#### Capitalism is dehumanizing – People become nothing more than material conditions of production.

Meszaros, University of Sussex professor, **95**

(Istvan, 1995, *Beyond Capital: Toward a Theory of Transition*, pg. 527, JZ)

The raison d'ttre of such changes is not too difficult to identify. For through its radically perverted meaning, the capitalist concept of 'property' can play a vital part in legitimating the established - apriori prejudged and materially fixed, as well as legally/politically safeguarded - relations of production and the dominant mode of appropriation (and expropriation) corresponding to it, in sharp contrast to its original meaning. For: Property originally means no more than a human being's relation to his natural conditions of production as belonging to him, as his, as presupposed along with hir own being; relations to them as natural presuppositions of his self, which only form, so to speak, his extended body. He actually does not relate to his conditions of production, but rather has a double existence, both subjectively as he himself, and objectively in these natural non-organic conditions of his existence. . . . Property originally means - in its Asiatic, Slavonic, ancient classical, Germanic form - the relation of the working (producing or self-reproducing) subject to the conditions of his production or reproduction as his own. It will therefore have different forms depending on the conditions of this reproduction. Production itself aims at the reproduction of the producer within and together with these, his objective conditions of existence. The capitalist mode of social reproduction could not be more distant from this original determination of production and property. Under the rule of capital, the working subject can no longer consider the conditions of his production and reproduction as his own property. They are no longer the self-evident and socially safeguarded presuppositions of his being, nor the natural presuppositions of his self as constitutive of 'his extended body'. On the contrary, they now belong to a reified 'alien being' who confronts the producers with its own demands and subjugates them to the material imperatives of its own constitution. Thus the original relationship between the subject and object of productive activity is completely overturned, reducing the human being to the dehumanized status of a mere 'material condition of production'. 'Having' dominates 'being' in all spheres of life. At the same time, the real self of the productive agents is destroyed through the fragmentation and degradation of work while they are subjugated to the brutalizing requirements of the capitalist labour process. They are acknowledged as legitimately existing 'subjects' only as the manipulated consumers of commodities. Indeed, they become the more cynically manipulated - as the fictitious 'sovereign consumers' - the greater the pressure of the decreasing rate of utilization. Naturally, under such circumstances and determinations the productively active human beings cannot occupy their rightful place as a human beings in capital's equations, let alone can they be considered within the parameters of the capital system as the true aim of production. The commodified and reified social relationship between the productive subjects and their now independent controller - who, as a matter of materially constituted and legally enforced rights, acts as the sole proprietor of the conditions of the worker's production and self-reproduction -appear mystifying and impenetrable. Equally, the task of social reproduction and metabolic interchange with nature is fetishistically defined as the reproduction of the objectified/alienated conditions of production of which the sentient human being is no more than a strictly subordinated part, as a 'material factor of production'. And since the established productive system, under the rule of capital, cannot reproduce itself unless it can do so on an ever enlarged scale, production not only must be deemed the aim of mankind but -as a mode of production to which there cannot be any alternative -it must be premissed b the never-ending multiplication of material wealth as the aim of production.