

Gingrich 'New Age' schemes: a threat to our republic

by Edward Spannaus

When Rep. Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) describes himself as a "conservative futurist," this should be enough to trigger calls for the men in the white coats to come and take him away to a more appropriate setting. It takes very little effort to trace out what Gingrich means by this—and to realize that the ideas he propounds are a threat to our republic and our industrial civilization. In fact, in the view espoused by the new Speaker of the House of Representatives, industrial capitalism is the enemy, and the institutions of our society—from the nuclear family to constitutional government—are outmoded and need to be replaced.

This is why Gingrich the "futurist" manages to find himself in such close programmatic agreement with the followers of one of the most reactionary schools of economics ever to ooze out of the decaying oligarchy of Europe, the so-called "Austrian School" of Friedrich von Hayek and Ludwig von Mises. The Hayekians are the architects of the "Contract with America" and the plans to demolish and slash social programs, privatize government agencies, and even further deregulate the economy. (See "Conservative Revolution Will Crush U.S. Economy," *EIR*, Nov. 25, 1994.)

The Hayekians are a feudal bunch, who hate the principles of the American Revolution and the accomplishments of industrial capitalism. In the 19th century, the "American System" of economics—which every literate American knew was counterposed to the "British System"—was their prime target, along with the growing industrial might of Germany made possible by the *Zollverein* (Customs Union) designed by American System economist Friedrich List.

These Metternichian reactionaries are joined by the "futurists," such as Gingrich's idol Alvin Toffler, in their mutual hostility to industrial capitalism and republican institutions; they just arrive at it by a different avenue. This is why Gingrich, whom we will show to be a New Age kook, finds himself in league with the likes of Phil Gramm, Dick Armeiy, and William Archer.

You think we exaggerate about Gingrich? You haven't bothered to look it up for yourself.

The 'Third Wave'

In recent, post-election speeches, Gingrich has laid out clearly the ideology from which he is operating, if not all the implications thereof. (See *EIR*, Nov. 25, 1994, p. 56.) The

first major change for the United States that Gingrich talks about is "the transition from a bureaucratic, mechanical, second-wave society to an information-age, Third-Wave society," which is explicitly based on the model and writings of Alvin Toffler. Gingrich's speeches and writings are replete with references to the "information age," to Toffler's notion of the "Third Wave," and so on.

What does Toffler mean by all this?

In Toffler's first book, *Future Shock*, which propelled him to instant "pop sociology" fame in 1970, he talks about three stages of society: agricultural, industrial, and "super-industrial." In the 1980 sequel, *The Third Wave*—which is Gingrich's favorite—Toffler now talks about Second-Wave and Third-Wave civilizations, and says that our societies today are characterized by the clash between the two. He attacks the sort of conventional "straight-line thinking" that adds up to "a vision of the future world that is essentially 'more of the same'—Second Wave industrialism writ even

On to the information age

From Newt Gingrich's speech to the Heritage Foundation, Washington, D.C., Nov. 15, 1994:

We're going to replace the welfare state, we're going to reassert American civilization, we're going to develop the opportunity society and we're going to move into the information age, and we're going to compete in the world market, and we're going to reassert civic responsibility, then anybody who's willing to work within that framework, we want to have a total dialogue with and we want to accept good ideas from everybody who agrees on the general direction. . . .

I believe that the new edition of Alvin Toffler's *Creating a New Civilization, The Politics of the Third Wave*, which was produced by the Progress and Freedom Foundation, gives you a sense of the direction we have to move in in terms of the information age.

Toffler versus the U.S. Constitution

Alvin Toffler on "The Coming Super-Struggle" from The Third Wave:

The need for new political institutions exactly parallels our need for new family, educational and corporate institutions as well. . . .

Put differently, the most important political development of our time is the emergence in our midst of two basic camps, one committed to Second Wave civilization, the other to Third. One is tenaciously dedicated to preserving the core institutions of industrial mass society—the nuclear family, the mass education system, the giant corporation, the mass trade union, the centralized nation-state, and the politics of pseudo-representative government. The other recognizes that today's most urgent problems, from energy, war and poverty to ecological degradation and the breakdown of familial relationships, can no longer be resolved within the framework of an industrial civilization. . . .

The defenders of the Second Wave typically fight against minority power; they scoff at direct democracy as "populism"; they oppose efforts to de-massify the schools; they fight to preserve a backwards energy system; they deify the nuclear family, pooh-poo ecological concerns, preach traditional industrial era nationalism, and oppose the move toward a fairer world economic order.

By contrast, the forces of the Third Wave favor a democracy of shared minority power; they are prepared to experiment with more direct democracy. . . . They

demand a renewable and less centralized energy system. They want legitimate options to the nuclear family. . . .

Some [of the advocates of the Third Wave] are drawn from the Second Wave "right"; others from the Second Wave "left". . . .

From Toffler's letter "To the Founding Parents" in The Third Wave:

You are the revolutionists dead. . . . You include the 55 who came together in 1787 to hammer out . . . that astonishing document called the Constitution of the United States. . . .

That piece of paper, with the Bill of Rights added, is clearly one of the stunning achievements of human history. . . .

[W]hat I now must write can all too easily be misunderstood by my contemporaries. Some will no doubt regard it as seditious. . . . [T]he system of government you fashioned, including the very principles on which you based it, is increasingly obsolete, and hence increasingly, if inadvertently, oppressive and dangerous to our welfare. It must be radically changed and a new system of government invented—a democracy for the 21st century.

You knew, better than we today, that no government, no political system, no constitution, no charter or state is permanent. . . . Nor can a government designed for one civilization cope adequately with the next.

You would have understood, therefore, why even the Constitution of the United States needs to be reconsidered, and altered. . . .

[A]bove all, I thank Mr. Jefferson, who helped create the system that served us well for so long, and that now must, in its turn, die and be replaced.

larger and spread all over the globe."

The problems with existing political parties and institutions, in the gospel according to Toffler, is that they are all basically committed to preserving "the dying industrial order." This includes a misguided and ill-fated commitment "to preserving the core institutions of industrial mass society," in which Toffler includes the nuclear family, mass public education, big corporations, big trade unions, and the nation-state.

Toffler's 1980 *The Third Wave* and his 1990 *Powershift* are both long-winded, "popularized" elaborations of this theme—how our ways of thinking about work, home, the family, government, and so on, are all ridiculously outmoded.

In Toffler's view, the differences between Second-Wave and Third-Wave civilizations and their proponents, are much greater than the differences among conflicting groups within

the Second Wave. Thus, he says, Marxists and anti-Marxists, Americans, and Russians marched forth into the non-industrial areas of the world "blindly bearing the same set of fundamental premises" in which "both preached the superiority of industrialism to all other civilizations." (Horrors!)

The three main ideas—now passé—that bound Second Wave nations together were, according to Toffler: 1) the idea that humans should hold dominion over nature, 2) that industrialism was a higher stage of evolution than non-industrial cultures, and 3) the "progress principle—the idea that history flows irreversibly toward a better life for humanity."

First in Toffler's list of such outmoded optimists is the great German philosopher and founder of the modern science of political economy, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz.

Does Toffler really want to overthrow all the institutions that have made the United States what it is today? There is not one which is left unscathed in his pursuit of futuristic nov-

elty and innovation. Not the least of the institutions which must be thrown into the dustbin of history is the United States Constitution.

Toffler begins his concluding chapter of *The Third Wave* with an imaginary letter addressed "To the Founding Parents." (He was already political correct, in 1980, before the term even became fashionable.) The Constitution was "an astonishing document," and taken together with the Bill of Rights, Toffler acknowledges, it was "one of the stunning achievements of human history," "so majestic," etc., etc. *But*, he sadly informs the Founding Fathers (and Mothers), their system of government is now increasingly obsolete, and therefore "oppressive and dangerous to our welfare." Now, it "must be radically changed and a new system of government invented—a democracy for the 21st century." The Constitution itself needs to be reconsidered and altered in order "to create a whole new structure of government."

Toffler concludes his not-so-imaginary letter by praising Thomas Jefferson, who knew that constitutions weren't too sacred to be touched, and he closes by thanking for helping to create "the system that served us well for so long, and that now must, in its turn, die and be replaced."

The Aquarian Conspiracy

Surely, you say, Newt Gingrich doesn't go along with all this nonsense? You will have to search long and hard for any evidence that he doesn't. Only a few months ago, Gingrich wrote a foreword to the newest book by Alvin and Heidi Toffler, *Creating a New Civilization: The Politics of the Third Wave*. This is a compilation of various chapters from earlier books such as *The Third Wave*, plus two new chapters. The book was just published by the Progress and Freedom Foundation of Atlanta, Georgia, which also sponsors Gingrich's college course and his television show.

In Gingrich's introduction, he is unequivocal and unqualified in his praise of Toffler's writings. He boasts that he has been working closely with the Tofflers for two decades to develop "a future-conscious politics and popular understanding" to help Americans make the transition from a dying Second-Wave, industrial civilization. There is not a hint of any reservation or hesitation on Gingrich's part with regard to *any* of Toffler's ideas—not to Toffler's hostility toward industrial capitalism, nor to his demands to overthrow our social and political institutions.

Almost 30 years ago, the London-based Tavistock Institute produced a treatise known as the "Rappaport Report," which bemoaned the excessive technological optimism of the American population—utterly dangerous in the eyes of the British oligarchy—and called for a reversal of the positive cultural impact of the Kennedy-era U. S. space program.

In 1968, the Stanford Research Institute followed up with a published policy report called "Changing Images of Man," which called the "image of industrial and technological man" obsolete and something to be discarded. The director of the study, Dr. Willis Harman, collaborated with author Marilyn

Ferguson to produce a popularized version of the study, a book called *The Aquarian Conspiracy*—which laid out the need for a counter-"paradigm shift" away from a scientific-industrial outlook into the drug-rock-sex counterculture.

Toffler was a direct participant in many of the activities around Harman and the Stanford Institute, and his first book, *Future Shock*, is concerned with overcoming "irrational resistance to change." His themes are virtually identical.

Now, by his own admission, we must place Newt Gingrich into the ranks of the co-conspirators of the Aquarian Conspiracy. The New Age has arrived on Capitol Hill.

'Anticipatory democracy'

Excerpts from Newt Gingrich's foreword to Creating a New Civilization: The Politics of the Third Wave, by Alvin and Heidi Toffler:

Alvin and Heidi Toffler have given us the key to viewing the current disarray within the positive framework of a dynamic, exciting future. . . .

If *Future Shock* had been their only work, the Tofflers would have been important commentators on the human condition. However, their next major work, *The Third Wave* was an even more important contribution to understanding our times.

In *The Third Wave* . . . they placed the information revolution in historic perspective, comparing it with only two other great transformations, the agricultural revolution and the industrial revolution. We are, they say, feeling the impact of the third great wave of change in history, and we are, as a result, in the process of creating a new civilization.

Despite the evidence that something radically new is happening in politics, in economics, in society and in welfare, there is still remarkably little appreciation of how crucial the Tofflers' insight is. Most American politicians, reporters and editorial writers have ignored the implications of *The Third Wave*. There is even less systematic effort to integrate their concept of a Third Wave of human change into policy proposals, political campaigns and the operations of government. . . .

I began working with the Tofflers in the early 1970s on a concept called anticipatory democracy. . . .

For 20 years we have worked together to try to develop a future-conscious politics and popular understanding which would make it easier for Americans to make the transition between the Second Wave civilization which is clearly dying and the emerging but still in many ways undefined and not yet understood Third Wave civilization towards which we must move. . . .