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CHAPTER 3

ELEGANT BUT NOT HELPFUL TO NAVIGATION: SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH AND THE FREE TRADE DEBATE*

"Beware of the man who works hard to learn something, learns it, and finds himself no wiser than before," Bokonon tells us. He is full of murderous resentment of people who are ignorant without having come by their ignorance the hard way.

- Kurt Vonnegut

From time to time, major issues of public interest provide an opportunity for social scientists to unpack their gear and show what new insights their "outillage mental" can generate and what new solutions their analyses suggest for tackling urgent and complex social issues. Such moments are always greeted with enthusiasm by practising social scientists as an occasion to prove their social usefulness; however, it is fair to say that most of those challenges have turned out to be somewhat catastrophic for the reputation of the social sciences when such "insights" and "solutions" have been assessed with a bit of hindsight.

Such failures are not so much ascribable to the incompetence of the practitioners as to the fact that social sciences in Canada and elsewhere have promised more than they could possibly deliver: they have been living beyond their means. Nowhere is this more evident than when social scientists leave their ivory tower to go to the forum.

In this chapter, it is suggested that one of the major sources of this failure of the social sciences may be traced back to the positivist revolution that led social scientists to ape the postures of their colleagues in the physical sciences in the hope of achieving respectability by following the recipes physical scientists were using. The social sciences input into the free trade debate is critically reviewed, and its limited usefulness is revealed. We speculate on the

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likely contours of refurbished social sciences and on what such an "outillage mental" might be able to contribute to the free trade debate. In conclusion, some hopes for refurbished social sciences are shown to be less unrealistic than might first appear.

SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH:
A GENERAL DIAGNOSIS

Although there has been much dissatisfaction with the drift of the social sciences into positivism, there has also been considerable praise for this development. Consequently, the social science community has been split into two factions: one group betting on the form of explanation propounded by positivism, the other defending a mix of explanation and understanding as the only warranted strategy for a sound social scientist (von Wright 1971). Most practitioners have chosen positivism; a minority is on the other side.

Syntax Versus Semantics

Much of the success of positivism in the social sciences is ascribable to the success of the physical sciences in explaining much of what is observed in nature through mechanical cause-effect connections. The machine model of reality worked well in the physical sciences and, since the 19th century, has slowly come to be regarded as more or less the only acceptable model in the social sciences as well.

But to explain a phenomenon, in the physical sciences sense, one must presume it has coherent identity and is repeated (Latouche 1984). But social phenomena are rarely, if ever, truly recurring or identical. Consequently, social phenomena must be reified, i.e., be given definite content and form, for explanations to take hold.

As a consequence of this process of reification (perpetrated on social phenomena to make them amenable to explanation), the social sciences have drifted further and further from the original questions that led to inquiry into social phenomena (Monnerot 1946; Schrag 1980). They have come to focus more exclusively on method and methodological procedures instead of on content and meaning. The social world has been reduced to a set of facts and knowledge made exclusively synonymous with the output of certain methodologic procedures. Epistemology has been reduced to simple methodology and methodology itself to certain procedures that were successful in the physical sciences (Habermas 1971; Paquet 1988a). A hypertrophy of syntax in the social sciences has ensued, much to the detriment of semantics. The social sphere has been reified, physicalism and analytical methods have become hegemonic, a polytechnician attitude prevails, and unrealistic ambitions have flourished within the social sciences community (von Hayek 1952).
Parsimony, Normalization, Regulation

The drift toward positivism has permeated social sciences over the last 40 years. Originally, positivism had been only one of many research strategies or approaches, but it has slowly become a set of norms imposed on the practice of social science and then the basis for a control apparatus to ensure the hegemony of those norms. There has been a progressive sociologization of positivism. Positivism is a parsimonious way to look at social reality. It constructs a collapsed, flattened, and shrunken version of the social world, a reduction to a single order, a single true version of the world — an order that positivism is supposedly best equipped to investigate (Hirschman 1985).

This parsimonious attitude would have been of little consequence, were it not that the social sciences of the 19th century had the tendency to respond to accusations of practical irrelevance or theoretical failures in a bizarre way. They were not so much led to take a less parsimonious view of reality, but rather to neutralize such criticisms by efforts to normalize and regulate the practice of the social sciences. This is the purpose behind the production of rules of method codifying the only way to acquire meaningful knowledge.

But every time a rule defining a norm — what is normal and what is not in the practice of any activity — is made, there must be reference to a regulatory power with the capacity to separate the normal from the abnormal. There is a need for a regulator. The dynamic of construction of regulatory instruments has been spelled out succinctly by Katouzian (1980: 119–122). He ascribes the emergence of the rigid paradigms in good currency in the practice of the social sciences to the growth of professionalism: the growth of a population of full-time mental workers operating in discipline-bound fields. There, narrow disciplinarian leaders rule through their control not only of the instruments of publicaton and dissemination of ideas but also of the mechanisms of research funding. In such a world, being normal translates into a higher probability of being hired and promoted, i.e., into a probability of survival in academe.

This enforced balkanization of the social sciences into fragmented disciplines has had important consequences for their usefulness. There has been a tendency toward a high degree of hyper-specialization, toward the concentration of the effort of full-time mental workers on the solution of real or imaginary problems defined by the leadership of the disciplinary professions, and toward a proliferation of publications for the sake of publications, i.e., much printed material with comparatively little addition to knowledge (Beam 1983; Paquet 1978a, 1985a).

In practice, this perversion has resulted in the social sciences' developing a predilection for small questions, an unmistakable theoretical twist, and a tendency to follow "in the footsteps of Monsieur Pangloss and Dr Bowdler" (Andreski 1974; Gordon 1970, 1975). The smoke screen of jargon has grown exponentially, and analytical/tautological developments have mushroomed to the point where Nobel laureate Wassily Leontief has gone on record as
deploring the drift away from relevance and meaningfulness of much of the work in current journals in economics. The methods used to maintain intellectual discipline in the most important departments of economics, says Leontief (1982), “occasionally remind one of those employed by the marines to maintain discipline on Parris Island.”

The Need for Interpretation

These trends in the current practice of the social sciences are well known even though they are not always appropriately acknowledged. Some continue to argue that positivism is the only way to make the social sciences truly scientific; however, a view that is becoming more widely held is that only through a more judicious mix of interpretation and explanation can we hope to extract the social sciences from their present crisis of confidence.

Daniel Bell (1984) has argued that a “turn to interpretation, in the broadest cultural sense, signifies the turn of the social sciences — or of those practitioners of this art — from the models of the natural sciences and their modes of inquiry, to the humanities.”

Interpretation is an ancient method of inquiry. It was the traditional method in vogue among scholars until the physical sciences developed and imposed their model on the production of knowledge in all areas. What makes interpretation a necessary ingredient in the social sciences has to do with the nature of the human sciences. The difference between mechanical or animal societies and human societies mainly rests with the fact that human action is based on plans, i.e., on mental constructs elaborated before the action is effectively carried out. It is not really possible to reduce all human activities to such plans (which are often not carried through) or to the perception or significance such plans might have for the main actors, but it is not possible either to exorcize those dimensions from any meaningful effort to understand such actions.

This qualitative difference between the human sciences and the physical sciences commands a different methodological strategy. It focuses mainly on institutions as instruments of coordination of activities for human agents, as rules of the game, as social armistices likely to reveal the meaning of such actions.

Institutions are the fabric of World 3 in Karl Popper’s (1972) parlance: a sort of efficient reconciliation of the pressures emanating both from World 1 (the world of material realities) and from World 2 (the world of plans, values and “faits de conscience”) (Lachmann 1971; Shapiro and Sico 1984). World 3 is a complex “text” that the human sciences must interpret in order to understand it. This sort of interpretation would not be unlike a close interpretation of a collective agreement to reveal the texture of conflicts that it has refereed.
THE FREE TRADE DEBATE

The free trade debate between Canada and the United States is a multilogue among various groups on both sides of the border about the number of impediments to trade between the two countries that should be tolerated. As such, it should be analyzed like a multifaceted conversation. The instruments used for such analysis must obviously draw on the body of theories and techniques in vogue in the study of rhetoric. For what is involved in this debate are attempts to persuade and, in assessing those attempts, rhetorical norms are in order. Indeed, much of science is rhetoric: "What distinguishes good from bad in learned discourse... is not the adoption of a particular methodology, but the earnest and intelligent attempt to contribute to a conversation" (McCloskey 1985: 27).

In such a context, the central question has to do with the standards of persuasiveness: whether the conversation about free trade is working well, whether the arguments put forward are persuasive. Our general point will be that the conversation about free trade is not working well, and that social scientists as persuaders have failed miserably in that debate.

Anatomy of the Free Trade Debate

One of the basic difficulties that might explain the poor performance of social scientists as persuaders in this debate may have to do with the confusion among three interrelated questions, all subsumed generally under the same rubric: free trade as an idea, free trade as a bout of negotiations, and free trade as construction of a new socioeconomic space. These are quite different issues, although obviously interconnected, but they have been debated interchangeably without taking care to specify which issue was addressed.

*Free trade as an idea* does not refer to the design of a free trade arrangement. It pertains to the inception of the idea of a free trade arrangement as a source of opportunities for business. As such, it is a potent economic force, even though it may never be realized. New opportunities are entertained and the prospective and plausible futures are significantly altered by the sociopsychological setting created by the beginning of a "conversation" about free trade.3

Because one might speculate on many different ways in which this idea might be implemented, everything is plausible, for the idea of free trade embodies what Leland Jenks (1944) would call "the dream of developing communities, regions, the continent." Corresponding to any number of different social partitionings of the community, one may identify clusters of groups grappling with the idea, speculating on whether the costs and benefits are of comparable magnitude or not for them. This is the paradise of *simulators*, i.e., those who have a simulacrum of the socioeconomic on which they are willing to play, for a fee, any imaginative scenario one might fantasize or build on this free trade idea. The simulacrum may be a simple supply-and-demand
scheme, an “issue-machine,” or an elaborate econometric caricature of the socioeconomy, but the process is largely of the same nature: a mechanical analogue of the socioeconomy is used to forecast growth in various allocations and distributional impacts.\footnote{Whether these simulations are anchored in a “realistic” model is not the issue. As any mechanical analogue is a reification of the socioeconomy — even if behavioural reactions and policy triggers are built in — such a construct is unlikely to generate very persuasive results. Indeed, the wide variability of “results” developed through those simulations has provided their consumers with very little in the form of robust persuasion. The main reason is that too much of the reality of the socioeconomy as instituted process is expurgated from even the most sophisticated simulations. An additional reason is that any built-in forecast of the reactions of different groups to changes in the rules of the game in matters such as our trade relations with the United States is unlikely to be gauged reasonably well by a simple rule. Consequently, most of the results generated by such exercises are not very robust when they are not simply tautological.}

One cannot expect much better results from social science analyses of the free trade debate as a bout of negotiations. Modeling such an interactive process is so difficult that most analysts have been satisfied with simple general descriptions. To perform a meaningful simulation of a game of negotiations, much is required: (1) an explicit set of actors together with their domains of possible actions, (2) a clear specification of mutual interdependencies, and (3) a correct gauging of the extent of consciousness of each group of actors and (4) of the degree to which any group is aware that all groups are aware of each other’s perceptions and of their interdependencies.

Leif Johansen (1979) asserts that standard social sciences do not admit of most of those points: in general, analyses considerably emasculate (2) and (3), do not deal with (1) very well and fail altogether to take (4) into account. There have been some efforts to develop the game paradigm, but the results to date are not very promising when one is confronted with complex non-zero-sum games with more than a few actors. The great merit of that paradigm has been to throw some light on the essential social character of the social sciences and on some of the requirements that status imposes on the practice of social sciences (Coddington 1968; Cross 1969; Shubik 1982; Schellenberg and Druckman 1986).

The contribution of the social sciences to the process of bargaining in the free trade debate has been rather limited. Although a certain amount of intelligence is necessary in such a process, the Macdonald Commission (1985) report noted that there is a significant gap in the expertise of Canadian academics about the structure of the American political system and its behaviour. Therefore, whatever contribution might have been legitimately expected from the social sciences in ascertaining what our trade partners are all about has not been provided. Although this is partly ascribable to a lack of expert personnel,
it is not entirely clear that their contribution (if it had materialized) would have been that significant, largely because of the limits of their tools.³

As for free trade as construction of a new socioeconomic space, the process is so full of unforeseen and unintended consequences that social scientists have a rather limited ability to grasp its full scope. Attempts to gauge such broad transformations in the social architecture of socioeconomies have been attempted through the use of counterfactuals, i.e., alternative versions of the world to ascertain the net effect of a particular transformation or feature. Counterfactuals have to be reasonably precise to be of use. A common weakness of most general equilibrium analyses of counterfactuals is that they leave so much unspecified that nothing categorical can be stated with certainty from comparisons between the “world as it is” and the counterfactual version of it.

A good example, again taken from economic history, is the comparison made by Robert Fogel (1964) between a world with and without railroads in the United States. One is hardly persuaded by simple quantifications of the “social savings” generated by railroads, when they are based on a naive comparison of the costs of transportation by rail with the costs of transporting the same goods to the same places using the pre-existing mode of transportation. The assumption is that the same goods will be transported to the same places before and after the introduction of railroads. But if anything is clear, it is that railroads have triggered a complete transformation of the matrix of transported goods (Fogel 1964, 1979). Therefore, the comparison is really meaningless and the notion of social saving thus defined somewhat spurious. The same general weakness plagues all attempts by social scientists to gauge the effects of the long-run adjustment to a “reality of free trade.”

A sweeping transformation of the tariff arrangements between two countries is likely to promote efficiency, but this is not certain. It may also promote economic growth through the expansion of trade, but it is not certain exactly how the benefits emanating from such a transformation will be shared by the different segments of the new socioeconomic space. Depending on the assumptions one makes about reactions, adjustments, etc. one may obtain dramatically different although not necessarily inconsistent results. Moreover, many have expressed doubts about the wisdom of this policy initiative as a mechanism to solve Canada’s economic problems: tariffs are not the issue any more.

The real issue is non-tariff barriers, such as regional tax incentives, government procurement policies, the treatment of foreign-owned firms, and the setting of currency exchange rates. These are the tools used in advanced industrial countries to pursue industrial strategies.... These tools are central to the economic power of the modern state, the key to sovereignty in the late twentieth century, just as tariffs were in the nineteenth. [Laxer 1986: 11]⁴

Because social sciences can throw no uncontroversial light on the impact of the “idea” of enhanced trade arrangements between Canada and the United States, nor on the best way to bargain for it, nor on the efficiency, economic growth, and wealth redistribution the new socioeconomic space is likely to trigger, nor even on the wisdom of such a policy initiative, it is hardly surprising that rhetoric has played such an important role in this debate. What has been
accomplished in terms of public awareness and in terms of persuasion is not so much a result of arguments soundly based on thoroughly persuasive social sciences research as rhetorical devices. Rhetoric may be inescapable, but even the conversation about free trade might be conducted more persuasively with the use of an enriched "outillage mental."

**Some Paradoxes**

Three paradoxes illustrate the degree to which social science research is bogged down in terms of illuminating the current debate.

*Second-best results:* One of the depressing results of economic analysis of the post Second World War period has been the development of second-best theorems in economics. This disquieting feature of general equilibrium analysis may be summarized as follows: there are many conditions to ensure welfare maximization in an economy; if for any reason, one of the conditions is unobtainable, it may be necessary to depart from other welfare-maximizing conditions. Because of the fact that perfect competition rarely exists (governments intervene via all sorts of taxes and subsidies, external economies and diseconomies exist in production and consumption, etc.), it cannot be assumed that all marginal social costs and benefits are equal in every segment of the economy. Because this means that some welfare-maximizing conditions are not met at some point in the economy, it becomes impossible to know with certainty whether a policy designed to remove a restriction to free trade (supposedly to bring the socioeconomy closer to the point of maximum welfare for all) will leave members of the community economically better off.\(^7\)

This shattering result has not received the broad diffusion it required. Second-best is still regarded as an advanced subject and is not discussed in most intermediate textbooks. Yet, one may infer from it that there are very few a priori propositions that economists may offer to policymakers. Obviously, the more we know about the facts of the economy, the more we are in a position to compute ad hoc second-best optima. However, as the number of violations of efficiency conditions increases and as the complexities of interdependence grow, computing such second-best solutions is both difficult and, of necessity, based on disputable assumptions.

In the great debate that surrounded the decision by Britain to join the European Economic Community, economists were very divided, and even free trade defenders like Harry Johnson (1971) campaigned against Britain joining the EEC on the ground that “the obvious economic benefits to Britain of joining are negligible and the obvious economic costs are large” (Hutchison 1977: 181). Other economists took a quite different stand, and their view prevailed; however, the force of their argument was much more rhetorical than substantive. The same conundrum faces experts when asked whether Canada should enter into a free trade agreement with the United States.

The broad consequence of this predicament is that there is no agreement among economists a priori about the desirability of free trade even as an idea.
When confronted with facts that can be read in a variety of different ways, one is faced with very different viewpoints. The full extent of the confusion can best be summarized by saying that it no longer appears inconsistent for an economist to say that even if economic integration is likely to generate more efficiency and growth, it cannot be presumed that economic disintegration is likely to generate inefficiency and slower growth.

The framing of decisions: A second major paradox has emerged from the experimental work of Tversky and Kahneman (1981): if one modifies the framework of presentation within which a decision is made, one may dramatically transform the nature of the decision. For instance, their studies have shown that medical personnel may be led to choose diametrically opposed strategies for treatment if the "objective" information is cast in terms of probability of death instead of probability of survival.

This work raises fundamental questions about the predictability of decisions by groups and, therefore, about the reliability of simulacra, as it would appear that "objective" conditions are not the determining factor in decision-making. This increases even more the importance of the rhetorical elements in debates such as the one about free trade. For the activities of the "définisseurs de situation" will trigger continuous "reframing" of the decision context, and consequently a modification of the decisions. In the case of complex issues, it is futile to model decisions and strategies anchored in "objective" conditions. This casts a shadow on much work based on rational man and his predictable behaviour.

In the free trade debate, much is based on presumptions and assumptions, and the complexity of the choices proposed are of such a magnitude that the framing dimensions are even more determining than they might be in laboratory circumstances. Consequently, there is little hope of developing an objective database on which to construct a sound simulation of decisions to be expected from different groups. Not only are the knowledge and database that are necessary for good social science work nonexistent, but also, even if they could be established, nothing would lead us to believe that the objective facts would have a determining impact on real decisions. In this world, interventions by opinion molders using the instruments of rhetoric have more chance of being determinant than the so-called basic facts of the case.

Balkanization and multistability: The efficiency, growth, redistribution effects of a freer trade arrangement are unclear, but the relative weights of these performance indicators in a dynamic socioeconomy existing through extremely rapid change and transformation are not clear either. Departure from the world of perfect competition does not only deprive economists of simple rules for policy advice, it also imposes a different set of weights on those different performance dimensions. In a world of perfect competition, it is argued that "there is an optimal amount of instability and inequity; this is the one that makes the human economy as efficient as possible in the broadest sense."
This may be questionable even in a world of perfect competition, but it is clearly neither warranted nor reasonable in a world that departs from the competitive ideal. In such a context, the whole notion of performance indicators has to be "reframed," and the problem must be addressed by a decision to "select a set of targets or objectives for the economy and then analyze the performance of particular sectors of the economy in terms of whether or not this performance aids or impedes the achievement of these overall goals" (Herendeen 1975: 230). De facto, the pursuit of equity and stability (or of growth/employment objectives, the construction of a particular socioeconomic structure, or the achievement of some cultural goals) overrides the concern for efficiency (Paquet 1978b: 46).

This shift in emphasis in evaluating performance has not always been given sufficient recognition in the practice of social scientists, despite important work recasting the image of the economic system as a non-zero-sum game in which the parts devise rival strategies taking into account conjectures about what other parts might do and the interactions between strategies. Such work has shown our capitalistic socioeconomies to be dynamically inefficient and, therefore, call for the use of other performance indicators (Lancaster 1973).

What makes this shift to other gauges of performance fundamentally important in the free trade debate is the fact that as soon as efficiency considerations cease to be dominant, there is little or no agreement on alternative gauges. Moreover, optimizing in other directions seems condemned to violate blatantly the efficiency norms. For instance, a fragmented, fractured economic system may be shown to be multistable, i.e., to have a relatively greater ability to adapt than a fully integrated one. Through the fragmentation of an economic system into "sub-systems subject to slightly different rules and interacting incompletely or only through the mediation of specific channels," one can ensure that an adjustment in some key or essential variables is delegated, so to speak, to a partial system enabling the overall process to adjust to important shocks in the environment in a manner which would have been either impossible or very time-consuming had the overall process been forced to adjust in toto" (Paquet 1977, 1978b: 52).

This might lead one to argue that although an expanded zone of freer trade might generate efficiency benefits, it might also reduce the capacity to transform a socioeconomic system. It is possible to argue along the same lines on the basis of some fundamental social objective like the primacy of culture or the preservation of sovereignty; this leads to a situation in which no technical advice based on simple efficiency norms can ever be persuasive, for the ground has been shifted to moral choices and one cannot replace a fundamentally moral basis for decision with a technical argument.

It is far from evident, therefore, that social science research can produce unambiguous answers to the questions of the day. The combination of second-best and framing-of-decisions constraints, together with the possibility that static and dynamic contexts or narrow and broader contexts might call for different policy initiatives, have led social scientists to make many statements
in general (and, therefore, on the basis of the most extremely reductive assumptions) but to contribute little except some interesting rhetoric — nothing that might be regarded as providing solutions to the practical problems facing the community.

Anamorphosis of the Free Trade Debate

Over the last 2 years, an extensive literature has been triggered by the free trade debate in Canada. I do not wish to review that literature; I have only sampled it to identify some of the major strands of argument, to illustrate the interesting rhetorical ploys used, and to show the general unpersuasiveness of the social science contributions to that debate. Because the free trade issue has a dominant economic flavour, the place of economists in this anamorphosis may be larger than life. I have also tried to gauge what filtered down to people from the social sciences community through the press.13

Because I claim that rhetoric has played a dominant role in the free trade debate, an anamorphosis through the prism of the four tropes that have so generously spiced the economic discourse in the past has appeared useful.14 Those figures of speech (metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony) have played a crucial role in the free trade debate. The pro-free-trade participants have tried to persuade by making use of them. Their opponents, in turn, have often used figures of speech in lieu of proofs. The rationale for such posturing is simple: neither side is really able to prove much.

Trade as synecdoche: A socioeconomy as an instituted process cannot be reduced to the process of trade: this is a synecdoche, i.e., taking a part for the whole. The manner in which the economic process gets instituted at different places and times invests that process with unity and stability and defines the nature of specific human economies (Polanyi 1968). A socioeconomy is fundamentally an organizational–institutional reality, of which trade is only a portion.

Any analysis of an economy partitions it into subprocesses. This reveals the extent to which trade is only a small part of the picture. One such partitioning that has proved particularly useful in analyzing the Canadian socioeconomy is based on six subprocesses — demographic, financial, production and exchange, distribution, and the state subprocesses, and the ecology of groups and their motives) (Paquet 1980).

By making trade relations the fabric of the economy, some social scientists have reduced the complex process of private, social, and public production, consumption, cooperation, and exchange to simple trading relations. This is a bold synecdoche.15 In fact, one is led to postulate a frictionless world in which monads trade relentlessly in all dimensions and where any trade impediment generates waste in preventing the realization of best solutions in all dimensions.

This elevation of trade relations to absolute eminence has meant that all other dimensions have been either occluded (except for their trade-related
traits) or at least emasculated to a great extent. For instance, the whole production process and its technological dimensions are naively simplified to a problem of scale economies.16

The mythical 100-million-consumer market: The trade bias leads naturally to an interesting metonymy — a procedure through which a thing associated with the matter under discussion becomes a symbol for it. The whole productive dimension of national economies has simply been subsumed under the rubric of scale. All the complexities of modern economies are reduced to one feature: the size of the market. Consequently, all problems of productivity and competitiveness are ascribed to lack of opportunity to gain access to a market of 100 million.

This is the foundation on which the Macdonald Commission builds its argument in favour of freer trade: without such a market, it is presumed that a socioeconomy cannot really achieve efficiency and, therefore, competitiveness. Yet there is more to the making of our daily bread (as McCloskey would say) than scale economies, and there is plenty of evidence that small open economies have succeeded in doing extremely well even without full access to a market of 100 million.17

This reduction of the whole productive side of the human economy to economies of scale and, therefore, the size of the market, has been challenged by most opponents to free trade as bogus. They argue that there is plenty of evidence that viable economies based on small domestic markets, but skilled productive capacity and good marketing strategies, have established a strong international presence in the world economy (de Wilde 1985; Drummond 1986). But the figure of speech has a great resiliency and it has had an extraordinary impact on the citizenry, as can be seen in the popular and financial presses, which have reproduced this argument hundreds of times. This is so despite the fact that the same financial press (Business Week 1984) has also shown unambiguously that economies of scale alone will no longer guarantee an advantage in manufacturing. Shorter product cycles and reliance on computer design and manufacturing have "made it economical to turn out products in small customized batches."

The metaphorical flavour of the basic argument: By focusing exclusively on trade and the extent of the market, pro-free-trade participants infer that from competition in a large market flows efficiency, and from efficiency flows welfare. This pivotal reliance on efficiency enables the pro-free-trade argument to stand; however potent the forces of competition may be, they cannot by themselves eliminate "natural protection" bestowed by transportation costs or "unnatural protection" bestowed by collusion, cartels, price manipulation, and other such techniques. Moreover, the surge of employment and per capita income purported to ensue from free trade (on the grounds that efficiency is the key to prosperity) depends on a large number of factors about which we know little. What about investment? What about the independence of Canadian policymaking? What about the differential institutions that characterize
Canada in comparison to the USA? On those matters, we can speculate, but we know little.

The trick of the free-trade promoters has been to force the argument on the grounds of competitiveness and efficiency and to presume that employment, growth, and welfare are necessary consequences flowing from efficiency. In fact, efficiency may promote growth, but it is hardly sufficient to ensure growth. Indeed, "inefficiencies" like tariffs appear to have been associated historically with periods of rapid growth in Canada (Drummond 1986). The basic argument linking large markets-competitiveness-efficiency-growth to employment and welfare may hold as a perfectly competitive world metaphor but it does not capture the essence of real socioeconomies.

The thrust behind the basic argument is that the optimal amount of protection is zero. The counter-argument is that it is not so, that there is a "scientific tariff" (Johnson 1960) that may well be significant if one is intent on achieving certain social objectives like economic growth, the creation of jobs, or the pursuit of certain objectives of political sovereignty or cultural development. The counter-argument adds that there is an "imperialism of free trade" as present today as it was in the middle of the 19th century. Free trade as panacea or free trade as economic and cultural genocide are rhetorical stands that one cannot buttress with persuasive arguments.

The use of irony in the free trade debate: Irony is the most sophisticated of the rhetorical techniques. It uses humorous or slightly sarcastic expressions in which the intended meaning is the direct opposite of their usual sense. The trade literature in Canada has always had a strong ironic strand: some may remember the famous Bladen Plan, a proposal to reduce tariffs on the import of auto parts but retain them on whole cars, which, even though designed to increase protection for local assembly plants, was billed as a step toward free trade.

For instance, to defend his belief in a more aggressive and forceful effort toward a complete liberalization of trade, Ron Shearer (1986) characterizes the more careful suggestion of the Macdonald Commission to liberalize trade in industrial products only as "a new face of Canadian mercantilism."

In the face of attacks on the free trade initiative as a threat to Canadian independence, Simon Reisman (1985) refers to studies that supposedly show that "there is not much to worry about on the independence issue in a free trade context that we don't already worry about." This is an argument that Anthony Westell (1984: 22) also uses, although Westell reserves his most biting words for those "romantics" who keep referring to the "national character" and the "national identity." There is also something suave about the U.S.-Israel free trade agreement being proposed as a model for Canada. Or about the suggestion by the prime minister (in his television address of June 1986) that the growing protectionism in the United States (Fortress U.S.A.) is putting our markets in peril and the only way out is to negotiate a trade deal. The rest of the year showed how little the ongoing negotiations would affect the dynamic
of countervails and how vulnerable Canadian sovereignty over its own policy instruments turned out to be!

The other side has shown itself capable of irony as well. James Laxer (1986) handled this trope exceedingly well, when he accused "economists of harbouring dark feelings about Canada" and he understood "that Canada is the scene of heinous outrages against economic theory." Mel Hurtig (1985) is also a master of irony in his many speeches and articles in which he uses variations on the theme of the famous blind leap of faith through the window of opportunity into the cold shower of international competition, ending up on a cement floor.

The final irony about the free trade debate is that the very notion of free trade connotes and has been made to connote explicitly in the mind of the public some sort of reduction of the importance of the state in trading relations. We are told that free trade, deregulation, and privatization constitute a trinity of policies designed to reduce the role of government in the socioeconomy. In fact, as Bruce Doern (1986) has shown, free trade is bound to mean expanded activities by the state (Baldwin 1986). In this context, it is enlightening to read the briefing document outlining the communications strategy of the Canadian government to sell free trade to the Canadian public. It shows clearly that the intent was not so much to educate the general public as to bamboozle the citizenry by emphasizing the free in free trade.

It is hardly surprising that the free trade debate has generated more heat than light. Throughout, the notion of free trade has maintained a certain strategic vagueness nurtured carefully by all participants in the debate. Attempts to promote other versions of the notion (freer trade, enhanced trade) have been perceived as decoys for the real thing and never did take hold. This strategic vagueness compounded by a certain tactical imprecision regarding the coverage of any possible free trade arrangement (industrial production à la Macdonald or a wider coverage including services, agriculture, culture, etc.) and the shifts among free trade as an idea, as a game of negotiations, and as a redesigning of the socioeconomic space of North America have kept the debate out of reach of most Canadians.

The lack of focus of the conversation about free trade is obviously partly strategic, but it is also largely ascribable to the lack of rigour of the language of problem-solution provided by the social sciences. Otherwise, much of this mumbling would have been exposed forcefully much earlier. But as very little of substance can be generated from general social-scientific rules, debaters have been forced to construct ad hoc policy recommendations derived from analyses of second-best or third-best possibilities. The framing of decisions has become such a key variable that the same "objective" information is now seen as capable of triggering quite diverse reactions depending on the way it is presented: rhetoric is queen. This is nowhere more transparent than in the communications strategy document revealed on 20 September 1985. Government would appear intent on shaping the framework for decisions rather than attempting to deal with so-called "objective" dimensions of the issue.
The multilogue is fundamentally flawed: on a bold synecdoche of a socio-economy fully defined by trading relations, academics and bureaucrats have attached the metonymy that the only operative force in the productive process is economies of scale. This has served as a foundation for a metaphorical chain rooted in the extent of the market and leading to an efficiency-seeking policy recommendation that had to be free trade; an occlusion of key substantive features of the socioeconomy as instituted process ensued. Appropriately spiced with irony, all this could be tonic, but not enlightening.

WHAT REFURBISHED SOCIAL SCIENCES MIGHT CONTRIBUTE

An alternative practice of the social sciences might be able to go further and deeper in making sense of the free trade debate. In this section, a general sketch of what refurbished social sciences might look like is presented, together with the sort of new model for policy research that should ensue. This might carry the debate on free trade into more promising directions.

This is quite a voyage, deep into terra incognita. It cannot be certain, therefore, that we can deliver as much as we would like to promise. The intent at least should be clear: we wish to map out this new terrain in a preliminary way.

The Nature of the Repairs

Refurbished human sciences must take a turn toward interpretation, and the fundamental sociality of the social sciences must become the central dimension of interest. To explore sociality, a new methodological strategy focused on institutions is necessary. This strategy calls for a reconstruction of the institutional schemata (as social armistices and parameters of possible actions) and for a recreation of their genesis; the central concern is not to explicate the reified social context from without, but to try to understand from within the unity, complementarities, consistency, permanence, and development of the institutional texture of World 3 (Bourdieu 1972; OECD 1979; Thompson 1981: 173).

But this cannot be done without some effort to go beneath the historical traditions to the real forces determining their shape. This is where hermeneutics comes in. It considers human social life as text-analogue calling for interpretation in the same manner as old incomplete and fragmented texts from past ages used to be interpreted. The contexted traditions are almost of necessity interpreted overtly by different actors or groups of actors in a biased, ideological way. This is why depth interpretation is in order.

What is called for is not unlike a Freudian-type interpretation looking for unsuspected patterns of distorted communication, beneath the observed speech pattern of ordinary life, resulting from the repression of needs and wants. What appear to be forms of neurotic symptoms in the individual may
transpire as forms of "false consciousness" and ideology in societies. Habermas (1971) suggests that in the same way Freud penetrated beneath the surface to underlying forces by methodical interpretation of dreams, behaviour, speech, etc., one can interpret societies' pathologies and unearth what might account for the false consciousness of groups in society.\(^{24}\) Bringing out the latent repressed significance of the patient's life history leads the patient to place new significance on those repressed areas; Habermas hopes to apply the same therapy in social life. By revealing the preconditions of power and domination that gave rise to distorted communication, one might improve the degree of communicative competence within a socioeconomy and come closer to realizing a less imperfect community.

To do so, one needs a better decoder than the language of problem solution — the language of progress. This language of progress is based on freedom as an absolute and on a blind faith in continuing progress through the use of instrumental reason and technology. This has been the decoder used to analyze our societies. The language of progress is not capable of throwing any light on the essential sociality of human communities, on their intersubjective fabric or on the various ways in which communication can be and is systematically distorted within human communities (Ramos 1981). It decomposes the institutional fabric of our societies into reified rights and, thereby, dissolves it into a contractual texture that gives no voice or reality to those who have no contracting power: marginals, nonconformists, the unborn, etc. It cannot take into account fundamental categories like goodness or justice.

What is required is a language rooted in what makes us human rather than in what makes us free. Michael Ignatieff (1985) has proposed one such language — a language of the good, a language of needs — more capable of appreciating fully our essential sociality and consequently also the relevant deformations of the social space, i.e., deviations vis-à-vis situations promoting the good and the just (Schick 1984). Such a language rooted in civil society recognizes the centrality of good society, good polity, good economy, and strives to eliminate impediments standing in the way of their realization, i.e., a socioeconomy that meets not only efficiency standards, but also standards of reciprocity and stability.\(^{25}\)

**Toward a New Model of Policy Research**

In most policy research on big questions, goals are ambiguous or in conflict and means–ends relationships are highly uncertain. It is hardly surprising that policy research should be of little use. Researchers have a great latitude to specify unreasonably narrow or naive goals or to presume some deterministic link between means and ends when there is at best a remotely possible one. However cleverly one may wish to package the results of such policy research, it is bound to be irrelevant.

This often leads to deception, but most of the time it results in some conniving between the producer of the metaphorical research and the policymaker who has paid for it. The rationale for this connivance comes from the
fact that such policy research is of no consequence: it leaves the policymaker entirely free to follow the strategy that proves electorally expedient. David Slater (1950) was not challenged when he wrote that little in the successes or failures of economic policy in the post-war period in Canada could be ascribed to economic research. 26

The only way to generate policy research of import is to renounce scientism and develop policy research in the full context of social practice. This in turn calls for a simultaneous taking into account of four interactive subprocesses: "the formulation of a theory of reality, the articulation of relevant social values, the selection of an appropriate political strategy, and the implementation of practical measures or social action" (Friedmann and Abonyi 1976). 27 John Friedmann (1978: 86) has proposed one such model in which

Cognition is linked to the world of events via social action (SA) and the results of that action. The adequacy of the theory of reality (TR) and/or the political strategy (PS) is, therefore, dependent on the results of action (SA) and the extent to which these results satisfy the given social values (SV). Such knowledge is useful in solving social problems, but it is not formally cumulative knowledge. Indeed much of the knowledge obtained may leave no visible traces of itself; it is experiential or tacit knowledge. 28

Such a policy research model incorporates normative assertions explicitly instead of "smuggling" them in; it is based on a transactive style of planning that boldly accepts the underlying conflictive process implied in the political system. It is also based firmly on the belief that social learning must be promoted at all possible locations within a social system and that social experimentation should be promoted wherever possible. Indeed, it would appear to lead exactly to the converse of the current manipulative strategies hinted at in footnote 21.

In a world freed from the totalitarianism of the knowledgeable elite, there is a "commitment on the part of the policy-maker to the idea of social experimentation, practice, and learning as the principal methods for public intervention" (Friedmann and Abonyi 1976: 939; on how one might implement such transactive planning, see Friedmann 1973).

Dimensions of Interdependence

The remaining question is whether refurbished social sciences might throw some new light on the free trade debate. I think it would. An attempt to examine the Canadian socioeconomy as a text-analogue and to socioanalyze it to unearth the foundations of the various ideological discourses we hear might indeed reveal a large amount of false consciousness in the Canadian political economy. Moreover, a model of policy research taking explicitly into account the sociocultural and the sociopolitical dimensions of the free trade arrangement might significantly redirect the thrust of the debate.

Many "deformations of the social space" might serve as révélateurs: Canada is a small, open, dependent, and balkanized socioeconomy living in the shadow of the United States but intent on preserving a separate and different cultural identity and social fabric. Whatever the rectitude of this view, the coherence
There are widespread concerns about free trade because it would seemingly lead irreversibly to a complete submission of the operations of the Canadian socioeconomy to the imperatives of the market. The strictly commercial dimension of the arrangement has already become hegemonic in all discussions. Culture, which for Canadians used to mean a profoundly different "program" in the sense that computer scientists use the word, i.e., a different way of life, a significantly different way to tackle issues and solve problems, is in the process of becoming synonymous with cultural industries. Social programs, that used to connote the style of society Canadians had chosen, are now referred to as forms of export subsidies.

If the free in free trade has been used to market the idea that Canadians could have their cake and eat it too, for other Canadians, the abandonment of their life-styles to the whims of the free market makes no sense. In many ancient societies, the market mechanism was used for the allocation of widgets, but banned in relation to food and essential goods, because it was believed that the free market might not allocate such essential commodities ideally (i.e., fairly and appropriately). The same might be said about such important intangibles as culture and social mores. Free trade has, therefore, been a major source of fear.

The only way to incorporate fully the social and cultural dimensions (but also the regional, distributional, technological, financial, human, political, and demographic objectives) into the discussion about trade is to recast the debate in terms of fair trade (Mégrelis 1980). This would ensure that, in the process of bargaining over trading arrangements, the collective goals that Canadians have chosen would be kept in perspective and explicitly brought forward in an attempt to negotiate a fair deal with the United States.

Fair trade is an expression which is likely to generate negative reactions from those who feel that fairness is not a sound enough basis to serve as a benchmark. Yet for years, courts have refereed cases on the basis of such criteria without too much difficulty. This is most certainly better than the "leap of faith" that might simply end up in a process of "Ukrainization" of Canada (Varzeliotis 1985: preface).

The fair trade scenario poses many important challenges to Canada. Such negotiations would have to be developed on the basis of the Charter of the Economic Rights and Duties of Nations approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1974. The 34 articles of this charter (including the right to control foreign investment, the right to share in the advantages that result from technological and scientific innovations, the duty to cooperate to ensure fair terms of trade, etc.) were approved by a majority of 120 votes to 6, but the United States voted against the charter. Consequently, it is not certain that efforts to negotiate a fair commercial, technological, financial, and social deal...
with the United States would either be welcome or feasible. But is anything less than such an arrangement simply another form of "imperialism of free trade"? And if so, do Canadians really want it?

A social science research program intent on examining the new trading relations with the United States within the context of a model of social learning might reveal that, as it has been mentioned by some observers, free trade as an idea is not such a good one, that Canada may have been imprudent in jumping into such negotiations without the necessary preparatory work at the provincial and grassroots levels, and that the economic benefits from such a new trading space are doubtful (while triggering irreversible social, cultural, and political consequences). It might also dispel those fears and help prepare the documentation necessary for the negotiation of a fair deal.

Such a research program does not exist. Many intelligent appraisals of the situation have been put forward, but they are mostly speculations and opinions couched in different figures of speech. Little has been done to analyze the "deformations" of our social space, to dispel the high degree of false consciousness that inhabits the debate, or to hasten social learning about the price Canadians might be willing to pay to maintain "their good society." And when such analyses have been put forward, they have been ignored or disparaged as "nationalist" or "socialist." This has not helped the conversation about what a fair deal with the United States might be. Canadians have been bombarded with messages from many Cassandras and many Candides, or they have been simply dis-informed. What they need is an orderly framework for their thought. Only a refurbished social sciences can help in this construction.

CONCLUSION

It may be unduly optimistic to believe that, after a century of positivistic indoctrination, one might feel that a turn to interpretation is likely to bring a breath of some fresh air into the social sciences. Yet there are many signs that we are entering a crucial transition period. The disciplinary guilds have been led to excesses in their regulation and there has been "a crisis of abstraction" in the 1970s. As a result, it can be argued that the social sciences have become more disconnected from the original questions that led to their creation than ever in the past.

According to Katouzian (1980), no amount of moral suasion or sporadic dissent and no sermons will provoke the needed change, "only a combination of public consciousness and the growing proximity of the abyss" will do the job. Those two forces may be at work. A crisis of confidence has developed over the last 15 years within the social science community. It has been echoed within the broader social context as practical irrelevance and theoretical failures showed up more and more frequently. Consequently governments and patrons have become less willing to fund the activities of the social scientists. The matching grants policy of the Mulroney government should bring that crisis to a head.29
While not determinant in this process, the free trade debate may have exposed social scientists more than they would have liked. There seems to be a convergence of developments (both in current philosophical thinking and in the demands by society) that would appear to promote the development of "an epistemology of practice which places technical problem solving within a broader context of reflective inquiry, shows how reflection-in-action may be rigorous in its own right, and links the art of practice in uncertainty and uniqueness to the scientist's art of research" (Schon 1983: 69). An alternative to positivism now exists and there is a demand for it.

At a time when those who gave us positivism — the physicists — apply terms like *colour* and *charm* to the quark — this elusive and invisible ultimate element — it may be time for social scientists to recognize at last that they should cease to be slaves to some defunct physicist (Jones 1983).

NOTES

1. The diagnosis put forward in this section has been developed more fully in Paquet (1987b).

2. This is probably the most vehement denunciation of this perversion of the social sciences. Von Hayek (1952) shows how, from Francis Bacon to Auguste Comte, there have been efforts to reduce the human sciences to the status of natural sciences of man. Although there is much merit in this approach in many subareas of the study of man, it is unacceptable, says Hayek, to reduce all of social sciences to this subsegment.

3. In economic history, it is often argued that tariffs are not unlike "negative railroads," as the impediments to trade that they generate are the exact opposite of the facilitation of trade generated by the introduction of railroad transportation. L.H. Jenks (1944) has analyzed the impact of railroads on American development under three rubrics: railroad as an idea, railroad as a construction enterprise, railroad as a producer of transportation services. We have adopted a somewhat similar approach.

4. These mechanical analogs might be almost entirely unspecified (Culbertson 1986), although one may easily gather from the analysis what sort of model Dr Culbertson carries in the back of his head; or it might be a very elaborate econometric construct as in the case of the work of R.G. Harris and D. Cox (1985) or in the many simulations performed by management consultants like Informetrica for a variety of clients. Such elaborate constructs need not be economic in nature (Braybrooke 1974).

5. It is interesting to note that in many instances the "social scientists" who have been making the most interesting contributions to this debate have been those least constrained by the trappings of the traditional disciplines: journalists, situationologists, or leading academics. The first two groups have provided *dehussaillages*, guided somewhat by social-scientific frameworks but not trapped in it. As for the prominent senior academics, freed to some extent from the need to abide by the rules of the discipline, they would appear to adopt a style and a form of analysis that is not without reminding those adopted by journalists and situationologists. An example of the journalistic pieces might be Blouin (1986) or McLean (1986). For a very lucid piece by a prominent academic economist, see Lipsey (1986); for a good piece by a situationologist, see Doern (1986) and on the notion of situationologist, see Paquet (1982) or Chapter 2 in this volume.

6. Laxer (1986) argues that a market-driven approach is not appropriate; he suggests that a business-government partnership is required to rebuild Canada's socioeconomic. See also Rotstein (1984).
7. This phenomenon has been known for quite some time, but it was analyzed carefully only in the postwar period. James Meade (1955), the Nobel laureate, coined the phrase. The fact that a best solution is ruled out by the existence of imperfections in one sector means that a second-best solution has to be found. Such a solution has to be derived from an examination of the particulars of the case. It cannot be inferred from the use of a general rule like the equalization of marginal costs and benefits. Obviously such a line of reasoning may be used to justify the existence of trade restrictions.

8. In Canada, the debates at the time of the Quebec referendum of 1980 and in the years preceding it, together with those that have been going on about free trade in the 1980s, have provided numerous examples of such apparently contradictory statements. In fact, most of the time there is no inherent contradiction: as soon as they stray away from tautologies or truisms, practitioners can hardly answer any question pertaining to the world of facts (as perceived by the citizenry) except by saying “it depends,” and many of the conclusions that follow are simply an echo effect of the assumptions on which they have built their argument.

9. This is the view upheld by neoclassical economists, and their policy advice is anchored in the assumption that the standard rules in force in the ideal competitive world should be used whatever their inappropriateness. For a critique of this view and some suggested alternative approaches to the gauging of performance, see Paquet 1978b).

10. Lancaster (1973) presents capitalism as a differential game and demonstrates the sub-optimality of this regime because of its built-in coordination failures. Social waste ensues. In the face of such inefficiency, it is futile to argue for a return to competition (and therefore freer trade) as a way out. Such a focus on efficiency criteria is not only unwarranted but assumes away too many of the complexities, uncertainties, and strategic dimensions of the real game that underpins the human economy.

11. In Paquet (1977) an argument is developed showing that to the extent that federalism fragments a socioeconomic, it may improve its capacity to adapt. To the extent that regulation and other nonmarket mechanisms balkanize the socioeconomic, the same argument may be made that regulation promotes multistability.

12. Such attempts to persuade the population that the technical has replaced the moral have been dubbed “a methodological or epistemological coup” (Wiley in Paquet 1977: 296) perpetrated by social scientists on the population. It has proved effective but only in the short run. Questions of sovereignty or culture, for instance, would appear to be almost ultra vires for traditional social sciences. It is easier for some, like Westell (1984: 22), simply to occlude such dimensions from their analysis or to transmogrify them: “To be a Canadian citizen does not signify a way of life, or a set of values beyond attachment to the community and loyalty to the national state. So the fear that closer association with the United States will erode a Canadian identity in the making or abort a Canadian culture about to be born is unfounded.” In the same spirit, he argues that free trade would entail “no sovereignty loss”; it is simply that “both governments would have to look very carefully before implementing domestic policies” (Westell 1984: 18).

13. Given the publication lag and the insensitivity of much of the academic community to current issues, it has been important to sample journals and magazines with a stronger interest in current policy issues. We have scanned a number of publications without any intention of being exhaustive. In alphabetical order they are: Alberta Report, The Business Quarterly, Canadian Business, The Canadian Business Review, Canadian Dimension, Canadian Forum, Canadian Labour, Canadian Public Policy, International Perspectives, Queen’s Quarterly, Policy Options, and The Idler.

14. McCloskey (1985: 83) has analyzed the prose of Robert Solow and others and shown that figures of speech have played a great role in “scientific” arguments.

15. For a more realistic look at the fabric of real economies, see Williamson (1985).

16. Harris (1985) has underlined the fact that the comparative advantages are not inherited from nature but made largely through institutional build-ups and structures. Even though he underlines the limitations of the classical approach to international trade,
his entry barriers approach still focuses unduly on the trade side of the economy and ignores the institutional fabric except as it generates barriers to trade.

17. The 100 million market as a necessary basis for achieving economies of scale is an argument one finds everywhere in the free-traders' prose. It was already there in the 1982 report of the Senate's Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs (Vol. III). It is repeated by Sarna (1985: 302), but also by Lipsey (1985: 225), and by a large number of participants in the free trade debate.

18. There have been many challenges to this representation of free trade as a necessary/sufficient condition to ensure efficiency and of the suggestion that efficiency is a necessary/sufficient condition for increased welfare. Some have argued that free trade is not sufficient (Harris 1985; Proulx 1986). Others have challenged the link between efficiency and welfare, claiming that other goals are more clearly correlated with the welfare of the population. The priorities may differ among those opponents to free trade—the need to preserve our independent use of policy instruments (J. Laxer), the need to design an industrial strategy (S. Smith), the need to combat unemployment and poverty (E. Kierans), cultural objectives (B. Anthony)—but they agree that efficiency considerations cannot be regarded as sufficient to lead to increased welfare.

19. Economic history provides ample evidence of both imperialism through protection and through free trade. Hirschman (1945) has shown how Nazi Germany used trade relations and protection to dominate and penetrate southeastern Europe and elsewhere. Gallagher and Robinson (1953) have shown how one of the most common political techniques of British expansion in the 19th century was "the treaty of free trade and friendship made with or imposed upon a weaker state." Therefore, one cannot necessarily associate free trade with benefits and protection with costs. Each country must design the mix of free trade and protection that suits its priorities. In the free trade debate of the last few years, this simple truth has seemingly been forgotten.

20. For a critical examination of this sort of economic sophistry conveniently putting aside the well-known principle that reducing the tariff on an input increases effective protection, see Johnson (1963).

21. This document was published in the Toronto Star on 20 Sep. 1985. Excerpts are telling: "The popular interpretation of free trade appears to be keyed to the word 'free.' It is something for nothing—a short cut—to economic prosperity. It is bigger markets for Canadian products, more jobs, more of everything. It is, as Terrence Wills of the Gazette puts it, having your cake and eating it too.... The strategy should rely less on educating the general public than on getting across the message that the trade initiative is a good idea. In other words, a selling job." Late in 1986, this document was reprinted in a book of readings attempting to collect a representative sample of the documents generated by the free trade debate (Cameron 1986). Varzeliotis (1985: 296) has described the strategy document as an invitation to "keep the people ignorant, impact upon them false impressions, prevent the opposition from exposing myths, encourage apathy and rule the society."

22. Some of the material in this section has been developed more fully in Paquet (1987b: sections 4 and 5).

23. For a simple introduction to hermeneutics and a sketch of the manner in which Jürgen Habermas has used it in a manner parallel to Freudian analysis, see Anderson et al. (1986: 76-81). We have drawn from their presentation in the next few paragraphs.

24. For a lucid analysis of the parallel between neurosis and schizophrenia in the individual and ideology and false consciousness at the social level, see Gabel (1962).

25. For a sense of what these concepts refer to see Friedmann (1979) and Kolm (1984). Any major departure from these norms would constitute a "deformation of social space" (Lachmann 1971: 83). One may regard in this context policymaking as elimination of misfits or the search for a good fit (Alexander 1971).
26. One might make the same argument about social policy or social change in general. A case in point of a fundamental change in which social scientists played little or no role is the civil rights movement in the United States (King 1968).

27. The "paradigm of social practice" is stylized as a process of intercreation between the following four subprocesses: theory of reality, political strategy, social values, social action. "These processes come to life only in the context of a concrete situation, and they are so connected that a change in any one of them will necessarily affect all others, either producing a substantive change or confirming the existing practice" (Friedmann and Abonyi 1976).

28. For those schooled in positivism, such a statement may appear rather vague and all encompassing. It should be clear, however, that the exploration of those dimensions is more apt to generate useful knowledge than the attitude that leads one to declare not answerable and, therefore, irrelevant the questions intractable with their disciplinary tools.

29. This is a policy that imposes a sort of market test on the funding of research by the federal government. The granting councils will get additional money only to match funding by the private sector. This should put the demand for social science research through a market test from which social scientists should emerge somewhat humbled. For the details of that policy, see Strengthening the Private Sector/University Research Partnership — The Matching Policy Rules (Canada 1986).
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