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MONTANANS AND SOCIALISM: A STUDY OF VALUES

by

William J. Dakin

B.A., Montana State University, 1971

Presented in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

1981

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In a case study of an instance of potential deliberate culture change, this thesis compares the social values of the contemporary socialist movement, subscribed to by the Montana New Socialist Party, to the social values held by a sample of the non-socialist western Montana public. The purpose of the study is to facilitate an understanding of the range of attitudes toward socialism that are manifest in contemporary political debate, and to identify trends in value system dynamics that may be determinative to the eventual success or failure of the socialist movement.

The core of the study is a body of folk narrative collected in interviews with twenty-two non-socialist residents of western Montana, in which folk models of socialism, and its desirable or undesirable meanings, are articulated. Ethnographic interpretation is employed to identify clusters of values that either attract or repel Montanans to the ideas of socialization.

The study concludes that Montanans' attitudes toward socialism are primarily shaped by an individual's valuative emphasis for an equality value cluster vis-a-vis an individual autonomy value cluster. Further, the interpretation of folk narrative reveals that variant existential models of society exist between socialists and the non-member public and that models of the relationship between citizens and a civic authority are influential in shaping attitudes toward socialism.

The study finds that environmentalism fosters a trend toward the de-emphasis of individualistic values and amplifies the compatibility of some socialist ideas and proposals to Montana folk models of social and economic reality.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a field-based study of values and political attitudes in western Montana. It is a comparison of the values held by two groups of people: the member-advocates of western Montana's socialist movement, and the non-member "general" public, to whom the movement is directed.

This study is, I hope, at least a partial answer to the recurrent question: Why, in contemporary America, do so many persons embrace the economic models and goals of Marxism-socialism while so many others reject them? And, if we can approach an answer to that query, what can we anticipate with regard to the dynamics, the growth or the decline, of the movement in the future?

The study is presented in five chapters. The first two chapters articulate a theoretical model within which the material may be interpreted anthropologically. The last three chapters are interpretive, containing observations and field research and drawing conclusions. The pages that follow present, in order, (1) a discussion of the relevance, methodology, and limitations of the study; (2) a model of the dynamic role of values in a situation

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of potential culture change; (3) a brief history of the American socialist movement, with emphasis on the values that underly its goal; (4) the presentation of original field research, with an interpretation of the value conflicts that the movement presents to non-members; and (5) an encapsulation of value difference between members and non-members and an assessment of the movement's future.

Perspective

There is ample evidence that Americans in the mid-1970's are a people in the midst of turbulent social and cultural uncertainty. If we remove ourselves to the positions of observers and "watch" life in the United States, we see young people grasping for ways to cope with social turmoil: opting for exotic religions, extremist political or social movements, the escape of drugs, back-to-nature lifestyles, or apathetic withdrawal. Another group of people, surely the majority, try to cope with the disorder these behaviors manifest to them, expressing their concern over the upheaval of family life, the rebellion of youth, a waning work ethic, or the deteriorating national pride. They cling assertively but defensively to the vestiges of what is to them the "real" American way of life.

As an individual strives to bring his aspirations and plans to fruition, he encounters obstacles each in succession seeming to be more insurmountable than the last, since,

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in retrospect, each earlier obstacle was overcome. Similarly, the problems of each generation in a changing society seem succeedingly more colossal, more insurmountable. In the personal interviews conducted for this study (within two years of the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal), time after time my informants' convictions were that the problems confronting their country and their lives have never been more serious.

Like the clerics of 14th Century Europe following the Black Death, Americans live a culture that, in a time of relative peace, relentlessly bombards itself with its own perils. Americans daily, through television, radio, print, art, even casual conversation, encounter ominous events. They see themselves face-to-face with environmental ruin, nuclear proliferation, crime, terrorism, moral upheaval, international confrontations, corruption, and the abuse of power. They find themselves in everyday situations over which they seem to have no control: inflation, recession, unemployment, the denial of meaningful political choice, conflicting social values, and the frustrating inability to actualize their own fulfillment.

To an anthropologist, the behavior of today's "man on the street" affords an opportunity to observe human beings in a situation where they perceive problems, stress, and the necessity of making choices. How do individuals weigh the proposed solutions to such problems? What alternatives

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do they entertain or reject and why? At what level do they see conflict or contradiction? To what extent do they accept or reject traditional American ways of coping with problems? To what extent are they willing to scrutinize heretofore sacred realms of their culture in order to initiate responses and seek solutions? Is the probable fate of a particular social movement to flourish or to perish?

These are fascinating questions. The contemporary social situation, of which the American anthropologist is both by accident a participant and by training an observer, provides the discipline a laboratory with chemicals and reagents mixed in a flask, begging the observation and analysis of the ensuing reactions. If one of the goals of the discipline is to promote an understanding of the course of human events and to elicit a model of the dynamic dialectic between people and their cultures, what better theatre might we find in which to witness an episode of the drama than in the contemporary United States?

To most anthropologists, the overriding goal in the study of any human group in any cultural environment, whether preliterate, peasant, or post-industrial is to better understand ourselves. Here, with a problem-oriented study of our own culture, is the method of participant observation exercised in its most direct, and perhaps valuable way. We approach the phenomena that bear on our own lives, anthropologically.

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Anthropology has only recently crossed its frontier into the study of the relationship of values and ideals to the process of change in modern social and political systems; study, that is, that directly illuminates our own relationship to 20th Century political dynamics. The vast, rich literature of the discipline is rife with typologies and structural-functional analyses of political structures, authority hierarchies, and distributions of power. Most are of such a level of generality that they are of little utility for application or insight into change as it occurs in the modern complex, multi-class nation-state. The majority of single-case analyses of social movements (cf. Aberle 1966; Wallace 1970) pertain to nativistic or millenarian religious movements which, although rich with value-oriented innovation and conflict, offer little insight to our understanding of a secular, social science-based program of cultural alteration.

Such studies are not disparaged here. To understand complexity one must first understand the less complex. Certainly these studies of sociopolitical organization and preliterate religious movements have been valuable in developing the interpretive tools and concepts for the study of more complex subjects. But to some extent this manifests the reluctance of social science in general to pursue problems of political dynamics. In the United States, it is a monument to the pervasiveness of cultural

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lag that the fields of economic and sociopolitical change have been less emphasized in anthropology and its related disciplines than has the study of technological or even religious dynamics.

To some tradition-embracing anthropologists, who believe that objectivity and self-study are incompatible, the study of economic and political values and dynamics in contemporary American society may violate some of the taboos of the discipline. If science and objectivity become ends rather than means, knowledge might carry with it no further obligation of participation. Some anthropologists still reify the comparative method, convinced that they can never get the "distance" to really observe and describe their own culture.

But recent journals demonstrate a trend toward self-study; a trend that soon may separate the "old" anthropology from the "new". And the old, in its reluctance to examine, understand, and educate about the dynamics of its own culture, its own era, will be seen to have been certainly a requisite phase of the discipline's development, but perhaps short-sighted; perhaps even a partial waste of time (Harris 1975; Mead 1974; Colson 1976).

An investigator who focuses his effort on a problem with relevance to his own life cannot claim total objectivity. Just the definition of the problem to be studied involves some indication of particular interest. At the

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same time, he cannot escape the rigor and criteria of validity that anthropology as a social science instills. The training that is essential to the discipline demands that objectivity and subjectivity be identified respectively as such. What we see and hear and perhaps know must always be separated from what we think, believe, or guess.

Methodology

As a graduate student at the University of Montana, I was early involved with meetings of the Montana New Socialist Party in the fall of 1974. At the early organizational meetings of the party, in attendance as a sympathetic observer more than an active participant, I was struck by the myriad of hurdles that confront the formation and focusing of such a politically-based socioeconomic movement. As events unfolded, I also became aware of what I thought to be a perceptual chasm between "social and economic reality" as it was perceived by the movement's makers and the reality that was normative for the small-town Montanans toward whom the movement was directed. Having been raised in, and never weaned from, this small-town Montana environment, it seemed apparent to me that there was a different view of the world out there in the wooded hills and river valleys; one different from that of the intellectually-oriented, University-based movement members.

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Such a disparity in <u>weltanschaaungen</u> is the essential problem of any social movement. It is the obstacle that the movement must overcome in its effort toward purposefully altering the existing cultural system. If such a disparity did exist here, I resolved that it must be explicable anthropologically.

In the early stages of theoretical study, it became apparent that the most fundamental determinant of such a disparity could be found by studying the values held by the two groups (values, and the reason for assuming them to be determinative, are the subject of Chapter II). There must be an identifiable distinction between the values of socialists and those of the "typical" Montanan-American. From this assumption, the problem-orientation of this study evolved: what values, and how do they work in this specific case?

I set about field research intending to find out what the folk conceptions of socialism were among the rural Montana public. The egalitarian values that motivate socialism are well-known (Marx 1844,1856; Engels 1892; Lerner 1973; etc.) but we know little about what non-socialists (somewhat distinct from anti-socialists) think about socialism. By eliciting this "folk model" of what socialism is and what it represents, and by finding out what aspects of it were considered acceptable or unacceptable, a relevant system of values might be defined and compared with the

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values that motivate the movement.

The field research for this study was undertaken between January and July, 1975. Within that period, I conducted interviews with twenty-two individuals, focusing our conversations on their assessments of contemporary social and political issues, the existence of a socialist movement (most were unaware that one was at large), and their opinions on specific socialist critiques and objectives. My sample was drawn from students at the University of Montana, where I was enrolled; permanent residents of the Missoula area; from residents of the Coram/Martin City/ Hungry Horse area of the upper Flathead Valley, where I lived in the summer; and from residents of Kalispell, a locale convenient to both my school and summer homes. These three informant sources provided a comfortable cross-section of the population of western Montana. They were distributed by residence, age, occupation, and education according to Table 1.

There are two sampling imbalances that should be mentioned here. First, since I found the informal, relaxed atmosphere of bars and nightspots very conducive to these interviews (and an excellent way to make the acquaintance of total strangers... there is, after all, no point in interviewing one's friends), a male-oriented sample was almost inevitable. I found it difficult to convince women in bars that I wanted to interview them about social-

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Residence	
Rural	8
Small Town (less than 3000)	3
Medium Town (3,000 - 10,000)	5
Large Town (more than 10,000)	6
Age	
18 - 25 years	7
26 - 40	5
41 - 59	5
60 - 76	5
Occupation	
Blue Collar	9
White Collar	3
Retired	3
Students	5
Unemployed	2
Education	
Grade School	3
High School	9
Attended post-High School	7
College Graduates	3

TABLE 1. Distribution of Sample

ism. It was also difficult to find female students interested in dropping by my office for a lengthy chat about their political preferences. Of the interviewees, only six were women. Since one of the explicit focuses of the socialist movement, however, is the wage-labor industrial work force, this male orientation may have been useful in

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that the models of socialism were more immediate and its critique and goals were meaningful.

The second sample bias is that I intentionally avoided interviewing anyone actively involved with leftist politics. None of my informants considered themselves to be socialists or identified themselves as political "activists" of any persuasion.

I found the informal interview approach to be very satisfactory; keeping the sessions as loose and unstructured as possible. The interviews ranged in duration from ninety minutes to three and a half hours. I used a cassette tape recorder and a notebook. Each interview was transcribed immediately following the session to paper for easy reference.

Some respondents' narratives are quoted more than others. Assuming that everyone has something to say, some people are more willing to say it than others. Some small proportion of any population, probably, is content to answer even the most seemingly provocative questions with "yep" or "nope" answers which tell the questioner both something and nothing. Fortunately, most Montanans are talkative folk, and our rapport was rich and fruitful; often fun.

Where I have used quotation marks, the narrative is in fact word for word. I have deleted repitition and stammering and have occasionally revised minor grammar. I have deleted expletives where they were immaterial.

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With the exception of the preceding distribution table, this study will have little to offer the statistically-oriented reader. I have made no effort to sort the "yes's" from the "no's" from the "maybe's" and put everyone else in the "not applicable" column. I used a basic set of queries in no necessary order, operating under the conviction that I could learn more if the interviewee carried the bulk of the conversation. I tried to keep the train of thought on the tracks by occasionally setting switches to avoid a siding or what loomed ahead as a total derailment. I have, in the presentation of the field research, exercised interpretation carefully and only where interpretation was necessary, preferring to use quotes whenever possible. Like many other students of human belief and behavior (Gerlach and Hine 1970; Geertz 1973) I believe we can learn more from an interpretive description based on what we see and hear than we can from a set of forced or overly-simplified categories into which human minds must be fitted.

It is important to emphasize that the range of folk models and concepts presented here is not claimed to be representative of all of American society. No small sample in a complex society with overlapping occupational and social identities could claim that. But it may be assumed to be representative of a significant segment of the population. That segment is the predominantly rural and small-town region of the western states. These are the legatees

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of people who have for a century considered themselves to be the "frontier" -- the outstretched arm of society that is so distant from their centers of government and centralization that their self-image is often independent and antagonistic of the whole. Yet, proud of their role as food producers and resource suppliers, they also grant themselves the stature of being a cornerstone of the nation's well-being; their ideals the stature of defining "Americanism" (Kraenzel 1955; Bennett 1969).

If the remoteness of rural life is a handicap with respect to the accessibility of ideas, it may well be partially compensated for by the impetus it provides for original, individualistic response. Today's Montanan is the legatee of the western populists, the union radicals, the reformers, the anarchists, and the visionaries who with broad, sometimes knee-jerk strokes painted his state's colorful, volatile history. There is no reason to assume that today's Montanan is any less receptive than yesterday's to political and social alternatives.

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CHAPTER II

VALUES AND CULTURE CHANGE

The purpose of this chapter is to define a model of the relationship between values, a social movement, and the process of culture change. This model will not be so general that it is suggested to be applicable to every case of culture change. Rather, it is intended to facilitate understanding and explication of the particular instance of cultural dynamics that is the concern of this study.

The Process of Culture Change

We all must be acquainted with the adage that "change is the only constant" in the realm of human experience. Although a Tiv tribesman (to whom our concept of change would be unfathomable) would disagree, most anthropologists, particularly the evolution-oriented, would be willing to uphold Heraclitus' observation that given the dimension of time, "the same man never steps in the same stream twice." Although the concept of "cultural equilibrium" has been critically accepted, most students of culture would agree that change in some degree and in some form is characteristic of man and of culture in all times

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and all places.

The focus of this study, then, the Montana socialist movement in 1975 and its potential for purposeful cultural alteration, cannot be considered to be completely unique. By the fundamental precept of social science -- that there are laws of human experience -- or, perhaps more appropriately, processual and conceptual universals in human experience, the socialist movement must be subject to analysis and explication through our theoretical models.

In the study of an instance of culture change the actual process may, for facility of analysis, be separated into steps or sequential phases. Such a "phases" model is presented here.

Some students of the dynamics of cultural alteration, notably Barnett (1953) and Wallace (1961) postulate as a conceptual starting point a phase of cultural quasi-equilibrium. They suggest that in order to conceptually distinguish a beginning for a particular instance of change, it is convenient to postulate a pre-existing phase in which there was no disequilibrium with respect to what subsequently undergoes alteration.

The stimulus to change may be either external (culture contact, etc.) or internal. The model for this study deals with the kind of internally-stimulated change of which a social movement is characteristic. Following Barnett

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(1953), the onset of culture change is that moment at which incentives for innovation are perceived by a member or members of the group. Such an incentive is present when members of the group perceive some goal which, in their estimation, will require a change from the status quo for its attainment. This goal might be a technological improvement, religious salvation, or the redistribution of wealth. Such a goal and an idea for the means of its attainment constitute an incentive for innovation in some corresponding aspect of the social system.

Barnett's model subscribes to the dialectical materialist interpretation of the relations between the subjective and objective worlds. He asserts that for every culturally-filtered reality there is in the mind a set of ideas of things. This set may be unique for every individual, but is assumed to have cultural unity since its basis is symbolic and therefore learned. These ideas are counterparts of external referents; man's mental image of the world is bounded by that world itself (1953:183). It is assumed that for every culturally-defined set of mental elements, there is a theoretically infinite number of linkages between them (structural relationships). The infinity of idea linkages is the basis of the human potential for innovation, which occurs when a new linkage is made and a new structural relationship of ideas comes into existence. Thus the process of innovation is a mental one; it begins

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with a new combination of pre-existing ideas which are shaped and limited by external, material conditions (1953: 181).

If, however, cultural alteration is to occur, the process of change enters a phase in which the acceptance or rejection of the innovation is decided by an effective proportion of the entire group. The history of human events must be replete with new ideas that have perished and been forgotten. Still other ideas affected only one or a few individuals. Less frequent have been those mental restructurings that have truly led to cultural changes; that have been accepted into and become part of the learned and shared totality of a group's existence.

Barnett suggests that the criteria under which acceptance or rejection are determined may be separated analytically into two components: advocacy and compatibility (1953:293,329). If an innovation is to make a cultural impression, it must have advocation.

Advocacy: Social Movements and Change

Social movements are one form of advocacy for purposeful cultural innovation and change. Aberle (1966:315) has defined a social movement to be:

> "...an organized effort by a group of human beings to effect change in the face of resistance by other human beings."

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It should be qualified that a social movement explicitly concerns social change; change in some aspect, if not the totality, of the social system. This qualification excludes the Cosa Nostra, opium smugglers, and Trout Unlimited, etc. (which may be organized efforts aimed at some immediate personal goal) from consideration as social movements. Aberle includes as "resistance" anything from overt suppression to passive apathy (1966:316).

Anthropology has predominantly concerned itself with social movements of a religious nature among preliterate peoples. Among the better known are Mooney's (1896) study of the Ghost Dance movement of the plains Indians, the work of Worsley (1957) and others on the "cargo cults", Barnett's (1966) Mau Mau study, Aberle's (1966) study of the Navajo peyote movement, and Wallace's (1970) "revitalization" examination of the Iroquois. Their conclusions have generally been elaborations on what Alfred Haddon observed in 1916:

> "An awakening of religious activity is a frequent characteristic of periods of social unrest. The weakening or disruption of the old social order may stimulate new and often bizarre ideals, and these may give rise to religious movements that strive to sanction social or political aspirations..."
> (quoted in Burridge 1960:xxii)

From these studies of less complex movements, a general theory has enabled recent research into more complicated and contemporary social movements. Gerlach and

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Hine (1970) have done extensive analysis of the Pentacostal and Black Power movements in the United States. The models have also been applied to the American Revolution (Jameson 1956), Maoism, and the student left (see bibliography E in Gerlach and Hine for a detailed list of recent studies).

Applying Barnett's ideas on the genesis of cultural innovation, a social movement begins with a new linkage of ideas growing out of the conception of some goal. Women's Liberation, Christian Science, the Symbionese Liberation Army, and the Montana New Socialist Party are (or were) all efforts toward purposeful cultural innovation championed by more or less organized groups of advocates and are, by these criteria, social movements.

Compatibility: Values and Value Systems

The other criterion of acceptance/rejection, compatibility, is determined by the meaning perceived in the innovation by its potential receivers. To have meaning, an innovation must be identifiable with other mental elements already familiar to the group:

> "Identification must take place if a novelty is to be accepted, even though the new idea is imbedded in a highly charged emotional field that interferes with circumspect estimation of it. Meaning is not necessarily a total or a logically defensible placement of a new experience. It is merely some kind of orientation with reference to the background

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of the individual that is more or less satisfying to him." (Barnett 1953:355)

Meaning does not assure acceptance; the meaning of something new to an individual could lead him to embrace it, be indifferent toward it, or to loathe it. Barnett asserts that in order to become accepted, the meaning of the innovation must have for its receivers both intrinsic value (inherent features that make it preferable) and extrinsic value (be considered possible)(1953:329).

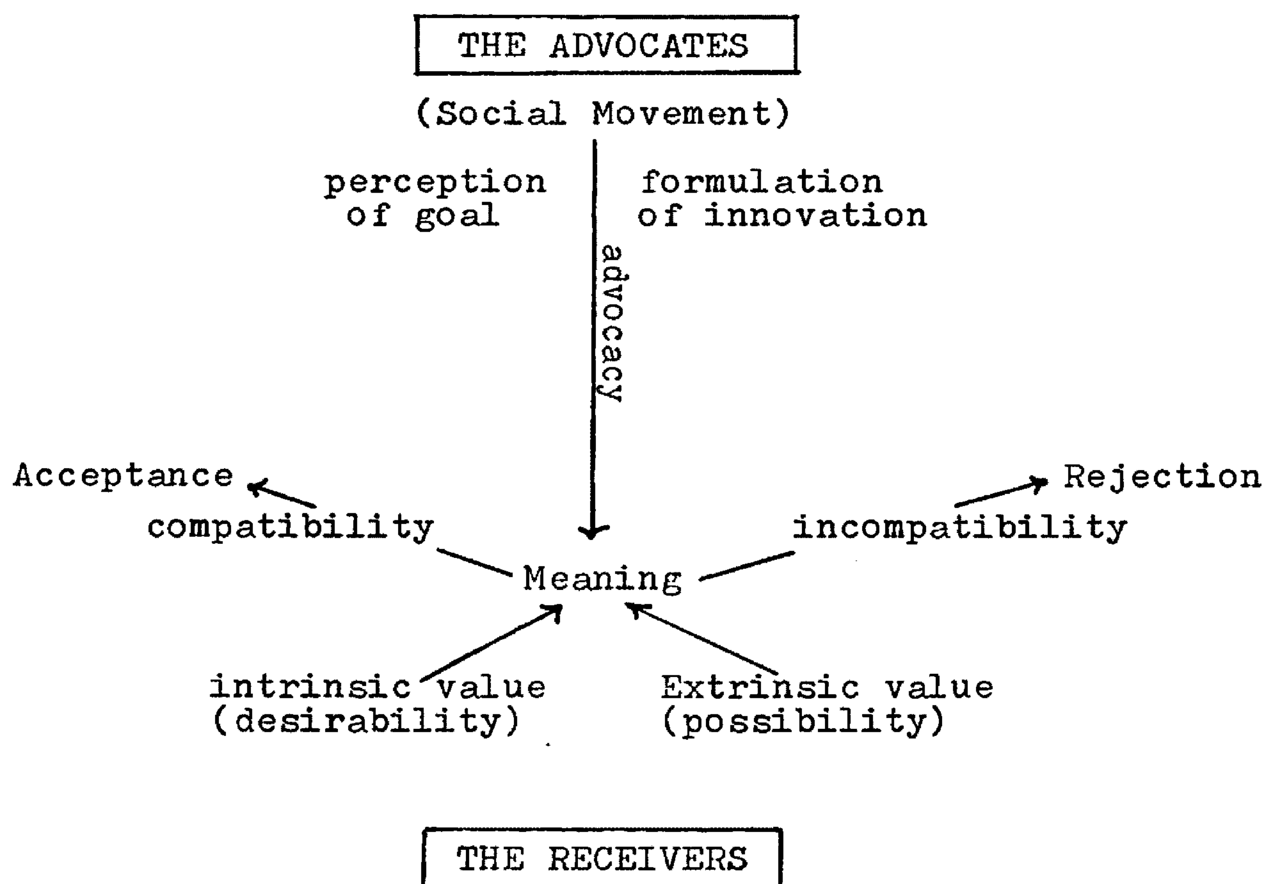

fig. 1. diagram of "phase" model

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In these steps, Barnett has articulated part of the theoretical perspective adopted for this study. To be accepted, a cultural innovation must be (1) effectively advocated and (2) compatible with people's existing mental reality. This compatibility is determined by the meaning of the innovation perceived by the receivers in the context of their values.

Intrinsic Value: value-and-action theory

To clarify Barnett's "criteria of compatibility", it is necessary to elaborate his model through value-and-action theory. Rokeach (1973) has suggested that the study of human values may become the core concept in social science. It might be added that the examination of values as a part of belief systems also provides common ground for the social science and the humanities. Basically, the study of values in cultural processes is the study of what people believe, why they believe, and what roles their beliefs have in particular situations of choice or preference.

Our concern here is with values as they affect individuals in their responses to a particular instance of innovation and choice. If one was to study a technological innovation, such as the introduction of a bow and shaft to improve hunting efficiency, one would expect to observe some empirical testing and a demonstration on the part of

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the advocate of some obvious potential in his invention for fulfilling its designated purpose. He also has to convince others that traditional techniques are insufficient or inadequate.

By extension and analogy, if a group of individuals propose to restructure political and economic institutions in order to bring about a more just and equitable social system, one would expect to observe a period of interaction in which the greater group would evaluate, by whatever criteria they find appropriate, the merits of the proposal as well as the necessity for it. Thus the advocates of the innovation are required to convince the receivers that the problem to which the innovation is directed is "real", that their method is appropriate, and that the innovation is desirable and will redress the original problem.

Just as a genetic mutation must be compatible with the existing structure, function, and behavior of an organism if it is to be successful (adaptive), so must a cultural innovation meet the criteria of compatibility with the existing cultural totality. This frames the meaning of the innovation to the group. If the innovation's meaning effects adoption, then it has been evaluated and found to be desirable.

Although the term "value" has certain implicit meaning in everyday usage, it is necessary to define it expli-

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citly as it relates to the general theory of action.

> "A value is an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially more preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence."
> (Rokeach 1973:5)

Values are conceptual and exist only in the human mind, and they are affective (C. Kluckhohn 1951:395). That is, a value is an idea which is affectively charged and values are the criteria by which things, events, or other ideas may be "classified" as preferable or not preferable, desirable or undesirable, even "good" or "bad".

As part of the general theory of action, the theory of values states that whenever people are confronted with a situation that requires action there exists mentally a system of values which are conceptions of the desirable. Rokeach (1973) suggests that values are the main dependent variable in the study of culture, society, and personality and that values are also the main independent variable in the study of social attitudes and behavior. In other words, values are the translators of culturally-filtered reality into human attitudes and actions. Whereas conceptions of value are derived out of the interrelation of mental elements, when shared by a social group they provide the pattern in human behavior.

We may expect to find values to be determinative (independent variables) in the synchronic study of many

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social and personal behaviors: taking sides on social issues, adopting moral or political ideologies, the presentation of self, the influence of one group by another, assigning praise or blame, self-justification, etc. Values, to their holders, have the attributes of infallible and ultimate truths. They have an element of ahistorical "givenness" and are usually assumed to be true a priori (C. Kluckhohn 1951:410).

It is values that dictate why Hindus will not kill a cow, why Christians send missionaries abroad, why Berbers steal sheep, why handgun control is anathema to many Americans, and why communism is a threat to the American way of life.

The Study of Values

There is general agreement among social theorists that values are the standards by which attitudes and actions are selected. It has been said that man is an evaluating animal: that he confronts his day-to-day world with a predisposition to rank objects, events, and ideas on a continuum of approval/disapproval. Hypothetically, among any cultural group, an observer may sit with the natives and elicit assessments of which things are good and which are bad; what is desirable and what is not. For such ranking to take place consistently, which it does, we must postulate the existence of conceptual reference

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points which delimit "value" for these people.

It may be helpful to explain the claim that values, as conceptual culture, are subject to study under the methodological rigor and empirical requirements of science. The lay reader might legitimately ask as to what basis there is for the empirical observation and analysis of mental phenomena. How does one verifiably identify a value? How do we find the relationship between a particular value and a particular action? What models of determinance or causality may be derived? What does the theory of values explain?

Following White (1949:3), science is but one way of rendering experience intelligible. Geertz (1973:9) has maintained that the particular contribution of anthropology toward this intelligibility lies in the ethnographic interpretation of meaning.

In the descriptive/interpretive study of conceptual phenomena, inference is unavoidable. We cannot, in the absolute empirical sense, "know" or even observe a concept. We do not "know" that the Azande believe in witchcraft but we can interpretively infer that they do, given the consistency with which their words and actions indicate the belief (Evans-Pritchard 1937). Since values, as one type of beliefs, are conceptual, we must interpretively infer their existence and their semiotic content from our observations of behavior.

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> "...(values)...like motives, genes, and neutrons -- cannot be directly observed but must be inferred as best one can, with whatever psychological devices are available, from all the things the believer says or does." (Rokeach 1969:2)

What people say is part of their "behavior", as is what people do. Following Geertz's metaphor, both activity and speech are manifestations of the "webs of significance" that are culture. Either is a fertile field from which to interpret meaning, and hence, from which to infer the compatibility of a social movement.

Once a value has been inferred, there are methodological tests to verify its presence in the cognitive map of the informant. One test lies in the presentation of and response to choices. If something is consistently chosen over something else, elements of value may be inferred and value hierarchies may be defined. R. Williams (1967:405) considers an informant's willingness to talk about and enthusiasm for a subject to be value indicators. But the most direct and utilitarian method of value verification is simply what people say their values are. This approach has an informant rank, in relation to one another, the things he considers most or least preferable out of any given list of values. It has been used extensively by Rokeach with strongly consistent results (see Chapter IV).

In an anthropological study, our concern is to identify values and to understand their role in guiding beha-

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vior. The issue is not whether particular values are valid. This essential point separates the scientific study of values from the philosophical:

> "The existence of a value can be demonstrated by social research; but its validity or justification cannot be established." (Davis 1970:28)

The model of values in action is not one of cause-and-effect. Values do not, in this sense, determine behavior. The dynamic rôle of a value lies in its defining preferability in a means-to-end process. Hypothetically, it is possible to conceive of human endeavor on a cause-effect model without even considering values. But if we wish to know why effect A was actualized rather than effect B; why, in short, a certain choice was made, we must complicate the model by including values as affective "channeling" devices. This is what the theory of values explains: why one solution or response was chosen over another. It tells us how the perception of meaning occurs in a situation of perceived choice and enables us to understand any specific decision with respect to the general "laws" or universalities involved. In providing this model of explication, based on the interpretation of meaning, it is scientific: it explains the particular in the context of the general (White 1949:3).

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Extrinsic Value: the value orientation

Recalling fig. 1 (p. 20), the acceptance or rejection of a cultural innovation depends upon its meaning to its receivers, meaning framed by both intrinsic value (preference) and extrinsic value (possibility).

In the theory of values-in-action, the role of intrinsic value has been elaborated. It would be an affront to the intricacy of human experience to consider affection the sole channeler of activity. To complete the model of the receivers' role in a social movement's attempt at culture change, the element of extrinsic value must be included.

Human beliefs about what is desirable are not operationally separate from beliefs about what is real. That is, in the perception of the meaning of a new idea, its affective component (whether it is good or bad) is linked to its existential component (whether or not it is within the bounds of reality). A social movement which sought the abolition of bill collectors and promoted unlimited overdrafts in checking accounts might have considerable intrinsic value, but since it lies outside the realm of American beliefs about economic reality and social order, it would be extrinsically incompatible and very probably rejected.

Existential beliefs must be included with valuative beliefs in the culture change model. To this end, the work of Clyde and Florence Kluckhohn, and their heuristic concept, the "value orientation" is incorporated.

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A value orientation is the entire set of cognitive assumptions which an individual (or a group) applies in a value judgement. It includes standards of preference (values) and a cognitive model of social and moral reality. It is general, organized, affective, and existential (C. Kluckhohn 1951:409).

Existential beliefs, such as "god exists" are linked to values, such as a high priority for religious salvation. This linkage of the intrinsic and extrinsic consideration cannot be broken for the sake of studying "pure" values. Hence, the meaning of an innovation to its receivers will be framed within the value orientation as a single frame of reference.

In a value orientation, the relationship between affective and existential beliefs is neither immutable nor static; it is dialectical. For example, the existential belief that human nature is perfectible might tend to promote high valuative emphasis for individual achievement in a culture. Conversely, a high valuative emphasis on material comfort and technological progress may shape the existential beliefs of man's position vis-a-vis nature.

We may assume that a value orientation, as part of the infinity of human idea linkages, is always to some degree in flux. The degree to which a culture is either "static" or embroiled in conflict and change may be both a symptom and a cause of the same dynamics in the value orientations

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of its members.

Summary

This chapter has developed a "phase" model of the process of cultural innovation and response. (fig. 2).

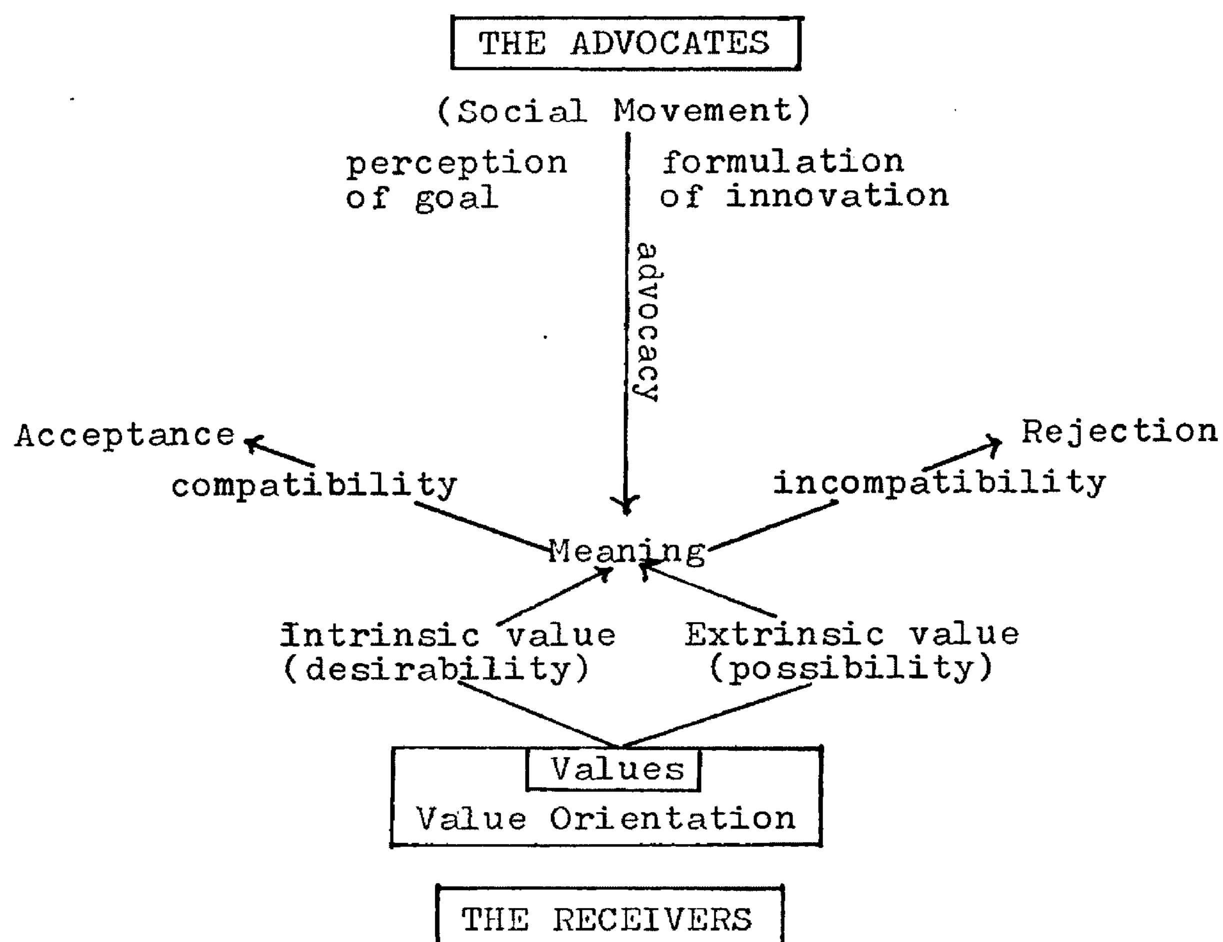

fig. 2. completed diagram of "phase" model.

While not intended to be applicable to all instances of culture change, it provides a general scheme of analysis within which the genesis and goals of the socialist move-

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ment may be examined. Further, by applying acceptable interpretive analysis of the values of the movement's potential receivers, a predictive assessment of the movement's likelihood of acceptance may be made.

The lineality of such a model is symptomatic of the directional predisposition of any scientific analysis of a temporal process. It is precisely toward the acceptance/rejection phase of the model, that phase in which the determination of meaning is made by the receivers through the context of their value orientation, that this study is focused.

Clearly in this case we are well beyond the stage of innovation. Socialists have found incentive for innovation; they have conceptualized goals that in their estimation require extensive alteration in the existing sociocultural system. Advocacy of their movement has been active in the United States for three-quarters of a century (Chapter III). It is the meaning of socialism to the receiving public that commands our understanding if we would know the movement's future.

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CHAPTER III

ADVOCACY: THE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT IN AMERICA

> "Many sociological studies of movements assume some sort of personal inadequacy on the part of the movement joiners. They are thought to be suffering from a sense of powerlessness, a lack of ego strength, or an inability to accomplish their own goals without the emotional strength and support of a group of people with similar "problems". The fact of the matter is that social change of any magnitude at all cannot be made by individuals. To the extent that changes in the existing social structures or customs must be made, an individual by himself is nearly powerless." (Gerlach and Hine 1970:xxii)

Anthropology is acquainted with three frequently-employed interpretations of the genesis of social movements -- the old "deviance/psychological maladjustment" model, "disorganization theory" (Wallace 1961; 1962:38), and "relative deprivation theory" (Aberle 1966). None of these casts significant illumination upon the "roots" or "causes" of the socialist movement. While Aberle's approach identifies some of the movement's motivations, certainly not all socialists are relatively deprived. None of these models can adequately account for who will or who will not join the movement.

The socialist movement in the United States can best

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be understood not only as a presentation of value conflict but as a product of it. Valuative beliefs come to bear not only in the receivers' response to an innovation, but in the "infinity of mental linkages" that conceive and nurture an innovation. The following pages present an historical sketch of Marxist socialism, from its theoretical origins to its many faces of advocacy through almost a century of American history. Woven throughout are references to the valuative assumptions that underly socialism and that motivate its advocates.

It must be emphasized that the purpose here is to describe the socialist movement, not to criticize it or to defend it. My brevity may offend the Marxist and the acritical presentation of socialist critiques and theories may upset the anti-Marxist. In either case, the point will have been missed.

Karl Marx: Social Science and Radical Humanism

A unique feature of the socialist movement, compared to other movements examined in the literature of anthropology, is that it is not only a secular, empirically-based effort for social change, but also one with goals based upon social models that employ most of the core concepts of the social sciences.

Marx, like Weber, Auguste Comte, Emile Durkheim and others, was one of the pivotal theorists in the branching

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of social philosophy toward what we now know as social science. Each has come to be identified as a founding father of one or another of the three main currents in sociological theory: the conservatives (Comte, Saint-Simon) who were concerned with the evils of modernism, denied "natural order", and saw virtue in absolute power for the sake of tradition and stability; the liberals (Durkheim, Spencer, Weber) who accepted the basic institutions of 19th Century European state and economy, admired progress, and were most enamored with the rights of the individual; or the radicals (Marx) who abhorred traditionalism, expressed faith in human reason for the establishment of new and more egalitarian social orders, and focused on the humanistic potentials for reorienting political power to the needs of the common man.

Here we focus on Marx and the radical current, recalling Wallace's (1961:184) observation that a "radical" is one who innovates in areas of cultural lag. Engels, in his eulogy of Marx in 1883, encapsulated Marx's perspective and motive:

> "...For Marx was above all else a revolutionist. His real mission in life was to contribute, in one way or another, to the overthrow of capitalist society and of the state institutions which it had brought into being, to contribute to the liberation of the modern proletariat, which he was the first to make conscious of its own position and its need, conscious of the conditions of its emancipations..."
> (quoted in Tucker 1972:604)

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The cornerstones of classical Marxian theory are dialectical materialism, the labor theory of value, and the model of class struggle. In the materialist conception of history, the means of production and the means of exchange form the infrastructure of all social systems. Changes in these modes are the final cause of all social changes: of political revolutions, for example. Human perceptions of injustice, wrongful servitude, etc., are indications that changes have occurred in the means of production and exchange and that the social order is no longer in step with the material conditions of existence. Marx wrote that the means by which the social order might make itself congruent with the altered conditions were always contained within them (Marx 1844; 1852).

Human history was to Marx a sequence of structural/functional forms each determined by the prevailing modes of economic organization. Each form evolved the forces that would enable it to be transformed by human effort to a "higher" cultural system. Feudalism had spawned the bourgeoisie who, in turn, brought Europe to capitalistic modes of production, distribution, and social organization. The fruition of capitalism had, he wrote, created the urban industrialized proletariat that could, if aware of its collective interests and power, overcome the bourgeoisie and establish the socialist society in which the means of production and distribution must be owned not by

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private interests, but publicly.

In the Marxian scheme of history, capitalism, even though conceived in worker exploitation, was historically progressive. The capitalist modes of production fostered modernization, the essential inheritance for socialism from the industrial exploitation of labor. Marx's Communist Manifesto (1848) dwelled almost poetically on the historical accomplishments and significance of the bourgeoisie:

> "It has been the first to show what man's activity can bring about. It has accomplished wonders far surpassing Egyptian pyramids, Roman aqueducts, and Gothic cathedrals; it has conducted expeditions that put in the shade all former Exoduses of nations and crusades."

The legacy of capitalism was an urbanized society, concentrated property, and an efficient means of production. But with its flowering, capitalism had brought over-aggrandizement and deprivation. Marx identified within the capitalist system inherent contradictions that would bring the private mode of production to its knees and sow the seeds of socialist revolution. Foremost of these would be over-production and the displacement of the working class. The capitalist mode of production would become incompatible with the capitalist notion of freedom and social well-being and could provoke proletarian revolution.

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This proletarian revolution could seize power, establish the "dictatorship of the proletariat", and transform the means of production from private to public ownership. If owned and directed by the people, the sophistication and technological efficiency of advanced industrial production should enable humanity a greater freedom than ever, extending to all segments of society the leisure and education previously available only to the wealthy. It should be a scientific revolution; a restructuring of society by plan. The highest form of society, communism, could be evolved later through additional effort and planning:

> "...after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, has vanished; after labour has become not only the means of life but life's prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all round development of the individual, and all the springs of cooperative wealth flow more abundantly -- only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banner: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!"
> (Marx 1875; quoted in Tucker 1972:388)

In developing his theoretical critique of capitalism and his model of the eventual classless society, Marx addressed all of the concepts that have been identified by Nesbit (1966) as the unit-ideas of social science. Marx and his successors identified alienation as the inversion of progress. The undesirable aspect of moderniza-

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tion was its threat to individual dignity; the estrangement of the worker not only from the product of his labor but from society itself. Marx saw society becoming remote, impersonal, and regimented and he believed that as the state became the tool of the bourgeoisie, its institutions became the oppressors of the proletariat; oppressors that only the human spirit could transcend providing class consciousness would provide the means.

This class consciousness, as the key to the success of the class struggle, revolution, and any eventual establishment of a classless society, demonstrated Marx's concept of status. Like de Tocqueville, Marx saw the dominant characteristic of capitalist society to be increasing inequality. Class conflict he believed to be inevitable. The upper class, by itself, would never take the initiative toward real egalitarianism. It was up to the proletariat to take the initiative and exercise its overwhelming political power, parliamentarily if possible; if not, by force. Like the other steps in Marx's theoretical phases of history and revolution, the mobilization of the working classes he saw to be problematical. He didn't know just how it could be done, but he believed it was possible, desirable, and (in some passages) inevitable. This problem, achieving class consciousness, is the hurdle which the socialist movement in the United States has been trying to step over for three-quarters of a century.

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Marx also wrote on the philosophical and socioeconomic aspects of <u>power</u>. Early sociological theory on the relationship between power and authority may have been partially in response to the revolutionary upheavals in Europe. While de Tocqueville and Weber focused, respectively, on the roots of power and the rationalization of authority, Marx concerned himself with the uses of power. For Marx, political power was class oppression. The essence of revolution was the movement of the politically uninfluential classes to end their exclusion from political life and power. Once a social order that is truly classless could be established, Marx believed, then the state would become obsolete, a sort of fossil institution, and political power would "wither away".

A further distinction between the "radical" current and the work of other early theorists was in the models used for, and the emphasis placed upon <u>community</u>. Comte saw the community as the moral basis of social life, finding his models in medieval feudalism. Durkheim used the community as a methodological unit for sociological analysis. For Marx, community was not a unit but a state of consciousness. His model of community was class unity; specifically, the working industrial classes of urban Europe. Beyond this, and assuming an eventual abolition of the state, mankind could reach their true community (that of all peoples, denying the artificial boundaries

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of nationalism) when they realized and affirmed their human nature ("species-being")(Marx 1843). Thus, for Marx, community was a moot question until "authentic" human life, life without class distinctions and imaginary sovereignties, was a reality.

The materialist perspective sharply differentiates Marx from his contemporaries in the models they used to articulate the relationship between the sacred (values, ideals, etc.) and the profane (the secular and utilitarian). Weber suggested that different types of societies reflected different types of religions. Durkheim's interest was in the social function of the sacred: expressions of collective sentiments and identity. But for Marx, different beliefs, whether religious, ethical, or valuative, or existential, were reflections of different systems of social relations. Human belief systems were justifications or apologies for the objective conditions of life. Religion was an "illusory happiness" that would persist until the conditions that demanded illusion were abolished.

In his envisionment of the socialist order, Marx exhibited, among others, values for equality, freedom, learning, and community (popular unity and participation). From his ideas, stated here with brevity and regrettable simplification, have sprung the multitudinous plethora of Marxist movements, insurrections, parties, revisions,

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and social and economic systems. Marx's work has today a direct bearing upon the lives of two-thirds of humanity. It has even rumbled to life in a little-known niche of western North America unaccustomed to a vanguard role in the modern struggles of political ideologies: the state of Montana.

Socialism in the United States: Efforts and Results, 1900-1960

> "The organized Left in the United States has had a history of discontinuity and self-delusion." (Weinstein 1972:7)

Throughout the rollercoaster ride of left-wing political activity in the United States, the class theory of Karl Marx and vehement anti-capitalism have been constants. Entwined among the fortunes and misfortunes of centralized parties, splinter groups, radical unions, sects, and affiliated organizations of the Left have been many persons whose names are familiar to history buffs: Kate Richards O'Hare, Eugeme Debs, John L. Lewis, Francis Willard, Norman Thomas, Jack London, Helen Keller and Walter Lippman, to recall a few.

Yet leftist activities and organizations are scantily mentioned in history texts, nor is the American labor movement since the turn of the century, around which most of the activity was focused, a common subject of American

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historians. Texts point to the closing years of the 19th Century as the "anti-capitalist" era; the period of anti-trust legislation; the heyday of the anti-business "muck-rakers" (W.Williams 1961:397).

Organized leftist political activity in the United States began with the coalition of several groups into the Socialist Party between 1897 and 1904. The Socialist Party's unifying goal was to promote working class struggle on the assumption that it would reveal and deepen the contradictions of capitalism and precipitate a crisis out of which socialism would emerge. This was their means to re-orient the nation's economy from the production of profit to production and distribution based on social need. They also believed it would bring about a more just distribution of income for industrial workers, farmers, and others whom they saw at the bottom of the capitalist society (Weinstein 1972:10).

This, the "old" Socialist Party, was a mass party made up of and led mainly by workers. Their modus operandi was the electoral process. They ran candidates for offices ranging from county commissioners to the presidency, polling six per cent of the national vote in the presidential election of 1912 (Weinstein 1969:93). In 1913, Socialist Party members held 1200 offices nationwide and the Party published more than 200 periodicals, including newspapers in Butte, Helena, and Sheridan, Montana

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(Weinstein 1969: 98-103).

But by 1924, the Socialist Party was effectively defunct due to a combination of political and ideological factors. Their stance against American participation in WW I had provoked their first governmental suppression. The socialist IWW "wobblies" were crushed by federal recognition and support for the liberal A.F.L. Over 2000 party members, including Debs, were convicted and imprisoned under the espionage and sedition acts. Many party publications were either banned or denied mailing privileges.

Of equal disruption were internal ideological rifts. The writings of the long-dead Marx, usually the final arbiter of theoretical disputes, could cast little light for coping with post laissez-faire American corporate capitalism. Government regulation of the economy brought with it government support. Socialists watched many of their "revolutionary" issues such as the eight-hour day become "reform" issues absorbed by other parties, by union movements, and eventually by industry itself.

The success of the Bolshevik revolution in pre-bourgeois Russia occurred contrary to Marx's historical analysis. American liberals were successfully co-opting socialist reforms. Fully-developed capitalism flourished in the United States, yet worker unity eluded the Party. The Socialist Party became demoralized and splintered; a

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shambles never to recover.

The American Communist Party emerged as the voice of the Left. Taking inspiration from Lenin's idea of a "vanguard" party -- a clandestine, intellectual group who could plan strategy, educate, and attract the working class -- the Communist Party had been underground, struggling with factionalism over the "revisionisms" of Trotsky and others, finally to emerge in the 1930's in a concerted effort to get back into contact with American workers. Generally abstaining from electoral politics (a notable exception was in Plentywood, Montana), they began assisting Lewis and his C.I.O. with organizing the unskilled trades.

Confronted by the spectre of Hitler and facism, the Communist Party adopted a more conciliatory stance toward liberal causes and critically supported the New Deal, all the while pointing to the full employment in Russia under the Five Year Plan and reinstituting the old Socialist Party call for socialization.

The surrender of the Axis Powers concluded the forced alliance of the United States and Russia. As the Cold War settled in, deepening popular phobia over international communist expansion (China, Eastern Europe) and America's internal security began to push the Communist Party back underground. The Rosenberg executions, the Korean War, the McCarthy hearings, and the popular reaction to a com-

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munist revolution in Cuba intimidated the organization and eroded its membership. By the late 1950's, it, too was effectively defunct; shrunken and no longer wielding leftist influence.

In its overriding goal of mobilizing American workers to topple the capitalist system, the organized Left in the United States had certainly failed, diminishing the stature of numerous lesser successes. In fact, sixty years of first the Socialist Party and then the American Communist Party, both espousing Marxian models of history and class struggle and advocating variations of the same revolutionary politics, had a pernicious legacy to bequeath to their successors. By the late 1950's, the rhetoric of the Cold War and the emergence of Soviet Russia as America's rival for world dominion had the effect of equating "socialism" with "communism" and both with "totalitarianism" in the minds of many.

An illustrative example of the emotionalism suddenly confronting the Left was the controversy that flared over the Tennessee Valley Authority and the first branching of government into the ownership and operation of hydroelectric facilities. In 1952, in opposition to public ownership, more than half the utility industry's advertising dealt with "socialism". The Edison Electric Institute sponsored national advertisements that associated TVA with Khrushchev, Castro, the Berlin Wall, barbed wire, and com-

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munist soldiers (Metcalf 1967: 98-173).

> "The language of values is an ingenious language admirably suited to the enhancement of all kinds of self-interest, whether enlightened or unenlightened, selfish or altruistic." (Rokeach 1973:168)

The popular phobia over the "Red Menace" reached almost hysteric proportions with the launch of the Russian Sputnik in 1957. For the socialist movement, and for the Left in general, it was the worst of times.

This was the intimidating environment into which the "New Left" was reborn in the early 1960's. Still anti-capitalist, still Marxist-socialist, but, when seen against the backdrop of its parenthood, it exhibited some substantial alterations.

The New Left

The "newness" of the New Left, as it emerged in the 1960's, was most visible in two facets. In contrast to the structured centralization of the old Socialist and Communist Parties, the New Left was no more than a loose confederation of reformist or revolutionary interest groups, to which the Montana New Socialist Party was a latecomer. The New Left has always been decentralized and without a recognized national leadership.

Secondly, the New Left's proponents were no longer drawn predominatly from the ranks of labor unions, urban

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workers, and minority groups. They emerged instead from colleges and universities.

Without a formal leadership or structure, the actual origin of the New Left is imprecise. The Leninist idea of the vanguard party survived implicitly, as evidenced by the intellectually-based campus organizations such as the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee and the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). Most of the organizations appeared in reaction to the Vietnam war, focusing their educational and political activities in protest of an "establishment" perceived to be undemocratic, immoral, and imperialistic. The SDS billed themselves as a movement for "radical social change" (Weinstein 1972: 47). They manifested an emergent awareness that youth could be a social force of moment, a sharp departure from the traditions of campus life a decade earlier.

In a scenario reminiscent of the 1920's, the SDS, which had been the strongest of the visible winds for revolution, splintered into factions in 1969 following the liberal alignment against the war in the 1968 election. Many groups, of which the Weaterman was most publicized, embracing variant ideologies, ascended to leftist notoriety with dramatic but short-lived impact. As one historian summarized them, they

> "...based their 'politics' on self repudiation and the implicit idea of redemption through identification with the one true

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> or key revolutionary agent -- ghetto blacks, youth culture 'freaks', industrial workers, or colonial revolutionaries." (Weinstein 1972:53)

The fiery leftist politics of the 1960's abated with the collapse of immediate issues. But the socialist movement, and its Marxist advocates, would deny that the real issues have collapsed at all.

Contemporary socialism

The Left has proven itself to be resilient and enduring, capable of withstanding decades of theoretical self-criticism and disheartening political setbacks.

In summarizing contemporary socialist theory, it is evident that the entire 80-year span of Marxist political promotion in the United States has been a single movement; that today's movement members are the offspring of their parent parties.

Learning from the experiences of the Communist Party, the movement has allied itself in a critical detente with reformist liberalism, given the perceived common opposition to right-wing interest groups and facism (Lerner 1973: 240). Whereas liberal reform was once condemned as counter-revolutionary, since it strengthened the status quo against material change, it is now considered "potentially" revolutionary.

Out of the experiences of the old Socialist Party

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came to the movement the belief that capitalism as it has evolved in the United States was beyond the laissez-faire free enterprise that Marx had critiqued. Probably the most significant of the many adjustments to theory that the movement has made, or is in the process of making, has been to gradually re-orient their model of socialism away from the monolith of classical Marxism and to accept the goal toward which they work as one which is historically and culturally specific. The old Socialist Party worked in an historic void, a theoretical world without models other than those in Marx's writings. The American Communist Party, enthralled by the success of the Bolsheviks in accomplishing a revolution, had hastily adopted Soviet models and tactics, inattentive to the circumstantial chasm between pre-revolutionary Russia and their own American environment.

Now, the movement speaks of socialism in the United States as an opportunity for a unique _form_ of socialism, and contemporary socialist journals and volumes are focused on a new critique of modern capitalism and a new model of modern American socialization. The "new" Left brings a "new" innovation, but that newness is a product of the movement's historical self-awareness.

The cornerstones of classical Marxism remain the cornerstones of the new socialism. Motivated by egalitarian values, contemporary socialism remains adamant

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that real human freedom cannot be realized until the class boundaries of private ownership are removed and political participation is extended to the dispossessed. In its critique of contemporary American capitalism, socialist theory identifies "monopoly" capital and perceives it to be structurally interdependent to the politics of imperialism and militarism; an interdependence that binds the interests of private ownership with the interests of the state to a degree unprecedented.

Today's socialist believes that the heretofore unimaginable technological promise of America's industrial organization, which could bring to society unprecedented opportunity for the freedom of the masses has, instead, only deepened the immiseration of the working classes by further alienating them from power and by amplifying the tedium of wage-labor occupations.

As an example, they site the growth of the "service sector" of the American economy, in which the profits of industry have been reinvested not in reindustrialization, which should strengthen the national economy against foreign deficits and inflation, but in the food, drink, and entertainment service industries. This service sector, and the inflation caused by private ownership's priorities, are criticized by the movement for displacing hundreds of thousands of workers into low-paying, part-time, no-advancement occupational niches that increasingly require fami-

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lies to have two earners. Thus capitalism, says the socialist, is currently causing to the working classes reductions in real income and reduced opportunities for leisure enjoyment, educational enrichment, and self-determinance, all of which should be essentials of freedom.

The contemporary socialist movement remains intellectualist in its membership spectrum. Leftist literature is still predominantly theoretical; its major contributors still of academic orientation. Marx considered progressive self-criticism to be essential for radical politics to be successful and his modern-day counterparts have embraced that maxim with fervor. The difficulty of moving from academic radicalism to field politics and a mobilized Left with political influence has been a repeated source of frustration to the movement, leading to a problematic rate of turnover in the movement's ranks. This problem of sustaining radical momentum and extending it to the working realms of society is compounded by the transitory nature inherent in a movement so oriented toward student involvement.

The cellular, reticulate web of autonomous localistic organizations that comprises the structure of the contemporary movement is a pattern typical of other social movements. Gerlach and Hine (1970:33-76) note that such decentralization is adaptive in that it prevents effective suppression, it ensures a constant and broad leadership

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(mainly through print), it facilitates communication across social and class boundaries, and it minimizes the impact of any failures on morale and confidence. Despite such advantages, the movement would prefer the visibility of a centralized, mass form to the limitations of mass communication that thwart the presentation of socialist ideas and alternatives to the public. In a passage calling for a mass party rather than a "vanguard" movement, radical theorist Michael Lerner (1973:251) argued:

> "The need for democracy is critical if a socialist party is ever to become a mass form in American society. The American working class, after all, is literate, intelligent, and capable of leading its own revolution. Unlike parties developed to fit the needs of the peasantries of underdeveloped countries, an American party must be designed to recognize the special strengths of the American proletariat."

An enduring obstacle to the formation of such a mass party has been the intellectual fiber of the movement. Theoretical analysis has not attracted mass involvement. Throughout the history of radical politics in America, the movement's faith in electoral tactics has oscillated. Setbacks at the polls provoked splintering and usually ended in vanguard-type factionalism. A maxim of Marxism is that radicalness is proportional to the awareness of oppression. When attempts to "make the oppressed aware" have failed to bring masses to the movement, the alternative has been to assume that vanguard elitism may struc-

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ture radical change, and would attract mass support when material conditions provoked the masses to either reform or revolution.

Yet factionalism among the vanguard elements remains an immediate hurdle. Lerner predicated the formation of the mass party on the unity of theory(1973:251):

> "Such a party would have the greatest concern for internal democracy, including the right to organize factions, but at the same time it would insure enough coherence so that once a decision was democratically arrived at, it would be carried out with dedication and recognition that the real enemy is the capitalists -- not those in opposing factions, or even those in sect groups."

The new socialism has adopted a flexible will for alliance with other movements whose goals are compatible. From the first racially-mixed sit-in at a North Carolina lunch counter in 1960, the student left and the civil rights movement have been allied in promoting social change. Similarly, the socialist movement has supported women's rights, civil liberties, and environmentalism and has evolved Marxian theory to identify the goals of these movements within the overall critique of capitalism. While the scale of socialist innovation is, on one hand, an inhibition to its lay acceptance (Chapter IV), it is also an advantage to the movement in that socialist goals encompass so many of the isolated ills perceived by the non-member population. The potential to communicate the

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ideas of socialization is amplified by the opportunity to apply the materialist analysis to problems that are "real" to broad segments of the non-member public.

The Montana New Socialist Party is one of many localistic organizations that subscribe to contemporary socialist theory. In their dedication to the alteration of existing material conditions by democratic process, they incorporate contemporary leftist theory with an alliance to environmentalism and seek to expose and attract the Montana public to the innovation of public ownership.

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CHAPTER IV

MEANING: THE MONTANA VALUE ORIENTATION AND THE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT

As a prelude to the integration of field information with theory, it is necessary to briefly review the fundamental relationship between values and culture and to acknowledge an operational disparity between theory and analytical technique.

Values are not necessarily "cultural" phenomena. It is conceivable that an individual might hold values which are not shared by other members of his group, or, at the other extreme, some values may be panhuman -- operative in the "webs of significance" of all peoples. Cultural specificity is relevant when we discard the study of a single value or series of values individually taken, and instead focus upon values as a structural system within a shared value orientation. Despite the criticism leveled at the early "national character" studies, there is an observable cultural specificity in the beliefs and behavior of even complex societies.

In the Rimrock study (Vogt and Albert 1967), five distinct cultures which lived apart but in close proximity to one another were found to have striking differences in

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value systems; differences in the mutual interrelationships and emphasis of values. Preferences, for example, for collectivism (the Mormoms) versus individual autonomy (the Texans) indeed were the basis for each group's conceptions of its own identity apart from the other groups (Stefanson 1973). Just as differences in value emphasis separated the Texans from the Mormomns, so they may separate members of the socialist left from the general public.

In the informant's narratives that follow, evidence for the transformational aspect (following Piaget) of value systems is interpreted. As people talk, they "sort" their values, in search of structural relationships that seem to them to be comfortable and accurate. Shared value systems provide individuals with an element of predictability and pattern in the many aspects of social life, including political life, without which social living might be a far cry from what we know (C.Kluckhohn 1951:400; Gluckman 1963).

In observing the meaning of the socialist movement to the receiving public, our concern is less with the total value system of the informants and more with that subset of values which might, in their individual orientations, be relevant to socialism. Whereas in theory we deal with an entire value system, for analysis we deal with a more finite portion of that system.

The narrative material is presented topically, to facilitate integration and interpretation. Narrative

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Informant	Education	Age	Occupation
Buddy	Attended post-High School	20	Unemployed
Charlie	High School	40	Logger
Donna	High School	51	Cook
Ellen	College Graduate	24	Retail clerk
Elwin	High School	57	Mechanic
Fred	High School	48	Restaurant
Guy	Attended post-High School	21	Student
Jack	High School	25	Carpenter
Janet	Attended post-High School	26	Postal clerk
Jim	High School	60	Rancher
Marcie	Attended post-High School	20	Student
Maragert	Grade School	63	Waitress
Merle	College Graduate	37	Schoolteacher
Mike	Grade School	76	Retired
Paula	Attended post-High School	19	Student
Phillip	Attended post-High School	45	Student
Robert	High School	37	Unemployed
Scott	College Graduate	30	Construction
Steve	Attended post-High School	53	Retail merchant
Tad	High School	18	Student
Tim	Grade School	69	Retired
Tom	High School	71	Retired

Table 2. Biographical Summary of Informants

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excerpts are more than mere fragments of speech. Like the tiny sherds and crumbs from which an archeologist defines the art of a bygone civilization, these "pieces of consciousness" reveal the mental linkages that bound the social reality of the speaker: the "real" present and the "real" future.

Idealism vs. Reality: Trouble With The American Dream

To begin each interview, I asked the respondent to tell me how he or she felt about current political issues in American life: are there serious problems? ...how do they affect your life? ...are they typical of the trials of each generation or are we dealing with problems of extra historical significance? Steve, who works for a hardware store in Kalispell, maintained that Americans today live in an atmosphere of unprecedented gloom:

> "...we're the first ones in history who have to live with atomic bombs and radiation and overkill. In the past, people had their problems too -- wars, diseases, all kinds of catastrophes -- but they didn't have to deal with knowing that world could go any time by our own actions. My boy came home from school...current events discussion...and asked me if I thought the world will still be here when he grew up. I can't tell him for sure that it will be. Who could? We really don't know. As adults we get it out of our minds ... what effect it has on kids to know how out of control we are. It's going to get worse, too. What happens when all the countries have nukes? Somebody's going to use them. I can't imagine how peopls will live in that situation. It couldn't be a happy life..."

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Tom, a retired sawmill foreman, responded from a different angle but shared the despairing outlook:

> "...we've always had troubles. I've lived through both world wars and the Depression. You're too young to remember that, but I do. In Idaho I picked berries and caught fish to trade for a living. People took care of each other ...now, it's a different feeling. People don't have faith in the country. Watergate showed there's no difference what we want or who we elect -- we're the last ones to know what's going on. That's what's got us now. That's why nobody is happy with the government. Nothing seems to make a difference. Hell, when I was your age, if somebody didn't do his government job, we threw him out. Nowdays, you just keep getting somebody worse than the s.o.b. you had. We can't solve problems without good leadership, and we just don't have it..."

Perhaps Tom was giving vent to frustrations more common to the elderly: the failure of the present (or the future) to measure up to the past. But the same tone was evident in twenty-year-old Marcie's response:

> "...I watch the news and read the paper every day. Every time I see a story about poor people or about life in the cities I wonder how that can be. We have this high standard of living yet people are eating dog food and afraid to leave their homes at night. Are we blind? We're hiding from the truth. This country is in bad shape...I suppose every period of time thinks its problems are the worst ever, but now we're overpopulated and solutions aren't so easy. We don't have religion to rely on. We have to find our own answers and that's depressing to know that if you don't solve problems, no big hand is going to come out of the sky and take care of you... When I think of the comfort that some people have compared to the poverty of others, I think that much of our self-image is myths.

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It's nice to think of how well-off we are as a society, but it isn't true. We have all the elements of a declining civilization. With crime and pollution added in, I think we're headed for a real disaster..."

There are no rose-colored glasses here. A composite folk-image emerges of waning confidence in "the system" and its ability to deal with and solve problems. Accompanying the overt frustration and the despairing tone of these excerpts is a common perception of powerlessness. R. Williams (1967) noted in his study of American culture that historically, the American folk-model has held that power and authority are ultimately retained by the public and that personalized authority has been disdained. The preceding narratives confirm that observation: "We, the people, are culpable for our own malaise and the responsitility for remedy lies with us." But, "we" can not seem to do anything. A Kalispell schoolteacher, Merle, articulated the roots of many informants' frustrations:

"...I think what's happening now is we're coming face-to-face with the fact that we can't do much. Not you and I as citizens. The world is outrunning us. Issues are too complicated. Power is in other places. By the time we hear they're going to build a dam or start a strip-mine, the decision is so far along that public opinion doesn't matter. I can't think of one case where public opinion changed that kind of decision. They listen to us, and then they go right ahead with whatever they'd already decided to do... (at an environmental hearing)... I was told to limit my testimony to five minutes because I wasn't an expert. Never mind that I've lived here for thirty-two

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> years. Why should people have to have experts to speak for them? Maybe that's the problem -- the experts are in control. Whoever is, we're not..."

This same sense of powerlessness surfaced from other informants:

> "...When Nixon invaded Cambodia, he was going against Congress and most of the people. But there was really nothing we could do about it; just demonstrate and yell..."

> "...Our power has been taken over by the government. It's become something that goes on its own, for or against what the public wants. We have less real voice than ever..."

> "...It seems like the only way to make yourself heard is to be part of a special interest group, like environmentalists or the oil companies. The average people aren't heard..."

> "...I just don't feel like we can do anything. You end up waiting for the next election and hoping nothing too awful will happen in the meantime..."

This sense of powerlessness coursed throughout people's complaints about and perceptions of an ineffectual and usurptive political system. In their image of antagonism between the public sovereignty and the functions of government, the people feel themselves to be losing ground. The real conditions of life seem to them to be in conflict with traditional American ideals. Festinger (1956) termed such conflict between believed and perceived

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existence "cognitive dissonance", the experience of which demands psychological resolution. One method of resolving dissonance is to find, within the perimeters of the belief system, a means of conflict resolution that restores cognitive consonance. Merely to conceptualize some form of treatment is to alleviate some of the discomfort. Socialism, for its advocates, offers such consonance.

These Montanans, too, had many ready remedies, ranging from anti-litter campaigns to rewriting the Constitution. They confirm what has been observed by other students: that to Americans, change is a social force of considerable corrective value (Herskovits 1948:637; Boulding 1961; R. Williams 1967:432). They also confirmed that:

> "The majority of the population, like the majority of any population, are much more concerned to find individual or general solutions to particular ills of the moment ...than they are to plan an ideal world or seek to reform an entire system."
> (Colson, on the Zambians, 1974:113)

To assess this "mood" in the narrative is to acknowledge that the concerns and frustrations of these Montanans would seem, on the surface, to exhibit some ripeness for Marxism. People feel alienated from political voice and there seems to be a receptive attitude toward change from the status quo.

Interpretively, using Barnett's model of culture change, the narratives reveal a milieu of incentive

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for innovation and that Montanans' mental image of their society is dissonant and contains conflict and might be receptive to structural alteration. We are poised at the very threshold of "meaning"; the threshold toward which social movements are launched and upon which their outcomes are fated.

Montanans and Socialism

To introduce Montanans' valuative responses to socialism, it is illuminative to briefly survey a related study. Some of the most conclusive research establishing the link between values and political attitudes is that of Milton Rokeach presented in his book, The Nature of Human Values (1973). In a statistically-oriented study, Rokeach showed how certain individual values or clusters of values shape the positions that individuals take on social and political issues.

Rokeach asked respondents to rank-order a list of values and then compared their ranked lists to their attitudes and voting behavior. When his respondents revealed who they supported in the 1968 Presidential election and correlations were made to their previous rank-ordering of social values, Rokeach found that supporters of all seven major candidates (Kennedy, Johnson,McCarthy, Rockefeller, Nixon, Reagan, and Wallace) ranked "freedom" third from the top of their lists. However, the ranked position of

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"equality" was widely variant. Supporters of Kennedy and Johnson had ranked equality as their fourth highest preference while supporters of McCarthy ranked it sixth, of Rockefeller ninth, of Reagan tenth, of Nixon twelfth, and supporters of Wallace had ranked equality fourteenth. "National security" ranged from the eighth highest value among Johnson's supporters to the thirteenth among McCarthy's backers (Rokeach 1973:85).

Respondents were asked to classify their feelings upon hearing of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King. Those who said they were "angered" at the murder had compositely ranked equality highly (fifth) in the list. Those who said they felt King had "brought it on himself" had ranked equality of thirteenth importance (Rokeach 1973:98).

Rokeach's findings provide a cogent demonstration of the values-and-action paradigm. In presenting to my interviewees 1) the existence of the Montana New Socialist Party, and 2) the theories and goals of socialism, I expressly solicited valuative reactions. In articulating what they found "good" or "bad" about the movement and its ideas, respondents vocalized the valuative criteria that framed to them the meaning of socialism.

Response to the advocacy

The response to the movement's advocacy can only be

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tentatively assessed. Since the MNSP was not "visible" at the time of the interviews, such factors as the consideration of personality and the style of presentation could not be included.

To begin, I told them that a new political party had been organized in Missoula, named it, and asked for a "good/bad" reaction. Most replied with a compromise between First Amendment free speech and uncertainty about the movement's tactics:

> "...I think it's good. It's fine. We're in no shape to ignore any point of view, no matter how extreme it is, politically. I think solutions to today's problems make it really important to have as many ideas out in the open as we can have. We need them. It's time people admitted that and quit hiding from new ideas..."

> "...it's a good thing. I mean, I'm not wild about socialism but I think it's healthy to have different points of view. As long as they're a political party and not an anarchist group or a bunch of mad bombers, it's okay. I think third parties are a good idea..."

> "...I don't know. I really feel uncertain about that. We believe in free speech and they should be allowed to push for what they want. But I'm not sure it's good to have them out talking socialism to young people or giving speeches on TV. It could go too far..."

A few were openly hostile to MNSP's existence. Jim, a Flathead Valley rancher, minced few words in his response:

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> "...Yes, it's bad. We don't need that kind of people, and the university doesn't need them either... the kind of people that lure kids into thinking that socialism is the answer to everyone's troubles ...idealists ...(who) refuse to believe that instead of a better life, it smothers people with government... I'm all for freedom of speech, but I think you have to draw the line somewhere. Why should we allow people that advocate anti-American ideas to run loose? It's self-defeating..."

Most respondents accorded the MNSP a rightful existence, couched in valuative emphasis for civil liberties, community (public participation), and learning, but predicated on the assumption that the party would comport itself in a traditional party fashion focusing on electoral politics; an assumption in some cases reservedly made.

To the rural world view, a university affiliation could be a liability for the movement. Fred, a restaurant worker, responded more to the idea of a university-based organization than to the organization's purpose:

> "...I don't feel strongly against a socialist party. But I think most people are tired of student groups that want to tell the poor, ignorant public what's right and what's wrong and what we should do. Young people always think they're the first ones to understand old ideas. Like socialism -- it's been tried. How about some original thought? That's what colleges are for. Not to reinvent the wheel. These kids would do better to get their educations and get into careers. I think once they get into careers they find out there's a lot more to the world that rebuilding it by a theory in a book. They see the more practical side and don't get so carried away..."

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The intellectualist hue rankled Fred and brought similar comments from others who were sensitive to their own images of a student elitism; a "we're educated and we know more than you do" approach:

> "...it's funny. They're probably all from out-of-state and their parents send them through school and they crusade for the workers and the poor. Who are they trying to fool, themselves?..."

> "...These kids learn about the world and about our ideals like justice and equality. We all know they don't fit together. They want to change that and I guess that's admirable. They really think the world can be changed. They assume the rest of us don't know such things or that we don't care..."

R. Williams (1967) and Rokeach (1973) both found learning to have high valuative significance in their studies, but these excerpts tempt the interpretation that this value may be qualified by other values. Learning among the young and, to some, the privileged, may not be so desirable. This university/intellectualism consideration seemed to be cognitively independent of the consideration of socialism. I believe the modest anti-student sentiment demonstrated to some degree a residual resentment from the 1960's era of student protests and activism in general.

These tentative, abstract responses to the advocacy of a socialist movement in Montana lend credence to Barnett's theory that advocacy and innovation may be perceived independently by the receivers but that both components

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affect meaning. This finding will be further elaborated in the conclusions in Chapter V.

Response to the innovation

Prior to discussing socialist ideas in any detail, I solicited an estimation of socialism, folk-model fresh, "off the top of your head". I had the impression that Jim had been waiting a long time for someone to ask him that:

> "...it's big government, plain and simple. It's the same as putting everybody on a handout program. You kick back and expect the government to take care of all your troubles, and you pay the price ...because the government takes over the right to let you know what you can and can't do. It's laziness on the part of the people that allows it to happen; expecting more and more benefits and then getting to the point where you can't live without them. People lose their ability to watch out for themselves and before they know it, they've lost the ability to keep track of the government, too. That's how it's so easy for a few politicians, or even one, to slip into power. And then you've had it. The more they promise and the more people expect from them, the farther away from control they get. It (socialism) has to be fought. It destroys the ability of people to work and think for themselves..."

In contrast to this image of a welfare state that crushed human incentive, a postal clerk named Janet offered this assessment of the appeal of socialism:

> "...I think socialism is based on the level-

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> ing out of society. It appeals to poor people and minorities because it teaches that equality should be real instead of the pretend equality that we really have. I understand why people support it. It's fairness is more appealing to a lot of people, really. It's an ideal. It threatens people who are well-off, since it doesn't allow ...millionaires ...any one person to own much property. Factories and industries would be taken away from them. I really don't think many people have an accurate understanding of socialism because there are such conflicting theories about it, depending on whether you stand to gain or lose. It's hard to know what to believe..."

To Scott, a college graduate construction worker, the image of socialism was framed by consumerism and his familiarity with selective socialization in some sectors of the economies of other countries:

> "...I think that socialist theory is that either directly or indirectly, most people work for the government. Since the government is an extension of the people, everyone in a sense works for themselves. Their idea is that by government control of manufacturing and marketing, people can be protected from profiteering and fake shortages that rip off consumers. Everything could be regulated in the public interest. It seems to work in some cases. England and Sweden are partly socialiszed. In Alberta, the mining and oil industries are socialized and they have socialized medecine. I think the people are pretty happy with it. It gives the public more say in their economy..."

A different understanding of socialism, this one more dreadfully familiar to the movement, came from a middle-aged sawmill mechanic:

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> "...In a socialist country, all the property is government-owned...you rent your house from the government. You work and live according to what the government says is in the best interests of socialism. If some bureaucrat thinks you'd be a good garbageman, you'll be a garbageman. Too bad what _you_ wanted to be. You do what's right for socialism, not what's right for yourself. You don't own property so you've got no choice but to do what they want you to. I don't know what makes people want that. They're blind to what's happened in Russia and Cuba. Look at those poor bastards risking their lives to get to this country just so they can be free to own a piece of land and choose their own life. It doesn't make sense that someone in this country wants to change to that kind of system..."

These excerpts contain the basic elements of the Montana folk model. Socialism is: 1) a system of bureaucratic authority; a government behemoth that denies the individual's expression both creatively and as a social unit, flying in the face of Montanan/American values for individual autonomy and personal achievement; and 2) an egalitarian ideal with valuative appeal (equality) that is supposed to defend the greater public from deprivation and exploitation, and reduce the alienation of the weak from society and hence enhance community.

Other brief excerpts share these folk conceptions:

> "...Socialism doesn't allow for the kind of freedom of each person to do as he chooses. Instead your freedom is more limited for the sake of all the people. It appeals to poor people in underdeveloped countries, but it is too restrictive for us. We are used to greater freedom than socialism can allow..."

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"...Socialism just substitutes governmental control for corporate control of the economy. I think that its drawback is efficiency. Where it's been tried, it often slows down production because bureaucracy can be very inefficient compared to corporations that have to either be efficient or die. The lack of competition in a government monopoly removes the incentive for efficient operations. You have a lot of waste and the taxpayers have to bear the burden of the increased costs..."

"...The idea behind socialism is greater equality for all the people. The society is more balanced with a more fair distribution of power. There aren't any David Rockefellers or J.P.Morgans. The people run the economy and set the prices and wages through agencies. I think it will come here like it is in Europe, but there's a lot of "free enterprise" propaganda against it. It will be slow, like in one part of the economy at a time. We already have things like socialized Medicare and if you think about it, our schools are already socialized..."

At this juncture, as a reference for further interpretation, two value clusters that affect opposite inclinations toward socialism may be inferred. A negative meaning is perceived by people with strong valuational emphasis for individual autonomy and personal achievement. The inverse of individual autonomy is subjection to any personalized authority ("big government") which some respondents perceive in socialism.

A more positive assessment of socialism derives from high valuative emphasis for community (public unity and participation) and for equality.

Extrinsically, socialism is repeatedly termed "ideal-

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istic", leading to inference at this point that even when the movement's innovation is granted some degree of intrinsic value, socialism is, to Montanans, of marginal compatibility with existential considerations. This may be due purely to perceived contradictions between socialism and social reality, or it may be due to an inability to conceptualize the magnitude of change that socialism, as it has been presented thus far, is believed to require.

Since MNSP (or any other socialist group) had not become publicly visible at the time of these interviews, informants were unprepared to evaluate specific socialist ideas and proposals. With the exception of old Mike, who had known "wobblies" in the 1920's in Butte, and two others who had read something by Marx, primary contact with leftist theory was nil. To compensate for this void, I summarized (my layman's understanding of) socialist theory and proposals to elicit valuative responses to specific aspects of socialism, some of which might be less desirable (or less possible) than others.

Powerlessness and private ownership

We discussed socialists' criticisms of the private ownership of production and distribution (capitalism). The movement maintains that the generation of profit (surplus value) deprives the worker of his labor's true value

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and increasingly centralizes wealth into fewer hands. The state then becomes co-opted into protecting the interests of the owning class, which insures economic stability, at a cost to the masses of their sovereignty, freedom, and social well-being. The perception of powerlessness, would say the socialist, is the very real manifestation of mature capitalism, wherein the welfare and concerns of the working class become estranged from and subservient to the welfare and concerns of private ownership. In short, what's good for capitalism comes before what's good for the people.

Mike, the former miner, responded to this with a typically unionist tack:

> "...It's true about capitalism. One thing I know after fifty years of working for wages is that no matter how much you're getting paid, you aren't making what you're worth because the boss is making more money on your time than you are. Look at John D. Rockefeller. If you hire a few thousand people and make money on every one of them every day, you're going to end up with a wad of dough. Then the politicians fall all over themselves trying to please you. And when they're through in office, you put them on your payroll for public relations. Real pals, the rich and the politicians. They get what they want but labor has to fight every inch of the way just to stay alive..."

While Mike's paraphrase of Marx testified to his perception of capitalist exploitation and co-option of the state by the wealthy, other respondents offered variant degrees of concurrence. Jim felt it was common knowledge,

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but since the rules of the game were known to all, every-one had a right to wealth and its powerful fringe benefits:

> "...It's no big secret is it? I mean, socialists aren't the first ones to figure out that some people have more power than others... You can't keep somebody out of politics just because he's rich. The thing is, we've all got the chance to make money, and the ability to have influence is available to all of us if we make the effort. And unless people are dumb enough to sell their votes, nothing can be put over on them. A rich man has no bigger vote than you or I do... The interests of the rich are the same as everyone else's in a way -- to keep the country strong and provide the best standard of living we can have. The idea that they live off the workers ignores the fact that people have to have work, doesn't it? They have to have jobs. When you work for another man, it's a fact of life that he has power over you, but if you apply yourself, he's going to be fair..."

In Jim's value hierarchy, emphasis for individual autonomy and personal achievement legitimize disproportionate power. His testimonial to social mobility displaced the tendency (that others had) to disparage social inequity. Although Mike and Jim struck discordant affective estimations of capitalism, a matter of note is that extrinsically, both concurred with the socialist critique. Both perceived power to be disproportionate. This was almost unanimous among the interviewees:

> "...There's a lot of truth to it. The advantages of wealth go way beyond the voting strength of the upper class. The tax system obviously wasn't written by the majority of workers; lower- or middle-income people. But I don't know if it's true that wealth keeps getting more and more concentrated. I think

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there are more rich people than ever, proportionally. And organized labor is better off than ever in terms of income. Unions have a lot of power too. But it isn't the same, I don't think. The threat of closing a factory or moving an industry to a foreign country sways a lot of votes in elections and in Congress..."

"...Wealth gets more concentrated because the government doesn't fight monopolies and mergers any more. The way it is going, about three or four huge corporations are going to own most of the nation's business. That isn't what the American revolution was all about. The idea of free enterprise is defeating itself..."

"...The people always believe they have the power but big business is really in control. Foreign policy is determined by business interests. Vietnam was good for business. Selling jet war planes to every little country is good for business, too, but it might not be so good for the country. The socialist argument is right, but you don't have to be a socialist to know it..."

"...The two-party system is supposed to even out power. The Democrats stand for the interests of the lower classes of society, but they depend on big contributions to get elected too. Nobody can afford to be an enemy of private ownership or they lose financial backing. I guess that confirms socialists' ideas. To really have power, you've got to have money first. It's not right, but it's built into the system..."

We may interpret considerable common ground between the anti-capitalism of the socialist movement and the public's dissonant perceptions of unequal power distribution in America. Not one informant disagreed with the thesis that wealth entails disproportionate power. How-

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ever, while the socialist sees such disproportion to be the inevitable contradiction between capitalism and freedom capable of correction only through radical social restructuring, the Montanan is more inclined to view it an a reformable recent corruption of the free enterprise ideal.

From most informants, disaffection was explicit in this perception of unequal power. Since class stratification is the inverse of equality and powerlessness is the inverse of community, this same value cluster identified previously is pertinent to meaning. In this case, toward capitalism, the cluster frames a negative (undesirable) meaning.

Other values that bear on the socialist critique of private ownership emerged as the interviews progressed to a discussion of public ownership: the fundamental socialist innovation.

Public ownership and power

The socialist movement maintains that the innovation of public ownership and control of the means of production and distribution would rectify the inequities and injustices brought to society by capitalism. Simply stated, they believe that the innovation of public ownership (socialization) would more justly distribute wealth and would restore the working classes to participation and

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political sovereignty. At this point, the compatibility between socialist and Montanan perceptions of the world begins to strain.

Merle, who had previously articulated his feelings of powerlessness, gave a qualified socialist response:

> "...Public ownership has appeal for giving the public more voice in the policies that affect them. I'd feel more secure if nuclear power plants were publicly owned. I don't think private industry can be trusted to exercise the kind of judgements that have to be made in such an important and dangerous field. I don't think there would be so many plants because the people would rather see other alternatives tried first... I don't think that public ownership of everything is a good idea. It's too massive and too complicated. Who could keep track of it? It has to be more selective..."

To a student named Paula, public ownership meant "government" ownership; a significant semantic distinction:

> "...You'd be trading one kind of alienation for another, I think. What's worse, the big business monopolies or a big government monopoly? I don't think that consumers or workers would really gain that much from it...(It) seems like one has as many drawbacks as the other, and maybe both have some good points, too. If the government made all the cars, everybody would have the same car. It might be cheaper, but it sounds pretty boring. It's like Chinese fashions. At least capitalism provides variety..."

Others conceptualized public ownership with variant affective estimates, even the most positive of which exhibited concern for the sacrifice of individualism:

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"...In Europe, I noticed that almost all the transportation and utilities were socialized ...(and) I think the people thought they were a pretty good deal. I can see it for things that are public necessities or a kind of natural monopoly, but I think it would be a mistake to try it across the board, not just because of the difficulty but because it isn't necessary. I think private ownership is better in most businesses, because the competition serves the people. The free market is also a place where people have some power by buying good products and not buying bad ones. That's a way of exerting control, too...I think public and private ownership can co-exist..."

"...Public ownership couldn't make up for the loss of inventive genius. You have to have incentives for research and improvements and new discoveries. Withou competition, you eliminate that. Progress would be much slower. Capitalism has it's bad points, but it is the best way to advance the quality of life..."

"...I couldn't imagine changing over. It would be so unmanageable. Think of the bureaucracy it would require. It's just too unrealistic..."

"...Whenever the government runs something, it quits working the way people wanted it to. To a bureaucrat, every thing else is second to just holding onto the job and climbing the ladder. No matter how wonderful government ownership could be, our eyes tell us that it just doesn't work. No matter how out of kilt private enterprise gets, we have to keep trying to make it work..."

The meaning of public ownership is conciously framed by considerations for both intrinsic and extrinsic value. Inclining people toward negative affection are values for

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individual achievement, technological progress, variety, material comfort, and autonomy (expressed in the context of antipathy for "government" authority.

The conversion of "public" ownership to "government" ownership in the narrative demonstrates a significant semiotic linkage. It implies that the socialists' concept of public ownership and control, which is conceived by the movement to be the embodiment of pure democracy, does not always transfer to the receivers. The authoritarian image evoked by the spectre of government, which respondents previously said they felt alienated from and impotent to influence, is a critical element in the determination of meaning for some people (It will be further interpreted in Chapter V).

Values promoting positive affection for public ownership, again, center on the equality/community cluster.

Throughout these narrative excerpts, apart from affective consideration, the sheer magnitude of change (as it is implied in the discussion of socialist theory) is incompatible. Extrinsically, the idea of comprehensive, abstract socialization appears to Montanans to be out of the bounds of reality. The folk meaning of public ownership is altered in the consideration of specific programs for socialization, and shall be examined again when the single-sector public ownership proposal of the Montana New Socialist Party is discussed.

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Class consciousness and revolution

As the interviews progressed from the socialist model of the power monopoly of the capitalist elite, class oppression and conflict, and the theory of public ownership, I broached the Marxian concept of rising class consciousness and the seizure of power by the proletariat. By broaching the subject of proletarian revolution without a prologue on New Left tactics and method, I unwittingly provoked some animated responses. These responses manifest, I believe, a focal aspect of the socialist movement's meaning to the Montana public, and an important aspect of the value conflicts in folk-model socialism. Thereby, they manifest the root of considerable popular phobia over Marxist ideology.

Marcie, whose sensitivity toward poverty disposed her to empathize with the egalitarian ideal, now articulated what could best be termed a passionate ambivalence:

> "...I think the lower classes are more aware all the time of their disadvantages. The very rich are so far removed from the world the rest of us live in. Whether you live in a ghetto or even if you own a small business, compared to the super-rich, you're like a peasant. It's like the kings of the Middle Ages who ate off golden plates while peasants spent their whole lives paying taxes. There have been a lot of revolutions for the same thing in the past. But it is scary too. I hate to think of what it would be like if there was a proletarian revolution. An uprising could get carried away and so much destruction would happen that the country could never recover. It would wipe out good

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> along with the bad. Even if the wealthy get worse than they are, a mass revolt would be an awfully high price to pay for change..."

Class conflict and consciousness and the theory of a proletarian revolution are, by some, perceived in the context of violence. The hackneyed vocabulary of socialism ("dictatorship of the proletariat", "abolition of private property", etc.) invites so many 19th Century analogies that some informants' initial reactions were almost parodic. Visions of plumbers-turned-anarchists sniping at stock brokers and mounted police battling students in the Rose Garden cloud circumspect estimation of the theory for itself. A concern with means pre-empts valuative estimation of the end.

> "...The idea that workers could hope to just seize control of the country is what makes socialism so naive. Do they really believe they could revolt? It would be suicide. People would never support it. A revolt would be squashed and nothing would be gained..."

These conceptualizations of class consciousness leading to proletarian revolt are certainly part of the Montana folk-model, are value-laden, and must be considered as part of the meaning of socialism to the public. And, it must be noted that among some factions of the Left, violent insurrection might still be considered a viable tactic.

But to clarify for the interviewees the New Left's

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conception of proletarian revolution as a radical change in _thought_ and _belief_ to be brought to the political scene by traditional non-violent electoral means, I presented to them the more modernized orientation of the MNSP and its kindred organizations whose tactics are specifically electoral. _This_ is the movement that seeks to approach these Montanans and it is their response to _it_ that we are trying to find and interpret.

Tom, who earlier had spoken of how people were isolated from each other and alienated from national unity, thought collective political activity was unlikely:

> "...I guess that kind of feeling (class consciousness) could happen because of the resentment of the rich and the government that serves them. There's no organization, but the feeling is there if it could be brought out ...there are so many special interests nowdays that the idea of a lot of people putting down their pet peeves to get together on one issue doesn't seem likely. We all have the same interests in general, but there's too many other things that distract us and keep people lined up against each other..."

Janet disagreed:

> "...Their idea is correct. There is a feeling of consciousness among ordinary people against big business and the power of the rich. I'd like to see it at the polls; I think the public still could bring about real change..."

Charlie articulated what several informants seemed to feel:

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> "...That kind of a movement doesn't have any guarantees. It's a risk, because the emotional kind of issue can blind people to other things. In Russia, the people were unified against the czar but they ended up with another kind of power structure that had its own interest heart. The idea of a real takeover by the people just doesn't seem to carry through. The socialists can't guarantee that what they say could happen really will. It hasn't come true in the past and that makes the whole thing seem like wishful thinking..."

The considerations of extrinsic and intrinsic value have become more distinct. The idea of a unified movement of the working people toward political power elicits empathy, channeled once again by the community/equality value cluster. The positive response to electoral tactics as opposed to the negative response to an image of violent revolution exhibits value for civil liberties, personal and national security, and for a peaceful life. The American predilection toward change is tempered by considerations for the method of that change.

But the extrinsic value is less positive. To a minor but notable extent, manifested by three of my informants, the folk image of socialism is colored by a Russian analogy. Even bearing in mind the dissimilarity between the Bolshevik revolution and the overt electoral methodology of the New Left, the idea of a socialist movement in Montana is not wholly separate from perceived historic precedent. Marxism, to some proportion of the Montana population, is Marxism:

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> "...(in the USSR)...elections are just for appearances. If you can only vote for one party, it's not democratic at all. A socialist's idea of elections is not like ours..."

> "...The Russians overthrew the ruling class but the theory didn't really work out like the people thought it would. The communist party leaders stayed in power and the people didn't gain as much control as the party did. They took care of the rich, but still didn't get a system for the working people..."

The modern Left in the United States has evolved a detailed critique of the "errors" of theory, practice, and circumstantial events in the Russian and other proletarian revolutions, which is beyond the scope of this study and beyond the breadth of these interviews. Just as the American Communist Party was perceived in the shadow of Stalinism by the public eye of the 1940's and 1950's, so the modern socialist movement's meaning is affected by historical and international folk analogy.

This analogy can work either for rejection or for acceptance. Respondents who referred to Canadian or Western European (parliamentary) socialism usually indicated more positive value compatibility, both extrinsically and intrinsically. Those whose models were Russian or Cuban invariably perceived negative meaning (two of these people used the words "socialism" and "communism" interchangably). The Russian analogy disposed an informant to consider socialization as being susceptible to, or inherently linked with, totalitarianism. Concomitant to this, Montana values

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for national security, personal autonomy, and civil liberty lead to sharp incompatibility and rejection.

Along with these intrinsic factors, the presence of negative models and the absence of well-known positive models of "successful" socialization incline persons toward negative extrinsic assessments. Charlie would not accept as possible the movement's vision without a "guarantee". And Tom, like others, could empathize with the ideal of class unity but perceived American society to be too pluralistic for its realization.

Egalitarianism

In the progression of the intervies, it was steadily evident that one particular value, that for equality, which is a core motivational value for the socialist movement, is also a strong component of meaning for the receivers. It might be argued that conflict in the relationship of equality to other values in fact spawned much of Marxian theory. This same conflict is present, to varying degrees, for non-Marxists:

> "...I think that equality is one of our values that is a real problem for us. We like to think that our country views every person as having the same rights and standing as the other person. The law is supposed to apply equally to everybody, but it's obvious that there are ways around it. White collar criminals don't go to prison. If they can pay a big fine, they go free. Nixon wasn't even tried. That's not right

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by our values but we do a lot of hedging on the basis that some people are worth more than others to society, depending on their occupations, and on their money..."

"...The civil rights movement has shown that there's a lot of problems left in the U.S. People aren't born equally. They don't really have equal chances or equal educations. Look at our own Indian reservations ...Equality has always been an ideal. We pay lip service to it. Even though we're making progress on it, it will never be brought up to the level we want it to be. Maybe it's an impossible goal, but I think we have to keep working toward it. Otherwise we will be living a lie forever..."

The equality value surfaces as a very dissonant and visible conflict between objective and subjective conditions in American life. Egalitarianism has a strong appeal. However, the affective influence of the equality value is structurally linked to the individual achievement/personal autonomy cluster. While social equality is desirable, Montanan existential assumptions of human nature and the structure of society cloud the desirable with other considerations, both valuative and pragmatic.

"...Equality is just an ideal. You have to have different statuses so people will use their talents to better themselves. Some competition is necessary. It can lead to extremes, like I think Rockefeller is an extreme and it can be dangerous, but people have to have the opportunity to better themselves. That's what society is based on...You can't just have everyone stay at the same position they have..."

"...The idea of everyone actually being

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> equally well-off is good and that's what I think socialists believe in. But it's also pretty naive. There are always too many lazy ones. You have to be realistic about human nature. They won't do anything if you give them too much. There has to be a way of making them work for their own good..."

The equality value conflicts with the achievement value. The degree to which either value dominates the other is bounded by one's respective image of society. For Marx, the sole segmentation of human society was that of socioeconomic class. He wrote that individualism, the concept of the self-determinant, aspiring individual, was an illusion born of the "rights and privileges" doctrines of private property; an illusion that obfuscated the collective interests of the working class and fragmented their energies. Hence, for Marx and his successors, the equality and community values predominate.

To the Montanan, the legatee of classical liberal social theory, society is an aggregate of individuals and groups of individuals whose interests may at times be collective but are fundamentally particularistic. Equality is desirable, but it is also desirable to be able to overcome that equality; to, in fact, be able to strive for superiority. The achievement and autonomy values dominate here.

Upon first examination, the qualification of the equality value by the individualistic values support what

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other studies have found: that "equality of opportunity" is a more appropriate description for the American value than is literal "equality of existence" (Warner 1953:108; R.Williams 1967:437). However, threaded through many of the preceding narratives have been instances of affective preference for literal egalitarianism, of which this excerpt from Janet's interview is illustrative:

> "...You can have a society that allows each person a better chance at a middle class kind of life. The range of lifestyles in America is just too broad to go on peaceably. The unfairness is becoming more and more visible. How can we justify the fact that some people are poorly housed and can't afford health care and at the same time there's somebody like Howard Hughes? I think that as the rich keep getting richer the middle class is going to be more and more demanding for real reforms. If it goes on it will become intolerable to too many people. If we just evened out the extremes, everybody would benefit in the long run. It would eliminate suffering, really..."

Since Americans have traditionally held that status and reward are proportional to an individual's effort toward achievement, inequality of existence can be legitimized (Rokeach's "rationalization of self" function of values). In other words, the belief in social mobility makes individual inequality compatible with egalitarian idealism. Janet's desire for structured equality is motivated by her conviction that economic stratification is not only too extreme but too rigid. She perceived social mobility, and hence, equal opportunity, to be of decreasing accessibility. In this dissonant observation, she was

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joined by several others:

> "...I don't think everybody in this country has an equal chance any more. The people with money have the advantage and they keep making more. Maybe it was true when the country was young and expanding -- cheap land and lots of jobs. Now everything is owned and it's a seller's market. If you don't have money to start with, you never could really compete with those who do..."

> "...Free enterprise is gone anyway. All the mills are being merged into big corporations like Champion and Burlington Northern. The smaller ones are going under...Chain stores are taking over the retail markets. You can't just go out and start a business any more and compete with the guy down the block because he's part of a big corporation and they can drive you out; starve you. In ten years, half the businesses in Missoula will be franchises..."

> "...The only way to make a fortune any more is to inherit it or marry someone who will. Or you can be a rock star ...the really rich inherited money to start with. If you're born in a ghetto to poor parents you haven't got a chance in the world. Why not just be a hippie and collect unemployment? You'll still pay just as much taxes as the rich..."

> "...Equal opportunity is the Disneyland version of life in America..."

Such perceptions of rigidifying social status imply deepening conflict between the achievement/autonomy and the equality value clusters. The dissonant perception of declining social mobility diminishes extrinsic value for personal achievement. In its absence, literal equality may be assuming greater affective appeal.

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A grassroots resentment of disproportionate wealth is certainly not a new phenomenon. The achievement/autonomy values that cast preferential emphasis for overcoming equality to achieve superiority also have internally dissonant ramifications. Individuals who, in this model, demonstrate superiority ("Rockefeller", "Hughes", etc.) are not held in high esteem. Aside from the "unfair" privileges of wealth, when an individual attains, through achievement, a position of perceived personalized authority, he becomes "dangerous". The socialist and the non-socialist both disdain the power of wealth, but one see it to be the symptom and the essence of capitalism; the other confronts it as the dissonance-inducing manifestation of values that conflict with each other.

Freedom/equality

In a study previously cited, Rokeach hypothesized that 20th Century political/ideological boundaries are defined by the intersection of two value vectors: freedom and equality. He and his assistants surveyed the major works of Adolph Hitler, Barry Goldwater, V.I. Lenin, and some selected socialist theorists (principally Erich Fromm) and tabulated the frequency of reference in each to freedom and equality. The following figure diagrams his conclusions.

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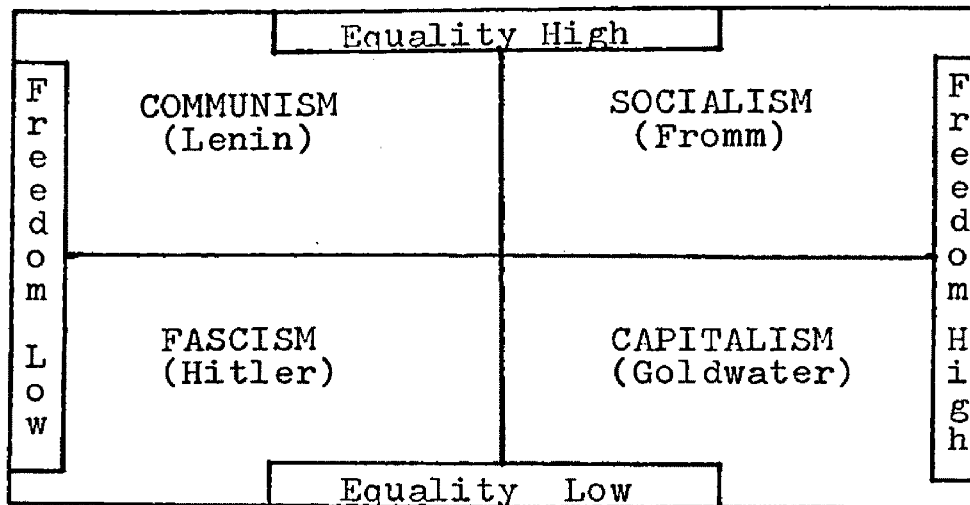

fig. 3 (Rokeach 1973:170)

Rokeach found both capitalism and socialism to emphasize freedom and to be differentiated by their relative emphasis on equality. The Montana folk-model would hypothetically be located to the "high" end of the freedom vector and, interpreting the emphasis placed upon equality in the narrative, at some mid-point on the equality vector.

I found "freedom" to be a difficult label to work with since it encompasses two overlapping but separable Montanan/American values: 1) "civil liberties" in the sense of democratic guarantees, and 2) individual autonomy. The former is freedom under governmental charter; the latter is freedom <u>from</u> governmental (or any authoritarian) interference or restriction. Both are strong, often cognitively distinct values; frequently emphasized differently in the narratives with respect to their relationship to socialism.

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The socialist's emphasis for freedom (freedom from class exploitation, civil libertarianism) is predicated upon egalitarianism. In contrast, the Montanan's emphasis upon individualistic freedom rests upon beliefs in social mobility and lesser emphasis for equality. The Montana public's folk-image of socialization has been shown to be partially framed by perceptions of restriction to personal autonomy and other individualistic values. Socialist theory, founded in materialism, insists that the personal autonomy value is a capitalist apology for the material conditions of private ownership. True freedom, says the Marxist, is an illusion until material conditions are altered to allow every person equal access to the direction and benefits of society:

> "...the liberties available are illusory, that they are available only to people who are in basic agreement with, or at least do not seriously challenge, the class distribution of wealth and power. It is precisely because radicals take liberal ideas seriously that they see the need for a revolution in which these ideals could be more fully developed, so that they are no longer merely formal principles, but are part of the actual content of people's lives." (Lerner 1973:128)

So long as the benefits of society are enjoyed disproportionally, maintains the movement, freedom is an illusion of self-justification.

I presented this critique to the informants and asked for their evaluations. Scott, whose conceptions of

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socialism were based upon reference to governmental programs in Canadian provinces, did not find significant disparity in freedom between the two economic systems:

> "...The idea that all of a sudden your lifestyle changes (after socialization) and you're more limited in what you can do is just paranoia. It's conservative propaganda. There isn't any difference between the way I live and the way an Albertan lives. If anything, they may have it better. Their health care is free and their towns are cleaner. You don't see so many shabby homes and run-down farms there and they have a lot of money to spend. Their taxes are actually less, but then they don't fight wars in Asia, either... If your idea of being free is to be a tycoon, maybe it would be more restrictive, but for the average person there's no difference..."

Jack, who was of strong individualist persuasion, thought there would be a definite sacrifice of freedom in socialization:

> "...if you're going to guarantee that everybody is taken care of to an equal standing, you can't help lower the standard of living for the majority of people. Everyone would have to live under a certain ceiling. It's better to have the upper limit wide open. It allows each person to at least have a chance to live life to the fullest. I don't think you can put a price on that...to be able to live with no holds barred. Sure, the majority of people will never escape a kind of average existence, but a few will, and to have that opportunity is the great thing about American life. If you don't have that kind of freedom, I don't think you have freedom at all..."

Fred related a personal story to point out that the free-

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dom of private enterprise might be self-defeating:

> "...I was a kid in the Depression but I remember it pretty well. My folks lost their farm near Malta. They had to take out a second mortgage to a man who already owned 11,000 acres. He foreclosed on their place two years later and took over the bank payments. It taught me a lesson I never forgot: that even in hard times the rich have the advantage over the rest of us. It's the same way now. Inflation and high interest rates work to the advantage of the rich. Big business keeps swallowing up small businesses. Young kids today don't have near the chance of working for themselves as we did. If it keeps going that way, the whole country will be owned and run by a few people... Those people will have power as if they were invisible dictators. Their decisions will determine how everybody else has to live... Our freedom is at stake there. If people don't see what's happening and make the government stop it, corporations will be the government. Every time I read about one of these big mergers, I think we've lost a little bit of our freedom..."

Fred's synthesis of perceptions of wealth accumulation and declining social mobility led him to question the future of individual freedom, which he valued dearly. Since what he perceived to be happening was what Marx had written would come with mature capitalism, I asked him if socialization would restore freedom to the "common man".

> "...It would be a different thing. Maybe it is inevitable that free enterprise ends up repressing the freedom of the majority for the sake of making money. I think it's possible to go back if the

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> people were really aware of their freedom disappearing. Big business could be broken back down. But if you do that, I guess it's about the same thing as a controlled economy with more governmental regulations... Maybe the alternative is socialism. We'd have to rethink what freedom is all about; whether it's protected for the many or for the few..."

"Freedom", or its particular form, personal autonomy is one of the Montanan's most cherished values. There is no valuative ideal that he speaks about with more devotion or more conviction. Yet, from my interviews, there is no clear image of just how "real" it is or how it fits with other values. Conflicts between autonomy and other American values were perceived by several informants:

> "...The idea of total freedom has given us a lot of problems, too. We've thought we were free to ruin the environment and to tell other countries what they should do. We used to think we were free to have slaves. We have had to learn to set limits..."

> "...The idea that you're only free if everyone is equal and free is kind of a platitude. It's like a proverb from the Bible. Could it ever really be lived up to? It goes back to whether you could really have a society where everybody had an equal position..."

> "...In our society, a person's ability to be free is determined by money. We all might be free in principle, but the ability to <u>use</u> that freedom is dependent on lots of other things..."

> "...We have the freest system in the world. An American is free even if he's poor -- he

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> has the right to vote and the right to free speech and religion. When you compare ours to the freedom of the iron curtain countries you have a huge difference. Your freedom is limited by what leaders think is in the national interest..."

This thought was an ironic contrast to the following excerpt, in which the same perimeters were perceived to be placed upon American life:

> "...There are some important things about freedom that most people don't think about. A good example is energy. Our establishment gives us the choice between different sources that are controlled by business interests, but something like solar energy isn't supported. That's a restriction to people's freedom. What I mean is that we are free within the limits of what's already here, but new ideas can be held off or eliminated just by existing power structures. That's a limit to our real freedom..."

The socialist movement's analysis of capitalist freedom and it's plan for "authentic" liberation of human life was, for Montanans, the most difficult to grasp of socialist ideas. It may be interpreted that "freedom" is such a deeply-held value that the questioning of its extrinsic viability was a new and unfamiliar activity. Montanans' most frequent valuative uncertainty, confirming Rokeach's hypothesis, was the relationship of autonomy to equality. The freedom to transcend equality can become the will to power, which can negate freedom. When such conflicts are manifest in folk consciousness, it may be indicative of

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transformational dynamics within the value system. This research indicates that any such transformational restructuring of these values' respective emphasis is of critical moment to the success or failure of the New Left.

Environmentalism/Montana socialism

In tracing the history of the American Left in the preceding chapter, it was pointed out that the modern movement has embraced many independent reformist social movements and has incorporated their concerns into its overall critique of capitalist society. Solutions to the particular perceived ills of these movements have been integrated with the goals of public ownership.

Typical of this trend is the environmental advocation of contemporary socialism. The roots of this alliance can be found as far back as Marx's (1875) discussions of capitalism's predication on the domination of nature, in which he maintained that capitalism's drive for surplus value and its constant appetite for expansion would deprive the people of their rightful dominion with and enjoyment of the natural environment. Marx believed public ownership and control of production would limit the exploitation of nature by instituting production solely to satisfy social need. Excesses against nature caused by the "drive for profit" and the momentum of self-justified expansion would be eliminated.

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In its incorporation of the environmental movement's issues, the socialist movement embraced a concern of immediate relevance to Montanans. Environmental issues had, by the early 1970's become matters in the forefront of public controversy. This was manifested in the guarantee of the right of the people to a clean and healthful environment in the state's new Constitution.

I presented the respondents with the socialists' theory of environmental degradation as a feature of capitalism and with the movement's proposed remedy. Compared to other aspects of socialist theory, this was something more tangible and understandable. As Colson (quoted earlier) observed, particular solutions to particular ills are more easily evaluated than is the prospect of restructuring an entire system.

Greg had consistently maintained that the ills of contemporary America were rectifiable through the reform of existing institutions. This conviction carried into the environmental realm, too, but in his estimation some value priorities would have to change:

> "...Private ownership is capable of policing itself. After all, executives need a clean environment, too. Since we became aware of the seriousness of pollution, we've taken a lot of good corrective steps...I think we are having to realize that the planet is more fragile than we thought it was, but we are willing to make the sacrifices, like driving smaller cars and conserving energy. We know now that having everything we want just isn't a realistic approach... As long

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as people are willing to sacrifice some of their consumption, we can keep environmental damages under control. It's all keyed on how much we take from the earth compared to how much we put back..."

To Greg, the solution of environmental problems was in reduced consumption, which implies a diminished value emphasis for material comfort. This remedy was offered by others, but they were less confident that diminished consumption and material convenience would be sufficient remedy:

"...The root of the problem is the demands of our way of life. Everybody assumes they have to have two or three cars and all kinds of gadgets that make life more glamorous and convenient. Our system tells us that. If you don't have these things, you're not living right. People have to reduce their demands. We have to realize that the environment is limited..."

"...I think Americans have always assumed that bigger was better and subconsciously we believed that science would always take care of any problems that developed. Now we're finding out that it isn't so true. Science creates problems, too, like chemicals and cancer-causing products...A lot of the problems are beyond our scientific limits now..."

"...It goes beyond just what we do as individuals. If we don't consume as much, the economy will still keep demanding resources for overseas. Big business wants us to keep consuming more but if we don't they'll just export more and the environment will still be damaged..."

"...The only way to not have any environmental problems is to not have any heavy industry.

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> Since that's unrealistic, we just have to do the best we can. To make industry clean up we have to pay the higher prices. It means less buying and more inflation. Life is going to have to change. Standards will have to go down..."

These excerpts reveal the conflicts of several values. Cultural values for beauty and a healthful life have assumed elevated emphasis as environmental awareness has escalated. Cultural values for material comfort and technological progress have been called into question.

The significance of conflict between these values is that comfort and progress values are strongly tied to the personal achievement/autonomy cluster that has been demonstrated to channel negative attitudes toward the socialist innovation. In this respect, it may be that the conflicts amplified by environmental issues could promote value system transformation to lessen emphasis for individualistic values and amplify the valuative importance of community-related values.

Concomitant to this, the narratives also exhibit an incentive for reorganization in the existential realm of the value orientation. Americans have traditionally assumed that man is distinct from and superordinant to nature (F.Kluckhohn 1969:347; Leiss 1972), an assumption that was part of their industrial revolution heritage and was reinforced by the national experience of conquering the "frontier" and taming raw land for settlement. What

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was once perceived to be an open-ended and infinite natural bounty is now increasingly perceived to be of real limitations. This promotes dissonance in the existential model of human-to-nature relations.

The Montana New Socialist Party was organized with the expressed intent to place on the Montana ballot an initiative that would, if passed, require the state to expropriate the facilities of energy production and distribution owned and operated by the Montana Power Company. The initiative would allow units of local government, under the auspices of a state energy authority, to establish and operate public utility districts. Party members observed the public controversy over Montana Power's plans to build coal-fired generators in the eastern portion of the state and their proposals for new power transmission corridors across the western portion and opted to present the public with the idea of public ownership and control of electric and natural gas utilities. The party membership believes that only by public ownership can the public's will be enforced.

The MNSP proposal focused the environmental issue to an immediate, tangible model. In this dimension, the Marxian public ownership/private ownership antithesis was more apparent to respondents, as Ellen attested:

> "...We have to wonder if private industry can ever really get to the point where they consider environmental impacts without being

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> forced to. When I look at the record of the Montana Power Co., I have to say that their interests are not the same as mine. Even though I have to depend on them, their priorities are not to do what's best in the long range for the people. They are able to manipulate the state government because they are a monopoly. What they want they get because they have all the information. And nobody else can have the chance to do a better job or do the job differently. If the only way to control their priorities is to put the system under state ownership, then I think it should be considered. The resources belong to all the people, including future generations, and we should be able to decide how they're going to be used..."

Ellen's feeling of powerlessness in affecting environmental priorities made the innovation of public ownership, with its emphasis for community, a compatible alternative. This single-instance approach to socialization provoked less outright valuative rejection than did the abstract conceptualization of socialization of the entire economy, which is implied in the earlier discussion of socialist theory. One informant, considering the MNSP public power proposal, told me, "I don't think that's very socialistic."

Paula, who earlier rejected "government" ownership for its blandness and negation of the individual, responded to the MNSP program with a qualification to individualism:

> "...When the product of the industry is something that is necessary for everybody, I think there is a question if it's right to let someone make money by controlling it. It seems like there is a right of the people

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to own energy because there's no choice whether or not you have to have it..."

Paula perceived another realm (beyond egalitarian sentiment) in which limits to the exercise of individualism might have justification; that of public necessity. To other informants, such as Charlie, this particular instance of free enterprise in perceived conflict with popular sovereignty and welfare provoked sharp criticism of private ownership:

> "...For years Montana Power has advertised that energy was unlimited and such a bargain that we should use more of it... It meant dollars for them. Now they say we have a shortage and the rates keep going up to provide new sources. Well, who really caused the problem? They did, by telling us to use more. The love of money just keeps getting us deeper into trouble, whether it's environment or something else. The people are being taken for a ride and then told that they are to take the blame..."

The socialists' arguments about private ownership's incongruence with popular benefit and control had a generally compatible message to environmentally-concerned Montanans. But despite the preceding excerpts, the compatibility of the criticism did not entail compatibility, across-the-board, for the socialist solution:

> "...The thing is, once you let government into one part of the private economy, you'd be setting a precendent that could be bad..."

> "...The solution wouldn't be socialism. It would be a no-growth kind of philosophy. I think extremist groups would have too much

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> power to block development that has to occur. If every project was subject to people's approval, very few would be allowed because we all want the other guy to have to make the sacrifices. Nobody wants a coal mine in their neighborhood. But we have to have coal mines, and it takes private industry to determine where the most efficient sources are. They can make judgements on more practical facts than just who wants it or who doesn't..."

From these excerpts, and from the preceding narrative, it would be anticipated that the MNSP program would be attractive or repellant to people largely on the basis of their respective valuational priorities for the community/equality or the achievement/autonomy value clusters. This is indeed the case, but the polarization is less clearly defined when environmental problems are central to the choice.

The existential dilemma posed by shifts in the man/nature model poses a less certain assumptive priority to the individualistic polarity. The perception of environmental encroachment and degradation heightens emphasis for the community value. Even Jim, whose affirmation of individualist values had unwaiveringly channeled a rejection of leftist priorities, exhibited a less polarized value response:

> "...About the time they came and told me they were going to run a powerline across my land, I'd get pretty loud, too. If you allow anyone, whether it's the government or a corporation, to have their way over the wishes of the common people, you have the

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> downfall of democracy... Public utility districts are a good idea, like any kind of co-op. Like I said before, those ideas are good, it's just that they don't always work the way they're supposed to. If the state took over Montana Power, which will never happen... (you) still don't solve the problem of where to get more energy. People will still need it and they won't agree on where to get it. But what you would have is that when the state decided it was going to build a dam, by god, it will get built! No matter how many farms will be under water. When the state makes the decision, who are you going to turn to for help and protection?... Having the Montana Power Co. on one hand and the state agencies on the other is a check-and-balance system that gives us some protection from monopoly. It saves us from either side having dictator's powers..."

A hypothetical confrontation between corporate needs and his own environmental priorities provoked, when contrasted to his earlier narrative, a change in Jim's value emphasis. The government, formerly the perceived embodiment of authority and threat to autonomy, remained so, but also became a mediator to define the limits of power. In the theatre of environmental encroachment, government also became the embodiment of community.

Taken together, these excerpts imply that the public ownership/private ownership argument has some distance to go. They also imply that the environmental movement could serve as the stage for subsequent debates. I believe that the environmental movement signals a transformational dynamic in the Montana value system, occurring in response to significant reordering of assumptions of man/nature

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existential relations. These value system transformations incline people toward less emphasis for the individualistic value cluster and greater emphasis for the community/equality cluster. These transformations could, if sustained, be of significant determinance in the shaping of attitudes toward many social and political ideas, including those of the socialist movement.

Summary

These folk narratives provide an insight into the mental "reality" of the people of western Montana. In considering the many facets of the socialist movement, Montanans have articulated what the movement means to them and have thereby enabled ethnographic interpretation of the valuative and existential beliefs that form that meaning. The interpretively significant points of the narrative are summarized below:

1) Montanans believe serious social, economic, and political problems confront them from a national to a personal level. They feel, as individuals, powerless to affect, influence, or control the "system" under which they live and upon which they rely for problem resolution. They believe change is needed and could be positive. They generally conceptualize change in the form of particular solutions to particular ills.

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2) Montanans generally accept the advocacy of socialism as a legitimate expression of political and ideological diversity, exhibiting valuative emphasis for civil libertarianism and learning. Some people exhibited sensitivity and resentment to perceived intellectual elitism in the movement.

3) Montanans are disposed to consider or reject socialist ideas on the basis of their respective emphasis for the value clusters (equality/community) or (individual achievement/autonomy). Montanans' folk model of social reality, and the grand scale of abstract, theoretical socialization incline people to perceive socialism to be idealistic and of marginal extrinsic value.

4) The socialist analysis of capitalism's increasingly disproportionate wealth and it's relationship to political power is compatible to the Montana folk model. Valuative emphasis for equality/community promotes a negative attitude toward the perceived status quo.

5) Montanans perceive socialism and its model of class revolution partially by international analogy. The image of violent class politics, reinforced by analogy to the Russian or Cuban revolutions, frames negative intrinsic and extrinsic assessments, revealing values for civil liberty, peace, and national security. The perception of parliamentary class politics promotes a more positive

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meaning, framed by value for community, equality, and civil liberty.

6) Egalitarianism is the most attractive aspect of socialist ideology. The affective power of the equality value with respect to individualistic values is partially dependent on the individual's perception of social mobility in American society. Those informants who believed social mobility was in decline were more favorably disposed toward egalitarian programs.

7) The Montanans' value priority for personal autonomy frames a negative meaning for authority, which is perceived in socialized society. Illegitimate authority is also perceived in corporate capitalism.

8) The socialist innovation of public ownership, abstractly considered, is perceived negatively by Montanans in the context of their values for individualism, material comfort, technological progress, and variety. Public ownership is often perceived to imply "government" authority. In the consideration of public ownership in selected, specific sectors of the economy (those sectors of public necessity), public ownership was less incompatible.

9) The socialist movement's critique of environmental issues and the movement's remedies are more extrinsically compatible to Montanans than is comprehensive socializa-

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tion. Environmental distress has promoted transformations in the Montana value orientation that include lower valuative priority for material comfort and technological progress, which are correlates of the principal individualistic value cluster.

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CHAPTER V

TRENDS AND CONCLUSIONS

In the four preceding chapters, we have modeled the process of cultural innovation, examined the theory of values and their role in the shaping of political attitudes, traced the development of the socialist movement and described its proposed innovation, and we have sampled Montanans' beliefs and attitudes toward that movement and toward that innovation. We may now interpret this information toward answers to the questions that stimulated this study: Why do some Americans advocate socialism while others steadfastly repudiate it? ...What are the differences in value orientations? ...What can we anticipate for and from the movement in the future?

The people of Montana are a group not accustomed to the deliberation and debate of the great ideological conflicts of the 20th Century. The specific beliefs and goals of the socialist movement are remote to them. Despite the fact that none of my informants had any direct association or confrontation with the movement, each held some personal model of a socialist system from which meaning was derived. That these meanings fall with some regularity into value-influenced categories attests to a

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finite universe of models, perceived most often by international analogy or by exposure to varied non-socialist media. This Montana conviction, that with or without contact with a visible movement, "we already know what socialism is," presents a two-fold hurdle to the movement's innovative process. Prerequisite to convincing Montanans that their innovation is preferable, socialists would have to first overcome contradictory pre-established beliefs about the nature of socialism.

The thesis that Montanans perceive rapid social change and a social milieu of turbulence and crisis-level conflict must be critically interpreted. While informants repeatedly expressed their confusion and frustration with American social problems and personal alienation, their concern with "crisis" may, in an anthropological perspective, be partially a conceit. This seems particularly true in comparison with countries (emerging African nations, Argentina, Northern Ireland) that are literally coming apart at their political and social seams. Seen from the Third World, the United States is as solid as the Pillars of Hercules. My point here is that despite popular hue and cry over social distress, the Montanan/American is not objectively faced with total social and political chaos and the penchant for sweeping change manifested in the narrative must be interpreted to be at least partly a posture. Montanans, as a group, are not frustrated to a point where

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massive restructuring of their social and economic institutions is seriously contemplated.

Yet we remind ourselves of the adage that introduced Chapter II; that change is culture's constant. The anguish of the synchronic study of cultural phenomena comes at the end of the study, when the researcher mulls over his information looking for indicators of temporal trends so he can project his variables and dialectics into tomorrow and say, "here's what will happen." Certainly, Montanans' ideas and beliefs are changing, just as is the socialist movement. And when one group of people is purposefully trying to alter the beliefs of another, change can occur very rapidly.

Montanans and the Movement: Compatibility

In comparing the values of members of the socialist movement to non-member western Montanans, an anthropologist is struck first by the similarities rather than the differences. After an academic regimen of contrasting the culture of, for example, the Andaman Islanders to that of the Laplanders, the two belief systems compared here seem almost congruent. But, while the values that mold and congeal the political and social attitudes of the two groups are similar, significant differences in the value <u>emphasis</u> (structural relationships between values) are evident.

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This research is strongly supportive of Rokeach's freedom/equality value paradigm. It has, I believe, broadened and explicated that paradigm by revealing the interrelationships of the freedom and equality values to other values and by demonstrating the dialectical linkages between these affective assumptions and the existential models that accompany them.

Marxian theory and the Montana belief system exhibit significant compatibility. The narratives frequently manifest a form of class consciousness; one without political direction and certainly more "latent" than the movement would design. The prevailing system of social categorization is to set "ourselves" apart from an indistinct, amorphous wealthy elite that wields disproportionate political clout. While some informants saw themselves "better off" than the poor (usually their idea of the urban poor), still, there is collective antipathy toward the perception of an elite upper class.

The socialist critique of capitalism's inherent oppression of the working classes is an abstraction generally unfamiliar to the Montanan, who is much more prone to specify singular sources of economic oppression than he is to indict the overall system. Again, there is common ground in the informants' repeated disaffection for "big business" and its perceived disproportionate political power.

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Both the resentment of wealth and the disaffection for corporate political influence provide elements of compatibility to the folk meaning of socialism. Both factors may be accounted for, at least in part, by the circumstances of Montana life, where ruralism fosters a self-image of remoteness from the expressions of wealth and power, and where corporate control has historically been perceived to be exerted from distant centers of commerce and banking (Howard 1943; Toole 1959).

Valuatively, folk consciousness of both disproportionate wealth and disproportionate power amplify preference for egalitarian proposals. We have seen that the long-held American existential model of social mobility and equality of opportunity in an individualistic society is being questioned and that belief in that model may be eroding. Montanans' perceptions of extreme economic stratification, peacetime unemployment, declining free enterprise, etc., stimulate disenchantment and a lack of confidence that not only begs redress but calls into question the values for achievement and autonomy, which many informants held to be the life-force behind American society. Should perceptions of extreme stratification and declining mobility increase, we can only anticipate that valuative emphasis for equality will be enhanced as the extrinsic viability of individualism and its cherished values wanes.

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The nearly ubiquitous folk awareness of individual powerlessness in influencing political processes must also be considered in the interpretation of an incipient class consciousness. The frustration of perceived impotence in individualized political and social activity will most likely dispose politically-concerned persons toward organized alternative interest groups. Should the movement find an effective way of persuading the public that its innovation is appropriate and desirable in redressing these maladies, enlistment is potenially there.

Montanans and the Movement: Incompatibility

The most glaring barriers to the socialist movement's success are the disparities between the existential model of society employed by Marxism and that assumed by the Montana individualist and the respective conceptions of "freedom" that are normative to each group. To the socialist, the liberty of every person is fettered by the boundaries of economic class. To the Montana individualist, freedom is the libertarian individual; the self-determinant, virtuous, and autonomous man upon whom the fewer impediments to self-fulfillment are placed, the better. To the Marxist, freedom in a stratified society is an illusion; freedom can only come with the release from class oppression. The Montanan believes he is free, and keeps an ever-wary eye out for encroachment on that liberty,

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his attention unwaveringly focused on the government. Both models value freedom near the acme of human conditions. The disparity of belief is existential: the Montanan, unlike the socialist, does not perceive inequality of freedom to be structurally inherent. Any perception of the disproportionate enjoyment of autonomy is, to the Montanan, a failure of the individual to achieve in a social milieu of self-determinance.

We have noted signs of strain to the folk belief in social mobility, yet the individualist model of society is firm and in general consonance with today's subjective world. Montanans emphasize individualism even though they may often affirm all men to be the same or perhaps place a high premium on cooperative effort.

The consideration of extrinsic value is pivotal in explicating the resolution of the equality vs. achievement/autonomy value conflict. I have cited other writers who have observed equality to be one of the most strained of all American dominant values, and the research for this study supports that observation. Personal achievement, the folk-model primo-mover of American society, is also strained as people struggle with perceptions of declining opportunity for self-betterment. The dilemma posed by the socialist alternative is the clash of intrinsic and extrinsic value, Barnett's two criteria for meaning and compatibility.

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The composite sentiment of the narrative is that, "sure, competition can get out of hand," and, "of course everyone should be equal," (it is intrinsically preferable) but a society without the impetus for individual achievement (folk-model socialism) would suffocate the human spirit and literal equality is impossible (extrinsically infeasible). Despite the attraction of the egalitarian ideal, the existential premises upon which Montanans conceptualize social life lead them to relegate the classless society to the realm of impracticable idealism.

If there is a primary determinant to the Montanan's perception in socialism of a threat to individual freedom, it is the vision of "public ownership" being but a thin and duplicitous veil for pernicious "government ownership". The Montanan understands government as his antagonist; he must be eternally vigilant, for government advances at his retreat in an inherent struggle over the boundary between autonomy and authority.

It is both ironic and illuminating that at a time when American life entails more social services than ever before, the people of this ruralistic, small-town region feel themselves further removed from political voice than ever. This points to a major hurdle for the movement: the people perceive the government that they have with resentment, mistrust and apprehension. Any innovation

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that suggests to them the expansion of the civic entity is at best mildly annoying and at worst repulsive; in either case, a negatively-valued proposal. The folk model of socialism, held by several informants, as a governmental monolith of ownership and authority (the Soviet analogy) provides any innovation that hints at state encroachment on the private sector with an aura of tyranny.

The Movement's Future

With almost a century of advocacy behind it, with its successful advocation of numerous reforms, with its many rejuvenations from almost total collapse, the advocacy of socialism cannot be anticipated to fade from the American political spectrum. The resurgent socialist movement is as much a product of the times as a mover of them. This is evinced by value conflicts and shifts parallel to those of socialism by people who are not socialists. Marx and Barnett agreed that ideas and beliefs are molded by external, material referents. We may assume that objective conditions of Western economic systems have spawned the conflict that the socialist movement manifests, and that such conflict could well endure until objective conditions allow its resolution.

Just as the cultural milieu in which it operates and seeks to innovate is changing, so must any social movement that would be successful. We have identified trends of

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change in the Montanan/American value orientation that may bear heavily on the movement's destiny, but that destiny hinges also upon trends of advocation.

The folk narratives imply that some proportion of the rural Montana public is not disposed to hear the song of the youthful, inellectualist revolutionary. The movement cannot anticipate its acceptance by the general populace if it assumes an iconoclastic posture based from the academic pulpit. If the movement does what people anticipate it would do -- sends college-based people into the hinterlands with feverish, starry eyes and tells people of the great life beyond capitalism, it will be resented and written off as another flighty, impractical episode in a recurring utopian pipe dream. If the movement divorces itself from the implications of intellectual elitism and concentrates its communication not on the abstractions of meta-Marxism but specific resolutions with practical applications to specific problems, it is very likely to be heard.

In tracing the historical development of the American Left, I suggested that the most significant mark of the movement's maturation has been their realization that to be compatible, Marxist theory in its application to any social "reality" must be made culturally specific. The MNSP (like other contemporary leftist groups) is a signal of the arrival of what we might term the first American-

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ized socialism: an attempt by Americans to innovate socialization's ultimate goals with the political and ideological tradition (free elections, the Bill of Rights, etc.) <u>and social values</u> of American culture.

This transition to a culturally-specific model of socialism is not complete. One can still hear, whispered from a back-row huddle at a socialist gathering, an occasional, "maybe we could do it like the Chinese did," or, "the collectivization of agriculture has to come first." Such statements reveal disregard for cultural variation, including variation in values, which are the independent variables in determining an innovation's compatibility. But, despite an infrequent yearning for a transcultural model, the American movement today (at least the Montana portion of it) manifests in its values and in its methods, the awareness of its own cultural heritage.

Ironically, it seems that one fundamental obstacle that the contemporary movement would have to overcome if it was to succeed, would be to convince the American public that socialism could be culturally specific. The narrative demonstrates that Montanans, too, conceive of socialism to be transcultural; that socialism in the United States would amount to experiencing life in the Soviet Union, in Sweden, or by whatever model.

The vocabulary of the Left, so given to cliches and sloganism, is an impediment to the communication of its

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ideas. The models by which the movement's goals are perceived may be evolving, but a descriptive, culturally-specific vocabulary is not. "Dictatorship of the proletariat" might mean the attainment of pure democracy to the socialist, but to the rural Montanan, it is an anachronistic spectre of barricaded, smoking streets and bandaged revolutionaries battling to the death in a St. Petersburg cul-de-sac. Basic American values for peace and security are threatened by a language that implies violence, tyranny, and excess -- "the abolition of (all) private property."

To achieve a compatible Montana meaning for socialization, the movement would have to overcome the disparity between its conception of public ownership and the lay public's conception of authoritarian government ownership. The Montanan makes little functional distinction between the image of conglomerate corporations or the image of government as either is perceived to impinge upon citizen liberty. The movement has failed to capitalize on the real models of socialization (highways, libraries, schools, etc.) that already exist benignly in the United States.

The flexibility of the socialist movement toward alliance with other "reformist" social programs, particularly the environmental movement, has been identified as an asset for the promulgation of ideas and, potentially, for popular acceptance. The narratives demonstrate that envi-

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ronmental concern promotes both existential and value system transformations that de-emphasize individualistic priorities and elevate community/equality values. If the socialist movement can convincingly demonstrate to the public the antithesis they believe to be inherent between private ownership and ecological balance, the environmental movement could become a vehicle to attract attention to socialism's alternatives.

As an interesting aside, and a potentially enlightening subject for further study, the women's movement might be considered, like environmentalism, to be a potential vehicle for socialism. With such a small sample, inference must be guarded, but my female respondents were observably more than men inclined toward egalitarian emphasis than individualistic emphasis. If, as seems plausible, women in Montana have historically been enculturated with less value emphasis for achievement/autonomy, might the Left find more receptivity to its ideas among the female population? Or, conversely, might the ongoing entrance of women into the wage-labor work force and its milieu of individual achievement/success diminish whatever priority for the equality valuc cluster there might be?

Summary

> "But even without the prod of an external agression, values might change as a result of a breakdown in the adequacy of existing

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> institutions to deal with what people are accustomed to consider their basic conditions of life. If inefficiencies or corruptions of governmental and societal leadership go beyond "normal", if demands are constantly frustrated by incapacities which can be laid at some human door, if all this is compounded by a rising consciousness of discrimination and sense of injustice, then people can experience great and often very sudden transformations of values, or those values that were subdued can become the basis for vigorous action." (Jacob 1971:13)

We have summarized the valuative factors that determine, for the people of western Montana, the meaning of socialism and that shape their attitude toward it. Each is a temporal process: a trend of ideas ebbing and flowing in the ever-in-flux system of a culture's beliefs and values. The Barnett-Kluckhohn paradigm premises the acceptance or rejection of new ideas upon the valuative and existential similarity between the donors' and the recipients' cognitive models of reality. A synchronic study can only give a fleeting glimpse of the width of the chasm between those models and then offer an interpretive and impressionistic judgement as to whether the chasm is narrowing or widening. My judgement, based upon the material I have presented here and upon the "direction" of the value orientation trends that have been identified, is that the chasm is in fact narrowing, but any trend is as subject to reversal as it is to continuance.

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