INTRODUCTION

1. On a hot summer day during Italy’s long 1968, the leader of the French student movement, Daniel Cohn-Bendit (today a member of the European Parliament and distinguished member of the Green Party) frequently interrupted a lecture being given by Herbert Marcuse in the packed Eliseo Theater in Rome, demanding he own up to his scandalous past as a CIA agent during World War II. The accusation—originally circulated in the United States by an anonymous source and later picked up by the European press—was inaccurate: the German philosopher did not in fact have any collaborative relationship with the controversial American agency, much less during the war, when the CIA didn’t even exist. Instead, Marcuse had later been under FBI investigation during his period of political notoriety as “father of the student movement” (although, to be truthful, half of the memos connected with that investigation were concerned with protecting him from death threats, especially after 1968). Indirectly, however, the provocation offered by “Danny le rouge” contributed to bringing to light a period in Marcuse’s life that had previously been neglected. The same was true for other proponents of the so-called Frankfurt School, such as Franz Neumann and Otto Kirchheimer, who also participated in the American war effort as political analysts at the Research and Analysis Branch (R&A) of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the first American intelligence agency.

In truth, these thinkers never demonstrated any particular embarrassment in connection with their past government service. Rather, on more than one occasion, they proudly defended their participation as one of the few attempts to make the Frankfurt School’s Critical Theory a practical tool in the fight against fascism. Precisely when Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno retreated into their Californian exile to write their Dialectic of Enlightenment—the Frankfurt School’s philosophical urtext, envisioned as a “message in a bottle” for future generations while they faced a present that appeared irremediably evil—the other three Frankfurt scholars produced a formidable number of studies and reports on the “German enemy” that represent the most complex and insightful analyses of Nazi Germany ever put forth by members of the Frankfurt School, as well as an extraordinary historical source for scholars of the Second World War.

The years spent by the three “Frankfurters” in the service of the American government share little of the romanticized life of the secret agent
who, immersed in danger, works in the theater of war or the double agent who plots in secret with the enemy; their endeavors much more closely resemble the “labor of the concept” that one associates with a stern German professor.

Directed by the Harvard historian William Langer, the Research and Analysis Branch was in fact the biggest American research institution in the first half of the twentieth century. At its zenith between 1943 and 1945, it included over twelve hundred employees, four hundred of whom were stationed abroad. In many respects, it was the site where post–World War II American social science was born, with protégés of some of the most esteemed American university professors, as well as a large contingent of European intellectual émigrés, in its ranks. To cite only a few such figures: the anthropologist Gregory Bateson, the historian Felix Gilbert, the geographer Richard Hartshorne, the Marxist economists Paul Sweezy and Paul Baran, the economist Walter W. Rostow, future Nobel Prize winner Vassili Leontief, the sociologists Talcott Parsons and Barrington Moore Jr., two-time Pulitzer winner Arthur Schlesinger Jr., the classicist Norman O. Brown, and the Frankfurt School scholars Arkadij Gurland and Friedrich Pollock. These men comprised the “theoretical brain trust” of the American war machine, which, according to its founder, Colonel William “Wild Bill” Donovan, would function as a “final clearinghouse” for the secret services—that is, as a structure that, although not engaged in determining war strategy or tactics, would be able to assemble, organize, analyze, and filter the immense flow of military information directed toward Washington, thanks to the unique capacity of the specialists on hand to interpret the relevant sources. In a global totalitarian war, Donovan was convinced, “intelligence must be total and totalitarian.”

2. One may situate the activities of Neumann, Marcuse, and Kirchheimer for the Research and Analysis Branch within the process of “total mobilization” of the American academic and intellectual world that, after the entrance of the United States into the war, pervaded “the classrooms of its colleges” and “rustle[d] the thumbed pages of our scholars.”

The first of the three German scholars to transfer to Washington was Franz Neumann. After a series of careful investigations by the FBI, he was hired in spring 1942 as chief consultant for the Board of Economic Welfare and later, in August of the same year, as chief economist in the Intelligence Division of the Office of the US Chief of Staff. At the beginning of 1943 he would assume the duties of deputy chief of the Central European Section, the subdivision of R&A charged with analyzing and studying Nazi Germany (as well as Austria and the other Central European countries). He gained these senior positions by virtue of the prestige he acquired after the 1942 publication of *Behemoth: The Structure and
Practice of National Socialism—which was itself the fruit of a memorandum prepared at the request of Assistant Attorney General Thurman W. Arnold and a significant contribution to the American war effort.

In 1941 Marcuse had published *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory* in the hopes of securing an academic position. Reluctantly abandoning the Institute for Social Research, he joined the Office of War Information (OWI) with the goal of formulating “suggestions on how to present the enemy to the American people”, in the press, movies, propaganda, etc.10 In March of 1943 Marcuse joined Neumann in R&A’s Central European Section as senior analyst and rapidly established himself as “the leading analyst on Germany.”11

Kirchheimer, who together with Arkadij Gurland had collaborated with Neumann in 1942 on an important study, *The Fate of Small Business in Nazi Germany*, for the US Senate’s Special Committee to Study Problems of American Small Business, worked for a few months as a consultant for the OSS before, in 1944, being welcomed among the members of the Central European Section as a specialist on the German penal and constitutional system.12

The government experience of these three members of the Institute for Social Research coincided with a turning point within the Frankfurt School itself. The departure of many of the scholars who had made the school famous marked, in many senses, the end of the Frankfurt School as a theoretically unified movement. One cause of this dissolution was certainly the growing economic difficulties of the Institute for Social Research (directed by Max Horkheimer and hosted since 1937, on New York City’s Morningside Heights, by Columbia University).13 During his negotiations with Washington agencies, on more than one occasion Marcuse earnestly entreated Horkheimer to give him an economic or intellectual reason for renouncing the economic security that his entrance into government service would guarantee him. In the second half of the 1930s, Marcuse strongly contributed to the definition of the program of Critical Theory14. For him, then, this experience could be lived in a non-punitive way only if thought along the lines of the contributions that, since the beginning of the war, the institute was trying to provide to the American war effort through the production of memoranda, research projects, and conferences on Nazi Germany.15 Neumann and Kirchheimer’s departures from the institute were somewhat less emotional; indeed, owing to the impossibility of his continuing to support the “costs” of their activities at the institute, Horkheimer was clearly urging them to accept employment offers from the various government agencies in Washington.16

As Horkheimer admitted in a letter to Neumann on February 1, 1942,17 the financial difficulties of the institute were also accompanied by significant theoretical and political divergences that had emerged around
the question of the nature and function of National Socialism. The entire group shared the idea that Nazism was in fact part of a wider process of social transformation that included Soviet Communism and liberal democracies in a single paradigm of domination. Nazism was thus part of what Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno would subsequently define in the 1950s as “total socialization,” or the process of systemic repression typical of mass society that “strikes the individual, as a presumably mere biological entity, no longer only from outside but in his own interior and makes him a monad of the social totality.”18 The differences consisted in identifying the driving force of the process of totalitarian socialization that Horkheimer, Adorno, and Friedrich Pollock saw in the autonomous movement of politics and technics, to which the economy was now inexorably subordinated. Conversely, for the future analysts of the Research and Analysis Branch, that driving force continued to be of a predominantly economic nature. Horkheimer and Pollock conceived their analysis within the wider theoretical framework of “state capitalism”—that is, as the expression of a qualitatively new social formation, in which, with market autonomy eliminated and the search for private accumulation subordinated to the needs of general planning, the profit motive tended more and more to be replaced by the “motivation of power,” and traditional capitalists became rentiers.19 From this perspective, Nazism could certainly be considered a “new order” founded on the “primacy of politics over the economy.”20 Not unlike the theses maintained during the same period by James Burnham, and even previously by the conservative German review Die Tat, directed by Ferdinand Fried,21 Horkheimer’s view was that power had assumed a predominantly impersonal nature and was now represented by a new social figure, the manager, in virtue of his superior technical knowledge of the alchemy of organization.22 Increasingly, capital was administratively regulated by political power, which was itself beholden to the economic dominance of big business, thereby modifying the very composition of social classes.

In Behemoth, Neumann had on the contrary defined Nazism as a “non-state,” a form of monopolistic-totalitarian capitalism where “ruling groups control the rest of the population directly without the mediation of that rational though coercive apparatus hitherto known as the state.”23 In his eyes, Pollock’s thesis concerning state capitalism was a contradictio in adjecto, similar in its impracticability to that of the “state of the masses” advanced during the same period by another German émigré, Emil Lederer, who defined fascist dictatorship as “a modern political system which rests on the amorphous masses.” This system, in order to guarantee the perpetuation of the dictator’s power, had destroyed society’s “stratified structure,” giving life to a perverse form of “classless society.”24 For Neumann, capitalism under the Nazis hadn’t resolved its innate antagonisms, which now operated on a higher level, concealed by the use of a
powerful bureaucratic apparatus and the völkisch community ideology. In fact, the Nazi regime favored and accentuated the process of monopolistic concentration, reinforcing the power of industrial potentates and weakening the position of the middle and working classes. Thus, while the capitalist system hadn’t lost its internal dynamism, and profit was still “the energy that motivated expansion,” with the end of market autonomy implied in the monopolization process, a totalitarian political power was now required.

In Kirchheimer and Marcuse’s explanation, the Nazis’ rise to power was neither the result of a social revolution that qualitatively changed the relationships of production in capitalist society, nor a simple restoration of the status quo ante the Weimar Republic. It was, rather, the expression of a shift in the “political compromise” upon which modern German society had up until then been founded. The compromise was no longer between members of parliament and the government, as in classical liberalism, or through agreements between opposed voluntary associations, as in the era of mass democracy (Weimar). German society was now founded upon “pacts” between the heads of dominant groups (big industry, the Nazi Party, and the army), who were united only by the common interest of keeping the regime alive, and whose conflicts were reconciled in the figure of the Führer, “the locus of final compromise,” and in his policy of imperialist expansion. The Nazi invective against the “spirit of capitalism” was thus anything but anticapitalist; it was, rather, the expression of the growing obsolescence of competitive capitalism based on individual effort and the rise of an economic power now concentrated in the hands of a few large trusts.25

In contrast to Horkheimer’s perspective, for Neumann, Marcuse, and Kirchheimer economic relations themselves were immediately transformed into political relationships whereby the state was the “executive organ” of the economy that organized and coordinated the entire nation for imperialist economic expansion. The advantages that were derived for big economic groups from the immediate identification of the state with dominant economic interests rendered their lack of independence acceptable. In particular, Nazism eliminated the typical characteristics of the liberal era—the monopoly on the legitimate use of force, the universality of the law, the state as a system of rational administration—all of the overlap between politics and society. At the same time, Nazism’s politicization of the private sphere could qualify the Third Reich as a “state of the masses,” where all forces and individual interests were “submerged into an emotional human mass, skillfully manipulated by the regime” and united only by the common instinct of self-preservation. This politicization, however, did not result in even a perverse form of a classless society. Like every capitalist society, National Socialism was constituted around two opposed social classes, “the small number of
those who control the productive process and the bulk of the population which, directly or indirectly, is dependent upon the former.” Its specificity consisted in having streamlined the process of social differentiation, repressing all intermediate agencies and groups, which resulted in the de facto expansion of the base of exploitation. In this sense, it represented “the specifically German adaptation of society to the requirements of large scale industry” that with liberal democracies and Soviet communism shared the affirmation of a new form of rationality. This was the “technical rationality” that “functions according to the standards of efficiency and precision. At the same time, however, it severed itself from everything related to the humane needs and wants of individuals; it is entirely adapted to the requirements of an all-embracing apparatus of domination.”

3. The three German scholars had very different backgrounds. Neumann was a student of Hugo Sinzheimer and Harold Laski; until the publication of *Behemoth*, he had practiced as a lawyer for the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and various union organizations. Marcuse was a philosopher who had studied under Heidegger, with brief political experience in his youth during the November Revolution of 1918–19, from which he developed his own approach to Marxism and an implacable antipathy for German Social Democracy, responsible, in his opinion, for the failure of the revolution. Kirchheimer was a student of Carl Schmitt, with brief experience as a Prussian penal administration secretary and a disinclination for activist politics. Despite these varied experiences, they came to Washington united by a solid bond of friendship, which extended even to their respective families. Above all, they were united by a shared methodology and theoretical perspective, cemented over the years of their collaboration with the Institute for Social Research.

However, in Washington Neumann, Marcuse, and Kirchheimer found a working environment that was profoundly different from the institute and a cultural terrain that was undoubtedly less favorable for practicing “critical theory.” Despite the three German scholars’ clearly Marxist orientation, however, their difficulties were not of a predominantly political or ideological nature. Until the advent of the Cold War, the American administration’s priority was to make the best possible use of the talents of the leading specialists available for the war effort. For example, Paul Sweezy—who was already well known before the war as a brilliant student of Schumpeter with a clearly Marxist orientation—was hired by General Donovan for R&A’s Economic Division without any concern whatsoever for the young radical’s Communism. Donovan only wanted to make sure, for reasons of expediency, that Sweezy wouldn’t take part in violent demonstrations and that he wasn’t against the political use of explosives or the like. The same went for Neumann, whose Socialist
political orientation was noted by government officials well before his joining the OSS. What’s more, today we know that, at least for a short time, Neumann acted as a KGB informant during his service with the OSS with the code name “Ruff,” providing the Soviets with top secret materials (e.g., those used to write the report on the attempts against Hitler’s life—published here—and which were denied to his colleagues at the R&A’s London branch). And Neumann’s collaboration with KGB was possibly known to the American secret services through “Venona,” a system of decoding the encrypted messages of Soviet espionage agencies, without any accusations of treason or conspiracy against him having arisen.

Much more troubling for the three German scholars were the “ethnic” prejudices in the OSS against European émigrés. This prejudice was evident in the decision to assign supervisory duties to American WASPs, thus preventing the alien “enemies” from assuming administrative responsibility in subdivisions like the Central European Section—even when, as in Neumann’s case, their superior abilities were universally acknowledged.

Still, what had the greatest impact on Critical Theory was R&A’s bureaucratic organization, which manifested itself in a series of internal directives that obsessively demanded a policy of scientific objectivity and neutrality throughout the war. The purpose of the directives was to prevent the authors from influencing readers with personal opinions, to the point that terminology in the drafting of reports was regulated down to the last minute detail. This positivist obsession was driven by the Project Committee, the R&A office charged with approving every report written and its subsequent distribution (the main recipients being the “operative” units of the OSS, the American and British military hierarchies, the White House, and the various departments of Roosevelt’s administration). The Project Committee was directed by the “orthodox” geographer Richard Hartshorne, for whom “Proust, Joyce or Gertrude Stein would all be equally out of place in R&A” because “intelligence reports find their literary merit in terseness and clarity rather than in expressive description.” On more than one occasion the circulation of the Central European Section’s reports was blocked because they were considered beneath R&A’s expected standards of “mature and objective scientific research.”

To avoid undermining the very presuppositions of a theory that aimed at being “critical” and that had begun precisely with the refusal of a positivist conception of scientific research as the “mere duplication of the real in thought,” those in the Frankfurt group found themselves forced to reconfigure the inner logic of their research activities. They abandoned philosophical and theoretical categories for an analysis that was apparently more descriptive but that was, in reality, spurred by
specific questions or strictly political or military phenomena. This approach resulted in their work at times assuming even more critical contours, thereby provoking veritable political “battles” inside the American administration—which they nearly always lost.

Their access to a number of “unconventional” sources, such as secret intelligence materials and reports from individual theaters of war, press reviews, telephone taps, war prisoner interrogations, as well as the entire resources of the Library of Congress, provided a more consistent empirical base for the group’s research in comparison with the parameters at the Institute for Social Research. A typical example of this new working method for Critical Theory was Marcuse’s report *German Social Stratification*. Marcuse was by far the most speculative Frankfurt School member in Washington, yet here we can see the “classic” thesis of the tripartite division of Nazi sovereignty argued in *Behemoth* supported by a statistical and factual base that allowed the precise definition of German class structure. Marcuse was thus able to debunk once and for all claims concerning the end of class divisions under Nazism.35

By adapting Critical Theory to the American cultural and bureaucratic machine, the Frankfurt group was rapidly able to impose their own “intellectual guidance” on the Central European Section, which despite being staffed by over forty analysts of different cultural and political backgrounds, ended up producing a cohesive interpretation of the Nazi “enemy” with a clear Frankfurt imprint. “The ablest persons to be found have been appointed,” we read, for example, in a memoir prepared by Eugene N. Anderson, head of the Central European Section between 1943 and 1945 and the main sponsor of the Frankfurt group in the OSS.

But in selecting personnel . . . have stressed the ability to do cooperative research. . . . The policy of mutual criticism and assistance has been consistently maintained. . . . Whenever a topic is assigned, all the analysts able to contribute anything on the subject, whether material or ideas, have sat in conference with the analyst responsible for the topic and have offered their information and knowledge. . . . Much credit in this respect is owing to Dr. Neumann and Dr. Marcuse, who both believe in and practice this approach to their work.”36

Amazed, Anderson noted the relative ease with which the Frankfurt group was able to imprint upon the entire section their own research strategies. In this way, the three German scholars managed to reconcile their intellectual agenda with the “productivist” exigencies of the American intellectual-military establishment. In a letter to Horkheimer sent shortly after his joining the OSS, Marcuse wrote ironically, for example, of having received the grade “excellent” in the evaluation that, periodically, in consummate military style, all of the R&A analysts received.37
During the “endless” weekly meetings, shrouded in a blanket of smoke, the “excellent” Marcuse distinguished himself with his philosophic digressions, which apparently only Neumann could contain, and with his capacity to discover the authors of anonymous reports and memoranda in virtue “of his knowledge of dialectics.”\(^\text{38}\) As John Herz, who was Kirchheimer’s closest collaborator at the time, recalls, “It was as if the left-Hegelian Weltgeist had taken up temporary residence in the Central European Section of the OSS.”\(^\text{39}\)

4. The Frankfurt group’s arrival at the Central European Section coincided with a decisive moment in World War II, immediately after the Nazis’ defeat in Stalingrad and Tunisia, when the American (and German) military and political hierarchies became convinced of an ultimate Allied victory. On more than one occasion, the section was thus called upon to comment on the “possible patterns of German collapse” and to identify the likely partners and interlocutors following the regime’s fall. Along the same lines as the understanding of Nazism they developed before entering into government service, the Frankfurt group immediately warned the American authorities of the impossibility of operating with the same logic used following the defeat of the Second Empire in 1918. In that case the German military dictatorship had acted “exclusively at the top and never succeeded in gaining thorough control over the organizations and lives of the German people.” Germany’s military setbacks thus had provoked a decline of German “morale” that opened the way for a transition of political power “quietly, while hostilities were still in progress, and well in advance of the so-called revolution.”\(^\text{40}\) Still, Nazi totalitarianism presented a qualitatively different scenario: society had been “completely pulverized into its individual atoms which are then organized and manipulated from the top-down,” “well-trained” to “want . . . ‘peace, bread, and security’, not politics” and to recognize “private sorrows, food, shelter, safety for themselves and their children” as its only priorities in a repressive context where “fear and distrust prevents them from articulating even these private sorrows.” Apathy, fatigue, and distrust were therefore the fundamental characteristics of the German people, who, though wounded by the setbacks of war, had not been fundamentally transformed.\(^\text{41}\) From the point of view of psychological warfare—which, the Frankfurters explained, shouldn’t be “concerned with what people feel and think about their governments but rather to what extent these feelings and thoughts will and can affect their behavior within the framework of the enemy society”\(^\text{42}\)—“morale” seemed wholly inconsequential. Rather, from this perspective, Nazism had truly managed to build a “nearly foolproof” society: if, in fact, “in a free society, the feelings of individuals are likely to be political facts of the highest importance,” in a totalitarian regime like Nazi Germany they
were merely “a minor vulnerability” that could be used by the regime to its own advantage.\textsuperscript{43} As the Allied bombing raids had also demonstrated, despite the important results reached on a strictly military level, on a social and political level they risked pushing the German people even closer to the Nazi government, perceived “as the only bastion against personal and national destruction.”\textsuperscript{44} Nazism had managed “to reduce the importance of individual feelings to a minimum” and transform even a coward into the most courageous fighter. “An entrepreneur,” Marcuse commented provocatively,

for instance, may dislike the Nazis; he may be convinced that they will lose the war. He may ardently desire peace and may even be willing to accept unconditional surrender. His morale may thus be said to be ‘low.’ What is the effect of his low morale on the operation of his armament factory? A worker may be a defeatist or even a revolutionist. Will he work less and can he work less? A soldier may not want to fight. Will his will have a chance of asserting itself?\textsuperscript{45}

In all three cases, distancing oneself from the regime would have been imprudent and irrational in a Hobbesian sense, because it would have meant putting one’s own life seriously at risk. In such a repressive context, where morals had become “a democratic luxury,” the “ordinary methods of psychological warfare” became totally inadequate. The Allies could only counter the totalitarian order “by smashing the structure for the management of morale,” that is, destroying the Nazi system itself and the social and institutional structures of which it was the expression.

For the same reason, the Frankfurt group was suspicious of identifying the “heart of [Nazi] Germany” in “Prussian militarism” and its “destruction” as the main objective of the Allied forces. This strategic perspective reproduced, on a military level, the widely held idea, deep rooted in the United States, that there was a common antidemocratic path in Germany’s history “from the romantics to Hitler.”\textsuperscript{46} To the Frankfurt group, this meant not grasping the “modern” nature of National Socialism, with serious consequences for effectively concluding the war. “Industrial concentration and the totalitarian integration of Germany into the imperialistic war economy,” Marcuse and Felix Gilbert explained in their October 23, 1943, report published here, “have led to a new distribution of power in which political control rests solely with the new Nazi Party hierarchy and its industrialist military and petty bourgeois.”\textsuperscript{47} The transformation of the German Reich into a totalitarian political regime subject to centralized terroristic control had in fact rendered necessary the dissolution of Prussia as an autonomous political and administrative unit and, more generally, the dismantling of the “social and political com-
plex” that guaranteed the Prussian Junker political predominance over all of Germany. The Junkers were tied to the Nazi regime only in virtue of the economic control of the large holdings in the occupied eastern territories, conceded to them as “compensation” for their political marginalization. Identifying Nazi Germany with “Prussian militarism” was misleading also from an ideological point of view. As Marcuse had already clarified in a report sent to the American governmental authorities before joining the OSS, the “new German mentality” was in fact much closer to the philosophy of efficiency and success typical of “western” bourgeois democracies than to the old German Kultur and conservative and semifeudal Prussian authoritarianism. The Nazi regime embraced a “democratic” ideology founded on “the standards to technocratic efficiency regardless of traditional status and privileges.” This was also true for the German army, the traditional center of the Junkers’ political and social power, where the ruling logic was incompatible with the “obedience of corpses” of the old Prussian army. “The strength of the Nazi army” (again in the Marcuse-Gilbert report *The Significance of Prussian Militarism for Nazi Imperialism*) “depends to a great extent on the striking power of highly specialized small units having high technological and organizational efficiency,” units that require “a technical training which is entirely alien to the tradition of the Prussian nobility, and . . . an organizational coordination unsuitable to the caste spirit of the Junkers.”

Winston Churchill’s reiteration of the old proverb of the struggle against the “Teutonic urge for domination,” to which even the American political hierarchies seemed sensitive, thus risked leaving an “escape route” open for the ones truly responsible for Nazi oppression and aggression. This view of Prussian militarism also risked putting the Soviets in a privileged position as negotiators for conservative German circles hostile to Hitler’s regime, since the Soviets—through the support of the League of German Officers and the National Committee for a Free Germany—seemed to have grasped the growing marginalization of the Prussian tradition in favor of industrial and financial structures.

However, Neumann and Marcuse discounted the possibilities of negotiating peace with some sectors of the German elite or arranging for an internal overthrow of the regime through traditional conservative circles, two prospects that a few American military and political groups had, at least for a time, anticipated. With the nominations of Heinrich Himmler to the Reich’s Ministry of the Interior and Albert Speer as the “dictator of the German Economy” (August–September 1943), it became clear to the Americans that the Nazi leadership was determined “to fight the war to the bitter end and not to allow the emergence of a Badoglio government,” and that the party intended to force different components of the Nazi’s “compromise” to “stand together” through the application of totalitarian terror “to the limit.” It is from this perspective—that is, in
response to the shifting internal balance in the Nazis’ “compromise,” to the party’s advantage—that Neumann interprets the failed assassination of Hitler on July 20, 1944. Written just two days after the attempt on Hitler’s life, Neumann’s analysis is that the German General Staff had in fact maintained its own identity throughout the course of the regime, even though it was full of faithful Nazis. With Himmler’s promotion to internal dictator, the military authorities saw their control over the army seriously threatened by the SS and feared the loss of the only institutional tool that could play any role in “managing” a defeat with their own allies (industrial tycoons, bankers, the Junkers, and high-ranking officials). \( ^{51} \) Unlike the situation in 1918, military hierarchies could no longer count on “a Social Democratic leadership which would entrust demobilization and reorganization of the Army to the old Officers’ Corps, encourage the establishment of a Free Corps, and protect the Reichswehr from parliamentary control.” \( ^{52} \)

More generally, the Frankfurt group excluded the possibility of “a smooth transfer of political power from a totalitarian dictatorship to an organized political opposition . . . because the very essence of totalitarian dictatorship is the absence of organized opposition.” \( ^{53} \) In such a scenario, the only real ally of the “United Nations” (i.e., the Allies) could be, in their opinion, the underground movement. However, not having the forces to autonomously conduct a movement of liberation from Nazism, the underground needed the “support of the United Nations”—that is, the military defeat and occupation of Germany by Allied powers.

5. By request of the Civil Affairs Division of the War Department, from the end of 1943 and for all of 1944 the Central European Section worked, under Neumann’s direction, on the Handbook on Nazi Germany and, above all, on the Civil Affairs Guides, an important series of reports (in total over forty guides were planned, of which more than thirty were effectively realized) on political, economic, legal, and administrative problems that the military government would have to face in the first phases of occupation. The War Department’s intention was to limit these proposals to furnishing “recommendations” to military government personnel working in liberated zones, without any pretense of an immediate political effect. Kircheimer, who was now working full time for Neumann and his Central European Section group, was responsible for the main guides on legal and administrative issues. Neumann and the group turned these guides into a tool to lobby the American administration, which was then occupied with internal discussions on how to treat the enemy at the end of the conflict. The Central European Section group transformed the proposals into an articulated program for the democratic reconstruction of the country. At the political and institutional level, the group recommended “competing political parties, civil
liberties and protection for small property holders.” At an economic and social level, the recommendation included socialist measures, such as “the nationalization of key industries with the full exercise of democratic rights and liberties.”

In the American administration’s internal debate, from the outset the Central European Section opposed the so-called Morgenthau Plan, which recommended the territorial dismembering of Germany and the destruction of its industrial base. Instead, it proposed an alternative centered around “the removal from German society of the causes of aggression.” As Neumann explained in the October 11, 1944, report, The Treatment of Germany, the destruction of Germany’s industrial base risked provoking serious internal social and economic tensions, both consigning the occupying forces to a long-term commitment as well as threatening “the post-war economic recovery of Europe” and its “pacification.” Similarly, the destruction of Germany as a political entity would have also created competing spheres of influence, or, even worse, “the consequence would be that the control over the policing of Germany would fall to the USSR,” better situated than the United States and the UK to undertake “the investment of a considerable force for a long period,” necessary in the case of a division of German territory imposed from above and lacking meaningful popular support.

The Frankfurt group held that “the task of governing [postwar] Germany is tremendous” and could not be simply resolved via the political and economic destruction of the country. In their opinion, a tabula rasa policy was also impracticable from a strictly legal and administrative point of view. As Kirchheimer explained, “year by year,” an endless stream of laws, decrees, and ordinances which have affected and transformed life and institutions in Germany to such an extent that the immediate wholesale abrogation of this legislation, though not without psychological benefit, would lead to chaotic conditions. Both from the point of view of the “imperatives” of the military security of the United Nations as well as the ideals that they sought to promote, the only possible policy would consequently “include the gradual restoration to the German people of the liberties necessary for the reconstruction of their society in a democratic form.” In fact, without appealing to “indigenous personnel,” it was impossible to aim for truly eliminating the “roots” of Nazism: “For security reasons alone,” explained Kirchheimer, “the extent of the administrative functions to be carried out by Military Government will not be comparable with the scope of similar functions performed during the first two years of the military occupation of the Rhineland” at the end of the First World War. In that case, the functions of the military government were limited to “contacts with a German government which was still intact and functioning outside the zone of occupation, and to a mild form of supervision of this government’s regional and local machinery in the
zone of occupation.” Considering the forms and modalities of Nazi domination, as well as the war’s impact on the German economic and social system, the military government would instead be forced to assume such vast administrative responsibilities that it couldn’t avoid relying on German personnel. ⁶⁰ This meant, from an organizational point of view, maintaining the formal framework of many German agencies, including, for example, the centralized control systems of raw materials, industry, and transportation in the European countries occupied by the Nazis,⁶¹ while putting them under the political control and supervision of the military government.

The proposal to collaborate with the German people did not imply in any way a lenient treatment of the enemy. “Reasons of political morality,” Neumann specified in his “tactical” memorandum against the Morgenthau Plan, “further require that the German people must share the responsibility for Nazism and its train of aggressiveness and atrocities. No matter how many Germans have rejected the works and ideology of Hitlerism . . . measures must be devised, therefore, which will impose upon Germany certain liabilities and responsibilities to be borne by the German people.”⁶² Similarly, a series of long-term punitive “impositions” needed to be immediately established, including the permanent interdiction of a standing army and a prohibition against arms production. However, for the Frankfurt group, the occupying force’s intransigence should be mainly directed through a radical policy of denazification that extended beyond merely purging the Nazi political and military leadership. The denazification policy should also undermine Nazism’s “economic base,” which had been promoted and sustained by elements external to the party, and which, over the years, came to pervade “all spheres of public and private life.”⁶³ In a series of proposals coordinated by Marcuse, the Central European Section presented a list of 1,800 businessmen and officials who belonged to seemingly “neutral” economic institutions outside of the Nazi Party’s ranks but who were “essential for the rise and maintenance of Nazism.” These figures under the Nazi regime “exert[ed] considerable direct influence over economic controls” and so should be added to the approximately 220,000 “active Nazis” to be immediately put into preventive custody.⁶⁴

“The most thoroughgoing possible elimination of Nazi and militaristic influences from German life⁶⁵ could not, however, be limited to the aforementioned measures. It also presupposed a profound transformation of Germany’s social structure “through a process of democratic evolution from below.” An integral part of the military government’s denazification program thus had to support the rebirth of a party and union system typical of liberal democracies, without, however, succumbing to the liberal democratic “repressive tolerance” that hypocritically claimed being impartial and neutral: “The principle of equal treatment
of all political parties,” Marcuse claimed in the report *Policy Toward Revival of Old Parties and Establishment of New Parties in Germany*, “will not be immediately applicable in post-war Germany.” Treating nationalist rightwing groups the same as anti-Nazi groups and not grasping the fundamental distinction that exists “between acts of violence perpetrated by Nazis and those committed by anti-Nazis and directed against known terrorists and henchmen of the Nazi regime” would be tantamount in his opinion “to perpetuating the greatest threat to the security of the occupying forces and to the restoration of a peaceful order.” Denazification, therefore, had to be partisan and selective, distinguishing the real “anti-Nazis”—those who had demonstrated their active opposition not only to a few incidental aspects of the regime but also to its social, political, and ideological structure—from simple “non-Nazis” and, above all, from figures like the industrialist Fritz Thyssen, who “may again become an ardent supporter of a new aggressive militaristic policy if he deems it profitable for his business interests” or from reactionary circles and “National Bolshevism,” which resented only the plebeian character of the regime but which were hostile to truly democratic policy. A mere willingness to cooperate with the occupying forces couldn’t be considered a sufficient element to establish “anti-Nazi activity,” since, foreseeably, many people “will seek the favor of the occupation authorities in order to retain the position they held under the Nazi system.” This was true above all in the case of industrialists or bankers. Such figures “increased their power during the Hitler period” by participating in “the spoliation of the occupied territories, the ‘Aryanization’ of property, etc.” They would nevertheless be ready to offer their services to the occupying authorities “in order to avoid identification with Nazi policies” by claiming to have “served” their country exclusively as businessmen without having held political office under Nazism.

For the Frankfurt group, sincere cooperation was only possible with leftist anti-Nazi opposition (in which, as proof of a perspective that was still very dependent on the political framework inherited from the Weimar period, the Catholic Zentrum was also included). The immediate interests of leftwing opposition, in the opinion of the Frankfurt group, coincided with the security necessary to the military government. “The security of the occupying forces,” Marcuse explained, “requires the immediate restoration of law and order, but the establishment of law and order is conditioned upon the elimination of Nazism, which can be accomplished only through the indigenous political opposition in Germany itself, . . . the greatest potential instrument for the destruction of German aggression.” In addition, activists from the anti-Nazi opposition could serve as a reserve army to partly fill the vacuum left by the necessary purging of the German administrative and legal machine, without blocking its functioning. “In the operation of modern adminis-
Neumann wrote, “the role of the trained civil servant . . . is quite frequently exaggerated.” The anti-Nazi activists’ lack of technical knowledge was undoubtedly compensated for by the “vast political and social experience” and “trust” that they had among the population. In a certain sense, their “technical” incompetence could work to break the “esprit de corps of the German bureaucracy” that, ever since the Weimar Republic, was “one of the greatest obstacles to the penetration of democratic elements into the judicial and administrative bureaucracies.”

This was particularly true of the working class parties and movements that were the vital core of the clandestine anti-Nazi movement. According to Marcuse, these working class parties represented the country’s only internal forces able to “transform a non-political community solidarity into political solidarity” and, hence, “light the spark which can transform apathy and hatred and weariness into action.” In fact, in the context of military occupation, the communist movement would reorganize itself around a “minimal program” of collaboration with the country’s democratic forces and the socialist movement would return to its traditional liberal democratic reformist orientation. The same was true for unions that, according to Neumann, “were likely to provide effective support for the occupation forces” if they were reconstituted on a truly democratic basis. In his opinion, “the most complete repudiation of Nazism and the most direct and complete avowal of democratic principles” was contained in the defense of union “freedom to organize.”

6. Although the Central European Section’s recommendations were accepted by the military government’s authorities on more than one occasion—for example, the proclamation of the dissolution of the Nazi party prepared by Marcuse as an appendix to the guide dedicated to this topic largely corresponds to the decree actually mandated by the military government—Neumann and his group perceived their contribution to the democratic reconstruction of Germany as a failure. For the most part, the American political authorities preferred to follow a different path from the one suggested by the Frankfurt group. The American authorities had established a privileged relationship with the Christian-democratic center, whose ideological flexibility made that party a perfect “rallying ground for all forces seeking to stabilize Central European society by preventing both a social revolution as well as a new form of German imperialism.” For the Frankfurt group, this American policy meant that the “revolution through legal means” that was to be the denazification and democratic reconstruction of Germany was deprived of the progressive political energy that the working class’s anti-Nazi opposition purportedly provided and was reduced to the “social democratic compromise” that inspired the “comfortable, smooth, reasonable, democratic unfreedom” later criticized by Marcuse in the 1960s. As John
Herz commented in an essay emblematically entitled *The Fiasco of De-nazification*: “Denazification, which began with a bang, has since died with a whimper, [since] it opened the way toward renewed control of German public, social, economic and cultural life by forces which only partially and temporarily had been deprived of the influence they had exerted under the Nazi régime.”

Only slightly more successful was the dossier that the Frankfurt group furnished for the preparation and conduct of the Nuremberg Trials. Even before the United States established an official position regarding war crimes perpetrated by the Axis Powers, Neumann had in fact prepared a report, *Problems Concerning the Treatment of War Criminals*, which General Donovan immediately sent to the assistant secretary of war, John J. McCloy, accompanied by a note that described it emphatically as the study that definitively clarified the problem of how to face the question of war crimes. Owing to his reservations concerning the possibility of prosecuting more politically complex war crimes like the persecution of the Jews (later redefined as “crime against humanity”), or of the Nazis’ political opponents in an international court, Neumann contemplated establishing an inter-ally “political agency” that could “apply generally recognized principles and standards of criminal law” with full discretion (i.e., without necessarily having to be based on a specific legal system). Neumann’s report provided multiple criteria for “implementing” the principles enshrined in the *Statement on Atrocities* signed by the Allies in Moscow on October 30, 1943—which, in a comment on December 10 of the same year, both Kirchheimer and Herz had generally approved. In particular, Neuman’s report insisted on establishing a clear theoretical framework through which the controversial question of assessing individual responsibility for Nazi criminals could be addressed. Anticipating what would be the main defense for Adolf Eichmann and many other Nazi officials, Neumann recognized obedience to “imperative” higher orders as one of the possible weak points in the Allied policy in prosecuting war criminals. Western legal systems, including the American one, acknowledged the legitimacy of such a defensive strategy. On the other hand, in an authoritarian system like Nazism, where “individual resistance against orders” was “more dangerous and consequently less to be expected than elsewhere,” refusing the admissibility of such a defense wasn’t practicable. The solution, then, was to be found in whether or not the defendant had voluntarily adhered to the Nazi Party or one of its affiliated organizations while engaging in crimes such as shooting hostages, the forced deportation or dispossession of civilian populations, ill treatment of prisoners of war, collective reprisals, and, above all, as in Eichmann’s case, the annihilation of Jews or political opponents. In this case, in fact, the defendant’s “full knowledge” of the practices and functioning of the Nazi regime could be assumed, “and [he] can therefore
not avoid his share of responsibility.” Instead, the question of criminal responsibility could be resolved by appealing to the very foundations of the Nazi legal structure and, specifically, to the Führerprinzip. In the Nazis’ own theoretical interpretation the Führerprinzip implied a concept of responsibility that was wider than that normally accepted in Western legal systems, extending all the way to include the objective responsibility of the commander for the acts of his subordinates even when they are not the result of any specific order. In this way, the Nazis themselves could be considered “objective enemies,” depersonalized, impersonal criminals, identifiable as such in virtue of their voluntary and sincere participation in a regime that was intrinsically hostile to democracy. In fact, both Kirchheimer and Herz, who were appointed by Neumann to give this innovative theory of criminal responsibility a systematic form, explain:

In reversing these standards and in making the Nazi leaders responsible for what we [i.e. Western democracies, italics in original] consider as war crimes, they would indeed have to answer for what has actually been done in accordance with their own standards and policies. The ‘law’ according to which the Nazi leaders have acted was in reality the absence of any legal limitation and since their actions have been in contradiction to what an over-whelming majority of peoples and nations consider as fundamental standards of law and decency, the application of these standards to them seems to imply not the absence of but the vindication of justice.”

As a result of these and other preparatory reports, Neumann (who in the meanwhile had been promoted to acting chief of the Central European Section), was called to London as head of a specific OSS research group on “war crimes,” with the responsibility of assembling all the available information on Nazi efforts to seize the power in Germany and extend its domination all over Europe, in order to be used for the trial. He was assigned to the team of Justice Robert H. Jackson, who in May 1945 had been named as chief prosecutor for the American part of the International Military Tribunal of Nuremburg. By May 30, 1945, Neumann and his group had already made a great quantity of materials and evidence available to Justice Jackson’s office, including twenty-five trial briefs, a list of the main war criminals, and a “trial run” of the case against Göring. Traces of this preparatory work are evident in the four counts presented at the main trial, for which Neumann had written a provisional draft. The Frankfurt group’s influence is especially notable for the idea of a “common plan” of imperial aggression and control, which is described in detail in Marcuse’s long introductory text to the series of reports he coordinated for Nazi Plans For Dominating Germany
and Europe.” The idea of including “domestic crimes” against the Jews and other civilian groups among those normally recognized as war crimes was part of the Frankfurt group’s central contributions to the prosecution’s strategy.

However, where the Frankfurt group’s influence was most evident—and most controversial—was in the part of the trial devoted to the Holocaust. In fact, Neumann has recently been accused of having been responsible for its general underestimation. From the beginning of the OSS’s involvement, the author of Behemoth was able to impose on the organization an interpretation of anti-Semitism as the “spearhead” of the universal Nazi terror: “The slaughter or the expulsion of the scapegoat, however,” Neumann explains in the May 1943 report that begins this volume,

marks in mythology the end of a process, while the persecution of the Jews, as practiced by National Socialists, is only the prologue of more horrible things to come. The expropriation of the Jews, for instance, is followed by that of the Poles, Czechs, Dutchmen, Frenchmen, anti-Nazi Germans, and middle classes. Not only Jews are put in concentration camps but pacifists, conservatives, Socialists, Catholics, Protestants, Free Thinkers, and members of the occupied peoples. Not only Jews fall under the executioner’s ax but countless others of many races, nationalities, beliefs, and religions.

The Jews were particularly useful in this role “as guinea pigs in testing a method of repression” because they were strong enough to justify “in the eyes of the peoples” their being made “the supreme foe” but not so strong as to force the Nazis to be “involved in a serious struggle with a powerful enemy.”

From its initial articulation in Behemoth, this interpretation of the Nazi anti-Semitism was criticized within the Frankfurt School itself. Leo Löwenthal, who had already started collaborating with the Office of War Information at the beginning of the war and who worked with Horkheimer and Adorno in drafting the chapter on the “Elements of Anti-Semitism” in the Dialectic of Enlightenment, in a long letter to Marcuse on June 29, 1943, stressed his perplexities about Neumann’s “spearhead” theory, which had described the “final solution” as a preparatory phenomenon. Lowenthal was instead partial to the traditional “scapegoat” theory, which identified Nazi anti-Semitism as a “diversion” that blamed all manner of political ills on the Jews. Lacking a real bureaucratic tradition and resistant to being assimilated into the German ideological sphere, the Jews had become the representatives of “bourgeois bad conscience” and the capitalist past founded on competition and free enterprise. The Jews thereby channeled both the hatred of those sectors of
the bourgeoisie that flourished on bureaucratization as well as those of less privileged strata that tended to be destroyed by the processes of economic concentration. Marcuse had also adopted this approach, and he privately stressed to Horkheimer the need to revise the “spearhead” theory in light of the developments in Nazi anti-Semitism. “The function of this anti-Semitism,” he wrote,
is apparently more and more in the perpetuation of an already established pattern of domination in the character of men. Note that in the German propaganda, the Jew has now become an ‘internal’ being, which lives in Gentiles as well as Jews, and which is not conquered even with the annihilation of the ‘real’ Jews. If we look at the character traits and qualities which the Nazis designate as the Jewish elements in the Gentiles, we do not find the so-called typical Jewish traits (or at least not primarily), but traits which are regarded as definitely Christian and ‘human.’ They are furthermore the traits which stand most decidedly against repression in all its forms.”

Despite these internal debates, the “spearhead” theory was employed in the reports on anti-Semitism prepared by the Central European Section for the Nuremberg Trials: “It is the purpose of the Prosecution,” we find for example in the report The Criminal Conspiracy Against the Jews, drafted by Charles Irwing Dwork (director of R&A’s Jewish Desk) in collaboration with the Institute of Jewish Studies in New York in the series dedicated to the Nazi plans for dominating Germany and Europe, “to demonstrate the existence of a common plan or enterprise of the German Government, the Nazi Party and the German military, industrial, and financial leaders to achieve world domination by war. The destruction of the Jewish people as a whole, although an end in itself, was at the same time linked to and closely tied up with this aim of world conquest.” As a result, the “spearhead” theory was directly adopted by Justice Jackson in the Nuremberg Trials: “Anti-Semitism,” he explained in his opening address,
also has been aptly credited with being a ‘spearhead of terror.’ The ghetto was the laboratory for testing repressive measures. Jewish property was the first to be expropriated, but the custom grew and included similar measures against Anti-Nazi Germans, Poles, Czechs, Frenchmen, and Belgians. Extermination of the Jews enabled the Nazis to bring a practiced hand to similar measures against Poles, Serbs, and Greeks. The plight of the Jew was a constant threat to opposition or discontent among other elements of Europe’s population—pacifists, conservatives, commu-
nists, Catholics, Protestants, socialist. It was, in fact, a threat to every dissenting opinion and to every non-Nazi’s life.96

Inserting the annihilation of the Jewish people into a more general “plan” of repressive domination of the world didn’t, however, presuppose in any way for the Frankfurt group an underestimation of its centrality in the ideology and practice of National Socialism, much less conceal evidence of extermination from the Nuremburg Trials.97 As Arthur Schlesinger Jr. recently reminded us, figures of Jewish origin like Neumann, Kirchheimer and Marcuse, all of whom lost many close family members in the Nazi lagers, were “the last people inclined to ignore or discount reports of a Final Solution.”98 In a context where the “Jewish question” had still not become an independent variable in American foreign relations and where, above all, the very concept of “genocide” had still not been affirmed, it was in large part thanks to Neumann’s research team’s documentation that kept “the fate of Europe’s Jews from disappearing entirely from the American military and diplomatic agenda.”99 Neumann’s team also helped to ensure that the International Military Tribunal had access to much of the evidence of the criminal conspiracy against the Jews, including an official estimate of at least 5,700,000 deaths.100 From their perspective, however, the struggle against Nazi anti-Semitism had to minimize the specificity of the Jews’ fate and to affirm the principle that their treatment be equal to that of the other German citizens.101 For the same reason, denouncing Nazi crimes could only be extraneous to the attempts to “essentialize” the Holocaust that would later become typical of Zionist politics.

7. In any case, the honeymoon between the Frankfurt group and Justice Jackson—if there ever was one, considering the reciprocal diffidence that characterized their relationship from the start—soon ended. Neumann resigned in protest as head of the research team on war crimes just days after the official opening of the main trial. Shortly thereafter he also resigned from the American administration in order to dedicate himself to the construction of new political science departments at Columbia University and the Free University of Berlin (thus ending up contributing, despite himself, to the progressive Americanization of postwar German political philosophy). As Vice Prosecutor Telford Taylor admitted in his memoirs of the Nuremburg Trials, on more than one occasion Jackson ignored, with no apparent reason, the contribution of Neumann’s group in the decisive phases of selecting the defendants to formally bring to trial.102 This went above all for the inquiry concerning the so-called “economic cause,” from which Neumann’s group was totally excluded, despite having prepared a series of studies that unequivocally
showed the German industrialists’ collusion in the perpetuation of Nazi war crimes and that included a list of sixty-five leading businessmen implicated in the criminal policies of the Nazi regime. The Frankfurt group’s disappointment in seeing its struggle against the German enemy deprived yet again of one of its essential elements was expressed by Marcuse in a 1978 interview with Jürgen Habermas: “Those whom we had listed first as ‘economic war criminals’ were very quickly back in the decisive positions of responsibility in the German economy. It would be very easy to name names here.”

The Frankfurt group’s marginalization in Justice Jackson’s team was coupled with a more general marginalization of the OSS, which itself was closed by President Truman shortly thereafter, in October 1945. As an example of their progressive marginalization, following the end of the U.S-USSR collaboration, the strategic importance of which the Frankfurt group had insisted upon numerous times, Marcuse and Kirchheimer were transferred to the State Department. “You will have heard,” writes Marcuse bitterly in a letter to Max Horkheimer on April 6, 1946, “that the State Department’s Research and Intelligence Division has come under fierce attack for alleged communist tendencies. With this justification the Appropriations Committee has, for the time being, rejected new funding. Now the general horse-trading over the usual compromise begins, but quite possibly the Division will be dissolved on June 30. Actually I wouldn’t exactly be sad were that to happen.” Marcuse’s predictions proved to be accurate: at the end of April, the Research and Analysis Branch that the State Department had inherited from the OSS was terminated. The department hierarchy, under pressure from conservative circles in the American administration, was in fact convinced that the intelligence group was led by a series of people from the OSS with “strong Soviet leanings” and who, from an ideological point of view, were “far to the left of the views held by the President and his Secretary of State,” and who desired “a socialized America in a world commonwealth of Communist and Socialist states dedicated to peace through collective security, political, economic, and social reform; and the redistribution of national wealth on a global basis.” Unable to leave Washington due to his wife, Sophie’s, serious illness, Marcuse (like Kirchheimer) was thus part of that “staff of Jewish scribblers” that, facing the new Cold War mentality and under continuous surveillance by the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC), languished for several years at the State Department in an atmosphere similar to Kafka’s The Castle, where “one never knew who would answer the telephone or even whether it would be answered at all,” and where everyone was continually frustrated in their efforts to counteract these anticommunist tendencies.
It was in this political climate, already fully pervaded by Cold War divisions, that, in August of 1949, Marcuse oversaw the long and detailed State Department report, *The Potentials of World Communism*, which concludes this volume. In his introductory presentation, he explains the consequences of the fact that, contrary to Marx’s Communism had been victorious in the Soviet Union, an underdeveloped and isolated country. These two facts constituted an obstacle to the global development of Communism and instead favored a forced, step-by-step industrialization of Soviet society. Even if Western Communist parties were not yet totally discredited among proletarian strata, and thus still maintained a certain degree of autonomy from Soviet leadership, the social base and the possibility of development of these parties were undermined by a series of policies. The Marshall Plan, the American containment doctrine, and the first attempts at systematic commercial relations between the East and West contributed to stabilizing the system and helped diminish the support that Western Communist parties had found outside of their membership circles immediately after the war. There were objective limits to the rise of European Communist parties that anticipated their “integration”—as indicated by their embrace of a nonrevolutionary “minimal program”—within the democratic framework of Western liberalism. In the “Western zones” of occupied Germany the political force of the Communists had declined to the point of being “insignificant.” In the case of a new economic crisis it was more probable that disadvantaged sectors of the population sided with neo-Nazi movements, as the anti-Semitic residues still very much present in the occupied zones demonstrated. Hence, for Marcuse, a Communist threat was nonexistent; instead, the truly antidemocratic tendencies in Germany lay in the unnatural, prolonged occupation of Germany’s post-Nazi political order that could otherwise have favored transversal alliances between many different subjects and groups around the question of “national liberation.”

Here, too, Marcuse’s “recommendations” fell on deaf ears. As Kirchheimer would explain a few years later in *Political Justice*—his 1961 magnum opus in which the traces of R&A’s activities are evident—“every political regime has its foes or in due time creates them.” The “free world” had already created its new enemy. It had, however, also created its own internal criticism: in fact, a short time later, having left government service, Marcuse would revive the analysis of the German enemy in order to reproach the bad conscience of Western democracies, which equated the “totalitarian” tendencies of Nazism and Soviet Communism, thus transforming the very liberty they claimed to defend into a “powerful instrument of domination” of society and the world.