

DIETMAR WITTICH News from Class Society

The political classes in the centres of capitalism are in motion. We can approach this phenomenon only using differentiated analyses, but without letting our attention be diverted from the major trends. This article presents as examples the richest people and largest corporations in the world, ones that exert enormous political influence. Taxation policy in Germany is taken as the point of reference to examine the positioning of the state in class relations. On the other hand, the number of wage-earners is decreasing while the structure of this class keeps changing; their income is stagnating and their share in the affluence of society on the whole is in decline. At the same time the middle-classes are arranging themselves anew.

Utopie asks about Utopia Conversation with DIETER KLEIN and MICHAEL BRIE

The Future Report confronts neo-liberal and neo-social-democratic paths of development with conceptions that outline emancipative reform alternatives. The neo-liberal concept of the flexible individual marketing himself as the contractor of his own manpower and means of sustenance is countered by the formulation of a different model: the person who acts on the basis of self-determination, solidarity and social security and who is capable of living in peace. This question is paramount: What do people need for a self-determined life in socially secure circumstances? The answer is that individual freedom for all people has as its prerequisite social equality to partake of fundamental conditions of life.

WERNER RUF A Road Map to Peace?

On the background of the history of discrimination of the Jews in Europe one central goal of political Zionism was the acquisition of land as territorial basis for Jewish statehood. This policy was consequently pursued before and after the foundation of the state of Israel. When the bipolar system collapsed the Palestinians became heavily dependent upon the good will of the Western powers and especially of the US. Therefore, the negotiations beginning in 1991 and culminating in the Oslo accords of 1993 were right from the beginning an asymmetric process: the formula »land for peace« not only remained empty, it was used by the Israeli governments to enhance settlement policy in the occupied territories. The »road map« is the clear expression of the asymmetry of the conflict and will not lead to the creation of a Palestinian entity which could be qualified as a state.

BERNHARD HEIMANN

The Left and War

The author deals with the period between 1848 and 1945. He analyses the views of theorists and politicians that gained influence on the Left-wing in Europe and describes the metamorphosis of Marx and Engels from advocates to opponents of war. He also discusses opinions within the II. International, the Socialist Workers' International and the Communist International. He examines in great detail the frequently changing views of the Bolsheviks under Lenin and the power-driven »theory production«

FRITZ VILMAR

Seminal Elements in East German Painting

The art of painters in the German Democratic Republic is usually seen by mainstream critics only as narrow, regulated by principles of »socialist realism«, uninspired and light years away from what is called »modern arts« in the West. The author pleads the case for a more subtle analysis of 40 years of painting in the GDR. He explores a process he calls the »concerted action« of painters against the dogmatisation of realism and for the revitalisation of ties to the »classic modern arts« of the 1920's. He comes to the conclusion that the best oeuvres of GDR art are characterized by a highly individual, seldom optimistic, often sceptical, critical, melancholy portrayal of human and social existence, history, environment and personal visions, often realized by expressionist as well as surrealist means. Comparing this »advanced realism« with the »abstract« arts which dominated painting in West Germany, the author hopes for a new approach to the assessment of this art which would make it possible to acknowledge that there were trends in painting in both parts of Germany which should now be seen as equal sources for future development.

STEPHAN B. ANTCZACK

The Business of Art

The aesthetic equivalent of a work of art in the marketplace is expressed in terms of its economic value. The marketplace is the interface and intermediary between art and commerce, artist and art buyer. This is the author's point of departure for a review of the economic and social status of artists and the art market in Germany since the 1960's. His data is derived primarily from studies done in West Germany.

He concludes that because of the current saturation of the mainstream art market, artists must become business people as well who realise that marketing – as the interaction between supply and demand – is an essential cultural activity, whether they do it themselves or find someone else to do it for them. The author sees art as a »growth industry« and reviews various marketing and pricing strategies; he exhorts artists and cultural institutions to get creative and inventive in this area, too. With public subsidies for culture being reduced or eliminated at breakneck speed, he appeals to the advocates of liberalisation to assume responsibility for the economic stabilisation of art and artists – because it also makes good business sense.