"We've all been had," the *Times* quotes a conservative politician as saying. "We boys on the Right have gotten snookered."

The example given is Frank C. Carlucci, the notorious deputy CIA director under Carter, who is supposed to be a liberal because he is a friend of Walter Mondale.

Other examples are Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger's dismissal of his transition team the day after his nomination. Secretary of State Alexander Haig did the same, and then nominated his own under-secretaries which include several former aides of Henry Kissinger including the former ambassadors to Yugoslavia and Singapore. Another example is that no member of the transition team for the CIA has been given a senior post in that agency thus far.

All this has presumably enraged the extreme right, headed by Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina.

Why were the so-called moderates picked instead of others? The answer, according to the conservative politicians quoted in the *Times*, is that "Reagan's personnel people, such as Ed Meese, don't want to ruffle the waters and are just more comfortable with establishment kind of folks."

Castouts and power holders

To sew all these pieces together and make out a case for a genuine shift by the Reagan administration from the right to the center is to make a mountain out of a mole hill.

This is merely a common practice of any incoming administration. The real power holders get rid of the surplus of professional hacks, job seekers without any moorings to the capitalist establishment, and the usual assortment of soreheads who failed to be properly "compensated for services."

After having worked themselves into a frenzy to lift their candidate to the presidency they always find themselves on the outs when it comes to the distribution of real power.

Invariably the extremist elements take up the cause of the castouts and always find the usual disloyalty, if not downright treason, to Republican right-wing demagogy.

The naming of Donald T. Regan to the post of Secretary of Treasury, Caspar Weinberger to Secretary of Defense, and Alexander Haig to Secretary of State are regarded by extremist elements such as Jesse Helms as having "surrendered to the [capitalist] establishment."

All too frequently this is translated by the liberal capitalist politicians, anxious to get into the good graces of the new administration (or at least ward off attacks from them) as evidence that the Reagan administration has moved from the right to the center and therefore is worthy of respect, if not support.

This is what the media and press campaign to build up the new image of Reagan is really all about.

But what is left out in all this maneuvering to paint up the Reagan administration? What is it that really must be taken into account? Is it that some extreme rightwingers and a motley crew of out-of-establishment extremists are being disowned and cast aside?

Not at all. The most significant fact in the evolution of capitalist politics in the U.S. both before and during the Carter administration and especially in its last two years is that the capitalist establishment itself has moved far to the right. In doing so it has lopped off political representatives of the liberal element in the capitalist administration. It has cast aside and soundly defeated old and traditional exponents of what passed for the liberal cause, such as former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and others.

Establishment moves to right

Upon recommendation from the establishment, Reagan has designated such well-known reactionary figures, such as Secretary of Treasury Regan, to preside over matters concerning the resuscitation of the capitalist economy. Note how the *Wall Street Journal* of January 28 literally sings paeans of praise to Reagan for this nomination. Likewise for Weinberger, known as "The Knife" by the rest of the capitalist press for ruthlessly cutting social programs in health, education, and welfare. Also note the somewhat grudging but nonetheless unambiguous support for Haig, notwithstanding his adventurousness in military and foreign affairs.

The truth is that both Reagan and the capitalist establishment generally hold a common viewpoint on the course the administration should follow given the many profound contradictions which are endemic to the administration of the capitalist state.

It is not to be wondered that the very far-out extremists find themselves mostly out of jobs. The Reaganites, especially Reagan, are "more comfortable with [capitalist] establishment kind of folks" than those from without.

At this stage of the struggle the out-of-establishment far rightists are so far only a fringe grouping although they wield considerable support among the conservative petty bourgeoisie, especially in the rural areas. It does not necessarily mean they can be discounted as a political force. The huge monopolies, Big Oil, and the military almost invariably turn to them as an invaluable support when they are needed as a stick to club the rightists of the capitalist establishment into line.

What does this show? Certainly not that Reagan has moved from right to center. There has been no move to the center, notwithstanding that the as yet insignificant extremist, far-right politicians cry bloody murder and treason because their neo-fascist ideological cohorts have not been given some of the cushy jobs. These jobs have gone to establishment functionaries who will carry out the orders of their superiors with skill and punctiliousness.

Haig-Reagan rift?

A potentially significant struggle in the Reagan administration is to be found elsewhere than in the squabble over the booty with the ultra-rightists. It lies in the relationship of General Alexander Haig to the Reagan administration.

On January 20, when Haig handed President Reagan a proposed executive order describing his authority in the administration, it caused alarm among the Reaganites. Instead of waiting for Reagan, as the president, to issue a memorandum or order describing Haig's authority, Haig hurriedly drew up an extensive, 20-page memorandum which was probably viewed not merely as a simple job description of his authority but more like an ultimatum. This happened on January 20, only a couple of hours after Reagan was inaugurated.

At a hurried meeting involving Haig, Reagan, the president's counsel, Edmond Meese, Caspar Weinberger, and National Security Adviser Richard Allen, it was reported (*New York Times*, January 28) that it was agreed to temporarily lay Haig's memorandum aside. "It was not a power grab by Haig," the *Times*, which supported Haig's confirmation, says with tongue in cheek, quoting some unnamed source.

The significance of Haig so hurriedly presenting Reagan with this so-called job description or what may be closer to an ultimatum, could scarcely be lost. The hurried meeting of the top leaders in the Reagan administration, it should be noted, was between one professional militarist and four civilians. That, too, did not go unnoticed in circles where such confrontations are given appropriate attention. What invests this confrontation with more than ordinary importance is that the authority of a secretary of state, which is a constitutional cabinet post, does not generally require definition of authority.

The point that has to be borne in mind in all this, aside from the political figures who are at the helm of the capitalist state, is that the objective course of U.S. politics is set by the growing instability of U.S. capitalist finance and industry.

The driving force which generates the greatest instability and pushes Washington in a perilous course lies precisely in the hands of Big Oil and the military-industrial complex and the generals and admirals. While they may vie with each other on tactics and on detail, they are nevertheless all headed toward the same perilous military adventurism abroad and continuing deterioration on the domestic front.

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Perspective on the Reagan regime:

Fascist violence and the form of the state

For the first time in many years there has been a truly alarming growth of the Klan, Nazis, and a varied assortment of fascist organizations. Along with this menacing development has come the spread of fascist violence in different parts of the country.

Fascist violence is not at all new in the United States. The phenomenon has existed in earlier decades. Fascist groups grew in large numbers in the 1930s, and suffered a steep decline from the very late '30s (1938-39) all the way up to the end of the Second World War.

In the early '50s, there was another rise of a number of neo-fascist organizations. They were, however, all overshadowed by the menace of McCarthyism and the witchhunt, which the capitalist government carried out during those days. Most of the fascist organizations again began to decline in the middle '50s all the way until the last few years following the defeat of the U.S. in the Viet Nam war.

To many, the rise of fascist organizations, particularly the Klan, is thus regarded as a transitory phenomenon, not to be taken too seriously. The strength of the KKK and other fascist groups is not considered of such numerical proportions as to pose a serious danger in light of the huge and overwhelming majority of the population who regard them with scorn if not utter hatred. This, of course, is very true.

New conditions for spread of fascism

What is completely left out of consideration, however, is that the spread of fascist organizations takes place in a vastly different, if not wholly new, social, political, and economic situation. The entire social environment in which the spread of this evil disease takes place imparts to it a significance which far surpasses the numerical strength of these organizations.

It is this which adds a really new dimension to the perilous growth of this virulent disease. Fascist violence has been endemic to the maintenance of the domination of the ruling class in the U.S. for a number of decades. It is, however, exceptionally important to distinguish between the violence which emanates directly and openly from the capitalist state, and the extra-legal, extra-governmental violence of fascist organizations.

The capitalist state is itself, of course, the main generator of force and violence. In its role as an instrument of capitalist domination over the working class and the oppressed, it operates as an organ of suppression in order to maintain and secure its rule over the masses.

Must differentiate government and extra-legal violence

Violence practiced upon the working class and the oppressed is therefore a concomitant element of the rule of the oppressing and exploiting bourgeoisie. Notwithstanding the viciousness, ferociousness, or magnitude of the violence which the ruling class visits upon the oppressed, it must nevertheless be considered as violence within the framework of the bourgeois legal ("democratic") system.

Such violence must be differentiated from, and not be confused with, the extra-legal, extra-governmental violence which is the essential characteristic of fascist organizations of the type under discussion. It is, of course, absolutely true that both legal and extra-legal violence have coexisted along with the bourgeois state since the very inception of the state itself.

In the U.S., legal and extra-legal violence have existed side-by-side for longer than a century. Ku Klux Klan violence is a principal example of how extra-legal violence visited upon the oppressed masses coexists with the legal forms of the capitalist state, and how one promotes the other.

Anti-labor violence employed on a