main consequence of this has been a profound weakening of the sovereignty of the nation-state.

The Global Political Crisis and its Manifestations

Thus, the contemporary political crisis entails the juxtaposition of two macro processes. One is the transformation of the global political order at the end of the Cold War leading to the emergence of a new correlation of forces; the other is a profound alteration of the state itself as a mechanism for conflict management and for the authoritative allocation of valuables. Five major dysfunctional manifestations emerge from the above-mentioned juxtaposition. The first is the spread of sub national "low-intensity" conflict and civil strife. The second is the

pervasiveness of extreme forms of violence, such as terrorism. The third is the increasingly endemic decline of the rule of law, expressed in soaring rates of crime. The fourth is the breakdown of the nexus beteeen state and civil society brought about by neoliberalism and the receiver states (Nef and Bensabat 1992). Last but not least is the rise of neofascism. We will briefly discuss each one of these manifestations and their impact on human security.

The Spread of Conflict — In an interconnected world, conflicts cannot be easily contained within national boundaries. Rather, they have a proclivity to become globalised, almost ivevitably drawing in external actors. Involvement and intervention especially on the part of paramount participants, such as the US or Europe, often mean entangling and costly operations, such as in Kuwait, or Somalia. Peacekeeping, developed for the prevention of escalating local conflicts contemplated in the specific mandate of the United Nations' Security Council in the bipolar era, has given way to a less focused and less transparent, broader and more unilateral notion: the idea of "peacemaking." The latter consist of a particularly American approach for multilateralising unilateral actions by means of the legitimation provided by a UN Security Council, where the veto of the former USSR has disappeared.

Not only are interventions brought to the living rooms of the virtual global village through the First World media, but their repercussions in terms of internal security threats and possible retaliations affect the everyday life of ordinary citizens in a very concrete way. As the aforementioned conflicts expand in scope and intensity, they may involve theatres other than the primary arenas of confrontation. Even under the restraint of bipolarism, primarily local confrontations, like the Korean or Vietnamese civil wars, the Israeli-Palestinian cconflict, civil strife in Central America or power struggles in Afghanistan, showed a tendency to become regionalised and internationalised. Today, without the dangers of unintended superpower head-on collisions, the possibilities of widening local wars wars have increased. A recent UN Report gave a sombre assessment of a world at peace but no in peace:

> Civil wars and internal conflicts have become the principal causes of violence, destruction and the displacement of peoples as conflicts between nation States and rivalries among major military powers subside .... During the period 1989-1990, there were 33 armed conflicts in the world, only one of which was between nation States. Some 2 million people have fled former Yugoslavia as refugees or displaced persons. (UNDESD 1993)

To put these figures in perspective, in the 45 years since the Second World War, there have been some 150 regional wars, with approximately 20 million deaths, mostly among civilians (Roche 1993). This suggests that, while bipolarism prevented an all-out nuclear confrontation between the Western alliance and the Warsaw Treaty, it was not as effective in controlling brushfire wars, especially in impoverished regions in the periphery. It also suggests that the incidence of armed conflict has multiplied five-fold in the years following the end of the Cold War. Given the fact that lethality expands with technology, we may expect the number of casualties to grow accordingly.

These conflicts are intensified by external economic and political interests, permeable boundaries and by the pervasive and massive accessibility to arms supplies. The latter, "in and of itself increases the instability of unstable situations around the world" (Winter 1993). The "arms trade constitutes a considerable burden on the already weak economies of developing countries" (Kiana 1991). It accounted for between 80 and 90 percent of the value of all the world arms imports between 1977 and 1987 (SIPRI 1988). For comparative purposes, while the total volume of arms transfers to developing countries between 1961 and 1980, expressed in constant dollars was above $143 billion US dollars, the total volume of economic aid was less than $48 billion (Maniruzzaman 1992). This transfer has contributed in no small manner to the emergence and perpetuation of repressive regimes and to the tragic and all-too-familiar cycle of dictatorship, rebellion and superpower entanglement in the South.

Table 20. Share of Global Arms Exports

	In constant 1990 prices			Percent		
	1989	1991	1993	1989	1991	1993
To the Developed World						
United States	7817	7554	5727	48.2	67.2	60.0
USSR/Russia	4033	461	1201	24.9	4.1	12.5
Total USA/Russia	11850	8015	6928	73.1	71.3	72.5
Total	**16218**	**11242**	**9550**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
To the Developing World						
United States	3549	4568	4799	16.6	36.1	38.6
USSR/Russia	10496	2728	3331	49.1	21.6	26.8
Total USA/Russia	14045	7296	8130	65.6	57.7	65.4
Total	**21397**	**12650**	**12425**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
To All Countries						
United States	11366	12122	10526	30.2	50.7	47.9
USSR/Russia	14529	3189	4532	38.6	13.3	20.6
Total USA/Russia	25895	15311	15058	68.8	64.1	68.5
Total Global Export	**37615**	**23892**	**21975**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Source: Data from *SIPRI Year Book 1994*, p. 484.

There are also latent threats to political security. Perhaps one of the most destabilising but largely unmentioned and underrated developments in the current international scene is the breakdown of the East European, and particularly the Soviet and Yugoslavian, military establishments. Before 1989, upwards of 16 percent of the GDP of the USSR was destined to feed its military machinery (by comparison, the US proportion was about 7 percent and Germany's 3.2; Canada's was slightly over 2 percent). By 1991 it had dropped to 11 percent — an annual rate of decline of over 20 percent and 31 percent overall. In terms of personnel, the rate of demobilisation for the same period was nearly 25 percent: from over five million to under four million (IISS 1993). With it, an enormous reservoir of hardware and knowhow, including highly sophisticated weapons and trained manpower has become available to world demand.

The wholesale availability of sophisticated arms at discount prices and equally cheap accessible manpower heighten the prospects of bloody civil and international conflicts. The disintegration of the of Eastern European armies, especially in the former Soviet Union, in the midst of a collapse of authority has potentially deleterious effects on global security. It has been estimated that the former Soviet republics posses over 13 thousand tanks, an equal number of artillery pieces, over 20 thousand armoured vehicles and likely hundreds of thousands of assorted smaller weapons (Borewiec 1993). A good deal of this hardware is finding their way into Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova (Nelson 1993), where civil wars have produced thousands of casualties and have created a flow of refugees and displaced persons numbering in the of hundreds of thousands.

Yet conflict regions of Africa and elsewhere are also receiving this influx of military hardware. Whether this threat becomes a wider and painful reality will depend to a large extent on the weak and problematic prospects for peace, development and the establishment of legitimate government in the Russian Federation and in the former Soviet republics. For as long as the economic and political situation in Russia and in the now independent members of the Union continues to deteriorate, global security will remain in serious peril.

But the possibilities of expanding conflict are not confined to the disintegrating East European region. In Western Europe there is a rather conventional and reciprocating security threat re-emerging from the collapse of the "old order." This is the scenario posed by German rearmament and a French nationalist drive to pre-empt German paramountcy, especially under the present conditions of reunification. The latent pressures could manifest themselves from many sides. They could come as a result of a reorganisation of NATO or as an unilateral action should a crisis in NATO occur. Rearmament could be a consequence of

instability in the Balkans or the Caucasus, or it could be a reaction against an unstable, neoisolationist and ultranationalist Russia. It could come too as a populist gamble to unify an increasingly polarised society. In any case, a German superpower and a French drive to keep such ascent in check would have highly destabilising regional and global effects. It should be remembered that in 1993 France had the largest military establishment in NATO-Europe, with 506,000 regulars. It possesses also a significant independent nuclear force. Germany, though non nuclear, has the second largest military contingent, with over 398,000 troops in 1994 (Sivard 1993, SIPRI 1994) and nearly an equal number of reservists. In the period 1988-1992, France was the third largest exporter of major conventional weapons, behind the USA and Russia, while Germany was a next fourth (SIPRI 1993). Germany's export of weapons to the developed nations, a good indicator of military production, increased by 70 percent between 1988 and 1992, and overall weapons sales by 46 percent (this is an average growth ranging between 11 and 17 percent per year), surpassing France's lead in 1991 and 1992 (SIPRI 1993).

Under these conditions, a military build-up would not require a momentous effort. Furthermore, German nationalism, despite its suppression by past occupation and forceful partition, is not dead, particularly in the former GDR. French nationalism, in turn, has always been a significant factor in French politics, even with the former Socialist government of President Mitterand. The 1995 election brought Gaullist candidate Jacques Chirac to the helm of power, with a highly nationalist rhetoric and agenda; one bowing to the presssures of the extreme right. In sum, chauvinism in both countries retains a strong political appeal. It is an option available to countervail external threats, internal conflicts and has been used in the past as a way to spearhead economic recovery. Without the external checks-and-balances of its American NATO ally, with a declining British presence, and with the vacuum left by the desintegration of the Soviet Union, militaristic revivalism (and rivalry) in France and Germany is by no means a dismissable proposition.

Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism — With the spectre of nuclear holocaust resulting from super-power confrontation gone, new security threats have to be reassessed. Nonconventional forms of violent struggle, such as low intensity conflicts, drug wars and terrorism (Wardlaw 1989) are increasingly fought in the global stage. Data on terrorist attacks is vague and purposely manipulated. What is clear is that the semantics of terrorism are much more important than the acts themselves. Differences between some of the major producers of data on the subject — the US State Department, the CIA, the Rand Corporation and

organisations with different types of affiliations and clienteles — show ranges of discrepancies of 300 and 400 percent (Jongman 1993).[9] For instance, while Risks International, a private thinktank, has recorded a total of 35,150 incidents between 1970 and 1988, the US State Department's figure is 13,572 for the period between 1968 and 1991. Such fundamental differences are related to the type of incident recorded, the nature of the group involved and the political intent of the producer of the data. The US government and its agencies, have consistently attempted to minimize the impact of, "wholesale," state-sponsored terrorism (unless perpetrated by communist and those defined as "crazy" states: Libya, Cuba, North Korea) while overemphasising both international as well as "left-wing" terrorism. There is also a proclivity to inflate the incidence of such terrorism in the West, by presenting very selective frequencies without reference to population. A 1992 US State Department study indicated that between 1983 and 1992, over 50 percent of the registered incidents occurred in Latin America, 31.5 in the Middle East and 7.8 percent in Europe. The remaining 10.7 percent took place in Africa, Asia and North America (US State Department 1992).

Though most terrorist activity takes place in the periphery and involves generally unreported acts of state terrorism, core regions are not "off-limits" to such activities. The once perceived security offered by Western societies has been rendered porous by dramatic events such as the destruction of Pan-Am flight 103 over Lockerbye or the bombing of the New York Trade Centre. While terrorism is a tactical expression of many ideological strains, ethnic, religious, linguistic and other forms of irredentism are the most frequent source of terrorist activity. The solution of some of the enduring national and territorial questions (as in Palestine and Northern Ireland) will likely bring to an end the violent spate begun in the 1970s. However, in a world of disintegrating nation-states, the spectre of nationalist, criminal, radical, vigilante or government-sponsored terrorism remains an ever-present security threat.

The menace to democracy posed by the "war of the flea" lies not only with the "disease," as an obscene symptomatic expression of violence. Objectively, the numbers of direct casualties resulting from terrorist acts are disproportionately small in relation to the psychological and indirect impact derived from their brutality. The above-referred study indicated that in a nine year period (1983–1992) fatal attacks involved slightly over 12 percent of all registered cases; more than half of those in Latin America. Only a handful of these reported cases occurred in Europe and North America; respectively 8.1 and 1.1 percent. If

[9] Both Risk International and the US State Department have collected data since the 1960s. Risk International reported a total of 35,150 incidents between 1970 and 1988, while the State Department registered a total of 13,572 between 1868 and 1991.

population is factored in, despite the image of a "world at bay," the relative incidence of terrorism in Western societies is quite negligible. This is not to say that the systemic impact of terrorism on everyday life is insignificant. Quite to the contrary. The very logic of terror creates a radically altered social and political environment.

In this sistemic sense, a real threat posed by terrorism to political security lies in its "cure." In many instances counter-terrorism means hardly more than terrorism with a minus sign in front. It nurtures secrecy and a proclivity to circumvent civil liberties, due process and all those institutions which counter-terrorist measures are supposed to protect (Schmid and Crelisten 1993). In the recent past, many policies designed to fight "subversion," had the unintended effect of multiplying insecurity in both the periphery and the centre. In the lesser developed societies, antiterrorism, often under the form of death squads and vigilantism, means the exacerbation of violence and the development of unabashed state terrorism (Chomsky and Herman 1979). In the West, policies proclaimed in the name of antiterrorism have enhanced both, antidemocratic predispositions and government by deceit. A similar danger can be found in the "moral entrepreneurship" of the war on drugs and other public safety campaigns which today replace the counterinsurgency and counter-terrorist discourse of the past. The globalisation of enforcement, combined with the transnationalisation of the state, reduce the latter's power and legitimacy. These tendencies increase North–South entanglements and in the long run weaken global and domestic security.

Crime and Counter-Crime — The growing incidence of criminality, violent or otherwise in the midst of a deepening economic crisis constitutes a related security threat. The latter manifests itself in two ways. The first is the ostensible erosion of the ethical bonds, trust and consensus that link political systems together. Without those, neither governance nor security are possible. A true "crime epidemic" appears to have swept many regions of the world; from the poverty-ravaged cities of Africa, to the drug-exporting regions of Latin America, to the disintegrating societies of Eastern Europe, to the North American inner cities. It affects the poorest slums as well as the highest offices. Some of its milder expressions involve increased corruption, venality, abuse, theft and vandalism. Its nastier manifestations include alarming increases in violent crimes in the streets, in schools, the workplace and at home. Violence, especially that affecting the equation of human security and mutual vulnerability, is on the rise. This violence is desensitised, glorified and even legitimised, by mass culture and its media. Depressed economic conditions makes crime a lucrative opportunity for

some and the only opportunity for many. Once internalised as a social practice, crime becomes part of the culture and a persistent systemic condition. The drug problem is a case in point. The links that tie the drug trade together begin with peasant producers in remote Third World regions, continue with corrupt officials in the periphery, crime syndicates both in the exporting and importing areas, functionaries "on the take" at the centre, retailers and First World users, ranging from the destitute to those of higher social standing. Being essentially a consumer-driven market and operating on the purest market logic, its containment requires addressing its social and economic causes — including the roots of addiction — rather than exclusively treating its symptoms.

The second security threat is the way in which criminality is being handled, chiefly the dramatic expansion in enforcement and containment measures, including authoritarian controls to protect property and maintain law and order. As with terrorism, there is a dysfunctional dialectical relationship between the problem of crime and the "technical" solutions to deal with it. Almost as fast as military demobilisation is taking place and public expenditures in social services are shrinking everywhere, internal security allotments have soared. So has the institutional empowerment of enforcement agencies, both public and private, and vigilantism. In increasingly polarised and fragmented societies, enforcement agencies end up taking sides and becoming politicised. The nature of intervention becomes more and more focussed on specific clases or groups of individuals who are labelled as potential "law breakers" (the poor, minorities, the young, nonconventional lifestyles). The expansion of internal security establishments worldwide has more to do with the bureaucratisation of social dysfunctions than with their effective solutions. Nor does such growth correlates with a reduction of crime. Without denying the seriousness of the problem and the need for crime prevention in all societies, this trend is a wide-ranging threat to democracies. It raises questions of public scrutiny, accountability, uncontrolled red tape, goal displacement, "moral entrepreneurship," the emergence of a professionalised siege mentality, corruption and control by antidemocratic forces.

The above is particularly disturbing given the worldwide resurgence of racist, ethnic irredentist and neofascist movements, rising precisely from the present crisis and finding themselves in a position to influence enforcement functions (Golov 1993).[10] Moreover, "law and order" has become synonymous with an extremist political stand. This raises the possibilities of police states. Important as they are, policing issues are hardly debated at any level of government. Enforcement agencies are "sacred cows" in contemporary society; their role and

[10] See for instance the survey data contained in Golov regarding Russia, "Crime and Safety in the Public Consciousness," *Izvestia*, July 23, 1993, p. 4.

modus operandi often obscured by secrecy and media manipulation. The case of the FBI under J. Edgar Hoover is a telling example of this breach of public trust, one for which Western democracies are not protected. The action of special agents and paramilitary forces within the FBI and other bureaus in the bloody Waco and Ruby Ridge incidents raise significant questions about procedure, coverups, accountability and public safety. The dialiectics of crime and counter-crime creates a self-fulfilling prophecy: most social or political activity becomes in one way or another "criminal." When this begins to happen, the very legitimacy of the enforcement agencies and of the law they attempt to enforce are brought into question. The consequences are increased personal insecurity, devaluation of authority and the perpetuation corruption, addiction, alienation and all the other social scourges crime prevention is supposed to address.

Neoliberalism — A related and potentially antidemocratic trend throughout the globe is the effort by socioeconomic elites and their institutional intellectuals to circumvent established democratic traditions and make politics "governable." The trend towards creating "limited" democracies, able to respond to "market" (that is elite) forces, constitute an attempt to reduce participation and depoliticise politics. The challenge presented by the 1975 report on *The Crisis of Democracy* (Huntington et al. 1975) was how to reconcile market politics, built upon the premise of equality with market economics, centred precisely on the opposite: the idea of unrestricted private accumulation, leading to monopoly. The neoliberal solution has been to limit the role of the state to stronger enforcement and to the facilitation of private accumulation, while reducing the scope and salience of popular participation, all this in the name of freedom. Elite politics offers very few real options and transforms the state's populist and welfare functions into mere symbolism. Without the legitimising trappings of welfarism, a strong connection develops between neoliberal policies, the above-discussed deepening of law and order and the possible emergence of police states.

The implementation of this project involves essentially redrafting the implicit social contract among the various social actors which regulates the pattern of labour relations (and income distribution) in society. It also relates to the definition of what social actors, especially nonelite actors, are considered legitimate. The neoliberal project is distinctively exclusionary and heavily biased in favour of business elites. The so-called "leaner but meaner" state resulting from structural adjustment and debt-reduction policies has built-in limitations to prevent possible redistributive policies resulting from "irresponsible" majority demands and "overparticipation." The choices of citizenship are stripped of substance. Monetarist economic policies and those referred to as macroeconomic

equilibrium are effectively taken away from public debate. They remain confined within "acceptable" limits by means of transnationalised regional trading agreements, central banking mechanisms and bureaucratic expertise. This elitist tendency to facilitate the "governability" of democracies reduces the governments' capacity for governance, as an expression of sovereign national constituencies. It also produces an effective loss of citizenship.

In the last analysis, from such a restrictive perspective, the only possible outcome is the creation and/or maintenance of an inequitable socioeconomic status quo. Attempts to resist the "inevitability" of this regressive order brings in the "seamy side of democracy": the application of "authorised" force and intimidation as an insurance policy against dissent. Critics and dissidents end up being labelled "subversives" and are subjected to numerous security regulations. As John Sheahan commented, the neoliberal policy package is "inconsistent with democracy because an informed majority would reject it. The main reason it cannot win popular support is that it neither assures employment opportunities nor provides any other way to ensure that lower income groups can participate in economic growth" (Sheahan 1987). In fact, the economic policies charted under this economic doctrine have been best suited for authoritarian political regimes, such as Brazil under the Generals, Pinochet's Chile, or some of the Asian "miracles" in South Korea, Taiwan or Singapore than for Western-style democracy.

The juxtaposition of economic "freedom" with political repression is the essence of the formula known as "authoritarian capitalism," which preceded the current "democratic opening" in Latin America. That is, there is a definite solution of continuity between the authoritarian and the electoral phase of neoliberalism. As the National Security regimes orderly retreated into their barracks, restricted democracies with neoliberal economic agendas have emerged. A similar trend towards liberalisation is observable in many of the former socialist republics of Eastern Europe. These new democracies are receiver states, based upon restricted participation and a peculiar consociational arrangement: a pact of elites. The key role of this state is to secure macroeconomic equilibrium, private accumulation, privatisation and deregulation. These goals are accomplished via debt service and the execution of the conditionalities attached to the negotiation of such service.

However, receiver states are not circumscribed to the periphery of the Third and former Second worlds. Nor is a large foreign debt one of their intrinsic characteristics. Western elites have been applying a similar political agenda in their own societies. Its manifestations have been Thatcherism, Reaganomics and the supply-side policies applied in Canada for over a decade and repudiated by

the electorate in 1993. These socioeconomic policies have been rationalised on grounds of keeping inflation down, reducing the tax burden, or more recently the current internal debt crisis. Economic "restructuring" and the new social contracts are their programmatic expressions.

Neofascism — Last, but not least in the list of emerging threats to political security is the upsurge of neofascism (Fakete 1993). With pronounced declines in living standards affecting the once secure bastions of the middle and blue-collar sectors in the First and the former Second World, sociopolitical conditions similar to those of post World War I Europe have been created. The unemployed, alienated youth and an economically threatened middle class constitute a propitious culture for "extremism from the centre." These symptomatic trends have become more pronounced in recent years. There are full-fledged Nazi organizations in areas of continental Europe which have experienced a large influx of immigrants and refugees, chiefly in Germany and Austria (Roberts 1992).[11] Neofascism is also rampant in the former Eastern Bloc; in Russia, Rumania, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and in the remnants of the former Yugoslavia (Fakete 1993). Established democracies, such as France and Italy have seen a recurrence of xenophobic movements as with the National Front and the older Italian Social Party (PSI), an heir of Mussolini's fascists. The Front has fared relatively well at the polls (having increased to nearly 13 percent of the vote), while the PSI had a poor showing in the 1993 Italian parliamentary elections, after having held 34 parliamentary seats since 1992. Nonetheless, the fact remains that neofascists have come out into the open as recognizable contenders in the official arena (Husbands 1992).[12] It should be borne in mind that electoral politics has always been but a minor component in past fascist movements and therefore a careful analysis of their alternative, extraparliamentary strategies is essential to ascertain their full potential.

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[11] It was estimated that in 1993 there were some 40 thousand right-wing extremists in some 77 various political organizations.

[12] In Germany, the neofascist Republican party (REP) won 15 seats in state parliaments in 1992, one member in federal parliament and 10 seats in the Frankfurt City Council (9.3% of vote in local elections). The ultranationalist Austrian Freedom Party (FPO) is the third largest, with 28 seats in parliament and 20% in Graz's municipal election of 1993. In Italy, the neofascist PSI held 34 seats in parliament since 1992 while the xenophobic Northern League won 55 seats in the same general election (17.5% of vote in the North) and, except for Turin, it controls all Northern city councils. In France the ultranationalist and xenophobic National Front (FN) received 12.5% of the vote in the 1993 election and holds 10 seats in the European Parliament. In the 1992 local elections, the FN elected 239 councillors across France. In Belgium, the ultranationalist Flemish Bloc (VB) won 12 seats to the lower chamber and 5 seats in the Senate in the 1991 election, receiving 10.4% of the vote in Dutch-speaking areas. In the Czech Republic, the Republican Party (modelled after the German REP) won 6% of the vote in the 1992 Czech general election.

Marked racist and protofascist tendencies are also increasingly evident in the Americas, having found home in a number of fringe organisations with a high capacity to penetrate mainstream movements and public institutions, such as political parties, the bureaucracy, the police and the military. Contemporary fascism is perhaps less nationalistic and more anti-left than its historical counterparts. Nor it questions, as classical facism did, the tenets of liberalism. In this, it largely reflects the nature of contemporary globalisation and the collapse of communism. Today's fascism is primarily defined by xenophobia and racism rather than by a coherent sociopolitical doctrine (eg. corporatism) or a national project. It constitutes an appeal to action, especially to the young and to those displaced by economic dislocations, uncertainty and the trauma resulting from the loss of community and identity (Bunyan 1993). In this sense, the skinhead phenomenon in Germany, the United Kingdom and elsewhere (B'nai B'rit 1990)[13] deserves particular attention. Most importantly though, is the fact, rooted in the historical evidence of pre-World War II Europe, that in periods of crisis, the fascist syndrome is more pronounced among the "respectable" white-collar middle classes than in other sectors of society.

These extremist movements are on the rise. Potentially, they have the capacity to affect policy in an indirect, but also in a more direct and forceful way. Key areas are language, education, welfare and especially immigration. In a poisoned political atmosphere, governments, as in Germany, Austria and France, have been already hard pressed, yielding to fringe demands to restrict policies regarding asylum and immigration (Nagorski and Waldrop 1993). There is also the possibility of neofascist movements coming to power in the not so distant future in a number of countries, either by themselves or in coalitions. This latter scenario is foreboding not only for the safety of democracy. It poses a threat to peace to the larger society and to the global order.

The Global Political Regime

The world system is undergoing a rapid transition from bipolarism to a form of highly stratified globalism. In it micro politics coexist with conventional interstate relations, as well as with collective defence and collective security arrangements. Therefore greater eccentricity and volatility prevail. Local power conflicts, economic instability and social turmoil are still cast, as before, upon a broader

[13] Numbers included some 8 to 10 thousand in the U.K., 5 to 6 thousand in Germany and several thousands in the USA, Canada, Western Europe, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, the Scandinavian countries and Latin America.

regional and transnational context. But without the containment effects of past military, economic and ideological bipolarism the effectiveness of existing mechanisms to control ethnic irredentism and national breakdown is minimal.

Context — With the fading away of Cold War bipolarism, national elites at the core enjoy greater room for manoeuvre, but they are also faced with greater uncertainty. The global context has become radically altered. In the case of the underdeveloped societies (and the underdeveloping nations of Eastern Europe), the impact has been dramatic. For the Group of 77, the disappearance of the Second World as an alternative source of support, the debt crisis and a new international trade regime have set the perameters of a more entangling dependency and peripheralisation. While there are lesser constraints for unilateral actions than under bipolarism, this untangling is more prevalent where the former Soviet Union had a significant presence. Without the restraining influence of his former Soviet ally, it may have appeared as an attractive choice for Sadam Hussein to attempt to annex Kuwait. There are also less constraints for the USA. It was also relatively uncomplicated for US President Bush, largely on account of internal electoral considerations, to assume the role of global UN enforcer and only then seek international consensus. Operation Desert Storm did not face the dangers of escalation resulting from a client relation between Iraq and the other superpower. "Peacemaking" has substituted for the peacekeeping functions of the past. This approach to collective security entails a globalisation and mutilateralisation of Washington's self-proclaimed role as protector of the Western hemisphere, known as the Monroe Doctrine (Nef and Núñez, 1994). The global policing sanctioned by the United Nations Security Council in both the Somali and the Kuwaiti episodes is at odds with the established practices of peacekeeping and conflict management contained in the UN system. Nevertheless, it has become a feature of the present order whose broader implications are yet to be seen.

But the context of contemporary politics goes deeper than a rearrangement of the global configuration. It also manifests itself in the manner in which contradictions between capabilities and expectations and between elites and masses within nation-states are shaped. With an expanding and deepening economic crisis, as outlined in the preceeding chapter, the possibilities for consensual mechanisms of conflict management have manifestly declined. The same is true with the resurgence of acute conflict between different social strata. The nature of the state both at the centre and the periphery has changed. There is a greater proclivity for institutionalised repression or for protracted stalemate cloacked in the garments of liberal democracy, elections and the like. Politics has become

ever more crudely an act of elite domination disguised in the language of legitimacy.

Culture — With the end of socialism and the nonaligned hybrids which vainly attempted to straddle ideological bipolarity, one dominant Westren worldview with seemingly universal claims has emerged triumphant. This is the above-mentioned neoliberal discourse, with its emphasis on procedural democracy and market forces. Whether its roots are strong or not, or wheteher it takes the form of window dressing wrapped in debt management and trade conditionalities, neoliberal discourse so far exhibits hegemonic characteristics amont the elites in the centre and the periphery. Alternative political cultures are to be found not in the utopias of noncapitalist social orders but in more traditional strains. Etnicity, culture and religion have substituted for the secular ideological conflict of the Cold War. Despite the disintegration of numerous nation-states, and partly as a result of it, nationalism is still a significant force in global affairs. One of its current manifestations is the micro nationalism of once submerged and supressed nationalities, seeking to break free from central rule: Tamils in Sri Lanka, Sikhs in India, Kurds in Iraq, Turkey and Iran, and the irreconcilable ethnic strife in Sudan, Rwanda and Burundi are among the many instances of violent ethnic insurrections not yet crystallised in formal partitions. Spain and Canada are equally faced with linguistic and ethnic separatism, the long-term outcome of which is still uncertain.

Nationalism is often connected with tribal, ethnic or religious iredentism. In many instances, it can be a reaction to Westernization. An example of this was the Ayatollahs' Islamic Revolution in post-1979 Iran, with its current projection into Algeria, Egypt and the Arabic Peninsula. As national disintegration accelerates, ultranationalist and virulent strains based upon the myth of past or future grandeur are also likely to surge at the centre of the disintegrating multiethnic states, representing the dominant ethnic group. A probable future pole for a strong recentralising tendencies is Russia, where the Zhirinovsky syndrome has been the consequence of acute centrifugalism. Vicious yet more conventional nationalism could re-emerge in the uneasily unified German Republic or in France, as mentioned above; or in an economically threatened Japan. The USA itself has never been above flag waving and aggressive jingoism, especially in the present conjuncture of perceived power deflation. While it appears ostensibly as the victor of the Cold War, it is experiencing a deep internal and external crisis. Should the present economic decline and "retreat from empire" become pronounced and manifest, translating itself in serious unemployment and turmoil, US political elites, as elites elsewhere, may see fit to resort to extreme

chauvinism to avert a crisis of hegemony. In this context, the possible breakdown of Canada, following an eventual separartion of Quebec may provide an enticing invitation for territorial expansion. So does the expansion of a free-trading area in the Americas. Paradoxically, in a free-trading world where economic blocs such as Pacific Asia, North America and Europe are becoming the very negation of such free trade, imperial proclivities are bound to emerge.

Structure — The global political regime is, at best, a loose conglomerate of interactions dealing with local, regional and international conflict management, bound together by limited rules, practices, correlation of forces and institutions. The latter two make up the what can be called global political regime. International law and organisations, such as the United Nations, the numerous regional arrangements, and the now swelling body of international conventions, bilateral agreements, jurisprudence and regulations, give the system a superficial semblance of order and authority. But this image is deceiving, for the real power regime rests with a small number of national and transnational actors, primarily among the elite core in the OECD countries. The existing mechanisms for global conflict management, such as the UN Security Council, have become tools of the foreign offices of few countries; especially the US State Department.

These institutions of the global regime project the interests of a bunch of paramount economic elites within the West; in other words, the global political order is increasingly subservient to the transnational economic regime. The IMF, the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation which emerged from the GATT negotiations are at the centre of the global political regime and configure a de facto mechanism for global governance. It is in the latter where effective policies and regulations governing the world order are to be found. All other manner of policymaking formally rests within the confines of the over 170 heterogeneous states which comprise the official roster of the UN General Assembly. The implementation and enforcement of those regulations occurs more readily in the economic realm than in the formal structures of government and international organisations.

The internal structure and operations of states have also been significantly transformed in recent years. With the advent of receiver states, financial decision-making has displaced other forms of "high politics." The world over, ministries of Finance, Treasury Boards, Central Banks and the like have become the heart of governance, subordinating other functions, ministries and agencies to the implementation of structural adjustment agendas of fiscal management. Is these globalised agendas, not national priorities or popular demands which determine government policies.

Processes — With the fading away of territorial sovereignty, persistent centrifugal tendencies (ethnic, linguistic or subregional) are more pronounced and the political process has increasingly fragmented. Subnational conflict is at the same time endemic but also highly transnationalised. This generates overall systemic instability. Many nation-states have shown unequivocal signs of disintegration and territorial secession. The most dramatic and multisided examples are those of the former Soviet Union — with the subsequent fracturing of many of its former republics — and Yugoslavia. To these one should add the peaceful, but definite division of Czechoslovakia, with India and Canada exhibiting strong centrifugal tendencies.

As conflic becomes more acute, the possiblilities for consensual solutions to long-drawn confrontation have diminished. The policy process has evolved into a fragmented one, progressively devoid of efective checks and balances, as well as meaning. This translates into deadlock mixed with superficial consensus and an entrenchment of the status quo, above and beyond the short-term equilibrium of shifting correlations of forces. In the new configuration, indecision and paralysis prevail. Disillusionment and alienation with politics on the part of the public is a common feature in the developed and the underdeveloped world; in the Western democracies as in the post-Communist societies of Eastern Europe, in the postauthoritarian regimes of Latin America as well as in the chaotic complexity of Africa, the Middle Esat or part of Asia. Rates of electoral abstention are about 70 percent in the USA, as in Colombia, while the trend of deteriorating civil confidence and alienation increases practically everywhere.

Effects — These developments are likely to have an long-term impact on human security, well beyond the sphere of the political. Environmental, economic, social and cultural security are equally at stake. One way of looking at these consequences is concentrating on Human Rights. Bearing in mind that their specific content is changing and evolving, the political trends discussed so far point to a deterioration of human dignity on a planetary scale, irrespective of the standards of measurement. Whether ethnic "cleansing" or killing fields, torture chambers, discrimination and oppressive conditions denying people of their humanity, the picture is far from optimistic:

> In every region of the world, it seems that human rights are being rolled back. Frustration and bitterness are fuelled by economic policies which make the rich richer and the poor poorer. And governments seem unwilling or unable to do anything about it .... But they are prepared to go to great lengths to cover up their crimes. They know that a blood-stained human rights record will damage their international relations .... Some turn to "arm's

length" ways to achieving their aims. They set up or back death squads and civilian defence forces to do their dirty work. Long standing democracies such as India, and newer ones such as the Philippines, proclaim the sanctity of human rights while in the streets people are being extrajudicially executed by government, or government-backed forces. Every year thousands of people are assassinated in Brazil and Colombia — even children whose only crime is their homelessness. (Sané 1992)

CHAPTER 6

CULTURAL INSECURITY

Rather than assuming the existence of a global cultural regime, it is more appropriate to talk about a process of globalisation of Western culture by means of a revolution in communications. According to some, and paraphrasing Toffler we live in a world of "future shock"; one so dependent on computers and telecommunications that should these gadgets cease to function, this would be tantamount to switching off global civilisation (Pelton, 1981). The velocity of innovation in telecommunications technologies has risen at an exponential rate since their emergence in the last century and is still expanding at a much faster pace than actual demand. By way of illustration, international satellite communication, measured by traffic in Half Voice Circuits (HVCs), has increased in less developed countries from 13,174 units in 1979 to 86,885 in 1993; a growth of 559.5 percent, or 39.9 percent per year. In the developed countries, including the former Soviet Union, the expansion has been from 21,167 to 162,558; this is 668 per cent growth in 14 years, or 47.7 percent per annum (Pelton 1981). These developments build upon — and further globalise — the already vast and expanding realm of radio, telephone, television and telecommunications in general.

But communications technology, irrespective of its wide spread is neither neutral, nor freely available. It is a highly concentrated business. In 1988, the top 10 information and communication enterprises which virtually controlled the technology and R&D of global communications and informatics, included 2 American (IBM and AT&T), four Japanese (NTT, Matsushita, NEC and Toshiba), one German (the state-owned Deutsche Bundespost), one Dutch (Phillips), one British (British Telecom) and one French (France Telecom). Their volume of annual sales was over $ 266 billion. Likewise, of the top 10 media enterprises, which dominated the bulk of global newsprint and broadcasting, eight, including the top two were American owned, with annual sales amounting to $ 24 billion. The remaining three were a German, an Australian and a Japanese conglomerate (Frederick 1993).

In the last two decades, "a combination of forces, political, economic, cultural and technological have moved the international mass media industry towards more competition and less regulation on a global basis" (US Department of Commerce 1993). This has meant, especially in Western Europe, Latin America and Eastern

Europe, a disappearance of state-owned public information systems and their replacement by private international consortia, which rely heavily on imported materials. A highly stratified global information order has emerged. In 1986, only 4 countries, the USA, Japan, China, India and the then USSR, imported less than 10 percent of their television programming. The lower layers were made of those countries whose cultural imports ranged from over 10 percent to those externally dependent in their programming (Mowlana 1986). In the years ever since, the system has become even more stratified, with only the USA and Japan remaining on top.

The development of the news and entertainment industry has meant an unprecedented explosion of cultural imports practically everywhere. The centre of the dissemination is clearly the USA, where the fastest growing industry is culture. In 1991 foreign sales accounted for 39 percent of US film and television revenue, a 30 percent increase over 1986. Between 1987 and 1991, net exports in this sector doubled: 7 billion, over the past record of 3.5 billion. In addition, the export of American records, tapes and other recordings rose from $ 286 million in 1989 to 419 million in 1991; an increase of 47 percent. To this, one must add the ever-expanding computer software market. A comparison between US cultural imports and exports would give a clear direction of the communication flows:

Table 21. Motion Picture and Television: US Global Sales, Imports and Exports

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Worldwide Sales	3,512	4,656	5,273	7,514	7,016
Export	1,752	1,444	1,740	2,219	2,303
Imports	62	505	111	112	81
Net	1,090	639	1,029	2,107	2,122

Source: Motion Picture Association of America, "Estimated World Wide Revenues by Media for All US Companies, 1989–1991," (November 25, 1992), in US Department of Commerce, *Globalization* ..., pp. 1, 15 and 20.

In addition to unidirectionality, media programming, especially in radio and television, shows marked uniformity. An average of 20 percent of broadcasting is dedicated to information, 4 percent goes to advertising and more than half is devoted to entertainment (Unesco 1987). If we keep in mind that the lower tiers of the global information and communications order, where most countries are located, between 40 and 60 percent of all television broadcasting time is imported, then the phenomenal impact of "global" (that is, imported) entertainment can be appreciated. Its impact is particularly strong among the young, who are the main target audience of the entertainment industry.

As indicated above, the both the broadcast and the production of the technology flows from North to South. Therefore, it is "quite possible that ... the external impulse transmitted ... is so powerful that all forms of national transformation converge towards a small number of common and hence universal types" (Unesco 1982). One emerging cultural pattern has been referred to as an elite managerial culture: "both a set of attitudes, values and behaviour models, and a set of forms and models of organization" (Ibid.) centred on individual competitiveness. Its mass ideological correlates are the culture of consumerism in its mainstream and pop versions. Time Magazine, Newsweek, the Reader's Digest, US News and World Report, The Economist, but more so CNN and Much Music, all espousing a similar worldview, are the conveyor belts in the transmission of a common neomaterialist worldview. Its foundations are inserted in the same possessive individualism and competitiveness of the past, yet this time the message is geared to a global consumer audience conditioned by a massively marketed pop culture wrapping. The elite doctrine underpinning this deceivingly chaotic ideological coating is neoliberalism. In the new culture "cyberpunk" and market economics blend in a coplex amalgam.

Not a Clash, but a Crisis of Civilisation

The cultural thrust discussed above has been equated by elites at the core with the notion of modernity. As the Marxist–Leninist strain of the modern fell in disrepute with the disintegration of the "really existing" socialisms of Eastern Europe, its capitalist variety has become, by default, the dominant paradigm. There seems to be no alternative hegemonic discourse at the present time, other than the reassertion of religious fundamentalism — as with the Islamic revival throughout the Middle East — or the nostalgic critique of postmodernism by Western intellectuals. However, even this apparently radical postmodern critique starts from the premise of a dominant Western culture. Therefore, what appears on the surface as a critical analysis of modernity is, linguistic pyrotechnics notwithstanding, at closer scrutiny a manifestation of neo or hypermodernism, not a substantial departure from mainstream thought. Thus, despite the rhetoric surrounding the "crisis of modernity," modernisation remains unchallenged as the prevailing teleology and deontology of development. Its alienating manifestations involve five major characteristics which are outlined below.

Mindless Incrementalism — The aforementioned "software loop" inserted in an increasingly globalised culture, far from offering a solution to existing

dysfunctions, tends to deepen them. The standard prescription to deal with problems of poverty and/or equity is, from this prism, more of the same, "growth" with technological fixes which created precisely the previous predicament. The double fetich of growth with "technocratic" answers tends to have the long-term effect of multiplying dysfunctions, or postponing much needed wide-range and innovative solutions. As mentioned earlier, socialism, as well as liberal capitalism and their political and developmental corollaries were deeply encased in a "modern" worldview. Scientific Socialism was just another way to reach modernity. Liberal capitalism nowadays has mutated from its earlier Keynesian forms into a broader and encompassing synthesis of Trilateralist neoliberalism. Like its dialectical-materialist counterpart, this ideology is imbued with a scientific pretension. But its appeal transcends the discourse of current economic orthodoxy as spread by mainstream university curricula. It is also grounded in the trappings of traditional elitist beliefs on authority, in "common sense" and in induced opinion-forming campaigns through the business-controlled media.

The Constructed Hegemony of Neoclassical Economics — The central tenet of the above-mentioned belief system is that only competitive and unregulated markets hold the key to progress. Conversely, those unable or incompetent to adapt, compete and abide by the objective laws of history — and the market — or acquire the attributes of outward success, deserve to descend to the "abyss" of abject squalor. "No pain, no gain" is the capsular ideological chain of signification of the new scolasticism. Behind the Kuznetsian slogan there lies an operational doctrine characterised by an extreme skewness in the domestic and global distribution of "pain" for the many and "gain" for the few. Neoliberalism has evolved into a sort of holistic economic determinism of the right, draped in "folksy" clothes. It encompasses a theory of History, a Political Economy (Public Choice) and a theory of world politics (Complex Interdependence). It is also a vanguard political movement of the well-to-do which exhibits many of the epistemologically fallacious assumptions of its now-defunct and discredited ideological opposite. "Really existing" capitalism, rather than "really existing" socialism is erected as the only possible teleology at the end of history, while market reductionism substitutes for class reductionism. The difficulty with this kind of monism, as with any form of exclusionary scolasticism, is that, having reached the end of contradictions, it soon runs out of ideas. Thought processes evolve into tautologies and slogans; education becomes simple training, while critical thinking becomes anathema. This dysfunctional cultural software is reproduced through the institutions of higher education and by the ever more

acritical yet transnationally integrated systems of diffusion of ideas as a form of musak or mesmerising chant.

The Crisis of Learning and the Crisis of Ideas — At the heart of the multiple environmental, economic, social, but more importantly, political crises there is a crisis of ideas. More precisely, there is a crisis of learning: an inability to link theory and practice and to correct errors. The UNDP's 1992 Human Development Report pointed out that, while the North–South gap in human survival (the basic component in human development, including life expectancy, literacy, nutrition, infant/child mortality and access to safe water) had been relatively narrowed in the 30-year period between 1960 and 1990, disparities in the **cultural** gap in had in fact increased (UNDP 1992).[14] Unequivocally, the crisis of thinking is closely connected with a profound global crisis in education, both formal and informal, in all its levels. This crisis is not limited to the periphery. As Ivan Illich observed many years ago, "schooling" everywhere has become divorced from education, thus encouraging goal displacement in the learning process. Education through prevailing institutions has little to do with enlightenment and with what Freire calls "the practice of freedom" (Freire 1989). Far from offering people the tools to transform their world and unleash their creativity for problem solving, conventional schooling is a bureaucratic mechanism for human depowerment and for the entrenchment of conformity and quiescence.

At the elementary levels, there is a generalised lack of accessibility to basic educational facilities, made even more dramatic due to global economic restructuring. After decades of international efforts to eradicate illiteracy, still over a billion adults cannot read or write and there are over 100 million children of primary school age who are not able to attend school every year (UNDP 1992). Enrolment rates have also levelled off over the past two decades. Secondary education everywhere is not only structured upon a verticalist, compartmentalised and decreative pattern, but it is a luxury which few can afford in the less affluent societies. Meanwhile, in developed societies, which suffer from the same structural and operational malaise described above with regards to "schooling," both the coverage of, and the accessibility to, quality education has become increasingly restricted. North America is confronted with a rapid and profound deterioration of its educational system. For many years, mounting ineffectiveness was dealt with by simply "throwing money into problems." Now,

[14] Between 1980 and 1990, the North–South gap in average schooling increased from 5.6 to 6.3 years. Between 1965 and 1990, the enrolment ratio differential in tertiary education jumped from 15 to 29, while the gap in radio receivers per 1000 people soared from 414 to 645. The distance in expenditures in R&D between North and South moved from 183 million in 1980 to 416 in 1990 and the one in telephones from 121 (1960) to 440 in 1990.

with a generalised fiscal crisis of the state, resources are dry. A comparison of the declining rates of growth in global enrolments in all three levels will illustrate the above-described situation:

Table 22. Average Annual Increase in Enrolment, 1970–1988.

	Primary		Secondary		Tertiary		All Levels	
	70–80	80–88	70–80	80–88	70–80	80–88	70–80	80–88
Developing Countries	8.1	1.1	10.3	3.1	9.4	4.4	8.6	1.7
Africa*	6.1	1.6	11.5	4.1	6.9	7.1	6.7	2.0
Asia	8.8	0.6	9.9	2.7	6.9	3.7	9.1	1.3
Arab States	5.0	4.0	9.1	6.0	13.2	5.4	6.2	4.6
Latin America**	4.7	1.5	5.0	3.6	11.2	4.6	5.0	2.1
Developed Countries	-2.8	0.0	2.7	0.1	3.3	1.3	-0.3	0.2
World	4.8	0.9	6.9	2.1	5.2	2.6	5.4	1.3

Source: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Development, *Report on the world Social Situation 1993* (New York: United Nations, 1993), p.48.
* Sub-Saharan Africa
**Including the Caribbean

However, despite the recognised crisis in Western, and specifically North American, education, experts in those countries are exporting their already obsolescent and dysfunctional educational structures and practices to the periphery. The overall impact of such acritical exports of social technology upon their recipients is at best dubious and at worst destructive. It compounds the deleterious effects created by the other more commercial cultural imports referred to earlier in this section: media imposts.

The systemic paralysis of both primary and secondary levels worldwide is recognised in all quarters as extremely acute. The crisis, however is much deeper in institutions of tertiary education, charged, in theory at least, with the task of producing professionals and generating the cultural "software" of society, including that required for the training of the trainers. The crisis of tertiary education coincides not only with declining levels of financing (and quality) but also with an accelerated closure (and the corporate appropriation) of the "cultural commons." Tertiary education is being restructured under the spell of the same forces which are shaping the direction of other social institutions.

This is particularly noticeable in scientific research, affecting both the "hard" as well as the Social Sciences. Learning and knowledge are thus commodified and alienated. When institutionalised education, as in the former Eastern bloc, loses autonomy and becomes subservient to the managerial and ideological apparatchik

of power holders and institutional intellecuals, society's ability for problem solving declines. A totalising ideology always ends up producing an official intelligentsia for whom orthodoxy and political correctness substitutes for critical self-examination and learning. It becomes also unable to cope with the changes occurring in the real world around it. Cybernetic stupidity and conformity set in as the learning process becomes unable to correct errors and instead reproduces them.

Impractical Pragmatism — The prevailing mode of training emphasises a largely "professional," incremental, narrowly focused and homogeneous mindset. Alternative thought is deemed either unscientific or heretical, or both. Vertical thinking and the short-run perspective prevail. Thus, piecemeal solutions to big problems are produced. The practical and the pragmatic end up not being the same. Pragmatism is elevated into an official dogma. There is a practical need to overcome the crisis to prevent catastrophe. However, the pragmatic approach, in the absence of critical thinking and transcendental ethical standards, leads to a highly fragmented problem solving pattern with an overriding focus on quantifiable economic gain. Neoliberal modernising strategies and packages, like its now defunct socialist counterpart, privilege the means of action (readymade solutions or "answers") over the understanding of the problems (or "questions"). Development and modernisation become contradictory: modernisation, far from bringing development, contributes to decay. At this stage, a self-sustained vicious cycle ensues: "solutions" create problems, which lead to new inappropriate solutions, and so on.

The Abandonment of Politics — The fundamental connection between politics, on the one hand, and environmental, economic, social and cultural security, is public policy. Politics involves policymaking, the outcome of which is the allocation of rewards and deprivations among various publics. In this sense, the issues of participation and regulation are as central to the question of "good governance" as are the issues of accumulation or enforcement. Western political theory, since the 1970s has consistently abandoned a normative ideal based on participation, democracy and the "input side" of politics favouring another teleology centred on order, stability and governability (O'Brien 1968, Leys 1982). In this, mainstream political thinking has reflected an equally significant shift in macroeconomic management from "input," demand-side economics, to "output," supply side. The new political economy, exemplified by Public Choice theory, unlike its authoritarian-capitalist predecessor, emphasises the role of the merchant over the prince, but like the early Huntingtonian formulation (Huntington 1967,

1968), it also ignores and deconstructs the citizen. Politics, as in vulgar Marxism, is subordinated to a technobureaucracy which manages "objective," natural-like economic laws, laws that cannot be legislated or debated but dictated or interpreted by those who understand the arcane and reified realm of the behaviour of capital.

Deontology Without Ethics — One important characteristic of the dominant cultural mould is that functional rationality prevails over substantial rationality (Mannheim 1962). Thus, procedural and quantifiable correctness become the only valuable ethical standards against which to make decisions, judge behaviour or evaluate consequences. In the last analysis, only those with the appropriate technical competence can judge; but they do so within the narrow and specific confines of a never-questioned ideal model, teleology, discipline or profession. Both the utopia (and the dystopia) which justify social action, substitute a surrogate instrumental operational code — grounded on professional, efficiency-related and quantifiable considerations — for a transcendental value system centred upon effects on people. The substitution is rationalised on the basis of one premise: "what works is good." In this context, categorical imperatives cast in deontological terms, such as maximisation, profit or efficiency displace moral responsibility (Goulet 1973). What really happens to concrete and sentient people is replaced by systemic or functional abstractions encased in lofty terms such as "order," "efficiency" or "profit."

The Closure of the Cultural Commons

The de facto global cultural regime is the consequence of technological change combined with growing concentration of wealth and power. Yet, despite the overwhelming power of Western media and ideology, an enormous variety of cultural strains persist. The problem is that, lacking vehicles of dissemination of their own, these cultural expressions, as with biological diversity, are increasingly faced with extinction. Cultural variability is essential for innovation and for the revitalisation of any culture.

The Context — While the image of the physical and social world is homogenised by global communications and technology in general, a tendency to monoculture develops. The content of information is shaped by its medium, therefore giving superior chances for dissemination to prepacked information. Under these circumstances, the discourse of modernity has demonstrated a remarkable ability

to incorporate and/or trivialize intellectual challenges to its hegemony and generally render them ineffective or counterproductive. In the 1970s and 1980s, actual or potentially revolutionary notions such as "basic human needs" (BHN), human resources development (HRD, appropriate technology, women in development, and others, were smoothly incorporated into the rhetoric of bilateral and multilateral agencies (as well as neoconservative think tanks) without altering the fundamental nature of modernising practices.

The Culture of the Culture — For the duration of the Cold War, national security and defence constituted a broad set of overriding commands to suspend judgment and justify folly and atrocity. They were categorical imperatives rationalised on fear. The string of human security outrages perpetrated since the 1940s, of which the recent revelations about illegal experiments with radiation upon unsuspecting individuals is just a small part, comes to mind. In the postnuclear era, economic rationality, the so-called logic of the market, is both the prime directive and its own overriding command. Competitiveness, credit worthiness or improved productivity have become catch words to justify practically any ethical violation, irrespective of its nefarious consequences. There is an urgent need to bring back ethics into the analysis of human behaviour and to link both with public accountability.

Structures — The attempts by the United Nations and that of specialised agencies such as Unesco to set the foundations of a New World Information Order — along the lines of the proposals of a New International Economic Order (NIEO) — failed to materialise in the 1980s, under relentless opposition by elites at the core. Instead, the dominant sectors within the GATT have expanded and redefined trade, thus commodifying cultural objects by means of proprietory rights. Agriculture, pharmaceuticals, publishing, research and every form of human activity falls within an expanded definition of services. This commodification of innovation and of ideas in general has constituted a virtual closure of Humanity's cultural commons. Paradoxically, while globalisation may point in the direction of universalism, limited accessibility to ideas and to the institutions charged with their development and reproduction point in quite a different direction.

Processes — Learning, the building of consciousness, the creation of values and the development of operational rules for problem solving have been influenced by the concentration and commodification of culture mentioned above. Cultural production and dissemination is increasingly monopolised by the values, tastes

and mechanisms present at the dominant core. Imitation rather than innovation prevails. In this sense, learning becomes quite discontinuous with experience.

Effects — The consequences of this discontinuity are two-fold. One is the obvious inability of the existing paradigm to deal with its own concrete circumstances, which may lead to a breakdown in the chains of signification (meaning) in the cultural paradigm. Yet, there is also the possibility of a quite contradictory effect: the recycling of the same ideas into a new rhetoric, while retaining the fundamental tenets of the existing mould. So far, this latter entropic tendency has prevailed.

It may be too early to claim a significant paradigmatic crisis or discontinuity between modernisation and ecologism. Attempts have been made by conservative modernisation theorists, whose intellectual roots are neo-Malthusian, to incorporate the seemingly dissonant discourse of environmentalism into neoclassical formulations by embracing cliches or by simple trivialization of the ecological posure. Possibly the ideology of modernization has become so entrenched that its proponents, like the "nuclear theologians" of not so long ago, are ready to destroy the world to prove that their theory is correct. The world may be in crisis, yet the paradigm that created the crisis, its diagnoses and its prescriptions thrive and may survive us all.

CONCLUSION

THE GLOBAL PREDICAMENT

From the previous analysis it is possible to state that the manifestations of the global crisis are visible everywhere: poverty, violence, famine, the spread of life-threatening diseases, severe environmental deterioration, more personal insecurity and a decaying quality of life (Kaplan, 1992). As indicated throughout this essay, these dysfunctional manifestations are interconnected. For those involved in Development Studies, the symptoms are well known: they are all associated with underdevelopment. In other words, a pronounced trend towards de-development is manifesting itself on a global scale: once-advanced societies are decaying rapidly, while communities elsewhere are dying of modernisation. Four basic observations relating to the crisis can be formulated.

1. The present global crisis is an accumulation of multiple and self-reenforcing dysfunctions. All these have configured a crisis of security with implications which go beyond conventional issues of maintenance of "order" and "stability," as well as peacekeeping. It is impossible to talk about national security as separated from global security. The analysis undertaken in the previous sections, clearly indicates that, despite the end of the Cold War, Human Security has diminished throughout the globe. The above-mentioned crisis is, in essence a symptom of a decline of modern civilisation.

2. Central to the global security crisis, is a crisis of the conventional and common-sense solution for crisis-management: growth.[15] Current rates of economic expansion are either stagnant, negative, or at best, much lower than they have been in recent decades. Incremental accommodations based upon increases of wealth and income are less likely. Moreover, as discussed earlier, it is now painfully clear that the growth of wealth does not necessarily mean an automatic decline in poverty. In fact, with

[15] An antithetic view to the Club of Rome, arguing instead for socioeconomic and political limits is contained in Amílcar Herrera et al., *Catastrophe or New Society? A Latin American Model* (Ottawa: IDRC, 1973), pp. 7-37, 83-108.

extremely skewed existing patterns of accumulation, poverty — even in the midst of the "prosperity" of the 1980s — has been expanding much faster than wealth has. More fundamentally, not only have growth strategies failed to eradicate staggering problems, but the logic of growth itself becomes the common root of the problems it was supposed to solve (Meadows 1974).

3. Until not long ago, developmental dysfunctions, related to inadequacies of growth, equity, or both, were solved by the rich and more powerful countries of the centre by exporting — or "dumping" — their contradictions into their peripheries, whether colonies, neo-colonies, or internal colonies. With growing interdependence, this strategy for crisis-management is no longer rational; though it is still done. It is increasingly clear that the mounting problems of the periphery have also transformed themselves into problems for the centre and are beginning to flow upstream. Neither can malfunctions be contained within the protective shell of territorial sovereignty, nor can their transfer abroad be justified by the usual "better them than us." What we have instead is the demise of sovereignty and the emergence of mutually assured vulnerability, where the insecurity of the whole is contingent upon the malfunctioning of its weakest link.

4. The sources of the crisis as well as the possibilities for arresting its causes and symptoms are to be found in the cultural software which created and reproduced the present impasse. However, functional practices can and must be generated from the current dysfunctional conditions. Policy alternatives are both necessary and possible. In this sense, changing cultural practices through learning,[16] invention and innovative thinking, may hold the key to alter an otherwise destructive course. As sectors within industrial societies are also falling victims of underdevelopment, the "periphery" cannot any longer be ignored by ways of deconstructive metaphors of inherent fatalism or ethnocentric recourse to "inferiority." Contrary to commonly held stereotypes, it has been the North rather than the South that for most of its history has remained parochial. This mental isolationism — an inability to "see" — was an expression of what US Senator J.W. Fulbright used to call the "arrogance of power" (Fulbright

[16] The relationship between learning, survival and civilisation, by means of cultural adaptation has been brilliantly presented by Gordon Childe, *Man Makes Himself* (New York: The American Library, 1958), pp. 20-26.

1966). But it has been, and continues to be, also an arrogance of technology, wealth and culture, based on plain ignorance. Exogenous new ideas and cultural strains have the potential for increasing the global capacity for analysis and problem-solving. Global learning is, in this context, a necessity for human security and survival.

There is no sound theoretical framework yet to structure a body of knowledge that, using the enormous amount of existing experience, be able to create the appropriate kind of policies to overcome the crisis. Conventional development theories and practices are still concentrating in old ideas of "national development" or "national security." There is a need for a new paradigm that takes into consideration the mutually dysfunctional traits of the present world system and looks at the inextricable and contradictory relationship between development and underdevelopment as global phenomena, more connected to concrete social relations than to abstract territorial categories.

Development theory as a whole, whether radical dependency or conventional modernisation, for all their differences has shared one common premise: that development (or underdevelopment) flows from the North to the South. Even the attempts to talk about "dependency reversal" à la Modelski (Modelski 1983) concentrate mostly upon "functional" trends with emerging symmetries and in fact correlates strongly with Euroamerican-centred views, not with critical and less ethnocentric perspectives. Interdependency is a re-invention of modernisation and structural-functionalism at its best. For this posture (one also shared by the former socialist world) the centre had and was the solution; the periphery had and was the problem. The greatest failure of modern Social Sciences has been their inability to examine Western societies with a critical light (Pye 1975). Mainstream Development Studies and Area Studies, with their counter-insurgent roots, were meant to study "them," "down there" in the South; not to address the mounting dysfunctions of the world system controlled by developed societies. The many problems which plague industrial and post-industrial nations have been defined out of existence by the logic of theoretical reductionism and misconstrued comparisons.

The predominant theories of International Relations — whether conservative "realism" (power politics) or the notion of "complex interdependency" (Keohane and Nye 1975) of the neoliberals and the Trilateralists — have not been able to extricate themselves from acritical ethnocentrism. "Realism" was caught on an entangling East-West myopia, where the South was just an arena for confrontation, prone to be "subverted" by the other side. Complex interdependency (Spero 1977), while recognising a North-South dimension in

international relations puts too large an emphasis on lofty terms such as mutuality, cooperation, global integration and market forces, trivialising the more dysfunctional, asymmetrical and exploitative interactions among and within centres and peripheries. Despite its de-emphasising the instruments of war, complex interdependence is extremely culture-bound and unidirectional. In this sense, the approach is based upon the same diffusionist premises of modernisation theory (Stavenhagen, 1968). It is an ideology that serves the practical economic and ideological interests of the globally integrated elites and provides justification for the status quo: the existing international division of labour, the role of the GATT, the IMF, the World Bank, the centrality of transnational corporations and the Group of Seven.

So far global problems have been analyzed from an exclusively American or an Eurocentric, not a geocentric prism. Cultural messianism has contributed in no small manner to maintain a condition of global underdevelopment and insecurity. However in the midst of the current crisis, the established flow of information, ideas, science and worldviews is being shattered. There is a "window of opportunity" to bring new voices and perspectives into the debate. This is not, as some cultural supremacists suggest, "contamination," or "the end of civilisation as we know it," but perhaps a chance for a cultural synthesis to examine the crisis in a concerted and truly global way. It should be remembered, as is becoming increasingly clear to our unemployed graduates, that living in a situation of underdevelopment, is not synonymous with being underintelligent (Dwivedi et al. 1990). If there is a point to break the present cycle of self-reenforcing dysfunctions, this is in the area of cultural autopoiesis (Maturana and Varela 1980). This modification in the chains of signification in the development discourse (Escobar, 1986) has the potential to set the stage for a new vision of a truly global, though heterogeneous, civilisation: a new universalism. The trademark of this emerging renaissance, if it is to take place, will have to a pluricultural global consciousness, rich in texture and diversity. In the shorter run, a fresh way of looking at the world could offer the kind of analysis, and policy prescriptions, capable of breaking the present cycle of self-reenforcing dysfunctions.

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