

Chapter 2

Ralph Miliband and the Instrumentalist Theory of the State: The (Mis)Construction of An Analytic Concept

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to suggest that the concept of instrumentalism that is so closely associated with Ralph Miliband's theory of the state is not merely an oversimplification and caricature of Miliband's political theory, but an artificial polemical construct superimposed on his and others' historical and empirical analysis of the state in capitalist society (Domhoff, 1990, p. 42). Many, if not most, of the criticisms directed at Miliband's political theory during the 1970s state debate were actually straw men created by polemical adversaries who introduced an analytic construct called 'instrumentalism' that Miliband himself never embraced, and for good reason, as an accurate conceptualization of his published work. G. William Domhoff (1987, p. 295; 1990, pp. 40-4) has even argued previously that Miliband's instrumentalism was willfully distorted and misinterpreted for the purely political purpose of exaggerating the theoretical originality of 'new' theories of the state that claimed to be 'more Marxist' and 'more revolutionary' than Miliband's theory. From this perspective, the instrumentalism that so many state theorists have sought to move beyond since the Miliband-Poulantzas debate (1969-76) is merely an abstraction that was steadily, artificially, and often deliberately constructed over the course of a polemic that accomplished little more than the fracturing of state theory (Barrow, 2000, 2002).

THE INTELLECTUAL ORIGINS OF INSTRUMENTALISM

Prior to Ralph Miliband's *The State in Capitalist Society*, the instrumentalist theory of the state had been most prominently, if cryptically, articulated by Paul Sweezy (1942, p. 243), who asserts that the state is 'an instrument in the hands of the ruling class for enforcing and guaranteeing the stability of the class structure itself'. However, instrumentalism actually has much deeper roots in a classical Marxist tradition that directly influenced Miliband's thinking about the state and political theory. In the 1960s and 1970s, Miliband (1969, p. 5; 1977, p. 1) challenged the dominance of 'bourgeois social science' by drawing on a classical Marxist tradition that he identified primarily with the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Gramsci and, to a lesser degree, with those of Rosa Luxemburg and Leon Trotsky.

Notably, Miliband's (1969, p. 5) theoretical reading of classical Marxism begins with the observation that Marx himself 'never attempted a systematic study of the state'. Miliband (1965, p. 278) was well aware of the fact that Marx intended to develop a theory of the state, as indicated in the notes for Volume 3 of *Capital*, but Marx successfully completed only Volume I and this work deals primarily with the structure, functioning, and historical development of the capitalist *economy*. Consequently, Miliband (Miliband, 1977, pp. 1-2) concludes that most of the *political* writings Marx left behind 'are for the most part the product of particular historical episodes and specific circumstances; and what there is of theoretical exploration of politics...is mostly unsystematic and fragmentary, and often part of other work'. Miliband identifies the main *political* writings of classical Marxism primarily with Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* and the *Civil War in France* and with Lenin's *What is to Be Done?* and *State and Revolution*. Significantly, although references to the state in different types of

society recur constantly in almost all of Marx's writings (Draper 1971), Miliband (1977, 5) concludes in the final analysis that:

...as far as capitalist societies are concerned, his [Marx's] main view of the state throughout is summarized in the famous formulation of the *Communist Manifesto*: "The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the affairs of the whole bourgeoisie."¹

Miliband (1977, 5) argues that this thesis 'reappears again and again in the work of both Marx and Engels; and despite the refinements and qualifications they occasionally introduce in their discussion of the state...they never departed from the view that in capitalist society the state was above all the coercive instrument of a ruling class, itself defined in terms of its ownership and control of the means of production'. Thus, for all the protestations that Miliband 'failed to transcend the framework that the pluralists use' (Gold, Lo, and Wright, 1975a, p. 34) and therefore 'does not advance the Marxist analysis of the state' (Jessop, 1977, p. 357), Miliband's theoretical position is firmly anchored in classical Marxism. In fact, Bob Jessop (1982, p. 12), a noted critic of Miliband's instrumentalism, observes that the instrumentalist thesis can be traced back at least as early as *The German Ideology* (1845-46), where Marx and Engels (1970, p. 80) claim that the state:

...is nothing more than the form of organization which the bourgeois necessarily adopt both for internal and external purposes, for the mutual guarantee of their property and interests....the State is the form in which the individuals of a ruling class assert their common interests...

Indeed, Marx and Engels not only reiterate this proposition in *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), but nearly four decades later the instrumentalist thesis continues to find an equally clear statement in Engels' *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884). In this work, Engels (1972, p. 231) asserts that:

it [the state] is normally the state of the most powerful, economically dominant class, which by its means becomes also the politically dominant class and so acquires new means of holding down and exploiting the oppressed class. The ancient state was, above all, the state of the slave owners for holding down the slaves, just as the feudal state was the organ of the nobility for holding down the peasant serfs and bondsmen, and the modern representative state is an *instrument* for exploiting wage labor by capital [italics added].²

Thus, even Jessop (1982, pp. 12-13), who claims to have moved beyond Miliband, acknowledges that much of Marx's and Engels' political writings are in fact 'concerned to reveal the various ways in which the modern state is used as an instrument for the exploitation of wage-labour by capital and/or the maintenance of class domination in the political sphere'. After Marx and Engels, Miliband (1969, p. 6) considered Lenin's *State and Revolution* to be merely 'a restatement and an elaboration of the main view of the state' found in the *Communist Manifesto*, while after Lenin 'the only major Marxist contribution to the theory of the state has been that of Antonio Gramsci'.³ For example, in *State and Revolution*, Lenin (1974, pp. 12-15) describes 'the state as an instrument for the exploitation of the oppressed class'. Moreover, Lenin's analysis of the state in Part I, section 3 of *State and Revolution* draws directly on

several passages in Engels' *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* as noted earlier.⁴

Consequently, Miliband identifies the chief deficiency of contemporary Marxist political theory as the fact that nearly all Marxists have been content to assert and reassert, as more or less self-evident, the instrumentalist thesis articulated so succinctly in the *Communist Manifesto*. For Miliband, this meant that the primary way to advance state theory was 'to confront the question of the state in the light of the concrete socio-economic *and* political *and* cultural reality of actual capitalist societies'. In other words, Miliband argues that Marx provides a conceptual foundation for the socio-economic analysis of capitalist societies. Lenin provides guidance for a political analysis of capitalist societies, while Gramsci supplies the conceptual apparatus for a cultural and ideological analysis of capitalist societies. Therefore, Miliband was convinced that the central thesis and conceptual structure of Marxist political theory was effectively in place and that what Marxism needed was more empirical and historical analysis of states in capitalist societies to give concrete content to this thesis and its theoretical concepts. The intended purpose of *The State in Capitalist Society* was 'to make a contribution to remedying that deficiency' (Miliband, 1969, p. 7).

MILIBAND'S THEORY OF THE STATE

The most concise summary of Miliband's (1969, p. 23) theory of the state is that:

In the Marxist scheme, the "ruling class" of capitalist society is that class which owns and controls the means of production and which is able, by virtue of the economic power thus conferred upon it, to use the state as its instrument for the domination of society.

In empirical terms, Miliband identifies the corporation as the initial reference point for defining the capitalist class. In the United States, for example, the bulk of economic activity, whether measured in terms of assets, profits, employment, investment, market shares, or research and development expenditures was concentrated in the nation's fifty largest financial institutions and the 500 largest non-financial corporations (Means, 1939; Mason, 1964; Baran and Sweezy, 1966; Edwards et al., 1978). Thus, members of the capitalist class are identified as those persons who occupy the managerial and ownership functions of corporations (Mintz 1989, p. 208; Zeitlin, 1974; Useem, 1984). In this respect, the capitalist class is an overlapping economic network (i.e., structure) of authority based on institutional position (i.e., management) and property relations (i.e., ownership). Consequently, Miliband empirically identified the ruling classes of the advanced capitalist societies with wealthy families who owned large blocks of corporate stock and with the high ranking managers of those same corporations – about 0.5 percent to 1 percent of the total U.S. population (Domhoff 1978, p. 4). However, it should be emphasized that the empirical composition and internal structure of the capitalist class is not fixed concept for Miliband. Instead, a Milibandian analysis of the socio-economic structure of capitalist societies must be empirically specific to particular countries and such an analysis must also be periodically updated to account for changes in the management and ownership structures of the capitalist economy.⁵

Social Class and Political Practice

In identifying the capitalist class, Miliband was directly challenging pluralists, who claimed that theoretical references to a 'capitalist class' were empirically meaningless, because the political representation of business interests is fragmented among

competing corporations and divergent industry sectors, while corporate power is simultaneously checked by countervailing centers of social, economic, and political power. Thus, Miliband's empirical documentation of his thesis captured the attention of behavioral social scientists, because it cast doubt on the assertions of political theories that claimed to be based on empirical observation (e.g., Truman, 1951; Galbraith, 1952; Dahl, 1959). Moreover, in challenging these claims, Miliband was also debunking a widely held ideological belief, especially in the United States, that capitalist societies were more or less classless, pluralistic, egalitarian, and democratic. Thus, as bizarre as it may seem in retrospect, it was *theoretically* important within the Anglo-American intellectual context to reestablish the simple empirical fact that a capitalist class does exist and that numerous mechanisms can be identified which facilitate the economic cohesion of capitalists *as a class*.

However, assuming that one can document the existence of an economically dominant capitalist class, Miliband (1969, p. 24) contends that in conceptualizing the state most Marxists had failed 'to note the obvious but fundamental fact that this class is involved in a *relationship* with the state, which cannot be *assumed* in the political conditions which are typical of advanced capitalism', i.e., political democracy. Instead, if Marxist theory is to effectively challenge the claims of bourgeois social science, then the relationship between the state and the capitalist class has to be specified with historical and empirical precision (Miliband 1969, p. 55).⁶ Miliband emphasizes that in documenting this relationship the claims put forward by a Marxist theory of the state carry a heavy empirical burden for the political theorist. This burden derives from the fact that Marxists do not merely assert that the capitalist class exercises substantial

power, or even that it exercises more power than other classes, but insists that the capitalist class 'exercises a decisive degree of political power' *and* that 'its ownership and control of crucially important areas of economic life also insures its control of the means of political decision-making in the particular environment of advanced capitalism' (Ibid., p. 48).⁷

What is the State?

However, determining the magnitude of the relationship between a capitalist class and the state not only requires a clear definition of the capitalist class, but an equally clear definition of the means of political decision-making that constitute the state. Yet, Miliband observes paradoxically, that the modern state 'is a nebulous entity', because the state 'is not a thing, that it does not, as such, exist'. Instead, the state, as Miliband (1969, pp. 48-50) conceives it, is merely an analytic reference point that 'stands for...a number of particular institutions which, together, constitute its reality, and which interact as parts of what may be called the state system'. For Miliband, the state system is actually composed of five elements that are each identified with a cluster of particular institutions:

1. the governmental apparatus which consists of elected legislative and executive authorities at the national level, which make state policy,
2. the administrative apparatus, consisting of the civil service bureaucracy, public corporations, central banks, regulatory commissions, which regulate economic, social, cultural, and other activities,

3. the coercive apparatus, consisting of the military, paramilitary, police, and intelligence agencies, which together are concerned with the deployment and management of violence,
4. the judicial apparatus, which includes courts, the legal profession, jails and prisons, and other components of the criminal justice system,
5. the sub-central governments, such as States, Provinces, or Departments; counties, municipal governments, and special districts (Ibid., pp. 49-53).

According to Miliband (1969, p. 54): 'These are the institutions -- the government [executive], the administration, the military and the police, the judicial branch, sub-central government, and parliamentary assemblies -- which make up the "the state," and whose interrelationship shapes the form of the state system'. Miliband's emphasis on the state system as a set of *interrelationships* between particular institutions warrants special attention, since he has often been accused of reducing the state to a mere tool in the hands of the ruling class. Yet, contrary to these assertions, Miliband offers an important qualification that belies this metaphorical straw man.

Miliband chastises liberal pluralists and left-wing activists alike for the mistaken belief that 'the assumption of governmental power is equivalent to the acquisition of state power'. Although it is a simple distinction, Miliband's conflicts with the British Labour Party made him acutely aware that drawing a conceptual distinction between government and the state can have significant consequences for political strategy and political tactics. Miliband understood that the accession to governmental power at various points in the twentieth century by liberal, labor, and social democratic

governments was accompanied generally by a simultaneous failure to conquer *state power* in its diverse forms and places within the state system. The fact that a socialist government might control the parliamentary and executive branches of government, whether by election or revolution, does not automatically entail its control of the military, the police, the intelligence agencies, the civil service, the legal system, the sub-national governments, the schools and universities, regulatory agencies, public corporations, etc. As Miliband (1969, pp. 49-50) notes: ‘...the fact that the government does speak in the name of the state and is formally *invested* with state power, does not mean that it effectively *controls* that power’.

What is State Power?

Consequently, it is theoretically important to Miliband to know who actually controls state power at any given time. One of the most direct indicators of ruling-class domination is the degree to which members of the capitalist class *control* the state apparatus through interlocking positions in the governmental, administrative, coercive and other apparatuses. Miliband (1969, p. 54) emphasizes that:

It is these institutions in which ‘state power’ lies, and it is through them that this power is wielded in its different manifestations by the people who occupy the leading positions in each of these institutions.

For this reason, Miliband (1969, p. 55) attaches considerable importance to the social composition of the state elite. The class composition of a state elite creates ‘a strong presumption...as to its general outlook, ideological dispositions and political bias’ and, thus, one way to measure the degree of *potential* class domination is to quantify the extent to which members of a particular class have disproportionately colonized

command posts within the state apparatuses. In the eyes of critics, Miliband's theory of the state is considered synonymous with this concept of institutional colonization. This is a misrepresentation of Miliband's analysis that has wildly exaggerated his empirical claims about the direct domination of the state apparatuses by members of the capitalist class.

Despite the importance of colonization to Miliband's analysis, his (1969, p. 55) empirical claims about the degree to which capitalists colonize the state apparatus were always circumscribed by his recognition that capitalists have not 'assumed the major share of *government*' in most advanced capitalist democracies. For that reason, Miliband (1969, p. 59) argues that capitalists 'are not, properly speaking, a "governing" class, comparable to pre-industrial, aristocratic and landowning classes'.⁸ Indeed, a fact completely ignored by Miliband's critics is that he quotes Karl Kautsky to the effect that 'the capitalist class reigns but does not govern' (Ibid., p. 55).⁹ The colonization of key command posts in selected state apparatuses is merely one weapon, albeit an important one, in the larger arsenal of ruling class domination. What Miliband (1969, pp. 56, 48) actually claims is that capitalists are 'well represented in the political executive and in other parts of the state system' and that their occupation of these key command posts enables them to exercise *decisive influence over public policy*.¹⁰

The fact that finance capitalists usually control the executive branch of government and the administrative-regulatory apparatuses is considered particularly important, under normal circumstances, for both historical and theoretical reasons. In historical terms, the political development of the modern state system has been marked mainly by the growth of its regulatory, administrative, and coercive institutions over the

course of the last century. As these institutions have grown in size, numbers, and technical complexity, the state's various subsystems have achieved greater autonomy from government in their operations. The growth of independent administrative and regulatory subsystems within the state has occurred as governments, especially legislatures, have found it increasingly difficult to maintain any central direction over the many components of the state system. The historical result is that the preponderance of state power has shifted from the legislative to the executive branch of government and to independent administrative or regulatory agencies.

This development is theoretically important partly because the very basis of state power is concentrated in those institutions (i.e. administration, coercion, knowledge) and because it is those institutions that the capitalist class has colonized most successfully. Thus, the actual extent of power that capitalists achieve by colonizing executive, administrative, and regulatory command posts has been magnified by the asymmetrical power structure within the contemporary state system, (e.g., in the United States by the imperial presidency and the emergence of independent regulatory agencies). This magnification of their state power provides capitalists with strategic locations inside the state system from which to initiate, modify, and veto a broad range of policy proposals.¹¹ Miliband recognizes that a potential weakness of this more limited claim is the fact that capitalists usually colonize only the top command posts of government and administration. The colonization process is clearly unable to explain the operational unity of the entire state system and, therefore, one must be able to identify the mechanism that leads a number of relatively autonomous and divergent state subsystems to operate *as if* they were a single entity called *the* state.

Indeed, the loose connection of lower level career administrators to the state elite is indicated by Miliband's description of them as servants of the state. In fact, these servants are frequently conceptualized as a separate professional-managerial class composed of lower and middle level career *state managers* (Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, 1977).¹² Miliband (1969, p. 119) observes that:

The general pattern must be taken to be one in which these men [i.e. state managers] do play an important part in the process of governmental decision-making, and therefore constitute a considerable force in the configuration of political power in their societies.

Likewise, a problem of systemic unity derives from the disparate organization of the contemporary state apparatus. To the extent that the state system is viewed as a web of decentered institutions, one must account for how the state elite and state managers are able to maintain some over-arching inter-institutional cohesion that is capitalist' in its content. Miliband has attempted to explain the coherence of the state system by suggesting that its operational unity is reinforced by ideological and economic constraints. He (1969, p. 72) argues that most state elites, including those who are not members of the capitalist class, 'accept as beyond question the capitalist context in which they operate'. In Miliband's (1969, p.75) account, the ideological commitments of state elites and state managers are of 'absolutely fundamental importance in shaping their attitudes, policies and actions in regard to specific issues and problems with which they are confronted'. The result of their underlying ideological unity is that 'the politics of advanced capitalism have been about different conceptions of how to run the *same* economic and social system'.

Miliband (1969, p. 75) certainly recognizes that state elites and state managers in the various apparatuses, whether members of the capitalist class or not 'wish, without a doubt, to pursue many ends, personal as well as public'. However, the underlying ideological unity of state elites and state managers means that 'all other ends are conditioned by, and pass through the prism of, their acceptance of and commitment to the existing economic system' (Ibid., p. 75). Thus, in an observation that clearly anticipates Fred Block's (1977) concept of business confidence, Claus Offe's (1975; 1984, p. 126) dependency principle, and Lindblom's (1982) notion of the privileged position of business, Miliband (1969, p. 75) observes that:

...it is easy to understand why governments should wish to help business in every possible way...For if the national interest is in fact inextricably bound up with the fortunes of capitalist enterprise, apparent partiality towards it is not really partiality at all. On the contrary, in serving the interests of business and in helping capitalist enterprise to thrive, governments are really fulfilling their exalted role as guardians of the good of all.

Otherwise, as Miliband describes it, the modern state system in capitalist societies is a vast and sprawling network of political institutions loosely coordinated, if at all, through mechanisms providing a tenuous cohesion at best. Importantly, for Miliband, the diffuseness of the state system in capitalist societies also means that the conquest of state power is never an all or nothing proposition, because it is -- in the Gramscian phrase -- a war of fixed position, waged on many fronts, in many trenches, with shifting lines of battle, where victories and defeats occur side by side on the same

day. The conquest of state power is never absolute; it is never uncontested; and it is never complete, because it is an on-going and contingent *political* struggle.¹³ Hence, Miliband's concept of the state requires an analysis and understanding of state power that always refers to particular historical circumstances and to institutional configurations that may vary widely from one capitalist society to another, and where over time class hegemony may shift in one direction or another within the same society.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH INSTRUMENTALISM?

Ralph Miliband never actually used the term 'instrumentalism' to describe his theory of the state, but rather it was Nicos Poulantzas (1969, p. 74) who first identified Miliband's book with 'a long Marxist tradition' that allegedly considers the state to be 'only a simple tool or instrument manipulated at will by the ruling class'. Although Miliband did anchor his work in a classical Marxist tradition, Poulantzas' epithet was hardly an accurate description of either Miliband's book or the tradition of instrumentalist theory. Nevertheless, it is an oversimplification that quickly took hold in the state debate that unfolded during the 1970s and that persists to the present time. For instance, in their seminal article on 'Recent Developments in Marxist Theories of the Capitalist State', Gold, Lo, and Wright (1975a, p. 31) followed Poulantzas's lead by defining the instrumentalist theory of the state as 'a theory in which the ties between the ruling class and state are systematically examined, while the structural context within which those ties occur remains largely theoretically unorganized'. Shortly thereafter, Fred Block (1977, p. 8) defined instrumentalism as 'the orthodox Marxist view of the state because it views the state as a simple tool or instrument of ruling-class purposes'.¹⁴ This definition effectively institutionalized Poulantzas's polemical jibe as a permanent part of

the state debate even though G. William Domhoff (1976) correctly pointed out at the time that if one accepted this definition of instrumentalism then no one, especially Ralph Miliband, actually subscribed to an instrumentalist theory of the state. Indeed, it should have been highly instructive at the time that Block's (1977, pp. 8-10) subsequent critique of instrumentalism does not cite a single published work or author to exemplify his specific claims about instrumentalism.

Moreover, even at the time, the most strident critics of instrumentalism recognized that very few Marxist works on the state could actually be considered 'pure examples of an instrumentalist, structuralist, or Hegelian-Marxist perspective' (Gold, Lo, and Wright 1975a, p. 31), because the concepts are analytically constructed ideal-types. Nevertheless, Gold, Lo, and Wright (1975a, p. 32) proclaimed that 'Ralph Miliband expresses this position clearly'. Bob Jessop's (1982, p. 15) influential work on *The Capitalist State* identified *The State in Capitalist Society* 'a classic work' of instrumentalist theory, while Clark and Dear (1984, pp. 26-27) labelled *The State in Capitalist Society* as 'probably the best example of the instrumentalist model'.

Yet, even within the framework of the instrumentalist-structuralist dichotomy being constructed during this time, Gold, Lo, and Wright (1975a, p. 33) still acknowledged from the outset that 'there are, of course, examples of instrumentalist work done at various levels of sophistication' and they conceded that Ralph Miliband 'most notably' had 'attempted to situate the analysis of personal connections in a more structural context'. Jessop (1982, p. 15) also qualified his critique of Miliband with the observation that 'it would be wrong to suggest that Miliband is committed to a simple instrumentalist position'. Thus, one critic after another acknowledges the sophisticated, nuanced, and

multi-level analysis in *The State in Capitalist Society*, but then still proceed to debunk his work on the basis of criticisms that apply only to an artificially constructed ideal type, rather than to his actual published works. It is not Miliband's actual theorizing that was ever at issue, but the so-called 'logic' of a theoretical position artificially applied to him by critics who seem oblivious to the words in front of them. A long list of broadsides have been directed against Miliband's instrumentalism and most of these criticisms revolve around four major problems: (1) the problem of the subject, (2) the problem of the ideological apparatuses, (3) the problem of state autonomy, and (4) and the problem of economic and social reform.

The Problem of the Subject

In his critique of Miliband's instrumentalism, Poulantzas (1969, pp. 70-71) defines the problem of the subject as 'a problematic of *social actors*, of individuals as the origin of *social action*'. If individuals or groups of individuals are considered as social actors, then Poulantzas argues that theoretical research is diverted from 'the study of the objective co-ordinates that determine the distribution of agents into social classes and the contradictions between these classes...to the search for *finalist* explanations founded on the *motivations of conduct* of the individual actors'. Poulantzas (1969, p. 71) claims that Miliband's empirical and institutional analysis of states in capitalist societies 'constantly gives the impression' that:

social classes or "groups" are in some way reducible to *inter-personal relations*, that the State is reducible to inter-personal relations of the members of the diverse "groups" that constitute the State apparatus, and finally that the relation between social classes and the State is itself

reducible to inter-personal relations of “individuals” composing social groups and “individuals” composing the State apparatus.

Consequently, Poulantzas chastises Miliband for offering explanations of corporate behavior, the state elite, and state managers that are ‘founded on the *motivations of conduct* of the individual actors’ (i.e., ideology and interests) and that Miliband fails to comprehend ‘social classes and the State as *objective structures*, and their relations as an *objective system of regular connections*, a structure and a system whose agents, “men”, are in the words of Marx, “bearers” of it’.

According to Poulantzas, the same problem of the subject resurfaces in Miliband’s treatment of the state bureaucracy, the army, regulatory agencies, and other personnel of the state system. The problem appears resides in the fact that Miliband places so much emphasis on the role of ideology in linking these agents to the capitalist class and the top state elite, because this explanatory mechanism suggests that the criterion for membership in a particular class is the shared motivations and subjective orientations of a group of individuals. Hence, Poulantzas (1969, p. 73) concludes that Miliband ‘seems to reduce the role of the State to the conduct and “behavior” of the members of the State apparatus’. Therefore, Poulantzas (1969, p. 73) claims in a now legendary passage that:

...the *direct* participation of members of the capitalist class in the State apparatus and in the government, even where it exists, is not the important side of the matter. The relation between the bourgeois class and the State is an *objective relation*. This means that if the *function* of the state in a determinate social formation and the *interests* of the

dominant class in this formation coincide, it is by reason of the system itself: the direct participation of members of the ruling class in the state apparatus is not the *cause* but the *effect*, and moreover a chance and contingent one, of this objective coincidence'.¹⁵

Although Poulantzas insists that the state as a whole, as an objective system of power, is relatively autonomous from the dominant class, the state's *internal unity* requires that we not view its individual apparatuses and personnel as relatively autonomous. Rather, it is the general function of the state that gives cohesion and unity to the apparatuses and personnel and which make it possible to refer both to a state and to the *capitalist* state. However, from Poulantzas's perspective, Miliband relies on factors exterior to the state itself and, therefore, he lacks a theoretical capacity to *conceptualize the necessary unity and cohesion of the state*. In contrast, Poulantzas (1969, p. 77) insists that 'the State in the classic Marxist sense of the term, possesses a very rigorous internal unity which directly governs the relation between the diverse branches of the apparatus'.¹⁶

Poulantzas's critique was aimed mainly at Miliband's and others' efforts to empirically document the extent to which capitalist elites colonized the top command posts of the state apparatus. While the earlier reconstruction of Miliband's theory of the state demonstrates that this was only one component of his overall analysis, Gold, Lo, and Wright (1975a, p. 33) nevertheless sanctioned this misrepresentation of Miliband's position by claiming that 'most of his analysis still centers on the patterns and consequences of personal and social ties between individuals occupying positions of power in different institutional spheres'. Indeed, they (1975a, p. 34) insist that even in

‘sophisticated variants of instrumentalism’, such as Miliband’s, the functioning of the state is still ‘fundamentally understood in terms of the instrumental exercise of power by people in strategic positions, either directly through manipulation of state policies or indirectly through the exercise of pressure on the state’.

In fact, Gold, Lo, and Wright (1975a, p. 35) contend that with ‘rare exceptions, there is no systematic analysis of how the strategies and actions of ruling-class groups are limited by impersonal, structural causes...the exercise of state power and the formation of state policy seem to be reduced to a kind of voluntarism on the part of powerful people’. Bob Jessop (1977, p. 357) echoes this theme with the claim that Miliband ‘reproduces the liberal tendency to discuss politics in isolation from its complex articulation with economic forces. To the extent that he does relate them it is only through interpersonal connection’ (Cf. Jessop, 1982, p. 22).¹⁷ Simon Clarke (1991, p. 19) repeats this assertion by claiming that the main weakness in Miliband’s theory of the state is its lack of ‘any theory of the *structural* relationship between civil society and the state’.

Miliband firmly rejected this indictment of his work by claiming that Poulantzas and others had greatly under-estimated the extent to which he did take account of the objective structural relations that constrain elite decision-making and the role of the state, but he also argued that the nature of the state elite was not irrelevant to understanding the concrete differences between states and state policies in various capitalist societies.¹⁸ In fact, in a chapter on ‘The Purpose and Role of Governments’ that follows his analysis of the state elite, Miliband (1969, p. 79) specifically takes account of the structural constraints on state elites:

The “bias of the system” may give a greater or lesser degree of emphasis. But the ideological dispositions of governments have generally been of a kind to make more acceptable to them the structural constraints imposed upon them by the system; and these dispositions have also made it easier for them to submit to the pressures to which they have been subjected by dominant interests’.

However, Miliband does not regard the ‘bias of the system’ or its ‘structural constraints’ as purely a limitation of state elites’ and state managers’ ideological outlook or even as the exclusive result of campaign contributions, lobbying, and the other political processes of ruling class domination (Cf. Domhoff, 1978). Indeed, in a chapter entitled ‘Imperfect Competition’, Miliband (1969, p. 146) argues that ‘business enjoys a massive superiority *outside* the state system as well, in terms of the immensely stronger pressures which, as compared with labour and any other interest, it is able to exercise in the pursuit of its purposes’. In fact, the analysis of state power in this chapter spins off a passage that clearly articulates the mechanism of structural constraint later identified with the works of Claus Offe, Fred Block, and Charles E. Lindblom. In defining capital’s ‘massive superiority *outside* the state system’, Miliband (1969, p. 147) observes that:

One such form of pressure, which pluralist “group theorists” tend to ignore, is more important and effective than any other, and business is uniquely placed to exercise it, without the need of organisation, campaigns, and lobbying. This is the pervasive and permanent pressure upon governments and the state generated by the private control of

concentrated industrial, commercial, and financial resources. The existence of this major area of independent economic power is a fact which no government, whatever its inclinations, can ignore in the determination of its policies, not only in regard to economic matters, but to most other matters as well.

Thus, as Domhoff (1990, p. 193) has pointed out previously, it should have been clear even at the time that when Miliband (1969, 23) states that ‘in the Marxist scheme, the “ruling class” of capitalist society is that class which owns and controls the means of production and which is able, by virtue of the economic power thus conferred upon it, to use the state as its instrument for the domination of society’ that he means exactly ‘what more recent theorists mean with their talk about structures and autonomy and privileged position’. If there was any doubt about Miliband’s meaning or intent, he (1969, p. 150) further clarified his position a few pages later in a discussion about whether government can use its political power and financial resources ‘as an instrument of long-term economic policy’ by compelling individual firms or industries to radically change their methods of doing business. Miliband (1969, p. 150) concludes that there is not much evidence that ‘governments have been notably effective in the use of this power in their relations with private enterprise’. The underlying structural reason for this failure, according to Miliband (1969, p. 150), is that:

in the abstract, governments do indeed have vast resources and powers at their command to “wield the big stick” against business. In practice, governments which are minded to use these powers and resources – and most of them are not – soon find, given the economic and political context

in which they operate, that the task is fraught with innumerable difficulties and perils.

So what is this economic and political context? What are the difficulties and perils that state elites confront in their relations with corporations and private businesses? Miliband (1969, p. 150) states that:

These difficulties and perils are perhaps best epitomised in the dreaded phrase “loss of confidence.” It is an implicit testimony to the power of business that all governments, not least reforming ones, have always been profoundly concerned to gain and retain its “confidence.” Nor certainly is there any other interests whose “confidence” is deemed so precious, or whose ‘loss of confidence’ is so feared’.

What is remarkable about such a ‘discovery’ in Miliband’s work is that many of his critics were explicitly aware of this ‘structural’ component in his theory, but chose for unarticulated reasons to downplay or ignore it. For example, Gold, Lo, and Wright (1975a, p. 33) concede that if ‘personal ties were weak or absent – as sometimes happens when social democratic parties come to power’ that Miliband was well aware that ‘the policies of the state would still be severely constrained by the economic structure in which it operates. Furthermore, he moves away from a voluntaristic version of instrumentalism by stressing the social processes which mold the ideological commitments of the “state elite”’. Jessop (1982, p. 22) also recognized that in later chapters of *The State in Capitalist Society* ‘Miliband emphasises the veto power of “business confidence” entailed in the institutional separation of the economic and political – a power that is independent of interpersonal connections – and also

discusses the role of ideological practices rooted in civil society in shaping the political agenda. In this way Miliband points beyond institutionalism and instrumentalism' at least as it has been understood by most scholars.

In contrast, Stan Luger (2000) is one of the few scholars to have incorporated this observation into his thinking about Miliband's theory of the state with his suggestion that Miliband 'offers a perspective that balances a focus on interest group activity with that of the privileged position of business'. At the same time, Luger observes that 'state dependence on business, while an important pressure, does not automatically mean that government officials know how to respond to each particular policy battle'. The structural dependence of the state on capital confers an asymmetrical advantage to business in the political process, but it does not obviate the need for business to involve itself in the political and public policy making processes. This is particularly true in capitalist democracies, where 'officials cannot simply ignore citizens' demands if they wish to maintain legitimacy in the eyes of the electorate' (Luger, 2000, p. 28).¹⁹

The Problem of Ideological Apparatuses

The problem of political legitimacy was cast primarily as a problem of the ideological apparatuses in the course of the Miliband-Poulantzas debate. Given its prominence in Miliband's analysis, Poulantzas was not inclined to dismiss ideology altogether, but instead he proposes to reconceptualize its production and distribution within a Marxist theory of the state. Poulantzas (1969, pp. 76-77) was quite correct to point out that 'the classic Marxist tradition of the theory of the State is principally

concerned to show *the repressive role of the State*, in the strong sense of organized physical repression'. On the other hand, ideology had been dismissed as epiphenominal (rather than constitutive) of social and political relations, mainly because ideology had been equated 'with ideas, customs or morals without seeing that ideology can be embodied, in the strong sense, in *institutions*: institutions which then, by the very process of institutionalization, belong to the system of the State'. Poulantzas proposes that the realm of ideology be brought inside the state by reconceptualizing the state as a dual matrix of apparatuses that either perform repressive functions or ideological functions.²⁰ Poulantzas defines the state ideological apparatuses to include churches, political parties, trade unions, schools and universities, the press, television, radio, and even the family.

Poulantzas's observations were again echoed by Gold, Lo, and Wright (1975a, 35), who argue that instrumentalism cannot account for ideology because there are 'important realms of state-related activity which are clearly not manipulated by specific capitalists or coalitions, such as culture, ideology, and legitimacy' (Gold, Lo, and Wright 1975a, p. 35). This cavalier assertion was anything but self-evident even in the context of the mid-1970s, when many highly respected works on the manipulation of culture, ideology, and legitimacy were readily available, including books by scholars such as Murray Edelman (1964), Joel Spring (1972), David N. Smith (1974), and Stewart Ewen (1976). On the other hand, Block (1977, p. 8) asserts that instrumentalism simply 'neglects the ideological role of the state'.

These are woefully misdirected criticisms, since Miliband (1969, p. 178) concludes chapter 6 of *The State in Capitalist Society* with the observation that:

The subordinate classes in these regimes [i.e., capitalist democracies], and 'intermediary' classes as well, have to be persuaded to accept the existing social order and to confine their demands and aspirations within its limits. For dominant classes there can be no enterprise of greater importance, and there is none which requires greater exertion on a continuous basis, since the battle, in the nature of a system of domination, is never finally won'.

Miliband then proceeds to devote two entire chapters to analyzing 'the process of legitimation' and thus adopts exactly the method of analysis proposed by Poulantzas. However, Miliband does reject the structuralist view that ideological institutions should be conceptualized as part of the state apparatus (Althusser, 1971; Poulantzas, 1980, pp. 28-34; Therborn, 1980). Precisely because ideological institutions are increasingly linked to and buttressed by the state, Miliband insists that it is important not to blur the fact that in bourgeois democracies they are not part of the state, but part of a wider political or ideological system. Miliband (1970b, p. 59) agrees that ideological institutions *are* increasingly subject to a process of 'statization' and he concedes that their statization 'is likely to be enhanced by the fact that the state must, in the conditions of permanent crisis of advanced capitalism, assume ever greater responsibility for political indoctrination and mystification'. Nevertheless, Miliband (1970b, p. 59) draws the *empirical* conclusion that such a process has not gone far enough to permit the conceptualization of such institutions as part of the state, since most of them continue to 'perform their ideological functions outside it'.

Miliband is also insists that it is necessary to recognize that while state power may be the main and ultimate means of maintaining ruling class domination, it is not the only form of class power as Poulantzas' formulation implies. Miliband's point is that state power is not the only form, nor the only site, of ruling class domination. This is another reason why Miliband again rejects the structuralists' suggestion that institutions such as churches, the educational system, political parties, the press, radio, television, publishing, the family, etc. all be brought within the realm of state theory as components of a state ideological apparatus. Indeed, Miliband (1973, p. 88, fn.16) scoffs at the suggestion as carrying 'to caricatural forms the confusion between different forms of class domination and, to repeat, makes impossible a serious analysis of the relation of the state to society, and of state power to class power'.

The Problem of State Autonomy

Another derivative aspect of the so-called problem of the subject is the assertion that Miliband, and instrumentalists generally, fail 'to recognize that to act in the general interest of capital, the state must be able to take actions against the particular interests of capitalists' (Block (1977, p. 9). Block argues that 'in order to serve the general interests of capital, the state must have some autonomy from direct ruling-class control'. Similarly, Jessop (1982, p. 12) suggests that even in instrumentalism's developed 'the state is not an independent and sovereign political subject but is an instrument of coercion and administration which can be used for various purposes by whatever interests manage to appropriate it'. Jessop (1990, pp. 27-8) goes on to insist that the instrumentalist approach also encounters difficulties 'where the state acquires a

considerable measure of independence from the dominant class owing to a more or less temporary equilibrium in the class struggle’.

However, even in his chapter on ‘The State System and the State Elite’, which is the basis of so many of the criticisms directed at Miliband, he (1969, p. 55) observes:

it is obviously true that the capitalist class, as a class, does not actually “govern.” One must go back to isolated instances of the early history of capitalism, such as the commercial patriciates of cities like Venice and Lubeck, to discover direct and sovereign rule by businessmen. Apart from these cases, the capitalist class has generally confronted the state as a separate entity – even, in the days of its rise to power, as an alien and often hostile element, often under the control and influence of an established and land-owning class....Nor has it come to be the case, even in the epoch of advanced capitalism, that businessmen have themselves assumed the major share of government. On the other hand, they have generally been well represented in the political executive and in other parts of the state system as well; and this has been particularly true in the recent history of advanced capitalism’.

On this point, Miliband (1973, p. 85) agrees that it is ‘is absolutely right’ to reaffirm ‘that the political realm is not, in classical Marxism, the mere reflection of the economic realm, and that in relation to the state, the notion of the latter’s “relative autonomy” is central’. Indeed, in a significant and lengthy footnote in one of his rejoinders to Poulantzas, Miliband (1973, p. 85, fn. 4) argues that the concept of relative autonomy is fully contained in:

...the most familiar of all the Marxist formulations on the state, that which is to be found in the *Communist Manifesto*, where Marx and Engels assert that “the modern State is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie’...what they are saying is that ‘the modern state is but a committee for managing the *common* affairs of the *whole* bourgeoisie”:

the notion of common affairs assumes the existence of particular ones; and the notion of the whole bourgeoisie implies the existence of separate elements which make up that whole. This being the case, there is an obvious need for an institution of the kind they refer to, namely the state; and the state *cannot* meet this need without enjoying a certain degree of autonomy. In other words, the notion of autonomy is embedded in the definition itself, is an intrinsic part of it’.

The Problem of Economic and Social Reform

The false assertion that instrumentalism does not accord any relative autonomy to the state has led to two further, but mutually contradictory criticisms of Miliband’s theory of the state. On the one hand, Gold, Lo, and Wright (1975a, p. 35) assert that instrumentalists ‘treat all reforms as the result of an instrumentalist use of the state by capitalists’, which is to theoretically ‘deny the possibility of struggle over reform’. On the other hand, Jessop (1990, p. 27) argues that a fundamental problem of instrumentalism is its ‘tendency to assume that the state as an instrument is neutral and can be used with equal facility and equal effectiveness by any class or social force’. Thus, rather than negating the possibility of reform, Jessop (1982, p. 14) suggests that a instrumentalist theory of the state ‘underlies the reformism of social democratic

movements,' which 'tend to see the state apparatus in liberal parliamentary regimes as an independent neutral instrument which can be used with equal facility and equal effectiveness by all political forces and they have therefore concentrated on the pursuit of electoral victory as the necessary (and sometimes even sufficient) condition of a peaceful, gradual, and majoritarian transition to socialism'.

In fact, neither violent revolution nor parliamentary reform was ever advanced by Miliband, who instead emphasized the importance of mass politics and social movements as the basis for realigning the relationship between state and civil society. From his early *Parliamentary Socialism* (1961) to *Socialism for a Skeptical Age* (1995), Miliband was always a critic of parliamentary socialism and never viewed electoral politics alone as sufficient for a transition to socialism, precisely because the state power is more than governmental power and class power is more than state power. In *The State and Capitalist Society*, Miliband (1969, p. 265) explicitly rejects the view that the state 'can be and indeed mostly is the agent of a "democratic" social order, with no inherent bias towards any class or group'. Miliband (1969, pp. 265-6) rejects the idea of state neutrality as 'a fundamental misconception', because the state in capitalist societies 'is primarily and inevitably the guardian and protector of the economic interests which are dominant in them'.

At the same time, Miliband (1969, p. 266) acknowledges that class rule in the advanced capitalist societies 'has remained compatible with a wide range of civil and political liberties' that provide the political basis for mass social and political movements. Miliband (1969, p. 266) contends that the historical exercise of these liberties 'has undoubtedly helped to mitigate the form and content of class domination in many areas

of civil society' and the state has been 'the main agent of that mitigation'. Miliband (1969, p. 77) is quite explicit in pointing out that state elites 'have in fact been compelled over the years to act against *some* property rights, to erode *some* managerial prerogatives, to help redress *somewhat* the balance between capital and labour, between property and those who are subject to it'. However, Miliband (1969, pp. 266, 271) also concludes that 'this mitigating function does not abolish class rule', because economic and social reforms have 'to be confined within the structural limits created by the economic system in which it occurs'. Thus, in Miliband's (1969, p. 271) theory of the state, reform is possible in exceptional circumstances, but only 'when popular pressure is unusually strong' (Cf. Piven and Cloward, 1977). Thus, Simon Clarke (1991, p. 19) correctly observes that an important implication of 'Miliband's analysis was that socialism could not be achieved by purely electoral means, but only by a mass political movement which could mobilise and articulate popular aspirations in order to conduct the democratic struggle on all fronts'.

CONCLUSION

It is beyond doubt that critics of Miliband's theory of the state have not only distorted 'instrumentalism' by representing it through a distorted ideal-type, but they openly gloss over significant aspects of Miliband's thought – indeed entire chapters of *The State in Capitalist Society* -- that contravene this ideal-type. For this reason, Barrow (1993, p. 168) has previously suggested that many of Miliband's critics appear to 'have never read more than the first half of

Miliband's *State in Capitalist Society*'. Thus, a mere *reading* of Miliband should be sufficient to document that his work has not only been "defamed and distorted" by critics, as (Domhoff, 1990, p. 190) argues, but that starting with Poulantzas many have even misrepresented the book as 'claiming the opposite of what it actually said'.

For example, during the 1970s, Gold, Lo, and Wright (1975a, p. 33) were well aware of the fact that Miliband 'attempted to situate the analysis of personal connections in a more structural context'. They (1975a, p. 33) note that 'Miliband stresses that even if these personal ties were weak or absent – as sometimes happens when social democratic parties come to power – the policies of the state would still be severely constrained by the economic structure in which it operates'. These same authors (1975a, p. 33) even concede that Miliband 'argues that the state must have a certain degree of autonomy from manipulation by the ruling class', which allows him to move away 'from a voluntaristic version of instrumentalism'. Similarly, Bob Jessop (1982, p. 22) explicitly recognized that in the later chapters of *The State in Capitalist Society* Miliband introduced the concept of business confidence as a structural constraint on decision-making in a way that 'pointed beyond institutionalism and instrumentalism' as it was described by most scholars at the time. Yet, even after this long list of concessions, Gold, Lo, and Wright (1975a, p. 33) still concluded that 'in spite of these elements in Miliband's work, the systematic aspect of his theory of the state remains firmly instrumentalist' as they defined that concept.

Thus, what are we to do with the concept of instrumentalism? In light of the foregoing analysis, one possibility is to jettison instrumentalism as nothing more than an

artificially constructed straw man that does not accurately describe any actually existing work on the capitalist state. Scholars who employ a power structure methodology could simply follow G. William Domhoff's (1976) lead and declare that 'I am not an instrumentalist' if it is the critics' version of instrumentalism that is to pass for instrumentalism among other scholars. An alternative strategy is to retain the concept of instrumentalism, since it is so well established in the state debate literature, while emphasizing that instrumentalism is both well grounded in classical Marxism and a more sophisticated theory in practice than critics have acknowledged in the past.

However, this second strategy creates a new theoretical puzzle. It has been documented that Miliband's theory of the state incorporates structural factors (e.g., business confidence and the dependency principle) that have been largely identified with competing theories of the state such as structuralism and systems analysis (see Barrow, 1993, Chaps. 2, 4). Miliband's theory also incorporates a detailed historical and empirical analysis of political institutions of the sort associated with the new institutionalism and state autonomy theory (see Barrow, 1993, Chap. 5; e.g., Skocpol 1980). Following Engels, Miliband's theory of the state even acknowledges the possibility of exceptional periods of state autonomy during periods of intense class struggle or stalemate. Once these facts are acknowledged, subsequent theorizing about the state does more to supplement, clarify, or deepen Miliband's original analysis, rather than supplant it.

¹ This idea first appears in Miliband (1965, p. 278), where he argues that Marx's 'whole trend of thought on the subject of the state finds its most explicit expression in

the famous formulation of the Communist Manifesto: “The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie”.’

² Notably, Engels (1972, p. 231) also observes that there are ‘exceptional periods...when the warring classes are so nearly equal in forces that the state power, as apparent mediator, acquires for the moment a certain independence in relation to both. This applies to the absolute monarchy of the 11th and 18th centuries...and to the Bonapartism of the First and particularly of the Second Empire’. See Barrow (1993, p. 130) for a criticism of how the idea of exceptional periods has been mistakenly generalized into an competing theory of state autonomy.

³ Elsewhere, Miliband (1977, p. 2) observes that ‘none of the greatest figures of classical Marxism, with the partial exception of Gramsci, ever attempted or for that matter felt the need to attempt the writing of a “political treatise”.’ See also, Miliband (1970a, p. 309) where he reiterates that ‘The State and Revolution is rightly regarded as one of Lenin’s most important works...In short, here, for intrinsic and circumstantial reasons, is indeed one of the “sacred texts” of Marxist thought’.

⁴ Jessop (1982, p. 12) claims that ‘it was Engels who first combined this instrumentalist view with the claim that it was a specific class which controlled the state apparatus and used this control to maintain its economic and political domination,’ but this assertion is not correct, because the same idea appears in *The Communist Manifesto* and *The German Ideology*.

⁵ For example, Bottomore and Brym (1989) is a Milibandian analysis of the capitalist classes, at a fixed point in time, of Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Canada, and the United States. From a historical perspective, Van der Pijl

(1984) utilized the same methodology to conclude that by the mid-1980s multinational corporations had established the economic basis of an Atlantic ruling class. More recently, Robinson and Harris (2000) suggest that the emergence of transnational corporations is creating the economic basis for a global ruling class. Also, Sklair (2001).

⁶ Miliband is responding most notably to Dahl (1958, p. 463) who dismisses the ruling elite model as 'a type of quasi-metaphysical theory....The least we can demand of any ruling elite theory that purports to be more than a metaphysical or polemical doctrine is, first, that the burden of proof be on the proponents of the theory and not on its critics; and, second, that there be clear criteria according to which the theory could be disproved'.

⁷ In contrast, Dahl (1958, p. 465) argues that 'neither logically nor empirically does it follow that a group with a high degree of influence over one scope will necessarily have a high degree of influence over another scope within the same system'.

⁸ In the same passage, Miliband (1969, p. 59) notes that capitalists 'have never constituted, and do not constitute now, more than a relatively small minority of the state elite as a whole'.

⁹ The passage cited is Kautsky (1910, p. 29). Miliband cites this passage nearly a decade prior to the widely acclaimed article by Block (1977).

¹⁰ For supporting evidence, see, Riddlesperger Jr. and King (1989); Zweigenhaft (1975); Freitag (1975). For historical data see, Mintz (1975).

¹¹ Importantly, however, Miliband (1969, p. 47) notes: 'This does not mean that they [capitalists] have always known how best to safeguard their interests -- classes,

like individuals, make mistakes -- though their record from this point of view, at least in advanced capitalist countries, is not, demonstrably, particularly bad’.

¹² Miliband (1983, p. 12) elsewhere points to this distinction by noting that the concept of the state ‘refers to certain people who are in charge of the executive power of the state - presidents, prime ministers, their cabinets, and their top civilian and military advisers’.

¹³ Miliband (1969, p. 78) observes that state elites ‘have often been forced, mainly as a result of popular pressure, to take action against certain property rights and capitalist prerogatives’. See, Clarke (1991, p. 19).

¹⁴ Block (1977, p. 6, 28fn1) cites Gold, Lo, and Wright (1975a, 1975b) in the first sentence of his article and also thanks Clarence Lo for his ‘help on this article’.

¹⁵ King (1986, p. 77) observes that in Poulantzas’ formulation ‘state bureaucrats are constrained to act on behalf of capital because of the logic of the capitalist system, irrespective of their personal beliefs or affiliations’.

¹⁶ Likewise, Poulantzas (1969, p. 75) insists that: ‘...the State apparatus forms an objective system of special “branches” whose relation presents a specific internal unity and obeys, to a large extent, its own logic’.

¹⁷ See also, Jessop (1982, p. 22), where he states for Miliband ‘it is the activities of the people who occupy the leading positions in these institutions and thus constitute the “state elite” that are said to determine the class nature of state power’.

¹⁸ This line of argument is taken directly from Domhoff (1990, pp. 190-4).

¹⁹ Luger does not undertake an extensive conceptual analysis of Miliband’s work, but his book calls attention to the fact that some scholars are starting to recognize that

Miliband was a far more sophisticated thinker than he was given credit for in the 1970s and 1980s.

²⁰ Poulantzas (1973, p. 47) elsewhere claims that 'the state is composed of several apparatuses: broadly, the repressive apparatus and the ideological apparatus, the principal role of the former being repression, that of the latter being the elaboration and incubation of ideology. The ideological apparatuses include the churches, the educational system, the bourgeois and petty bourgeois political parties, the press, radio, television, publishing, etc. These apparatuses belong to the state system because of their objective function of elaborating and inculcating ideology'.

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