

## THE WELFARE STATE, POLITICAL IDEOLOGY, AND THE NEW WORLD ORDER

### The New Conservatism: Cultural Criticism and the Historians' Debate

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By Jürgen Habermas, translated by Shierry Weber Nichol森

Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1989, 270 pp., with index, \$22.50 cloth.

### Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power

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By Joseph S. Nye, Jr.

New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1990, 307 pp., with endnotes and index,  
\$19.95 cloth.

### The True and Only Heaven: Progress and its Critics

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By Christopher Lasch

New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1991, 591 pp., with bibliographical  
essay and index, \$25.00 cloth.

Reviewed by Victor Bondi

Intellectual Progress usually occurs through sheer abandonment of questions together with both of the alternatives they assume—an abandonment that results from their decreasing vitality and a change of urgent interest. We do not solve them: we get over them.<sup>1</sup>

#### I

What will be the political ideology of the new world order? This question arises as a natural corollary to the arrival of that order. A premature answer

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1. John Dewey, "The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy," in *The Middle Works, 1889-1924, Vol. 4 (1907-1909)*, ed. Jo Ann Boydston et al. (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois Press, 1977), 14.

appeared in 1989 in Francis Fukuyama's widely debated article, where he announced the "ultimate triumph of Western liberal democracy."<sup>2</sup> Fukuyama's answer was premature precisely because an understanding of the new world order is predicated upon a clear assessment of the old world order, the sort of detailed historical analysis rendered superfluous by Fukuyama's muddled declaration of "The End of History." History has not ended with the advent of any new world order—an order which was, in fact, announced in response to a crisis of the old world order, since Saddam Hussein's seizure of Kuwait represented his refusal to abide by boundaries arbitrarily established by the western powers. In fact, fifty years after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, international politics is still working through the implications of events that occurred in the middle of this century; whatever new world order will be established in the future begins in the crises of that time. A reasonable historical assessment of the crises of that age thus becomes an indispensable tool for contemporary political science.

This is especially true in the realm of political ideology, for World War II was a battle of competing social and political philosophies. Whatever claim liberal democracy secured for the present was won in its victory over fascism in 1945; as Soviet communism shared that victory, it divided power with the West in the immediate postwar era. Today, communism's initial success as a form of social organization seems doomed by its own internal limitations. Therefore, *glasnost* and *perestroika*, as either the capitulation of Soviet communism to liberal democracy or the fulfillment of Leninism, also represent a broad historical evaluation and repudiation of the Stalinist order. Either way, the terms of the current Soviet agenda are centered around a political vocabulary and bureaucratic tradition established in the ideological crucible of the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>3</sup>

In Europe and the United States, the crisis of the old order is less pronounced than in the Soviet Union, but it is no less indebted to the events of mid-century. The political phenomenon characteristic of the West in the 1980s—the shift to the right represented by Reagan and Bush in the United States, Thatcher in the United Kingdom, and Kohl in Germany—are all responses to welfare state liberalism, an ideology whose key components were developed to combat the Great Depression. Gorbachev's restructuring of the Communist bureaucracy thus shares a common historical origin with Reagan and Thatcher's dismantling of welfare liberalism. Both Stalin and Keynes suggested avenues out of the Great Depression; both Gorbachev and Reagan offered remedies for the political and economic malaises of the 1970s and 1980s.

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2. Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?" *The National Interest* (Summer 1989): 3.

3. So is the debate among Sovietologists about the nature of the Russian state and its relationship to Stalinism. The extent to which this debate is rooted in a lexicon established at mid-century is evident in the controversial "Z" article, "To the Stalin Mausoleum," *Daedalus* Vol. 119, No. 1 (Winter 1990): 295–344; as well as in that of Sheila Fitzpatrick, "New Perspectives on Stalinism," *Russian Review* Vol. 45 (1986): 412–417. See also the responses to Fitzpatrick by Stephen F. Cohen, Peter Kenez, and Alfred G. Meyer in the same issue.

## II

Jürgen Habermas provides a more precise expression of this link between the present and the past in a recently published collection of his political essays, translated into English as *The New Conservatism*. Drawing upon his rich understanding of critical theory and pragmatic sociology, Habermas views the political events of the 1980s as an expression of the inherent limitations of welfare state liberalism as it was conceived in the 1930s and 1940s. That system originated in the attempt to ameliorate the individually devastating consequences of an unregulated, laissez-faire capitalist economy. Unfortunately, it was crippled by three weaknesses: first, restrictions on its political and economic power which were ultimately dependent on the democratic political process; second, its success in providing the working class with financial security; and third, its creation of a huge bureaucracy to administer the welfare system. Echoing a common observation, Habermas maintains that the success of the welfare state destroys its own social base: when working class voters are raised through the welfare system to middle class status, they inevitably identify with their employers rather than their with fellow workers in times of economic crisis.<sup>4</sup>

This erodes the political support necessary to maintain the system in the face of incessant attacks by "private investors," who, from the moment of the welfare state's birth, have been hostile to its intended goals (p. 56). The bureaucracy of the welfare system, on the other hand, has proved itself to be one more center of inhuman power, destructive of traditional values and individual dignity—the very things the welfare state was designed to protect. Habermas thus sees current political events as an outcome of a contradiction between the welfare state's goals and its methods (pp. 48–59).

For western industrialized societies, however, there is no viable alternative to the welfare system; Habermas identifies this as the historical lesson of World War II. World War I, The Great Depression, and World War II were all consequences of the inability of laissez-faire capitalism—at both the national and international levels—to meet the economic and social needs of modern society. Fascism and communism also failed the utilitarian calculus of bringing the greatest happiness to the greatest number of individuals in society; only liberal democracy has proven relatively successful in this regard (pp. 48–54).

In light of this historical experience, Habermas identifies three alternative critiques of the welfare state in recent political activity. In the first, the "legitimists" (Democrats in America, Labour in England, Social-Democrats in Germany, and the second government under Mitterrand in France), seek to maintain the current welfare state despite its shortcomings and in spite of

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4. Habermas credits this observation to the German political scientist Claus Offe. American proponents of the same idea include Steve Fraser, "The Labor Question," and Jonathan Rieder, "The Rise of the 'Silent Majority,'" both found in *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930–1980*, ed. Fraser and Gerstle (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

its critics. Echoing the arguments of the architects of the welfare state, these politicians and political scientists maintain that current social problems originate in the "unfettered inner dynamic of the economy," and seek to restrain the negative effects of *laissez-faire* capitalism—unemployment, homelessness, arms proliferation, and ecological devastation (pp. 59–60).

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On the other hand, the "neoconservatives" (Reagan, Thatcher, Kohl, and their domestic supporters) attempt to free the economy from the "bureaucratic restraints" imposed by the welfare state. They see current social crises as a consequence of a meddling welfare state; they seek to restrict its activities to a few vitally regulative spheres. According to Habermas, the neoconservatives make scapegoats of cultural modernity and a lack of morality for social problems traceable to economic conditions (pp. 60–61).

The third critique is that of the "antiproductivists" (the Greens in Europe, environmentalists in America, and ethnic and other minorities) who view the problems of contemporary life as a function of both unrestricted capitalism and over-regulative government, of systems of thought which emphasize production and efficiency at the expense of humane values. They see the realm of traditional mores and human dignity as being "equally threatened by commodification and bureaucratization" (p. 62). Habermas views their suggestion that modern society abandon its industrial base and centralized state apparatus as frankly incompatible with reality, as an attempt to restore a state of affairs which existed before the creation of the welfare state. He interprets this demand as the Left's equivalent of neoconservative pressure for the return of *laissez-faire* capitalism, both being types of political nostalgia. The legitimists, however, are also given to the unreflective embrace of the past, especially to the extent that they revel in the original accomplishments of the welfare state and ignore its subsequent development. Contemporary political responses to the welfare state thus share a common political paralysis rooted in a misunderstanding of the history of welfare liberalism; a more effective recovery of that history, a "higher standard of reflection," is therefore necessary for the reconstruction of the liberal welfare state (pp. 64–65).

### III

Habermas's book concerns itself with the neoconservative program for the reconstruction of the welfare state, especially in its analysis of the neoconser-

vative tendency to lay the blame for current problems at the doorstep of modernist/popular culture. This is a function of Habermas's larger project: the recovery of "modernity," whose complex and involved parameters exceed the limitations of this essay.<sup>5</sup> More germane to this discussion are Habermas's anxieties regarding the fate of liberal democracy in an age of ideological paralysis. His fears are based on the "Weimar model": if political discourse is limited to a few ineffective definitions, there is a tendency to seek more radical alternatives—to throw out liberal democracy as inviable, as the Germans did at the end of the Weimar period. Habermas does not exactly fear a return of fascism; instead, he is alarmed about the possible return of Wilhelmine capitalism, and attendant elitist intellectualism, whose antidemocratic bias preceded, and then accompanied, the rise of German nazism (pp. 210–40).

Habermas observes this return of Wilhelmine capitalism in the ideological products of German and American neoconservatism. Central to this neoconservatism is a polemical strategy premised on what he has defined elsewhere as "the determination of ideology by means of the politics of language," a restructuring of political discourse which marginalizes democratic and socialist vocabularies in an attempt to delimit democratic politics and socialist ideology.<sup>6</sup> Here, for instance, politics is discussed in terms of "systems theory" and the rule of elites, rather than in terms of democratic rights and obligations; government is discussed in terms of *realpolitik* rather than morality; freedom is associated with anarchy rather than liberation; modernization is a concept restricted to industrial processes; finally, political and cultural modernization are understood in terms of "degeneration," or "decline." "Liberalism," in other words, is restricted to its classical economic definitions; subsequent meanings are purged from the term, especially by associating liberalism with social phenomena unacceptable to the mainstream, such as homosexuality or the rights of prisoners, or by linking it to anti-liberal doctrines such as revolutionary communism (pp. 21–31).

In *The New Conservatism*, Habermas directs his attention not only to the neoconservative transformation of political discourse, but also to the shifts in historical understanding which accompany them. According to Habermas, the marginalization of the Left in political thought and action is attended by a recovery of the Right in historical understanding, evidenced best in the famous "historians' debate" conducted in Germany. That debate is centered on how to integrate nazism into present German consciousness. In this regard, the strategies adopted by neoconservative historians such as Ernst Nolte and Michael Stürmer to come to terms with the past repeat the same rationales

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5. They are delineated concisely in Jürgen Habermas, *Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*, translated by Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1987). See also Habermas, "Modernity—An Incomplete Project," in *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, ed. Hal Foster (Port Townsend, Wash.: Bay Press, 1983), 3–15.

6. Jürgen Habermas, "An Ideologieplanung mit Mitteln der Sprachpolitik" in his "Einleitung" to *Stichworte zur Geistigen Situation der Zeit*, ed. Jürgen Habermas (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1979), Vol. 1, 21. Translated by Andrew Buchwalter as "Introduction," to *Observations on "The Spiritual Situation of the Age"* (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1984).

offered by the Nazis for their actions; for example, Nolte implies that the Holocaust would not have happened were it not for the Bolshevik threat to Germany (pp. 210–40). Habermas's interpretation of the historians' debate does not suggest that the neoconservatives are Nazis; rather, he maintains that their training in the pre-Nazi anti-democratic academic tradition causes them, like their teachers in Hitler's time, to make compromises with the Nazis. Habermas sees this pattern repeated in the general population, itself imbued with its own anti-democratic traditions, which once led to an accommodation with the Nazis in Hitler's day, and which lead to a historical accommodation with nazism in the present.

The import of these observations for the present is that German conservatives were implicated in nazism precisely because liberalism and democracy had been written out of the canon of respectable political alternatives before 1933. That same circumscription of political dialogue is occurring today, and the rehabilitation of nazism so evident at Bitburg is its attendant historical consciousness. Although Habermas is confident that history cannot simply repeat itself, he is afraid that the advances made by the Federal Republic in western democratic consciousness are being undermined by a restoration of a command economy and a neo-Hegelian, elitist intellectualism. The real danger is, as he has written on another occasion, that Germany will forget that "on German (blood and) soil we have already conducted the experiment of modernization restricted to economic growth and technological progress"—that Germans will forget that it was the inherently inhumane effects of Wilhelmine capitalism (especially its imperialism) which led Germans to cast about for anti-liberal alternatives in the first place.<sup>7</sup>

#### IV

In terms of Habermas's typology of contemporary responses to the welfare state, Joseph S. Nye, Jr. takes his place among the ranks of the legitimists with *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*.<sup>8</sup> Not that Nye is preoccupied with the role of the American welfare state today, or with its historical origin—in fact, as a former diplomat, Nye writes as one concerned primarily with international relations rather than domestic affairs. But Nye's book, a survey of the current status of American power in relation to that of other states, is concerned with a concept intimately related to the fate of the welfare state: that of the "decline" of national power.

Nye's thesis holds that this sense of decline was, and is, a politically efficacious fiction cultivated in disregard of the facts. Facts permeate this book: production quotas, export statistics, CIA white papers, and Chamber of

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7. "Auf deutschem (Blut- und) Boden haben wir schon einmal das Experiment einer auf Wirtschaftswachstum und technischen Fortschritt eingeschränkten Modernisierung gemacht," Habermas, "Ideologieplanung," 23.

8. See the review of this book by Alan K. Henrikson, *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* Vol. 15, No. 1 (Winter 1991): 207–211.

Commerce reports. All demonstrate that American power, by any economic, military, or political measure, is about what it was before the start of World War II (pp. 4–8, 67–87, 259–61). The perception that modern America is somehow in decline as a great power is, in Nye's opinion, the function of two factors: first, a relative decline in American power from its early postwar prosperity, when every other national economy was recovering from World War II; and second, a series of mistaken historical analogies, offered by academics and politicians for partisan ends, which interpret the competition and success of the rebuilt European and Asian economies as a sign of American decline (pp. 35–68, 87–112).

Nye utilizes current economic statistics to demonstrate the true viability and health of American power; he also reconstructs the historical origins of the decline argument, and specifies the reasons it is an inappropriate explanation for current affairs. Most importantly, however, Nye argues that a real disintegration in America's strength begins with the neglect of its domestic resources. It is with this argument that Nye joins the ranks of Habermas's legitimists, for he is an unabashed apologist of the welfare state; he sees nothing but good in governmental supervision of the marketplace. The solution to the challenge posed by revitalized power abroad is to amplify and fund native resources; to invest in education and social programs; to expand the effective practice of democracy; and to maintain and support the liberal traditions in the United States, rather than imitate the anti-liberal traditions of nations overseas, no matter how economically effective in the short run (pp. 202–30). "A leader who wants to maintain American power at the turn of the century," he writes, "must follow a strategy that rebuilds the domestic bases of American strength while also investing resources to maintain international influence" (p. 228).

The key to America's maintenance of its international standing is, in other words, dependent on how true to its liberal welfare traditions it remains; Nye implies that America's real weakness in the international arena is how far it falls below the welfare measures typical of European economies (pp. 205–06). While Nye acknowledges the shifting nature of international relations in the new world order and the challenges that it presents to American power, he suggests that the best way for the United States to maintain its power in that order is to maintain its domestic political institutions and economic structures pretty much where it left them under the New Deal.

The strength of Nye's book is that he ties domestic liberalism to liberal positions for a regulated and cooperatively enforced international economy. Under the guise of "interdependence," and "ideological resources," Nye reverses the common academic assumption that international affairs is a game among elite players—states and their governmental agents—and maintains that in both domestic and foreign affairs the needs and demands of the broad masses must be met (pp. 173–95). As welfare-state liberalism is the best means of meeting these needs at home, so interdependent, regulated liberalism is the best means of meeting these needs abroad. Because the United States

is well-equipped with the "soft" power resources of a democratic ideology and a universal popular culture, he argues, there is no immediate danger of American power being superseded on the world stage.

## V

Joseph Nye's well-constructed arguments effectively refute much of the realist and neoconservative cant about power politics and national decline. He is confident that the subtle shifts in world power (still within the frame constructed at the end of World War II) can be managed to a positive end. But to Christopher Lasch, in his new book *The True and Only Heaven: Progress and its Critics*, it is this managerial confidence which is at the center of America's current problems and is the source of its real and disastrous decline. Lasch maintains that optimistic legitimists like Nye are imbued with a kind of secular religion which sees progress as inevitable and certain. By contrast, Lasch holds that history is characterized by life cycles of national growth and decline which cannot be evaded or managed. His book is an attempt to plumb the historical origins of this secular religion of progress, to expose its role in precipitating and justifying American national decline, and to suggest new ways of thinking more consonant with the realities of our time.

Central to Lasch's argument is the ideology of the welfare state and its ethos of progress. His concern is with the meaning and definition of "progress"—a key concept for New Deal liberalism and the modern American welfare system. "Progress" was the organizing concept behind "progressivism," the term turn-of-the-century American liberals used to describe their political ideology and agenda—an ideology and agenda which permeated the New Deal (pp. 429–39). As a historian, Lasch has reviewed this concept before, most notably in *The New Radicalism in America*,<sup>9</sup> where he interpreted progressivism as the ethos of a managerial elite who used the New Deal, and the bureaucracy it created, to bend the hopes, desires, and political support of the American working class to their own ends. According to Lasch, the instrumentalist use of politics obscured the activities of anti-democratic capitalism and power, thereby "commodifying" individual lives and making America a place where "freedom" equaled the right to choose between Pepsi and Coke. In Habermas's typology of responses to the welfare state, Lasch's *New Radicalism* was an example of the antiproductivist critique: the problem with the welfare state was not only its capitalist base, which destroyed human values by trivializing them for sale in a consumer economy, but also the creation of a huge bureaucracy that obscured the workings of capitalism and manipulated public opinion in the direction of dependent complacency. In short, the problem with both the industrial and political systems of production is their emphasis on efficiency and growth at the expense of traditions and values. The best way to oppose

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9. Christopher Lasch, *The New Radicalism in America* (New York: Vintage Books, 1965).



this incursion on human ideals is therefore to oppose the ethos of progress and production.

Like *The New Radicalism*, *The True and Only Heaven* argues that current political difficulties are a product of a vulgar capitalism that corrodes the best human values and the function of an administrative arrogance out of touch with the needs of a democracy. Lasch traces the roots of both problems to their common origin in the philosophy of laissez-faire liberalism and capitalism. Both concepts shared a faith in the inevitably progressive character of history, as well as a confidence that enlightened rationalism could manage the social transitions involved in progress (pp. 52–78, 110–138, 279–292). Given these postulates, American liberals have consistently underestimated the inherent limitations of human inventiveness and the inevitably tragic character of history (pp. 47–49, 78–83, 221–25, 523–32). This “fatuous optimism” has carried American liberalism through the implications of two world wars, and has resulted in a consumer capitalism which equates progress with the creation of new commodities, and a governmental elitism which sees improvement in unsanctioned social engineering (pp. 40–44, 170). Lasch further maintains that these ideological underpinnings foster the development of a consumer capitalism whose insatiable appetite for new commodities and new thrills results in “an ethic of hedonism” which “undermines the ‘traditional values’ of thrift and self-denial” (p. 518). It also necessitates governmental authoritarianism, insofar as government increasingly concerns itself with issues

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of economic growth and progress, and neglects the human and ecological costs of such advancement (pp. 168–70, 520–22). Just as human appetites have limitations, however, so there are limits on the expansive capacity of capitalist economies and governmental power. Lasch avers that we have now reached those limits, that the inevitable hour of our historic decline has struck, and that therefore a reconsideration of our progressivist ethos is at hand (pp. 22–24). The challenge today is to construct a new ideology, one which accepts the limitations of the age.

*The True and Only Heaven* offers a “mythological” understanding of American history and society as a substitute for progressivism. Like Georges Sorel, Lasch champions the mythical not as a useful illusion, but as a means of understand-

ing truth in a manner that supersedes rationality. He perceives in the mythological thinking of the lower middle class a core of common sense and morality too often devalued by American progressives. In the perspective of the lower middle class, in which Lasch identifies the autonomous small businessman, the small farmer, the worker who takes pride in her labor, family, church and neighborhood, one finds real wisdom regarding the meaninglessness of work or the lawlessness of the streets (pp. 172-77). These observations should be used as the basis of a new American stoicism appropriate for an age of decline. Here human values such as simplicity and dignity are credited over technology and luxury (pp. 157, 221-25, 476-508). Like the lower middle class, we should see history as cyclical and abandon progressivism as a manipulative historical consciousness at odds with present reality. Decline is inevitable; only if we abandon our faith in progress can we find the necessary moral and communal strength to live in a nation "under the sentence of death" (p. 49).

In *The True and Only Heaven*, Christopher Lasch abandons progress as historically inevitable and substitutes the thesis that national decline is inescapable. Joseph Nye would, of course, disagree. Yet both men share a fundamental concept which transcends their debate. At the center of both books is a process of political and historical definition. Lasch sometimes implies that it is our faith in progress which has made national decline inevitable; Nye implies that it is our faith in inevitable decline which creates a self-fulfilling prophecy. In either case, our future depends upon how we define the present, and our definition of the present depends upon how we understand the past.

## VI

The events of the first part of this century are open to any number of interpretations. Still, Habermas's observation that the events of the twentieth century are a consequence of the failure of laissez-faire capitalism, as formulated by either the industrial Junkers or Mark Hanna's brand of supply-side economics, merits due consideration. It explains, for instance, how a world-wide systemic crisis in political economy would precipitate a search for ideological solutions based upon different political traditions, and it explains the simultaneous appearance of three different solutions to this crisis: fascism, communism, and welfare liberalism. Welfare liberalism and communism survived the war effectively intact; both are undergoing their own systemic crisis today. In the neoconservative, legitimist, and antiproductivist solutions offered to the current crisis, what is being repeated is not the programs offered in the 1930s but a way of framing the debate, such that only some programs are viewed as viable. Thus the neoconservatives and antiproductivists today suggest an "either/or" solution to current problems: either a dismantling of the welfare state or national decline; either a repudiation of progress and industrial production or national decline and ecological disaster. These alternatives echo the national choices offered by conservatives and Marxists in the 1920s and

1930s to the problems of that time. Then, the western democracies selected neither fascism nor communism; instead, they resolved their crisis through the construction of welfare state economies.

In the historical memory of the neoconservatives and the antiproductivists, the selection of this third alternative is precisely what must be avoided. Thus, German neoconservatives frame an understanding of the rise of nazism in such a way as to make it inevitable, a natural reaction to the threat of bolshevism, while American neoconservatives, unable to effectively bury the memory of the welfare state, suggest an "end to history" which renders moot its very recollection. In a demonstration of Habermas's perceptive observation that antiproductivist arguments mirror those of the neoconservatives, antiproductivists like Lasch also evade historical memory. Here, by creating a mythology of progressivism, Lasch avoids a more complete definition. In fact, Lasch badly skews its meaning.<sup>10</sup> Are John Dewey and Louis Brandeis (whose values of simplicity, thrift, decency, and compassion Lasch is attempting to reclaim) to be considered progressives? Obviously not, since neither figure is discussed in detail. And if Thurman Arnold's elitist philosophy is offered as typical of the management ethos of the New Deal, why is Henry Wallace's socialism, equally characteristic of the New Deal, avoided? What type of historical recollection is at work here? None, of course, which is precisely why Lasch abandons history and embraces a historical mythology he capriciously attributes to the lower middle class.

In both cases, that of the neoconservative Habermas discusses, and the antiproductivists represented by Lasch, what is occurring is a process of historical evasion which prescribes the acceptable parameters of political discussion today. Neoconservatives would have us forget the origins of the welfare state in the failure of free-market capitalism; antiproductivists would have us forget that progressivism was originally more than a simple excuse for commoditization and bureaucratization. Yet the legitimists are also guilty of a type of forgetting. This is all too apparent in Nye's text, where his appeals for domestic renewal assume that the same public agencies which have affected welfare state policies in the past will be effective and humane agents of change in the future, an assumption belied by the postwar history of the welfare state. Nye is not at all convinced that these agencies have failed, and does not bother to document the history of their failure. He too forgets, and in the process, he makes reconstructing the welfare state all the harder.

The virtue of Habermas's approach to the welfare state, its reconstruction, and its historical memory, is that he accepts elements of all three contemporary political critiques. With the legitimists, he agrees about the necessity of maintaining the welfare state; with the neoconservatives, he concurs with some of the inherent contradictions of that state and the need for a restructured

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10. More balanced accounts are offered in James Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory: Social Democracy and Progressivism in European and American Thought, 1870-1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); and Fraser and Gerstle.

relationship between it and capitalism; and he shares some of the antiproductivists' concerns about the human and ecological dangers implicit in the operation of large-scale capitalism and centralized government. His perspective, outside all three positions, is testament to the capacity of political definitions to formulate social programs outside the limited frame of either/or alternatives; his saving grace is his historical consciousness. Habermas's example suggests that any meaningful new world order must be constructed with the history of the old order very much in mind.

