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## ANOTHER DEVELOPMENT: Possibilities of a Counter-Hegemonic Planning

John Friedmann

### Abstract

*How do we approach the question of an alternative development (for the Third World no less than for the First) in ways that go beyond mere literary utopias? This essay seeks to explore this question by examining the kinds of behavior that are revealed as the so-called popular classes of Latin American cities confront their daily struggles of survival and livelihood. It is argued that their behavior reflects an existential Reason that must be balanced off against the cognitive Reason which underlies the Enlightenment model of modernization. Four aspects of this model are examined: in metaphysics, epistemology, philosophical anthropology, and the legal-political order. The essay concludes by arguing that existential and cognitive Reason stand in a dialectical relationship where each defines and sets limits to the other, thus preventing the totalization of any model, including the hegemonic model of capitalist modernization.*

Forty years ago, Rexford Tugwell wrote an essay with the provocative title, "The Utility of the Future in the Present" (Tugwell 1948). He spoke about a community's need for forward planning. He thought that one of the most practical things a community might do is to think about the kind of future that it would want collectively for itself. He thought that planners should help a community to create images of a desirable future, thinking as far ahead as the human mind could reasonably reach.

By community he meant, of course, not small-town society, but the polity at large: a political community. There would be conflict and debate about the "good society," but the endeavor would be to gain a clear and realistic vision by which progress towards a common good might be assessed.

Tugwell's images of the future would not be goals in the strict sense; they might in fact never be achieved. Germans have a word for what he meant. They speak of them as *Leitbilder*, or guiding images. Tugwell believed that they would have the power to influence the choices that a community has to make as it moves forward in "irreversible" time. They would color the community's perceptions and assessments of the present and help it to weigh alternative courses of action, allow it to have a sense of progress and to learn from its errors as it moved, however tenuously, towards a future that almost certainly would differ

from the community's original images as it came face to face with actual outcomes in a context of global change.

Tugwell might also have spoken of the utility of utopias in the present. For these *Leitbilder*, which inform much of what a community collectively decides to do, are nothing other than utopias, images that hold up to the mirror of our consciousness a world in which such overriding and widely shared values as freedom, equality, autonomy, and self-determination may be concretely realized.

Of course not all utopian thinking has the power to inform our present actions. Plato's *Republic*, for instance, or Bellamy's *Looking Backward* were merely literary utopias and thus dissociated from everyday reality. And I am sure you will be quick to observe that human beings may be more ready to act because of fear -- the fear of a dystopia -- than out of a desire to "create heaven on earth." Some of our most powerful social movements -- those of peace and the environment -- were born out of desperation. As far as their militants were concerned, the hands of the world clock pointed to minutes before midnight. Forester's *Limits to Growth* models made popular by the Club of Rome (Meadows 1974) predicted the end of the world by early in the next century. And fundamentalist Protestant preachers have sent shivers down the collective spine of their congregations with sermons of hell-fire and brimstone.

What I want to talk about instead is "realistic" utopias, and more specifically about a utopia that goes by the general name of an *alternative development*. The term goes back to the mid-1970s, when the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation prepared a report entitled: *What Now: Another Development* (1975). Although the Foundation shied away from coining a new doctrine of "development" for both the Third World and the First, the key terms were such inherently ambivalent concepts as basic needs, collective self-reliance, and "planning from below." It embraced an ecological world view (eco-development) and was sympathetic to the then-prevailing Maoism in China (or at least what was then known in the West about the cultural revolution). The people who contributed papers to this symposium were all distinguished in their own right, but none were what you might call "mainstream" thinkers. Some of the better-known people included Cynthia de Alcantara, Taghi Farvar, Johan Galtung, Reginald Green, Paulo Singer, Rodolfo Stavenhagen, and Ignacy Sachs. I don't think there was an American among them.

"Another Development" has remained a catch phrase, though subject to diverse interpretations. At the time, in the mid-seventies, it was intended as an answer to an actual crisis in the capitalist world economy. Today, this crisis is in many respects more severe than it was 14

years ago. Even the World Bank has become worried over the decapitalization of many of the so-called developing countries and the failure of per capita incomes to rise. In a growing number of countries, income per capita in fact is declining. Children's body weights are decreasing. There is hunger on a massive, unimaginable scale.

What is interesting, too, as a "sign of the times" is the growing literature on what is termed civil "resistance." It is not always clear what it is that's being resisted. Sometimes, it's the state; at other times, private landlords; in a more general way, I think, we can speak of a resistance to modernization as such. I have in mind the works of people such as Eric Wolf (1982), James Scott (1985), and Grace Goodell (1986). These authors write about the massive and pervasive resistance of ordinary people -- peasants, aboriginal populations, the urban sub-proletariat -- whose numbers run into the billions and yet who are, for the most part, the nameless victims of aggression and exploitation, and whose life-worlds are systematically being invaded and alienated by the carriers of so-called "modernizing values."

It is necessary to be very clear about this phrase, "resistance to modernization." It isn't resistance to the benefits of material civilization as such: the TVs and motorcycles and tractors, or the benefits of "modern," scientific medicine to cite another example. All these things may have their uses at a particular time and place. What is being resisted is the mindless, indiscriminate mixing of use and non-use values, the invasion and destruction of people's life-worlds and life-spaces where they still maintain a modicum of control over their lives -- individually as well as collectively -- and a dynamic money economy which rides roughshod over everything in its way, proclaiming the always-new as the thing that "everybody must absolutely have" and, by the same token, devaluing all that is old and by definition "no longer serviceable." What they resist is being made into passive consumer-objects; what they resist is impersonal organizations in which human beings become mere ciphers, substitutable for each other like spare parts; what they resist is being declared, in so many words, no longer useful to the larger (integrated) market society because there are no real jobs for them out there and no livelihood that can be produced by themselves; what they resist is being expelled from their subsistence farmsteads; what they resist is being made wards of the state. It is a long story, this resistance, and it will not always come out in interviews in precisely the form I've said. Because what is at stake very often is simply physical survival, and people will say, sure, I'd like to have a television set or a moped, and the young people will want to dress like the young people they see on the screen or in the suburbs of the rich. But that's not the point. The point is that it is a form of resistance to the deep, pervasive, and encroaching structures -- the dissolving

structures -- of industrial capitalism that leave nothing the way it was and which have a place for everyone: the early grave, the poor house, the prison, or a squatter's shack in some miserable part of the city where, as in Mexico City, the very shit of a hundred thousand open-air privies becomes part of the putrid air people breathe day in, day out.

I have spoken of "modernizing values," because it is these values that hide even as they undergird the brutal process of capitalist expansion, that "whirlstorm of creative destruction" that Joseph Schumpeter so worshipped, and that has yet to find its ultimate limits (though, like everything else in the universe, it will encounter them in the end). Marx and Engels began the long process of unravelling the "laws of motion" of this incredible dynamic, which indeed is much more than a form of economics, of saving and investing, producing and consuming. It is an all-embracing process that transforms everything that it touches. But I won't be dealing with these laws of motion here. Instead, I want to take a closer look at the ideology that has become the official doctrine of capitalism in its global quest.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the industrial or the factory system (as it was also called) was wedded to a set of philosophical ideas which in common usage came to be identified with all that was good and progressive and rational. They were the ideas of Enlightenment philosophers and accordingly were said to be accessible to human reason. They were distinctly this-worldly and paved the way for the cruder technological determinism, gutsy profiteering, and free-wheeling competition that would expand with extraordinary force across the entire globe until even the remotest mountain valleys in New Guinea will have experienced it in flesh and blood.

What are these key ideas of the modern world which would stake out their claim as the hegemonic ideas of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries?

In *metaphysics*, it was the claim that ultimate reality is material. It focussed attention on the natural world and upgraded social problems of exploitation and oppression because what mattered in a material world was happiness here and now rather than in Paradise or Nirvana. The materialist world view (which brought into being such philosophical doctrines as logical positivism) also came to privilege the methods and institutions of the sciences (usually patterned after the natural and physical sciences) as an instrument for uncovering the "reason" of the world.

In *epistemology*, the claim was made that the world could be fully known through the exercise of an objective reason. Karl Popper (1972) carried this to an extreme by arguing for "knowledge without a

knowing subject." The practice and logic of the empirical sciences involved hypothesis-testing through experiment and careful measurement. Following their famous method, scientists would be able to discover universal laws about the world of material facts. Some would even argue that whatever wasn't knowable through science wasn't worth knowing at all. For them true knowledge was, by definition, empirical and scientific.

In *philosophical anthropology*, Enlightenment scholars advanced an especially radical notion. Human beings are autonomous actors, they argued, who are centered within themselves. Their behavior can be accounted for by a utilitarian calculus. Individuals act rationally, said philosophers, when they act in a clear understanding of their own self-interest. Social forces warp and constrain rational choice. Once released from social bondage, human energy would become Promethean, they believed, and mostly good would be accomplished. For most philosophers regarded evil as a mere epiphenomenon that could be changed into its opposite through education, therapeutic environments, and a little doctoring.

With respect to the *legal-political order*, finally, Enlightenment philosophers advanced a contract theory of the state. Contracts defined social relations, conceived of as relations freely entered upon by autonomous and "sovereign" subjects guided by their own self-interest. The state was to be the guarantor of these contracts, ensuring orderly compliance. Beyond that, its business was to do only those things which would safeguard the full possession of property and the accumulation of wealth. But a state shorn of divine authority had to be grounded in other forms of legitimacy. The result was the liberal-democratic state, with its constitution, political parties, periodic elections, and guaranteed civil rights, including the right of each person to own and freely dispose of property, including his own labor. The liberal state was in large measure conceived to protect these rights.

The utopia of the Enlightenment, then, can be summed up by the central ideas of materialism, scientism, individualism, and the liberal-democratic state. It was in their sign that capitalism would conquer. Capitalism promised a world of inexhaustible, material plenty whose unlimited "progress" or development was guaranteed by empirical science and the technical wonders based on it. Capitalism promised a "free society" based on contract that would allow each individual to find and realize his own potential in terms of both innate and learned abilities. To accomplish these wonders, capitalism would have to smash older, traditional patterns of social relation as it marched victoriously across the globe. It would devalue the historical past for an image of a glorious future. The process, of course, would be neither

painless nor costless. That much was clear. But capitalism's cornucopia would bury all that in amnesiac bliss. History would be rewritten as the History of Progress. And when people looked around for an example of the kind of world that might embody these values, they would find it in America, and would risk their lives to climb ashore in Miami or New York or Los Angeles into the very heart of Paradise.

Now the actual history of modernization is of course something quite different from the idealized picture sprung, more or less full-blown, from the minds of philosophers. It was (and still is) a history filled with struggles of resistance as people's life-worlds were (and are) being invaded by the missionaries and salesmen of the new order. And the newly subordinated classes, especially the working class or, at any rate, some segment of that class, embraced only aspects of their new ideology while advancing a utopian future of their own which would be free of exploitation and which, above everything else, understood the individual to be socially grounded. As working people, they understood the intrinsically social nature of work.

It is not my purpose to detail this history of struggles, nor the history of an advancing capitalism which benefitted some nations but not others, and whose success -- undeniable though it was in many spheres -- frequently came as a result of exploitation and oppression and at an immense cost in human pain and suffering, in the destruction of vital resources (deforestation!), and the general unease and anxiety -- if not mass neuroses -- of modern men and women. Instead, I want to turn to the special and extreme story of those individuals and human groups who appear to have been rendered unnecessary to the productive apparatus of modern capitalism. They exist everywhere, but especially in the so-called Third World, where their number is running into the hundreds of millions. I am especially familiar with this phenomenon as it occurs in Latin American cities, where this "underclass" is referred to as the *popular classes*. In the existing economic crisis, from 40 to 50 percent of the urban population in Latin American cities belong to these *clases populares* who no longer reproduce themselves, biologically speaking, because they are scarcely any longer needed by the capitalist economy-in-crisis: perpetually undernourished, their life-span is only a fraction of the norm for those who are well fed and engaged in productive work; their children frequently do not reach adulthood, because their growth is stunted and they die.

There is a large literature that describes how this class lives (Friedmann and Salguero 1988). But only recently has an attempt been made to portray their everyday struggles for survival as a "social movement," and more specifically as a movement of "resistance" (Friedmann, forthcoming). Its resistance is to those forces that have

subjugated its life to an alien logic and would ensure its passive compliance through the bureaucratic powers of the state. Within the admittedly very narrow limits allowed it by the extreme circumstances of life in proletarian *barrios*, especially in the squatter areas that surround all large Latin American cities, the popular classes are evolving ways of livelihood and life that depart very significantly from the usual ways portrayed in the ideology of capitalism. I would like to put this somewhat abstractly in order to bring out the uniqueness of what we find in the popular *barrios* of Latin America. It is not acts of rebellion that we find, or a stirring of revolutionary fervor. Resistance does not take this violent, explosive form. Rather, it takes the form of *collective action in the self-production of life and livelihood*. It is an action grounded in the *existential Reason* of survival struggles, and it is opposed, as we shall see, point for point, to the ideological foundations of modern capitalism which are the work of philosophers and thus what I intend to call, by way of contrast, *cognitive Reason* (Friedmann 1989).

The last four decades in Latin America have witnessed a spectacular growth in the size of the popular classes, but factory workers constitute a shrinking proportion of this sector. The growing majority lack fixed employment and live a bare existence at the margins of survival. Their net contribution to GNP is close to zero, and perhaps even negative, while their demographic contribution is at perhaps double the relative increase in the national population. In some countries, the popular classes comprise over fifty percent of metropolitan populations. Yet they command less than five percent of urban resources.

Pushed off the land by commercialization, land shortages, and destitution, migrants flock to the city in hopes of a better life. In most poor countries, they account for a major part of the urban increase. Some eventually realize their dream, but the metropolitan economy, even in world cities such as Mexico City and Sao Paulo, is not sufficiently dynamic to absorb more than a small proportion of the increase in the urban labor force. And since the oil shock in 1973, the situation has steadily gotten worse.

Given that most third-world countries lack a public "safety net," every household is obliged to engage in some sort of income-earning activity, whether pushing drugs or peddling custom jewelry on the street. Registered unemployment is consequently at an apparently tolerable level. The real problem is the disguised unemployment in secondary labor markets which involves the massive use of unpaid family workers, multiple forms of self-employment, and casual labor. Participation in secondary labor markets comes down to irregular income, long hours, and minimal returns. Aggravated by gargantuan



foreign indebtedness, hyperinflation, and loss of faith in the ability of government to handle the mounting economic problems, the crisis is likely to last a very long time.

In this situation, the popular sector is left to search out its own solutions, as people cope with the persisting but always urgent problems of getting a roof over one's head and feeding hungry mouths. The *barrio* economy is a natural outgrowth of this daily struggle. A moral economy, it is based on reciprocal household relations. In a supplementary role to the always fluctuating market economy, the *barrio* has four interrelated levels of production. The first, most universal level is the *direct production of use values in the household itself*. This comprises the nurturing activities which, by custom, constitute women's work. The second level is that of *reciprocity relations among households*. Almost as prevalent as activities at the household level itself, they are based on a series of dyadic exchanges among people who have learned to trust each other. They may be among kin and near-kin, or simply among neighbors, and typically involve the exchanges of small favors.

The third level is composed of *cooperative activities for collective consumption*. Most of them are organized by women and include such money savers as collective food purchases (*comprando-juntos*), soup kitchens, communal gardens, child care centers, and housing associations. At any given time, only from ten to twenty percent of the *barrio* population may participate in these activities, but over longer stretches of time, a much larger percentage of the resident population may benefit from them. Finally, there are *small producer co-ops* based in the *barrio* but organized primarily to market the commodities they make: tourist souvenirs, household implements, furniture, knitwear, toys, and bakery products. What distinguishes these cooperatives from other "informal" activities is that they are organized around the basic needs of their associates rather than the profit of the firm. Their object might be said to be the development of a moral economy in which the worker is not merely the embodiment of an abstract category called labor power but someone standing in specific relations to others, and thus an ethical being, a person. There are obvious limitations to a production unit that, although it must sell in competitive markets, is organized on alternative principles, and some compromises with traditional efficiency criteria are inescapable. Despite these difficulties, the experience with cooperative production has been a valuable, if modest, opportunity for social experimentation and learning.

The organization of the *barrio* economy -- as fragile as it is -- reveals to us a pattern of responses to the breakdown of the market economy as the main provider of livelihood. And from its rich diversity of

concrete manifestations, from Mexico City to Santiago, Chile, and on to literally dozens of Brazilian cities, we may relearn certain lessons we seem to have pushed from our consciousness.

- That self-organization and cooperative action for common ends is possible on a community-wide basis, creating a collective or territorial interest.
- That major initiatives at the level of collective consumption and cooperative production nearly always require the mediations of external agents offering support, technical advice, and modest financial resources.
- That women play central and leadership roles in community organization and are beginning to break down traditional patriarchal roles at home.
- That the direct production of use values at home and in the community is a vital element in the moral economy of the *barrio* and essential to household subsistence.
- That the personal dignity and self-confidence of women, as well as of men, is enhanced by an economy in which life values and production values are conjoined. Caring for others, collective enterprise, sports, conviviality, joyful celebration, and political resistance are all embraced by a concept of the moral economy.
- That self-organization and political action, though initially oriented to survival, may in time lead to wider objectives of collective self-empowerment.
- That even though class-consciousness among *barrio* residents remains low, and their mode of action is typically pragmatic, residents' self-identity as *vecinos* (or neighbors) is increasingly common and may be read as a sign of a new social and political reality.

This new reality in the *barrios* poses new challenges and opportunities for a state unable to guarantee even minimum survival needs. New structural linkages are being formed between popular *barrio* organizations and outside institutions such as the Catholic Church, universities, private action research centers, political parties, and labor unions, frequently with financial assistance from abroad. These new alignments propel the existential reason of the *barrio* into the mainstream of national politics. The state can at various times respond with attempts at co-optation, repression, and even limited negotiation. If the new political formations are powerful enough, however, and the crisis persists (as it is widely expected to do), an unprecedented opportunity may be created for major structural reforms, including those reforms of the state itself.

So described, I am tempted to say that the existential reality of the *barrio* contradicts bourgeois ideology point for point, not only as a lived experience but as an ideology as well. I shall attempt to characterize this (implicit) ideology by drawing on the same four categories that I used to describe the philosophical legacy of the Enlightenment.

In the *metaphysics* of the *barrio*, survival ultimately depends on human subjectivity. The moral economy of reciprocity relations, as we have noted, is founded on trust, and to this extent, the basis of human existence can be said to have a dimension beyond materiality. Successful resistance, of course, always requires material foundations: a defensible space, for example. That is why gaining a physical foothold in the city -- a bit of land and a roof over one's head -- is the first and essential step for rural migrants. But moral fortitude and solidarity with others are the necessary means for gaining and defending even this foothold. This fact has been grasped by the progressive wing of the Catholic Church, which has gone into the *barrios* to organize spiritual communities as a way of building resistance and of gaining material objectives that will increase the community's command over resources.

In *epistemology*, *barrio* struggles have taught us that knowledge for praxis requires a knowing subject. The claims of certain philosophers to the contrary, knowledge does not exist in a closed world "for itself"; nor is the purpose of producing knowledge merely to underwrite more acquisition. In the *barrio* struggles, knowledge becomes a resource that is turned to use by the knower. And this changes the way we go about gathering and interpreting information about the world. *For barrio reality reveals itself only to those who put their own subjectivity to test.* Of course, to interpret what one observes correctly requires a coherent theory, and every theory is an inter-subjective construct. But once instructed by theory, knowledge is reinserted into practice by acting subjects. The purpose of a scientific study of social realities is thus not to describe them "as they are" (in any event, they never remain the same), but to provide the insights and information that will be useful in popular resistance struggles.

Basic to the *philosophical anthropology* of the *barrio* is the frequently observed practice of *barrio* residents referring to themselves as "good neighbors." Someone will say, "I'm a *vecina*," meaning, "I may be poor; all the same, I am a person who enjoys respect and dignity in my community." And if we then inquire further, we find that the communal relations in question are nearly always dyadic in form and, in a communications-theoretic perspective, dialogic. The spoken word in *barrio* life functions as the primary medium through which social relations are established and confirmed. Habermasian validity claims are relevant

here. They are redeemed by positive answers to the questions: Is a given assertion factually true? Is it right by the norms of the community? And is it an authentic expression of the speaker? In the elaboration of the answers to these questions, the life of the community takes shape, its will to resistance is formed.

In the *legal-political order* of the *barrio*, popular organizations practice forms of direct democracy. It is by exercising the right to voice that citizenship in the *barrio* is acquired. "Free riders," who are a problem in other organizations, do not prosper in a direct democracy where rights and obligations are reciprocally defined. As a political community, *barrio* residents seek to attain a measure of control over the life-space which is the ground for their collective existence. Destroying popular sector *barrios* by forced relocation, for example, a continuing practice in some Latin American cities and elsewhere, violates much more than the right of people to a roof over their head. *It destroys the basis of their political identity on which their praxis of resistance is built.*

The terms of this four-fold ideology are as rational, I would argue, as the products of cognitive Reason. They have grown out of the experiences and verbal culture of the popular classes whose validity claims are being redeemed by correspondence with facts, normative rightness, and authenticity. Yet even like its bourgeois counterpart, the ideology of the *barrio* cannot be totalized. It cannot become the grand alternative. For it would be as foolish to believe that a "pure spirituality" can provide us with all the answers, as it is that a philosophy of materialism is the only viable response to human ills. Materialism and spirituality are dialectically connected, each term limiting and defining the other. The same holds true for the remaining terms: objectivity and subjectivity in knowledge; individualism and communalism; liberal democracy and the "strong talk" of direct democracy. Each of these pairs comprises a conceptual unity. The separate terms stand in a dialectical relation to each other.

I began this paper with some words about the emergence of what is called an alternative development. But that development was then and is now still being defined by intellectual elites who, though they have themselves in many cases become peripheral to the hegemonic system, are still very much and, I would say, inevitably, a part of it. I would now like to ask whether we cannot take the experience of Latin American *barrios* as a way that the popular classes themselves would claim as their own "alternative" development -- not, of course, in its present and constrained form but in a form that would promise to lift them permanently out of poverty into a condition of life where they would no longer serve as the supernumeraries of the capitalist system,

condemned to be economically and socially redundant and expendable. I would like to interpret the *barrio* economy and its survival struggles as a *form of collective resistance*, supported, to be sure, by powerful external agents, such as the Catholic Church -- but nevertheless autonomous in its search for its own "development from within". I would like to begin seeing the popular classes as a collective actor on the stage of historical transformation.

The American and French revolutions created the myth, though not the reality, of people's sovereignty. They signified the ascendance, but not yet the victory, of the political domain over the economic. My question, then, is this. Perhaps the several revolutions of the Enlightenment are not yet completed. Perhaps their central myth of popular sovereignty will not be buried in the swamplands of post-modern rhetoric. Perhaps people will continue their struggles to recover a deep sense of political community. Perhaps in the politics of the world's *barrios* (and in every other part), people's sovereignty will at last be redeemed, and a democratic politics expressive of people's will -- the general will dreamed of by Rousseau -- will become hegemonic. As we near the threshold of the twenty-first century, it would seem to be a question worth pondering.

What I have in mind is not, of course, a simple substitution of "capitalist development" by an "alternative development" which reflects nothing more than the experiential logic of the *barrio*. Capitalism is in a deep and lasting crisis, I believe, not least for the reason that it has failed to embrace a spectrum of values wide enough to sustain human life on earth. We shall need to find new forms, synthesizing what we know of the ideas of cognitive Reason with those of existential Reason, in which attention is given to both the material and spiritual elements of life (as in Zen Buddhism); in which science is simultaneously subjective and objective and is turned to people's liberation rather than their forced subordination to the impersonal dynamics of Langdon Winner's "autonomous technology" (Winner 1977); in which the individual is cherished precisely because he or she is also a member of a territorially-based political community; and in which the liberal-democratic state is revitalized through a widespread system of direct or "strong" democracy, as Benjamin Barber calls it. This new synthesis cannot merely be thought, however; it must be enacted, and enacted in different social and political environments, so that what we get is not another imperialistic/universalist ideology but an articulation of life-spaces which, while sharing a common ideal, nevertheless pursue that ideal in as many different forms as there are life-worlds!

I look upon the experience of the popular *barrio*, then, not as a model to be followed but as a way by which we can (re)discover

important truths about human life. As in certain experiments in physics where discoveries are made, for example, at extremes of temperature, the *barrio*, whose population has been rendered redundant by capitalist developments, allows us to observe forms of behavior which otherwise would not be visible. This is not bedrock reality. But it is an aspect of what it means to be human. And any system which fails to take account of this reality is not only doomed to fail, but also to exact an immense toll in human grief.

I would like to close with a question. Because we are planners, the question must be asked, what is our own role as professionals in the emergence of a new society governed by the vision of "another development"? In the realization of this vision, and belonging to the privileged world of the elites, we cannot, as planners, expect to play a vanguard role. But neither are we part of "the enemy." Rather, I think that we should address ourselves to the question of collective self-empowerment and social reconstruction, carefully investigating in what ways we can effectively assist the popular classes in their quest for social and political power. I want to leave open the question of how to do that, but I am convinced that we can play such a role, not only at the local *barrio* (or community) level, but at every level of decision-making, from the local to the global. The local and the global levels are necessarily linked. There are no simple solutions. But a possible vision is there to guide us.

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