

DISCUSSION

MARX, ENGELS AND LENIN ON JUSTICE: THE CRITIQUE OF THE GOTHA PROGRAMME

I

The Critique of the Gotha Programme is a polemic, turned against certain of Marx's opponents in the German social-democratic movement.¹ It is a vitriolic, sarcastic indictment of what Marx takes to be bad utopian political thinking on the part of the Eisenachers, the German followers of Ferdinand Lassalle. These matters are better left to the dustbin of history and I shall not be concerned with them here.

However, Marx does say things there about justice, equality and about a future communist society which are both hard to interpret and suggestive. I shall stick close to his text and see what account of these matters emerges from a close reading of it. (I shall in my characterization and explication of it, for the most part, deliberately put aside the sometimes fascinating recent interpretations of Marx on justice.)²

Early on in his *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, Marx makes some remarks which are clearly enough integral to his overall social theory and would fit as well with his revolutionary strategy, but which are plainly empirical statements which also have a moral force. Marx notes, against the Lassalleans, that "labour is not the source of all wealth" for "nature is just as much the source of use values" as is labour. (p. 3) Indeed human labour power is itself the manifestation of a natural force. Material wealth consists in the amassing of use values and they come from nature and labour. (p. 3)

Marx then remarks significantly, and thoroughly in harmony with his labour theory of value, that, if the only thing a person owns is his own labour power, then, under all conditions of society and culture, he must remain a *slave* to other men who have made themselves the owners of the material conditions of labour. In using the word 'slave' here, Marx has clearly flagged that he is making a moral judgment and indeed whether he thought of it in these terms is immaterial, for the very term 'slave', used in such a linguistic environment, clearly indicates a moral judgment is being made.

But Marx, in making that claim, is *also* making an empirical statement of fact, though in a vocabulary which is somewhat theory-laden, and that claim will not be thought to be appropriate unless some central bits of his social science are believed to be approximately correct. But the use of 'slave' does not make Marx's remarks here subjective, merely emotive or even tendentious, if his empirical social analysis is correct, anymore than the use of 'cheated' makes the following empirical statement merely emotive, subjective, or tendentious if what it asserts is true: 'He cheated her. The tickets are only two dollars and when she gave him a twenty dollar bill, he only gave her back sixteen dollars'. Sometimes the use of terms with a certain emotive and normative force are exactly the appropriate terms to use in making an empirical statement of fact that is accurate and true.³ A statement, to count as a genuine statement of fact, need not be normatively neutral.

A few pages later Marx makes another cluster of statements that are both empirical and have a plain moral force. They are, however, statements which are not brutally empirical, for they are statements which are very theory-dependent and use the vocabulary and forms of conceptualization which are integral to Marx's overall social theory. But this, again, we should not forget, is a social theory which at least sets out to be an empirical theory.

Marx reminds us that as labour develops socially and becomes more complex and requires more co-operative labour (though the division of labour in the workplace generally becomes more acute), it becomes an ever greater source of wealth and culture in the society. But, as it so develops, "poverty and neglect develop among the workers, and wealth and culture among the non-workers". (p. 5) Again we have an empirical statement which is subject to all the empirical constraints that all empirical statements are subject to; but, still, talk of poverty and neglect in such a context also makes it a moral utterance, though one which is plainly true – empirically true – if Marx's political sociology here is accurate.

Marx goes on to say that when we recognize that this has been "the law of history hitherto" and further recognize how extensively the productive forces have developed under capitalism, we will come to see that "the material conditions" in society "have at last been created which will enable and compel the workers to lift this social curse." (p. 5) Again with the use of the phrase 'social curse', we have a powerful normative phrase with clear emotive overtones; but, we also have an empirical statement making

a prediction about what will happen in the future and that statement is perfectly open to confirmation or disconfirmation. Moreover, if the conditions of poverty and neglect of the working class are as Marx says they are, if (for example) Engels' description of the conditions of working class life in Manchester are even in part accurate, and the development of the productive forces make such poverty, degradation and inhuman working conditions unnecessary, then the phrase 'social curse' is both morally appropriate and empirically apt for the characterization of the situation.

II

Marx's first remark about justice comes in his comment on the third proposition of Part One of the Gotha Program. The Eisenachers' proposition speaks of the "equitable distribution of the proceeds of labour." (p. 6) Marx asks: "What is 'equitable distribution?'" Applying both his historical-materialist methodology and the keen eye of a social scientist for the diversity of moral beliefs, Marx remarks

Do not the bourgeois assert that the present-day distribution is "equitable"? And is it not, in fact, the only "equitable" distribution on the basis of the present-day mode of production? Are economic relations regulated by legal conceptions or do not, on the contrary, legal relations arise from economic ones? Have not also the socialist sectarians the most varied notions about "equitable" distribution? (p. 6)

Marx shows his awareness that within the socialist movement itself people, including militants, have all sorts of different moral conceptions and beliefs about what is just and what is unjust. Moreover, they often have very different notions about what some philosophers would call the logical status of these claims and have, as well, varied conceptions about how, if at all, they can be validated. He also, employing his own materialist methodology, makes a claim that he makes in *Capital* as well, namely that what we would correctly judge to be just or unjust at a given time is fixed by the level of development of economic relations at that time. If at time T we judge A to be just or equitable, if we mean anything sensible at all, we must mean something contextual, namely that, with respect to the set of production relations Z , we mean that A was just or unjust. The judgment we would make about the justice of distribution of food to the aged in a primitive hunting and gathering society living under marginal life conditions – say the aborigines in the anthropological present in Tasmania – and the judgment

we would make about the justice of distribution of food to the aged in a contemporary Switzerland will not be the same, if we are informed and reasonable. We could not rightly say the same thing about both societies. But this is not at all a form of relativism but a contextualism which is perfectly compatible with a belief in moral objectivity.⁴ What it does appeal to is a recognition that material conditions and the economic organization of social life strongly condition what we can rightly say is just or unjust in a particular circumstance or even during a particular epoch in a particular society.

There is also the steadfast assertion that bases determine superstructures and not the other way around. Legal and presumably moral relations arise out of economic ones and are regulated by them. (Note here how Marx naturally sees justice-talk as a part of legal talk and not as distinctively moral.)⁵

Marx next remarks that in the Lassallean program there is a lot of loose talk about 'the equal rights of all members of society' and 'undiminished proceeds of labour'. He sees the kernel of the conceptions underlying such talk as amounting to the claim that, given the Lassallean conception of a communist society, in such a society every worker must receive the 'undiminished' proceeds of his labour. (p. 7)

Marx argues that such an 'axiom of justice', if that is the right word for it, cannot reasonably stand as it is given. The 'undiminished proceeds of labour' must become the 'diminished proceeds of labour'. (p. 8) However, it is important to recognize that, even with the 'diminished proceeds', there is an overall gain for workers here. What, because of these diminished proceeds, an individual producer is deprived of in his capacity as a private individual, he receives back in things which "benefit him directly or indirectly as a member of society". (p. 8) In talking in this context of the proceeds of labour, we are talking of the product of labour and the co-operative proceeds of labour are the total social product. Speaking of this product, before we can even reasonably begin to talk about the part of the total product to be divided up for individual consumption, we need to make the following types of deductions: we must (1) allow "for the replacement of the means of production used up", (2) "allow for expansion of production" and (3) allow for a "reserve fund to provide against misadventures, disturbances through natural events" and the like. Here we are talking about economic necessities and how we are reasonably to respond to them. "Their

magnitude”, Marx remarks, “is to be determined by available means and forces, and partly by calculation of probabilities, but they are in no way calculable by equity.” I want to note here in passing that it is not so evident that this is completely so. I could imagine at least a materially very wealthy society in which it would be a real question of equity as to whether or not to expand production. Some people, with one scheduling of needs, would want more and others with a different scheduling of needs would rather have less and do instead less work. They would not, that is, be for an expansion of production. It would be a real question of equity whether or not to continue to expand production and if so by how much.

Be that as it may, and to return to our characterization of Marx, once we have made those deductions from the total social product, we still have further deductions to make before we get to what is left from the total product that can rightly be divided into consumer items. Before we can do that, we have to allow for the general costs of administration, we have to make deductions for the meeting of social needs (what Marx calls the communal satisfaction of needs) such as schools, health services, day-care centres, parks and the like. And we must, as well, set aside from the product, funds for those unable to work, i.e. the aged, the disabled, mental defectives and the like. So we cannot sensibly and literally think of dividing up the total social product among individuals as we might divide up a pie.

Moreover, the Lassalleans, socialistic though they intend to be, still see things, Marx argues, too much in a capitalist way. In the future Communist society, we will no longer talk about or conceive of the individual getting the proceeds of his labour.

Within the co-operative society based on common ownership of the means of production, the producers do not exchange their products; just as little does the labour employed on the products appear here as the value of these products, as a material quality possessed by them, since now, in contrast to capitalist society, individual labour no longer exists in an indirect fashion but directly as a component part of the total labour. (p. 8)

What Marx, in effect, does here is to draw out some of the analytical connections of what the communist society of the future would look like in its various phases. He is not describing something which is but he is saying what in general terms, if we ever have a communist society, that society must be like.⁶ This is partly definitional but it is also partly empirical in a way analogous to a biologist’s description of what he would predict to be a likely future mutation of a given species. The biologist is telling us

that if the present environment of that species is changed in some substantial way, then that species in time will very likely come to have certain characteristics that it does not have now. Marx is saying similar things about societies only he is saying that certain societies will change in certain ways and he is giving us to understand as well – and here is the definitional part – that if, contrary to his expectations, they do not change in that way, then they would not be communist societies. Perhaps his claims also reflect, as many have thought, a distinctive moral vision, but that claim need not be invoked to make Marx's point here. We have empirical propositions here, though we also have a recognition that in such a future society of abundance we would no longer distribute according to contribution but instead according to need.

III

However, Marx, social realist that he always was, at least in his mature writings, reminds us of what have come to be called the problems of the transition.⁷ What counts as a just treatment or an equitable treatment of people in early phases in communist society would not be the same as what would count as just or equitable treatment in later phases of communist society. (The same distinction is sometimes made in different terminology in speaking of the transition from socialist society to a later communist society.)

What we need to recognize, Marx tells us, is that we must, standing where we are, start with a society emerging out of a capitalist society with all the problems and limitations that that brings:

What we have to deal with here is a communist society, not as it has developed on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, as it emerges from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it emerges. Accordingly, the individual producer receives back from society – after the deductions have been made – exactly what he gives to it. What he has given to it is his individual amount of labour.

In this early stage of communism, remuneration is determined by individual contribution. Marx remarks that intensity of labour will also be taken into consideration as well as his labour time in determining what a worker shall receive. Still, what he shall receive is principally determined in a society where every able-bodied adult is a worker, by his labour time. “The same

amount of labour which he has given to society in one form, he receives back in another.” (p. 8) (How labour contribution is to be computed is actually very complex, much more complex than Marx hints at here. How we could compute intensity, for example, is not evident.) Be that as it may, here in this early phase of communism we still have something very like exchange of commodities in capitalism. Still there is this important difference: in communism no one can give anything except his labour; “nothing can pass into ownership of individuals except individual means of consumption.” (p. 9) (This includes, of course, consumer durables like cars and houses.) But we still have, as we have in capitalism, labour exchanging at equal value. I get ten chits for ten hours work and I can take from the common stock of means whatever would be produced by ten hours of labour. “Hence”, Marx remarks, “equal right here is still in principle, *bourgeois right*, although principle and practice are no longer in conflict. . . .” (p. 9) That is, there really is an exchange of equivalents and not just in theory.

Marx now makes a remark, as reasonable as it is, which does not seem to me a remark that could be a remark of *wertfrei* (a normatively neutral) social science. He sees the moral and social relations he has just described as unavoidable, given the way, as a matter of fact, early communism must emerge out of capitalism. But he thinks, though they are unavoidable, that they are still *flawed*. “The equal right” of workers in early communism “is still stigmatised by a bourgeois limitation”. (p. 9) What he has in mind is that “the right of the producers is *proportional* to the labour they supply; the equality consists in the fact that measurement is made with an *equal standard*, labour”. (p. 9) But why, according to Marx, are such social relations flawed? We indeed will by now be living in a classless society in the straightforward and objective sense that every able-bodied adult in the society is a worker, but the individuals in the society – that is all of us – are still, in terms of the division of labour, viewed only as workers, *sic* as personifications of economic categories. That they have different needs is ignored in the distribution to them of their share of the total social product.⁸ We ignore from this perspective considerations such as that one is married and another is not, that one has more children than another, that one is ill and the other well. The measure is not in terms of need but *entirely* in terms of labour contribution measured by its duration and intensity.⁹ “Thus with an equal output, and hence an equal share in the social consumption found, one will in fact receive more than another, one will be richer than

another.” (p. 10) The maxim of justice, or at least of distribution, for early communism is ‘From each according to his labour contribution, to each according to his labour contribution.’ (Think here of problems in measuring that contribution.)¹⁰

In a statement which is both characteristic and famous Marx tells us:

These defects are inevitable in the first phase of communist society as it is when it has just emerged after prolonged birth pangs from capitalist society. Right can never be higher than the economic structure of society and the cultural development thereby determined. (p. 10)

Again there are clearly value-judgments at work here. But they are value-judgments based on his historical-social analysis and on an empirical theory about the relation of base to superstructure. If that analysis and that theory are approximately true, then Marx’s moral evaluations follow rather trivially. Only if certain moral truisms presupposed by Marx, and by almost everyone else as well, are not accepted would his moral evaluations here not be accepted if his empirical analysis is accepted. But that is true as well of ‘Duck! There’s a sniper!’.¹¹

IV

Marx next turns to a discussion of what would be just distribution and equitable treatment in “*a* higher phase of communist society. . . .”¹² (p. 10) A passage here is so famous and so crucial that I shall quote it in full:

In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of individuals under division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, has vanished; after labour, from a mere means of life, has itself become the prime necessity of life; after the reproductive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly – only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be fully left behind and society inscribe on its banners: from each according to his ability to each according to his needs! (p. 10)

Note that Marx is telling us – and this is a *wertfrei* scientific bit of the sociology of morals – that the earlier phase of communism will have a fundamental principle of justice ‘From each according to his ability to each according to his labour contribution’ and that a later phase will have a quite different fundamental principle of justice ‘From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs’ and that these different principles

of justice arise from and support and in turn are supported by different material conditions and different forms of economic organization. Given a certain development of productive forces and a consequent development of production relations, we get one principle; given another development of the productive forces and a consequent development of production relations, we get another.

Marx, however, also refers to these earlier and later phases of communist society as higher and lower phases of communism and this clearly connotes that one phase is a better state of affairs than the other. And it is evident enough that this is something which plainly Marx firmly believed. He did not think, as many bourgeois intellectuals now think, that progress is an illusion. In short, there is here a moral judgment, though it seems to me a perfectly reasonable one, on Marx's part. And again we have gone beyond *wertfrei* social science.¹³ (In his attitude toward progress Marx's conceptions are plainly at odds with those of Max Weber.)

Marx also talks, appropriately enough it seems to me, of a higher phase of communist society, escaping "the enslaving subordination of individuals under the division of labour", escaping the antithesis between mental and manual labour, where people of one class and status do one kind of job and people of another class and status do another kind of job. Work, in capitalist societies, and in the early phase of communism, will be under the realm of necessity. Much of the work will not be satisfying, will not be fulfilling. But, with the extensive development of technology, with democratic control of the workplace, with the rationale of production becoming the meeting of unmanipulated human needs, work will become increasingly less dehumanizing and less a matter of drudgery — a mere means of life — and will become instead a meaningful and indeed an important necessity of life as it is for some fortunately placed people now. With the development of the productive forces and with the greater leisure this makes possible and with the existence, for everyone, of a more extensive and more varied education and, at least the possibility of a greater variation in work, a more "all-around development of the individual" becomes possible and a greater self-realization for more and more people becomes a genuine possibility. This all, of course, requires a high degree of economic development, a state of affairs where "the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly" than they do now or in the earlier phases of communism. It is only when the productive capacity of the society is very fully developed that this state

of affairs can obtain so that “the narrow horizon of bourgeois right” can be, and will be, “fully left behind and society” will “inscribe on its banners from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs”. (p. 10)

We have in Marx’s account here some ‘moral description’ in indirect discourse that might be construed as the descriptive discourse of the sociology of morals, but there is also talk, which plainly is directly moral, e.g. talk of the “enslaving subordination of individuals”. There Marx is speaking in his own voice as a moralist – I did not say as a moral philosopher – and is not doing *wertfrei* social science. There is the judgment that one form of society is higher than another, because it is more liberating, more conducive to human self-realization and to a maximal satisfaction of human needs. (We can see here how both the self-realizationist and the utilitarian can claim him.)¹⁴ Such claims on Marx’s part do not at all justify the claim that Marx was here developing a moral philosophy or some ‘rational foundation’ for ethics, whatever exactly that means, but he does show here something of a vision of a good society and of a humanly more adequate way of distributing things.¹⁵ The earlier phase or phases of communism were an improvement in this respect over capitalism and the later phase or phases of communism are an improvement over the earlier phase or phases.

With the stress here on altered patterns of distribution and conceptions of right, albeit changes which come with changes in the mode of production, I do not see why it is not at least plausible to conclude that Marx believed, though he did not actually say this, that with a greater increase of social wealth, with the development of productive forces and with an alteration of economic relations to relations which match more adequately these developed productive forces, there will be a growth of justice in the world, though it will not always be a direct growth and it will not be without its temporary setbacks. (Still, is ‘a growth of justice’ the right way to describe this growth?) Certainly if things go in that direction a more humane society is coming into being and there is an increased human flourishing, but do we want to say that with such changes, we have a more just or a fairer society? Here Allen Wood’s argument should be borne in mind. Still, it does *not* seem to me a mistake to say that we have a fairer society, as well or a more human society. If Wood would resist and we would drop terms like ‘fairer’ or ‘juster’ would it matter very much? We still have a judgment about one society being better than another.¹⁶

Marx goes on to stress, in the paragraphs following the famous passage

cited above, that it is a “mistake to make a fuss about so called ‘distribution’ and put the principal stress on it”. (p. 10) This is almost a corollary of central theses in his labour theory of value and historical materialism. But it is still not at all to deny the moral reality of what was described above. It is rather again to put stress on how meaningful moral argument is circumscribed by determinate historical possibilities and specifically on how questions of distribution are subordinate to questions of production, since the “distribution of the means of consumption at any time is only a consequence of the distribution of the conditions of production themselves”. (p. 10) Where the “material conditions of production are the co-operative property of the workers themselves then this results in a different distribution of the means of consumption from the present one”. (p. 11) The crucial thing in defending a socialist construction of society is to stress the co-operative ownership and control of the means of production. That development of the mode of production will produce a better distributive pattern answering more readily to the interests and needs of the vast majority of the people. That is – or so at least Marx believes-automatic.

It is a mistake – in effect playing into the hands of bourgeois ideology – to consider questions of distribution as if they were independent of questions of production and to see socialism as principally an alternative system of distribution of the social product.¹⁷ The crucial question is the question of industrial democracy: the question of who owns and controls the means of production.¹⁸ It is only with that control that workers can gain autonomy and win the battle for democracy. Here we have claims which have a moral force but are still claims which have empirical truth-conditions and are part of an empirical social science.

v

Marx also makes a characteristic remark, a remark echoed in several places by Engels and again much later by Lenin, when he contrasts his position on equality with that of the Lassalleans.¹⁹ The Lassalleans (the Eisenachers) had called for establishing, by the legal means of a ‘free state’, the “removal of all social and political inequality”. (p. 14) Marx says such indefinite and loose talk should be dropped from the programmatic statement of a worker’s party and emphasis should be placed instead on class struggle and the attainment through such struggle of classlessness. Instead of talk

of “removal of all social and political inequality” and the establishment of a ‘free state’, the worker’s program should spell out to the workers that their agitation and struggle should be for a liberation from class society, and that “with the abolition of class differences all the social and political inequality arising from them would disappear of itself”.²⁰ (p. 16)

That last remark is ambiguous in various ways, but I take it that Marx means by it that the really troublesome and morally objectionable inequalities are caused by society being divided into classes and that when class society is firmly overcome these inequalities will just disappear.

Engels says, in greater detail, similar things in his *Anti-Dühring*. (It is important that we have a look at Engels here for his remarks on morality are more extensive and systematic than anything Marx ever gave. It was written in 1878 while the *Critique of the Gotha Program* was written in 1875. Thus they are of the same period.) Engels remarks there that in different places and at different times the demand for equality has meant different things.²¹ (pp. 113–4) In modern times, with the rise of the bourgeois order, it has meant most essentially that human beings, women and men, “should have equal rights in the state and in society”. (p. 114) But this is still, important as it is, a limited and inadequate kind of equality. To show this, Engels goes on to point out that when the bourgeoisie developed into a class in modern society, they brought into existence another class, the proletariat. Both classes demanded equality, but their demands were distinct. The bourgeoisie demanded an end to class *privileges* but the proletarians demanded the “abolition of the classes themselves”. (p. 117) The proletarians took the bourgeoisie at their word: “equality must not be merely apparent, must not apply merely to the sphere of the state, but must also be real, must be extended to the social and economic sphere”. (p. 117) So, as a battle cry for the proletariat, the demand is not merely for political and legal equality but for socio-economic equality as well.

In a famous passage Engels sets forth, more fully than does Marx, but in harmony with Marx’s remark cited above, the characteristic Marxist position on equality.

The demand for equality in the mouth of the proletariat has therefore a double meaning. It is either – as was especially the case at the very start, for example in the peasants’ war – the spontaneous reaction against the crying social inequalities, against the contrast of rich and poor, the feudal lords and their serfs, surfeit and starvation; as such it is the simple expression of the revolutionary instinct, and finds its justification in

that, and indeed only in that. Or, on the other hand, the proletarian demand for equality has arisen as the reaction against the bourgeois demand for equality, drawing more or less correct and more far-reaching demands from this bourgeois demand, and serving as an agitational means in order to rouse the workers against the capitalists on the basis of the capitalists' own assertions; and in this case it stands and falls with bourgeois equality itself. In both cases the real content of the proletarian demand for equality is the demand for the abolition of classes. Any demand for equality which goes beyond that, of necessity passes into absurdity. (pp. 117–118)

The most crucial thing to see here is that Engels treats the key core of the communist demand for equality to be the demand for the end of class society. Meaningful, morally supportable, demands for equality are demands, *not* for the obliteration of all human differences, something which, even if achievable (as it is not), would be morally monstrous, but for the abolition of class differences.²² The demand for equality, where sensible, is now the demand for the end to a society divided into social classes with their great inequalities of power and control in the living of one's life. In the modern era, the struggle for equality and the struggle for socialism come to the same thing. This, I think, is the most crucial thing to see in Engels' passage. If that claim of Engels had been duly noted, much strawman criticism of egalitarianism could have been avoided.

However, it is also worth noting that Engels there regards, in certain circumstances, the appeal to equality as a useful agitational weapon in the class struggle. And it is also useful to note how this appeal so functions. It is not so much a matter of designing a clearly crafted, clearly articulated principle of equality, à la Ronald Dworkin, but of drawing out the appropriate implications of the bourgeois conception.²³ The thing is, looking at things from the standpoint of workers, to make the capitalists eat their own words by making evident that in reality their own professed commitment to equality cannot be realized.²⁴ It cannot be realized because political and social inequalities cannot but exist if the economic inequalities, unavoidable in class society, exist. It is not so much that we need to unearth some deeper understanding of the equality of human beings than that articulated by the best bourgeois thinkers; rather what we principally need is a more realistic understanding of the conditions under which the achievement of this equality would be possible. (Though we do need to know that economic equality is pivotal here.)

To round out this discussion of Marx's arguments about the Lassallean claims about equality and to shed further light on what Engels is claiming,

it is useful to quote Engels' 1875 letter to August Bebel, where he discusses Marx's response to the Lassalleans about such matters. Engels' comments on the Second General principle of the Gotha Programme.

The removal of all social and political inequality is also a very questionable phrase in place of "the abolition of all class differences." Between one country and another, one province and another and even one place and another, there will always exist a certain inequality in the conditions of life, which can be reduced to a minimum but never entirely removed. Mountain dwellers will always have different conditions of life from those of people living on plains. The idea of socialist society as the realm of equality is a one-sided French idea resting upon the old 'liberty, equality, fraternity' – an idea which was justified as a stage of development in its own time and place, but which, like all the one-sided ideas of the earlier socialist schools, should now be overcome, for they only produce confusion in people's heads and more precise modes of presentation have been found.²⁵

Here we see Engels stressing that there are certain inequalities which have nothing to do with classlessness which cannot be removed and which we should not attempt to remove. At any given time some will have to live in places like Brandon or Kansas City while some live in Victoria or Portland, some will be more energetic and creative than others, some will be better looking than others. It would be the height of absurdity to have everyone undergo plastic surgery in order to produce a kind of uniform look. There are inequalities that are harmless and some that we should rejoice in because they are the cause of cultural richness and there are some that we just have to live with and try to reduce their ill effects to a minimum. Not everyone will be able to marry the person he or she wants to marry; to insist on equality here makes no sense. Rather the inequalities most persistently to be struggled against and to be overcome are the political, social and economic inequalities which stem from the existence of class society and which deeply affect, through resulting differentials in power, people's autonomy.

Engels also stresses that egalitarianism can be and has been, as it has come out of the French Enlightenment, a one-sided ideal. To try to construe equality as *the* notion of what a socialist society is about is to miss the complexity of conception that is built into the very idea of a socialist society and of a future communist society, though to say this is not to deny that there is in socialism a conception of equality of condition partly captured in the bourgeois conception of an equality of political and social rights and more fully captured in the socialist idea of classlessness. It is also important

to recognize that some such conception of an equality of condition would have to be part of a vision of the communist society of the future.²⁶

VI

For contemporary thinkers as diverse as John Rawls and Robert Nozick talk of freedom and of the role of the state in society is closely related to discussions of justice. Marx does not directly link his talk of freedom and the state to talk of justice but, there appears at least to be an implication there, for such talk does occur in Parts III and IV of his *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, just after his discussion of equality and only two sections after his discussion of justice. The thread of the argument there is continuous. Marx there derides the Lassalleans' naive talk of the 'freedom of the state' and their reliance on state action, within capitalist society, to establish workers' co-operatives and by new state loans to build a new society just as the state might instigate and support the building of a new railway. (p. 16) Marx will have nothing of what later will be labelled revisionist ideas. (p. 16) It is a mistake, Marx argues, to ignore class struggle. We must recognize its import and we must further recognise that it must be channelled in the direction of a revolutionary transformation of society. Instead the Lassalleans simple-mindedly look to the state in capitalist society to transform society into a society of producer's co-operatives. (p. 16) Class-conscious workers will not be so hoodwinked and will work instead to revolutionize the present conditions of production and this "has nothing in common with the foundation of co-operative societies with state aid". (p. 17) Such a revisionist stress, whatever the intentions of the authors, is in reality reactionary and supportive of the *status quo*, for it will, where it gains currency, deflect the worker's attention away from the necessity of militant class struggle culminating in a revolution in which they will seize the state apparatus and run the state in a transformed form in their own interests. That is the state will be run by workers for workers. We should not fail to note here *vis-à-vis* any moral assessment we might want to make about this that these interests are those of the vast majority of people. Still, until such time as the last remnants of bourgeois opposition and bourgeois consciousness have withered away, there will be the need for a coercive *workers* state. But when the last remnants of such bourgeois opposition is gone, the repressive state apparatus can be

replaced by an administrative apparatus designed to administer things in the interest of everyone alike.

This also points the way to what Marx takes freedom to be, namely “converting the state from an organ standing above society into one completely subordinate to it . . .” (p. 17) The state in bourgeois society is an instrument for the control of the vast majority of people by a few. These few men constitute a pinnacle of power of the capitalist class. It is they, sometimes in subtle and indirect ways, who control the vast majority of people. Freedom will be obtained only when that control is broken and when even the state comes to be completely subordinate to society as a whole, that is to say, subordinate to the people acting together democratically.

A preliminary partially liberating idea is to come to see through the common ideological view that the state is “an independent entity that possesses its own *intellectual, moral and free basis*”. (p. 17) Moreover, we must recognize that in the period of revolutionary transformation between capitalist and communist society when the proletarians have gained control of the state apparatus but where the economic institutions are still in a period of transition “the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat”. (p. 18)

We must be careful how we proceed here for this is one of the most misunderstood remarks of Marx and one, given the modern sense of ‘dictatorship’, that has understandably caused alarm.²⁷ Marx meant by ‘dictatorship of the proletariat’ the ‘rule by the vast majority of the people’, i.e. the workers, in the interests of the vast majority of the people, i.e. the workers. He was speaking here of mass and popular democracy. ‘The dictatorship of the proletariat’ is meant to refer to the rule of this huge class in a period of transition when it was still contending with the threat of the capitalist class, but this proletarian class rule was the rule of a class which was to put itself out of business by finally ending all class society. When the last remnants of bourgeois resistance and distinctively bourgeois thought are gone and we have a society of people who are all workers and who think of themselves as workers, then the need for rule by a class would also be gone and with that the dictatorship of the proletariat, like the state itself, would wither away. This could not be what the anarchists so feared, namely ‘Dictatorship *over* the proletariat’ for to be the dictatorship that Marx spoke of it *must* be rule *by* the proletariat itself.²⁸ What the anarchists worried about might transpire, but if it were to happen what we would have would not be a dictatorship of

the proletariat. If, contrary to Marx's expectations, a 'dictatorship *over* the proletariat' were the upshot of what started out as a socialist revolution, then the socialist revolution would have failed and we would have the transition from a capitalist society – a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie – to some distinct kind of authoritarian society, perhaps, depending on its exact form, to a fascist society or some modern form of technocracy. This might very well not be an ending of 'the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie' but a transforming of it to meet modern conditions. The transition state in the revolutionary move from capitalism to socialism, must be a dictatorship of the proletariat. But to talk of a 'dictatorship of the proletariat' is to talk of a democratic workers state. It is not to talk of the domination of the many by the few, though it is to talk of the domination by the proletariat of the bourgeois. We must remember that we still are in a state of class war.

Marx also addresses himself to questions about freedom of education, science and conscience. He points out that around these notions there is not an inconsiderable amount of bourgeois subterfuge and ideological distortion. If we want to have free education, he argues, it better not be education by the state. It is his belief that "government and church should rather be equally excluded from any influence on the school". (p. 21) The state should not be the educator of the people; the education of the people should remain in the democratic control of the people.²⁹ (p. 21)

In his attitude toward 'Freedom of Conscience', Marx's distance from liberalism can be clearly seen. He saw the talk and the preoccupation with freedom of conscience as an unfortunate diversion that, particularly in Bismarck's Germany, divided the working class along religious lines and stimulated a superficial bourgeois anti-clericalism. Marx saw the stress on "bourgeois 'freedom of conscience' " as "nothing but the toleration of all possible kinds of religious freedom of conscience". The stress in socialism should not be here but should be placed instead on liberating "the conscience from the spectre of religion". (p. 21) Here Marx was one with Ludwig Feuerbach. But this is not to say, or to give to understand, that in a transitional society, or any society, where there are Jews, Protestants and Catholics, as well as atheists, that all but the atheists should be interfered with or repressed such that religious folk should not be allowed to engage in their religious practices. There are, as Marx recognized, both practical and moral reasons for not doing that. But it is to say that a workers state, without being oppressive about these matters, will not be neutral in its approach to religion and

that it will actively promote atheism as something which is in the workers' interest. Communists will recognize, and under many circumstances stress, that religion is *generally*, in one way or another, an ideological prop for the old society. But to actively promote atheism – and indeed to use the workers state to actively promote atheism – is one thing; to suppress freedom of conscience is another. Aside from recognizing that freedom of thought and conscience is itself a good, it is also the case that such a policy is misguided (a) because under suppression religion is likely to be strengthened and (b) left to itself, where people have greater wealth, security and education, the religious impulse will gradually wither away.

What I think we can see here in Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme* is not the development of a theory of justice or even a theoretical articulation of a sociology of morals but, in the light of certain empirical-cum-theoretical social beliefs – the articulation of a political sociology, if you will – a critique of bourgeois ideology in the form of the critique of certain bourgeois conceptions of justice, equality and freedom and the substitution for them of a more adequate conception of these moral notions, freed from their distorting ideological context and resting on a more adequate empirical-cum-theoretical understanding of the world that would satisfy, for the most part, though, as we have seen, not entirely, Weber's criteria for a *wertfrei* social science.

There is no reason to think of Marx's own understanding of morality here as ideological or of his own moral judgments as being ideological.³⁰ How far Marx was from seeing them as ideological expressions can be seen from his unself-consciously moral remarks about the regulation of prison labour at the very end of his *Critique of the Gotha Programme*. He notes there, without any suggestion that this should be construed as a bit of ideology – as something which distorts our understanding of social reality, as something which is class biased or as something which is subjective – that “it *should* have been clearly stated that there is no intention from fear of competition to allow ordinary criminals *to be treated like beasts*, and especially that there is no desire to *deprive* them of their sole means of *betterment*, productive labour. This was *surely* the least one might have expected from socialists.” (p. 22, underlining mine)

VII

Robert Tucker and Allen Wood argue that it is a mistake to think of Marx

as defending some particular conception of justice (some distinctive principles of justice which provide us with an Archimedean point in virtue of which we could assess the institutions of society) or as developing even the kernel of a moral theory, though it is the case that, in accordance with his historical materialism and his conception of ideology, Marx develops a sociology of morals.³¹ This Tucker-Wood thesis, as I remarked initially, has occasioned much discussion and I shall turn to an examination of it on another occasion. Here I want to examine how Engels and Lenin took Marx's argument in his *Critique of the Gotha Programme* about what they took to be justice. They took Marx's remarks at face value as stating principles of justice, for both a transitional socialist society (a workers state in the early phases of building socialism) and as providing, as well, principles of justice for a higher phase of communist society, where the springs of social wealth flow freely. As we shall see in the next section, an economist-philosopher team, Edward and Onora Nell, interpret and assess Marx's argument understood in this very natural way Engels and Lenin took them. We shall see in the next section what their critical arguments, taking into account contemporary argument over such matters, come to. (Even *if* this is an anachronistic, mistaken reading of Marx's intent and execution, it is significant to examine it as an argument in its own right as to what could be made of those claims.)

Let us start by discussing Engels. In a series of letters, some of them written in 1875 and others written in 1891, Engels, perfectly straightforwardly, with utter seriousness and without even a touch of irony, makes moral remarks about what it is his duty to do, what people's rights are, what the right thing to do is, what the obligations of the *International* are and of the people working in solidarity with it. He speaks freely of what ought and ought not to be the case and he speaks of a "colossal moral defeat for our party" when it was "converted to the Lassallean confession of faith". (p. 39) (See Engels in *The Critique of the Gotha Programme*, pp. 29, 37, 39, 43–4.)

There can be no doubt that Engels regarded *much* moral talk as ideological twaddle, but if he had regarded all moral talk, or all moral discourse, simply in virtue of what moral discourse is, as ideological twaddle, he could hardly, without gross inconsistency and a doublemindedness between his theory and practice, have made the straightforward, everyday moral remarks he unself-consciously made above. (Remember many of these were in private letters where he was expressing his moral convictions to trusted comrades.) The contradiction is just so patent that no principle of interpretive charity would

allow us so to read Engels, if we can find a reading of him (and Marx as well), which will not commit them to such a conflict between theory and practice. And there is in fact a ready one: namely that in speaking, in doing the sociology of morals, of morality as ideology, they were making the empirical claim that very frequently, indeed almost always, morality is ideological, and indeed for very good reasons, but that notwithstanding there is nothing in the very nature of moral discourse itself which made it necessarily ideological so that anyone who ever made a moral comment, no matter how informed or how sensitive he was about the role and extent of ideology in life, must be making an ideological remark because that is what morality essentially is. Marx's and Engels' sociology of morals requires no such meta-ethical backdrop and there is no independent evidence that they made any such assumption. They repeatedly and unself-consciously made moral judgments and there is no reason not to take them for what they are: to wit moral judgments either reasonably made or not so reasonably made.³²

I shall turn next to V. I. Lenin's comments about Marx's remarks about both the first phase and a higher phase of communism and about justice and equality generally in Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme*. (Lenin, like Marx, was known to have made some very snappy remarks about moralizing and about moral talk.) There are brief remarks in Lenin's notebooks on Marxism and the state and detailed remarks, indeed much more detailed than Marx' own, in Chapter V of his *State and Revolution*.³³ I am struck here by the faithfulness of Lenin's account to that of Marx and how it perceptively draws out of Marx' account what is implicit in it and what would result from a rigorous application of the method of historical materialism to the problems Marx discusses.³⁴

Lenin here no more does moral philosophy than does Marx, though he does make remarks about what under the first phase of communist society and what under the higher phase of communist society just distributions and a morally and humanly appropriate form of equality would look like.³⁵ Yet this discussion is thoroughly meshed with a discussion of what the state of development of the productive forces is, what the historical possibilities are and the like. Like those of Marx and Engels, Lenin's moral judgments and assessments about the appropriateness of various social arrangements are always made with such considerations firmly in mind.³⁶

To start first with something very general: Lenin, as we can see from his notebooks on *Marxism on the State*, accepted, and accepted as a principle,

‘From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs’. He took it to be a principle which was to be a fundamental governing principle in *The Higher Phase of Communist Society*.³⁷ (p. 56) Here, it seems to me, Marx’s, Engels’ and Lenin’s positions are identical. Lenin stressed in his notebooks, and again in *State and Revolution*, that in the lower phase of communist society – a phase often called socialism – there would still be a form of compulsion. The Biblical ‘He who does not work, neither shall he eat’ will be one of the principles of justice rooted in a conception of fairness appropriate to that situation.³⁸ (p. 59) Indeed, Lenin follows Marx in claiming that in such a society the articles of consumption will be distributed proportionately according to “the quantity of labour contributed by each to society”. In such a circumstance, Lenin remarks, inequality of distribution will still be considerable. (p. 59) In this transitional workers society with a workers state we will be able effectively to transcend the horizons of bourgeois society, and to pass over into a higher phase of communism only (a) when “the antagonism between mental and physical labour has disappeared”, (b) when the habit of working has become the rule and is seen as meaningful and desirable and is engaged in without compulsion as a “*prime necessity of life*” and (c) when the productive forces have developed sufficiently such that we all live in a society of abundance.

Lenin develops these points in detail in *State and Revolution*. In discussing socialism or the first phase of communist society, Marx, Lenin avers, “makes a sober estimate of exactly how socialist society will have to manage its affairs”. (p. 78) He contrasts this favorably with the hazy and obscure moralizing of the Lassalleans. Marx, while remaining morally reflective, applies his materialist methodology to specific historical situations and makes “a concrete analysis of the conditions of life of a society”. (p. 78) We are speaking, recall, of a “society which has just come into the world out of the womb of capitalism and which, in every respect, bears the birthmarks of the old society . . .”. (p. 78) Still, it is already a society in which a socialist revolution has taken place. The state, in such a society, is in the hands of the workers; the military and police are made up of armed workers militias and the “means of production are no longer the private property of individuals” but “belong to the whole of society”. (p. 78) Distribution is carried out in the following way:

Every member of society, performing a certain part of socially-necessary labour, receives a certificate from society to the effect that he has done such and such an amount of work. And with this certificate, he draws from the social stock of means of consumption,

a corresponding quantity of products. After deduction of the amount of labour which goes to the public fund, every worker, therefore, receives from society as much as he has given it. (p. 78)

Marx, on Lenin's reading, thinks of this as the most just and equitable (fair) social arrangement in *that historical circumstance*, but he does not think of it as the goal of equality that communist society should aim for. It still involves a lot of inequality that, though necessary in that circumstance, is a state of affairs that it would be desirable to overcome as the social wealth comes to flow more freely as the productive forces expand. Such a world of moderate scarcity, before the springs of social wealth flow freely, will be a world in which every able-bodied adult is a worker and every person "having performed as much social labour as another, receives an equal share of the social product", after the deductions Marx's discusses are made. Yet there should be no blinking at the fact that this will still result in a kind of inequality, for people are in various ways different: their needs are not all the same, their propensities and abilities differ, they are in different situations (some are married, some are not, some have children, some do not, some live in different parts of the world in quite different circumstances). So while they receive the same certificates to draw from the social stock of means of consumption depending on whether they make the same labour contribution, this equal measure will still have the effect of making some better off than others. There will in reality, operating in accordance with 'From each according to his labour contribution', develop not inconsiderable inequalities though they will not be so severe or so unjust as the inequalities under capitalism.

Lenin's remarks here are important and reveal his willingness to make moral judgments in the course of his analysis without regarding them as bits of a distorting ideology:

Hence, the first phase of communism cannot yet produce justice and equality; differences, and unjust differences, in wealth will still exist, but the exploitation of man will have become impossible, because it will be impossible to seize the means of production, the factories, machines, land, etc., as private property. In smashing Lasalle's petty-bourgeois, confused phrases about "equality" and "justice" in general, Marx shows the course of development of communist society, which, at first, is compelled to abolish only the "injustice" of the means of production having been seized by private individuals, and which cannot at once abolish the other injustice of the distribution of articles of consumption "according to the amount of labour performed" (and not according to needs). (p. 79)

Even with the abolition of private productive property, and the ending of

the exploitation that goes with it, there will still remain unjust inequalities; that is, there will be inequalities to be overcome as long as products must still be divided according to the amount of work performed. But in the situation of moderate scarcity of early communism (socialism) – the first phase of communism – it is an unavoidable necessity. We need such incentive schedules and the husbandry of what is accumulated to attain the development of the productive forces which would make possible the abundance that would allow us to distribute according to needs. (pp. 79–80) In certain respects early communism will face problems like those of capitalism and will operate under some similar constraints. One of them is the imperative necessity to speed the development of the productive forces. In early communism our maxims of justice are almost puritanical, though not without reason, e.g. ‘He who does not work neither shall he eat’ and ‘An equal amount of labour for an equal amount of products’. We still do not, nor can we, distribute according to needs; we are not yet able to follow the rule of procedure of a higher stage of communism which, in Lenin’s words, “gives to unequal individuals, in return for an unequal (actually unequal) amount of labour, an equal amount of products”. (p. 80) (To stick with Marx, we would have to add something about ‘where these needs are the same’.)

Lenin, like Marx and Engels, insists on political realism. “. . . if we are not to indulge in utopianism, we must not think that having overthrown capitalism people will at once learn to work for society *without any standard of right*; and indeed the abolition of capitalism *does not immediately* create the economic premisses for such a change”. (p. 80) Where there are still remnants of the bourgeoisie around and where the bourgeois mentality is still very much with us, deeply affecting many of the workers, professionals and intelligentsia, there would still be a need for a worker’s state in the struggle, in the years immediately following the revolution, to achieve a socialist transformation of society. There would be a need of a proletarian state which (a) safeguarded the public ownership of the means of production, (b) safeguarded equality of labour, and (c) safeguarded equality in the distribution of products according to the principle ‘To each according to his labour contribution’.

However, as the productive forces develop and the productive relations change accordingly, and the wealth of the society is ever greater, then, moving into a higher phase of communism, our principles of justice will also alter. (p. 81) With the higher phases of communism the economy will be radically

transformed. Workers will by now be well educated people with an all-round development; the antithesis between mental and manual labour will have been broken down; the society will have achieved great social wealth, with the arts and the sciences flourishing and with the vast majority of the people in the society, in which everyone is a worker, in possession of a highly developed socialist consciousness with the motivations toward co-operativeness, solidarity, pleasure in meaningful work and commitment to work for the commonwealth that go with that consciousness.³⁹ (pp. 81–3) But the material basis for this consciousness must be laid in a less developed society by the expropriation of capitalist ownership and control of the means of production and the substitution for it of co-operative worker's control of the means of production. Capitalism, which once promoted the development of the productive forces, by now retards their development. "The expropriation of the capitalists", Lenin asserts, "will inevitably result in the enormous development of the productive forces of human society." (pp. 81–2) But he immediately adds a cautionary note, which his critics have tended to ignore, "how rapidly this development will proceed, how soon it will reach the point of breaking away from the division of labour, of removing the antithesis between mental and physical labour, of transforming labour into 'the prime necessity of life' we do not and cannot know". (pp. 81–2)

As society moves towards classlessness, the state will more and more wither away. We will, of course, have a community – a *Gemeinschaft* – and some of the administrative functions of the state will continue in the ways of organizing social life adopted by the community, but the state, viewed as Marxists do as an instrument or vehicle of control by the dominant class of other classes in the interests of the dominant class, will wither away. When the state so withers away and the society finally stands in full abundance the 'maxim of justice' for the higher phase of communist society can have application. For the first time in history, we can and should live according to the maxim: 'From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs'. (p. 82)

Lenin is talking about a society, as he puts it, in which "people have become so accustomed to observing the fundamental rules of social intercourse and when their labour is so productive that they will voluntarily work according to their ability". (p. 82) People will not worry whether or not one has worked a little longer than another or whether one gets a little more than another. Everyone will be abundantly cared for. In such a condition, if ever

we get there, there “will be . . . no need for a society to regulate the quantity of products to be distributed to each: each will take freely ‘according to his needs’ ”. (p. 82) (Is that to be beyond the circumstances of justice? But, even if it is, should this still not serve as a guide for how social life should be organized?)

Surely one can predictably expect a chorus of remarks to the effect that that is ‘pure utopianism’, ‘a morality for saints’, ‘it just isn’t the way human nature is’, ‘a nice pipe dream’, ‘secular pie in the sky by and by’ and worse.

Lenin responds to this as follows:

From the bourgeois point of view, it is easy to declare that such a social order is “a pure utopia,” and to sneer at the Socialists for promising everyone the right to receive from society, without any control of the labour of the individual citizen any quantity of truffles, automobiles, pianos, etc. Even now, most bourgeois “savants” confine themselves to sneering in this way, thereby displaying at once their ignorance and their mercenary defence of capitalism. (p. 82)

Lenin’s reaction is understandable, but it still looks like, viewed as a measured response, it fails by being badly *ad hominem*. But let us see. In saying this bourgeois response reflects ignorance, Lenin makes this important point. Socialists do not *promise* or *guarantee* “that the higher phase of communism will arrive”. (p. 82) They foresee its arrival because they foresee an ever greater productivity of labour and recognize, given the malleability of human nature, that rather different people will emerge from altered material conditions. Later Marxists would put the essential point in an even weaker way.⁴⁰ The thing is to recognize that such developments are a coherent empirical possibility and, given their evident desirability, they are worth struggling for and worth reading into one’s plans for the future development of society. Any kind of reasonable approximation of them is surely an advance over what we have now.

There is a hope about the human prospect that goes with a conception of a higher phase of communism. It is not a question of guarantees or even, I should add, a claim about what *inevitably* will come to be. Arguments about the limits of growth make such a development more problematic than it was in Marx’s time or even in Lenin’s. (Lenin was writing *State and Revolution* in 1917.) But it is also too easy and rather too convenient from the bourgeois point of view, to hold firmly to pessimistic estimates about the limits of growth. *Perhaps* a *conservative* maximum strategy is best here for social policy? But it is also about as evident as anything can be that the full effect

of that productive force that is science has not yet been utilized and that it certainly is not being utilized in a persistent and massive probe into how to use science maximally to meet human needs. It is not unreasonable to believe that with a socialist revolution that was world wide such energies would be unleashed and problems of undernourishment and deprivation plaguing the world could be met.

What is crucial to realize is Lenin's point that the Marxist is making no promises here. What he is saying is that over time the productive forces tend to develop and that with their development comes a development in the productive relations which in turn leads to an increasingly emancipatory development in non-economic social forms.⁴¹ It is not as evident as Lenin believed that they will develop as far as Marx, Engels and Lenin foresaw, such that the higher forms of communism will surely become a reality with their extensive egalitarianism (*pace* Wood), in which the varying needs of everyone are fully met.⁴² But, even if this state of affairs cannot be satisfied or even closely approximated — and that it cannot is something we do not know — it could still reasonably remain a heuristic to guide the direction of our social struggles and our conceptions of the design of a good society.

Moreover, whatever 'utopianism', if any, there is there, it is compatible with a political realism, for while 'From each according to his ability to each according to his needs' will guide our *aspirations*, we can, with Lenin, also take, without any conflict or inconsistency, the following *Realpolitik* turn which is completely compatible with those communistic aspirations:

Until the "higher" phase of communism arrives, the Socialists demand the strictest control, by society and by the state, of the measure of labour and the measure of consumption; but this control must start with the expropriation of the capitalists, with the establishment of workers' control over the capitalists, and must be carried out, not by a state of bureaucrats, but by a state of armed workers. (p. 83)

It is the bourgeois theoreticians who worry repeatedly about the distant future. Socialists have a heuristic guide here, but they center their attention on the "essential and imperative questions of present policy". (p. 83) That has to do first with toppling capitalism and then with a start on the building of socialism. (p. 83)

In the building of socialism, including the long-range goal of attaining, if possible, the higher phases of communism, it is crucial to recognize that in the earlier phases the remnants of old traditions will confront us at every step. We must also see things clearly in the light of developmental stages. The

struggle for bourgeois democracy is a struggle for equal civil rights, equal political and legal rights, and the attainment of them in the bourgeois era was a great step forward from the feudal and pre-capitalist era, where they were not generally recognized. But this, as valuable as it is, is still only a formal equality and it does not bring equality in the economic sphere which is the most crucial sphere in our control of our lives and in our ability to attain and sustain our autonomy as human beings. (p. 85)

Lenin follows Engels and Marx in claiming that the proletarian demand for equality is more extensive than the bourgeois demand: besides demanding such formal equalities, its essential and crucial demand for equality is a demand for the abolition of classes. As long as we live in class society we have not attained equality no matter how extensive or how secure our civil liberties. Even common ownership of the means of production – something we will gain in the first phases of socialism – will still only give us formal equality; we will attain real equality only when we attain a higher phase of communism. As Lenin puts it:

As soon as equality is obtained for all members of society in relation to the ownership of the means of production, that is, equality of labour and equality of wages, humanity will inevitably be confronted with the question of going beyond formal equality to real equality, i.e. to applying the rule, “from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs”. (p. 85)

Again Lenin inserts a note of political realism. He adds by “what stages, by what practical measures humanity will proceed to this higher aim – we do not and cannot know.” (p. 85) What is important is to make clear that such a *possibility* is indeed a real possibility: it is, that is, something which is on our historical agenda. Among a number of possible scenarios, it represents one coherent empirical possibility. Bourgeois cultural pessimism to the contrary notwithstanding (a pessimism which is very useful ideologically to capitalism), such a possibility is not an unreasonable one.⁴³

With the development of capitalism in an ever more corporate and perhaps a more monopolistic direction, we get an even more complex and co-operative workforce, requiring greater and greater utilization of technology and an ever greater education of the proletariat. We have more and more people who are not capitalists who are capable of running society economically and politically. The capitalist is becoming increasingly superfluous (p. 85). We increasingly have the possibility that it could be the case that all citizens could readily be “transformed into the salaried employees of the state, which

consists of the armed workers”. (p. 86) (There are unfortunate connotations to this remark of Lenin only if we forget that the state is to be democratically and collectively run by the workers.)

Such groups can run the state and can continue, indeed can accelerate, the development of the forces of production. (p. 86) In such a situation it is possible to develop a set of economic and social relations where every able-bodied adult does roughly the same amount of work – each doing his proper share of work – and where each gets paid equally. (p. 86) There will, in such a circumstance, be nowhere else for the capitalist or intellectual gentry with capitalist habits to go, for “the whole of society will have become a single office and a single factory with equality of labour and equality of pay”. (p. 87) (Why must things be so centralized? Why, under socialism, could there not be more decentralization?) Still this ‘factory discipline’ is exclusively a matter of the transition.

But this “factory” discipline, which the proletariat will extend to the whole of society after the defeat of the capitalists and the overthrow of the exploiters, is by no means our ideal, or our ultimate goal. It is but a necessary step for the purpose of thoroughly purging society of all the hideousness and foulness of capitalist exploitation, and for further progress. (p. 87)

Again we see Lenin, as Marx and Engels often are, quite willing to make moral judgments and not at all concerned at this point to keep his social theory *wertfrei* or to engage in value elimination.⁴⁴ Yet his moral judgments are still rooted in a *wertfrei* conception of how society functions and develops, and how human beings will act under different conditions.

However, with the vast majority of the members of the society having learned to administer the state themselves and having routed finally the capitalists and their allies and resocialized workers addicted to bourgeois habits – all things that could reasonably transpire – the state becomes less and less necessary and in that historical context the state will begin to wither away. (p. 87)

VIII

I have described Marx’s essential views in *The Critique of the Gotha Programme* about equality and justice or, if ‘equality’ and ‘justice’ are the wrong words here, his rationale, in different modes of production, for distributing in one way rather than another and for treating people in one way rather than

another. We have also seen how the reading of Marx's view here, which seems to me the least strained, is also the reading that Engels and Lenin give to it. Assuming now that this is Marx's view about justice, I want to see how justified it is, how well it stands up to competitors and whether it is or is not a radically incomplete view which in an important way needs supplementation.

Consider the following three principles (putative principles) of social justice:

- (1) From each according to his choice, given his assets, to each according to his contribution. (*The Capitalist Principle*)
- (2) From each according to his ability, to each according to his contribution. (*The lower Phase of Communism Principle*)
- (3) From each according to his ability, to each according to his need. (*The higher phase of Communism Principle*)

Edward and Onora Nell point out in their 'On Justice Under Socialism' that Principles (1) and (2) have advantages over Principle (3) in that, as principles resting on contribution, rather than on need, they, in a way Principle (3) does not, or at least does not as obviously, provide both "a general principle of distribution and indicate the pattern of incentives to which workers will respond".⁴⁵ Principle (1), whatever other objections we may reasonably have to it, can, on a reasonable reading, provide us with a principle of distribution which can have a general application: "it covers the distribution of earned and unearned income, and it applies in situations both of scarcity and abundance".⁴⁶ It appears, by contrast, that (3), the principle (putative principle) of justice for a higher phase of communism, however noble the sentiment it expresses, is quite unworkable. It simply will not do the job a principle of justice is designed to do. The Nells point out that even if all people conscientiously contribute according to their abilities, we still have no guarantees that *all* needs can be met, but a principle of distributive justice that does not tell us how to distribute when all needs *cannot* be met is, to put it conservatively, seriously incomplete and defective. It simply leaves us without guidance in the typical circumstances of justice, namely in conditions of moderate scarcity. And, if there were ever to be a situation where there is scarcity, and everyone could just take what they need, then we could be in situations where we have no need for a principle of justice. The principle — as a principle of justice — is also defective because in circumstances where all contribute according to their abilities there may, in a society of considerable

wealth, be a material surplus, even after all needs are met, but Principle (3) does not tell us how to distribute in such a circumstance and this again shows that it is an incomplete and inadequate principle of justice. Finally, it should also be noted that Principle (3) provides no adequate *incentive* structure for people to act, i.e. to contribute, according to their abilities. No reason, or at least no sufficiently stable motivating reason, is given in Principle (3) to motivate workers to contribute according to their abilities. But this makes Principle (3) defective as a principle which will guide action in society. But this is precisely what we expect of a principle of justice.

In reflection on Principle (3) “we seem to have reached the paradoxical conclusion that the principle of distribution requiring that worker’s needs be met is of no use in situations of need, since it does not assign priorities among needs”⁴⁷ It is further argued, by some critics of Marx, that “a principle demanding that each contribute accordingly to his ability is unable to explain what incentives will lead him to do so”.⁴⁸ Unfortunately, the principle will not give us a principle of allocation of benefits and burdens that will cover not only situations of sufficiency but situations of scarcity and abundance as well.⁴⁹ What is probably the most crucial defect here is that there are many situations, including situations of relative abundance, where the aggregate social product is such that all needs cannot be met. The principle of justice for the higher phase of communism will not tell us how to distribute in such a circumstance, but it is, perhaps most paradigmatically, for just these very circumstances that we need a principle of justice. As David Hume or John Rawls might very well say of the Communist Principle (Principle 3), it only is applicable in those circumstances where we are beyond the circumstances of justice. It is an important moral principle but it is not, and cannot be, a principle of justice.

The Nells’ attempt to respond to such criticisms of Marx, partly by way of concessions and partly by way of arguing that when we are clear about the kind of society and the kind of human beings for which Marx’s principle for a more advanced phase of communist society was designed, and when we supplement that principle in perfectly plausible ways, we will come to see that it is the appropriate principle of justice for such a society.⁵⁰ And recall that Rawls also believes that his own two principles of justice only hold under conditions of moderate scarcity.

The first thing we need to see is that the society Marx was talking about, where what I shall henceforth call The Communist Principle, i.e. Principle (3),

applies, would be a society of considerable wealth and abundance and a society in which much of our work was no longer alienated labour but a humanly fulfilling activity.⁵¹ The needs that the principle is to fulfill would not be merely subsistence needs but the various social needs as well, some of which would be felt, indeed called into existence, only after our active powers began to be developed and we became increasingly well-rounded human beings. It would be a situation in which there would be a far greater degree of human flourishing than there is at present.

One of these needs that would increasingly come into prominence, and would be felt more acutely and self-consciously, is the need to have meaningful and satisfying work. Marx speaks in the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* of labour in a higher phase of communist society as being “no longer merely a means of life but” as something that becomes “life’s principal need”. This has led to quips that Marx’s vision of a good society under conditions of abundance was that of a gigantic workhouse filled with compulsive workers trying to fill ever higher quotas. But this parody ignores what Marx says about alienated work under capitalism, what he says about the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom, and takes a remarkably superficial view of what work is and can be. It also narrowly limits our view of things to bourgeois conditions and conditions very like bourgeois conditions in the early years of the transition.

Much work is now pure drudgery and not even remotely engaged in for its own sake. If it were not for the fact that so many must engage in it under our thoroughly alienating conditions, the very idea of it being engaged in for its own sake would be laughable. Life on the assembly line, at a checkout counter, directing traffic or checking gas meters is surely not one of life’s principal needs. We should avoid a romantic, university professor’s view of work: a view in which he draws too much on his own atypical experience. Much work in our societies is just a means to an end and would, barring whipping people on the job, only be done for compensation. It is done in short, solely, or almost solely, so that the person who does the work can get things he wants, needs or at least thinks he needs. It is not in itself, or only marginally, a meaningful activity.

Marx believed, as is well-known, and it is something the Nells believe as well, that much of the work in a future communist society could and would become meaningful. The alienating nature of work under capitalism was in large measure a result of capitalism’s distinctive socio-economic structure, a

structure that would be radically altered in communist society. The Nells put Marx's key points about alienated labour from his *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (1844) very succinctly: "Under capitalism labourers experienced a three fold alienation from the *product* of their labour, which is for them merely a means to material reward; alienation from the process of labour, which is experienced as forced labour rather than as desirable activity; and alienation from *others*, since activities undertaken with these are undertaken as a means to achieving further ends, which are normally scarce and allocated competitively."⁵² But in the higher phases of communist society, where the underlying rationale of production will not be capital accumulation and profit-making, but the fullest possible satisfaction of the needs of everyone, work will not have those features. Work will be co-operatively done and the product of this labour will be under the democratic and collective ownership and control of the workers themselves. Work, under those circumstances, will be very different, since what is done, who does it, what life chances people have to do different things, what schedules of work exist and what is done with what is produced, where the vital interests of more than a given individual is involved, will be decided collectively by the workers themselves in a democratic fashion. This being so, labour will not, or at least not so extensively, be experienced as forced labour. Moreover, as it will be done co-operatively for commonly agreed on ends, and at roughly equal pay; workers will not in their work be alienated from each other.

However, the crucial thing is to see that work — or rather some work — need not be the curse of Adam but can be immensely rewarding and satisfying. It is so now for some intellectuals, craftsmen, farmers and professionals in capitalist societies and much more of it, for a more varied group of people, can become meaningful and highly satisfying — something that is one of life's prime needs — as societies grow wealthier and change their production rationale to production directed to meeting as fully as possible all human needs. We must remember that needs in certain ways will expand as this process becomes more and more a reality. But recall that under such an organization of society workers are making collective, democratically structured and informed decisions on what to produce, how much, in what way and how it is to be distributed. The work that we engage in in such a circumstance will have a point; senseless work will not be engaged in and work will become more and more challenging and interesting and more and more it will be something that requires the worker's thought and deliberative decisions.

(Rawls' Aristotelian principle will come more and more into play.) There will be more and more occasions for the exercising of talents, for taking responsibilities that result in beautiful or useful objects. Moreover, it is increasingly true that more and more people will work at what they want to work at and, in doing that, they will do something which is more and more something they genuinely need. All of this plainly contributes toward making work more meaningful. For such work in such a society it is clear that there is no problem of incentives. People, generally speaking, will work willingly and happily at the level of their abilities.

Many feel that such talk about unalienating labour under the higher phases of communism fails to face a very plain and very crucial problem: to wit that not *all* work can be need-fulfilling and satisfying even in such a communist society with its high level of technology. Moreover, we cannot live by works of art and scientific achievements alone. Some work of drudgery, work which cannot but be unappealing, simply must be done. The Communist Principle of Justice provides no incentive for doing it.

It is an empirical problem just how extensive that work would be. And it is plain enough that under abundance and high technology and with an extensively educated population and with workers' control of society it would be much less than it is now. But, unless it is just a failure of our imaginations, it still seems likely that there would continue to be quite a lot of it. (Think concretely of all the various jobs that have to be done in a complex civilization.) It seems likely that there will be "certain essential tasks, in such a society whose performance is not need-fulfilling for anybody".⁵³ The amount of this will be diminished as technology and social consciousness develop, but some of it, it seems very reasonable to believe, will remain. But with the Communist Principle of Justice in force what will be the motivation for doing these tasks when reward is severed from contribution?

What is correct to say – and the Nells say it – is that given an equitable allocation of the burdens of these necessary but non-need-fulfilling jobs, no one would be prevented from having work such that most of his work could be need-fulfilling. No one would have to be a full-time dishwasher. But we are still without an incentive for doing the dirty, boring but necessary work that even such a technologically advanced, worker-controlled society could not dispense with. And it is not clear on what principle or by what criteria we decide what is an equitable allocation of the necessary but non-need-fulfilling work.

The Nells maintain that we need to make planning decisions here. But on what basis, by what principle? We need to engage in these activities to meet subsistence needs, to make possible the fulfilling of many other needs including needs that people would have, and would continue to have, in a society which was both a society of abundance and a society without classes. But in a communist society we would seek to reduce non-need-fulfilling work as much as is compatible with meeting these conditions. (People may differ here and in trying to ascertain what is equitable there *may* be some difficult trade-offs.) Where such work does not meet those conditions we do not engage in it. Moreover, there would be a general awareness that for everyone to be able to do what he finds need-fulfilling these tasks must be done. The doing of them, when they are allocated equitably by collectively agreed on principles and procedures, would very likely be less onerous than they are now or would otherwise be. It is not implausible to believe that people in such circumstances would willingly take up such work once they realized that it was for the common good and was being fairly allocated.

It is also crucial to realize that this would be in a society toward which people would reasonably feel some considerable loyalty, for it would be a society which had ended class structures and exploitation and a society whose productive energies were directed to meeting the needs of everyone alike as fully as possible. A sense of social solidarity and community would develop. And in such a society, with its extensive reciprocity, people's willingness to work would be greater. At least this is not an unreasonable Pascalian wager to make about people.

Rational people would also realize that the opportunities for everyone to do creative need-fulfilling work would be enhanced by their doing efficiently the necessary work of drudgery so there would be a motivation to work at those tasks effectively. We would indeed, even in doing these things, acquire some skills we would not want for their own sakes but which are necessary for the carrying out, in an efficient way these burdensome tasks. After all, to will the end is to will the necessary means to the end. Where "the members of society take part in planning to maintain and expand the opportunities for everyone's non-alienated activity, they must understand the necessity of allocating the onerous tasks, and so the training for them."⁵⁴

The problem of motivation to work under an advanced communist society should also be seen in historical and economic terms. The Nells put the matter thus:

The link between work and rewards serves a historical purpose, namely to encourage the development of the productive forces. But as the productive forces continue to develop, the demand for additional rewards will tend to decline, while the difficulty of stimulating still further growth in productivity may increase. This at least, seems to be implied by the principles of conventional economics – diminishing marginal utility and diminishing marginal productivity. Even if one rejects most of the conventional wisdom of economics, a good case can be made for the diminishing efficacy of material incentives as prosperity increases. For as labor productivity rises, private consumption needs will be met, and the most urgent needs remaining will be those requiring collective consumption – and, indeed some of these needs will be generated by the process of growth and technical progress. These last needs, if left unmet, may hinder further attempts to raise the productive power of labor. So the system of material incentives could in principle come to a point where the weakened encouragements to extra productivity offered as private reward for contribution might be offset by the accumulated hindrances generated by the failures to meet collective needs and by the waste involved in competition. At this point, it becomes appropriate to break the link between work and reward.⁵⁵

However, it is not enough for such a developed society simply to break the link between work and reward, but, for a significant domain of work, it is also necessary to show that work is its own reward – that it is intrinsically valuable as well as extrinsically valuable. But this is what, under the proper circumstances, much work can and should be. The short of it is that “Because man needs fulfilling activity – work that he chooses and wants – men who get it contribute according to their ability.”⁵⁶ Yet, no matter how we cut it, there will remain, as we have noted, the routine, menial, unfulfilling but still necessary jobs. Such a society will be committed to mechanizing and automating as many as they possibly can of these jobs.⁵⁷ In such a society, the operative slogan for such work should be ‘Machines to replace people’. But those tasks of drudgery that remain – those which are really necessary and for which the society, for the time being at least, can find no replacement – the society will rationally plan for, and in this planning, allocate them in as fair and as non-burdensome a way as possible. Fair here comes, most centrally, to the counting of each person’s interests equally.

Since such a society is committed to the greatest equal satisfaction of need for every person in that society, it will allocate these burdens in a way such that the doing of them will become no one’s full-time job such that no one will be kept by these burdens from having as his principal work, work that is need-fulfilling. Besides a demand for equality, that is, as Engels put it, a demand for the abolition of classes, there will also be a demand for an equal sharing of the burdens of these tasks. Where possible and feasible – and subject to the usual qualifications of age and health and the like – these

burdens will be distributed equally among all the members of the society. Here a primitive conception of fairness is at work – a sense of fairness which is deeply embedded in our thinking and which animates Rawls' work and Dworkin's work – which is distinct from the Communist Principle but which is also in its spirit. The conviction about fairness is what pushes us to want to start at least from a baseline of equal (the same) benefits and burdens for us all. We need reasons (reasons we will frequently have) for departing from it. It is here, and in our recognition that we must start from an equal consideration of the interests of everyone, where our primitive sense of justice – a very basic considered conviction – tells us we should start. This is just a very basic conviction of ours about what is fair and there is perhaps no getting back of it and showing that it is something to which 'pure practical reason' commits us.⁵⁸

Yet, whatever we want to say about the above, it remains true that the Communist Principle does not tell us how to distribute in conditions of scarcity, how to distribute the surplus product in situations of great abundance, when all needs are met, and how to distribute in classless societies of great abundance where it still is not the case that all needs can be met or all interests answered to.

As Marx makes perfectly evident, the Communist Principle was not meant to be used in conditions of scarcity but only in conditions of extensive abundance. In a socialist or early phase communist society, where some scarcity obtains, one reasons, Marx claims (as we have seen), according to the maxim 'From each according to his ability to each according to his labour contribution'. Need can only come in a wealthier more fully socialized society.

For someone who accepted the Communist Principle as such a guiding ideal, and accepted Marx's analysis, he could and, I believe, should, accept the principles of justice – the principles of distribution – of some form of what I have called radical egalitarianism.⁵⁹ The underlying rationale for them is that, in conditions of abundance, we should aim to distribute the benefits and burdens of our societies roughly equally, so that the needs and interests of each individual can be maximally satisfied. Each person is to have as many as possible of his needs satisfied and to have them as fully as possible satisfied, subject only to the limitation that everyone else be, in that respect, treated exactly alike. Where we cannot satisfy a given need of both Peter and Paul, we should try to ascertain whose need is the greater and then satisfy that or failing that we should choose by a fair roll of the dice. It is not that people

who come out on the losing end here are being sacrificed – treated as means only – for in deciding what to do, Peter’s and Paul’s needs get equal consideration; but, if their needs are actually inspected – each one’s needs counting equally – and it is also clear that they both cannot be satisfied, then, whichever need is the greater or the more urgent, that need is the need to be met. That it is Peter’s need or Paul’s is never relevant.

The Communist Principle should be supplemented by some such radical egalitarian principle, or set of principles, but it *may* be that the Communist Principle itself should not be regarded as a principle of justice. It is true that it does not tell us how to distribute when the needs of different people conflict and they cannot all be satisfied, but, it is also true that with its stress on from *each* according to his ability to *each* according to his needs, it is stressing that *every single person* should (where possible) have a certain sort of equal treatment and should, *ceteris paribus*, equally shoulder certain responsibilities. This tells us, as against, for example, *purely* maximizing doctrines, to aim at giving *everyone* the fullest possible need satisfaction, compatible with a like need satisfaction for all, and to expect of everyone the fullest contribution to his society that he can reasonably make. This is a deep underlying ideal of how to aim at distributing things in the world and captures our underlying ideal of what is through and through fair and thus just.

NOTES

¹ Karl Marx, *Kritik des Gothaer Programmes*, *Karl Marx–Friedrich Engels Werke* Band 19, Berlin, Dietz Verlag 1962, pp. 15–32. Citations are given in the text and are to the English translation, Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, edited by C. P. Dutt, New York, International Publishers 1938. The original was published in 1875.

² The Tucker-Wood thesis is articulated, developed and assessed in the following places: Robert Tucker, *The Marxian Revolutionary Idea*, New York, NY, Norton 1969, Chapter 2 and Robert Tucker, *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx*, Cambridge, England, Cambridge University Press 1961, pp. 11–27; Allen W. Wood, ‘The Marxian Critique of Justice’, *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 1 (1972–3); Allen W. Wood, ‘Marx on Right and Justice’, vol. 8 *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, (1978–9); Allen W. Wood, ‘Marx and Equality’ in *Issues in Marxist Philosophy IV*; John Mepham and David-Hillel Ruben (eds.), Sussex, England; Harvester Press 1981, pp. 195–221; and Allen W. Wood, *Karl Marx*, London, England, Routledge and Kegan Paul 1981, Chapters IX and X. For criticisms of the Tucker-Wood thesis see Nancy Holmstrom, ‘Exploitation’, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 7 (1977); Gary Young, ‘Justice and Capitalist Production: Marx and Bourgeois Ideology’, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 8 (1978); Ziyad I. Husami, ‘Marx on Distributive Justice’, *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 8 (1978–9); George C. Brenkert,

'Freedom and Private Property in Marx', *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 8 (1979); Derek Allen, 'Marx and Engels on the Distributive Justice of Capitalism' in Kai Nielsen and Steven C. Patten (eds.), *Marx and Morality*, Guelph, ON, Canadian Association for Publishing in Philosophy 1981; Gary Young, 'Doing Marx Justice' in *Marx and Morality*; and G. A. Cohen, 'Review of Allen Wood's *Karl Marx*' in *Mind* (1982).

³ How this is so is nicely explicated and defended by Andrew Collier, 'Scientific Socialism and the Question of Socialist Values' in *Marx and Morality*. I have discussed and developed this view in my 'Coming to Grips with Marxist Anti-Moralism' (forthcoming).

⁴ William Shaw, 'Marxism and Moral Objectivity' in *Marx and Morality*; Kai Nielsen, 'If Historical Materialism is True Does Morality Totter?', *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* (forthcoming); and Kai Nielsen, 'Historical Materialism, Ideology and Ethics', *Studies in Soviet Thought* (1984).

⁵ Allen Wood, 'The Marxian Critique of Justice', *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 1 (2) (Spring 1972).

⁶ This in spite of what he said about not producing recipes for the cookshops of the future. Presumably, what is vital here is the level of generality.

⁷ I say this in the face of what some of his detractors have said about his utopianism.

⁸ Stanley Moore appropriately raises the question of whether this need be so in socialist societies. Stanley Moore, *Marx on the Choice Between Socialism and Communism*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press 1980.

⁹ Why need it in these early phases of communism (what later came to be called the socialist phase) be *entirely* according to labour contribution where there is illness, a large number of children and the like? Why would there not be 'corrections' similar to the corrections we get in welfare-state capitalism? To say that there could and should surely means to be in the spirit of communism.

¹⁰ Jon Elster, 'Exploitation, Freedom and Justice' in *Marxism, Nomos XXVI*; J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman (eds.), New York, NY, New York University Press 1983, pp. 277–364; and Edward and Onora Nell, 'On Justice Under Socialism', *Ethics in Perspective*, Karsten Struhl and Paula Rothenberg Struhl (eds.), New York, NY, Random House 1975, pp. 436–446.

¹¹ For the underlying conceptual rationale for this see Collier *op. cit.*

¹² Unlike Lenin, he does not speak of *the* higher phase of communist society. I owe this point to R. X. Ware.

¹³ Collier with his thesis of value elimination in the social sciences, something he takes to be Marx's actual practice, brings out an important theoretical underpinning of this. Collier, *op. cit.* See also Russell Keat, *The Politics of Social Theory*, Oxford, England, Basil Blackwell Ltd. 1981 and my 'Coming to Grips with Marxist Anti-Moralism'.

¹⁴ Hilliard Aronovitch, 'Marxian Morality', *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* X (3) (September 1980), pp. 357–376; Derek Allen 'Does Marx Have an Ethic of Self-Realization?', Reply to Aronovitch', pp. 377–386; Hilliard Aronovitch, 'More on Marxian Morality: Reply to Professor Allen', pp. 387–393, both in the same volume as Aronovitch's 'Marxian Morality'.

¹⁵ For an accurate and detailed picture of Marx's conception of a good society see Bertell Ollman, 'Marx's Vision of Communism: A Reconstruction' in Seweryn Bialer and Sophia Sluzan (eds.), *Radical Visions of the Future*, Boulder, CO, West View Press 1977. Note how this is combined in Ollman's work with a form of Marxist anti-moralism. See Ollman, *Alienation*, second edition, Cambridge, England, Cambridge University

Press 1976, Chapter 4. See also Istvan Meszaros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation*, London, England, Merlin Press 1970, pp. 162–194.

¹⁶ Allen Wood, *Karl Marx*, pp. 141–156. See here, for the kind of questioning I think should be made of this thesis, G. A. Cohen's review of Wood's *Karl Marx* in *Mind* (1982); Gary Young, 'Doing Marx Justice', *Marx and Morality*, pp. 251–268. For how far a Marxist anti-moralist could go with making judgments about one society being better than another see David S. Levin, 'The Moral Relativism of Marxism', *The Philosophical Forum* XV (3) (Spring 1984), pp. 249–279. For a carefully structured and nuanced account which argues that Marx has an implicit theory of justice, see John Elster, *op. cit.*, pp. 290–291. "Marx", Elster remarks, "may have thought he had no theory of justice, but his actual analyses only make sense if we impute such a theory to him," p. 290.

¹⁷ Elster, *op. cit.*

¹⁸ Joshua Cohen and Joel Rogers, *On Democracy*, Middlesex, England, Penguin Books 1983; Samuel Bowles *et al.*, *Beyond the Waste Land*, Garden City, NY, Anchor Books 1984; Herbert Gintis, 'Communication and Politics: Marxism and the "Problem" of Liberal Democracy', *Socialist Review* 10 (2/3) (March–June 1980), pp. 289–232; Andrew Levine, *Liberal Democracy*, New York, NY, Columbia University Press 1981; and Andrew Levine, *Arguing for Socialism*, London, England, Routledge and Kegan Paul 1984.

¹⁹ In this section my account stands in sharp contrast with Allen Wood's account of Marx here and Engels' as well. See, most particularly, his 'Marx and Equality'. I shall in the future produce a critical discussion of Wood's account.

²⁰ Not all contemporary Marxists have followed Marx and Engels here. See Mihailo Markovic, *The Contemporary Marx*, Nottingham, England, Spokesman Books 1974, Chapter 7; and Kai Nielsen *Equality and Liberty*, Totowa, NJ, Rowman and Allanheld 1985, pp. 57–60.

²¹ Friedrich Engels, *Herrn Eugen Dührings Umwälzung der Wissenschaft (Anti-Dühring)*, *Karl Marx–Friedrich Engels Werke*, Band 20 Berlin, Dietz Verlag 1972, pp. 5–303. English translation by Emile Burns, New York, NY, International Publishers 1939. Citations will be made from the English translation and the citations will be given in the text. On Engels see Kai Nielsen, 'Engels on Morality and Moral Theorizing', *Studies in Soviet Thought* 26 (1983); George G. Brenkert, 'Marx, Engels and the Relativity of Morals', *Studies in Soviet Thought* 17 (1977), pp. 201–224. See Terrell Carver, 'Marx, Engels and Dialectics', *Political Studies* XXVIII (1980), pp. 353–363. See also his *Engels*, New York, NY, Hill and Wong 1981.

²² Kai Nielsen, 'Formulating Egalitarianism, Animadversions on Berlin', *Philosophia* 13 (3–4) (October 1983), pp. 299–315.

²³ Ronald Dworkin reveals something of the complexities in his 'What is Equality', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, (Summer 1981 and Fall 1981) and in his 'In Defense of Equality', *Social Philosophy and Policy*, 1 (1) (Autumn 1983).

²⁴ I attempt to do just that in my *Equality and Liberty: A Defense of Radical Egalitarianism*.

²⁵ See Frederick Engels' correspondence concerning the Gotha Programme (1875) as an appendix to Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, New York, NY, International Publishers 1938, pp. 31–2.

²⁶ I have argued for that in my *Equality and Liberty* and I have also argued there that the idea of classlessness does not completely capture it (pp. 57–60).

²⁷ C. B. Macpherson has shown that if we have an adequate historical understanding of its import that it should be no cause for alarm or for a belief that Marx was defending or acquiescing in what we would now call totalitarianism or even in an authoritarian state. C. B. Macpherson, *The Real World of Democracy*, Oxford, England, Clarendon Press 1966.

²⁸ Michael Bakunin, 'Statism and Anarchy' and 'God and the State' both reprinted in Sam Dalgoff (ed.) *Bakunin on Anarchy*, London, England, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1973, pp. 323–350 and 225–242. For an authoritative discussion of the relation of anarchism to Marxism see Paul Thomas, *Karl Marx and the Anarchists*, London, England, Routledge and Kegan Paul 1980.

²⁹ It would be important to try to think through what this would come to.

³⁰ I have argued for the claim that Marx and Marxists are not at all committed to the claim that moral utterances of their very nature or because of something about moral epistemology *must* be ideological. There is nothing about their logical status or semantical structure that requires that, though they do very pervasively have an ideological function in class societies. But this does not mean that this is the only function they can have such that all moral judgments, including those of Marx and Engels themselves, must be ideological. Cf. Kai Nielsen 'Marx and Moral Ideology', (forthcoming), 'Historical Materialism and Ethics', *Laval Review of Philosophy of Theology* (forthcoming), 'Marxism and Relativity in Ethics', *Philosophical Inquiry* VI (3/4) (1984), pp. 202–225.

³¹ See the references in the second note. See also Alan Gilbert, 'An Ambiguity in Marx's and Engels' Account of Justice and Equality', *The American Political Science Review* 76 (June 1982).

³² For an extensive elaboration and defense of this see the essays cited in note 30.

³³ The references I am using are to the English translations of these works by Lenin given in appendices to the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, New York, NY, International Publishers 1938, pp. 47–88. Page references will be given in the text.

³⁴ For a contrasting view see Stanley Moore, *op. cit.*

³⁵ Unlike Marx, who, as we have seen, speaks of a higher phase, Lenin speaks of *the* higher phase of communism. Lenin, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

³⁶ Collier, *op. cit.*

³⁷ Elster's emendation is an important qualification here. Elster, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

³⁸ This remark, if it is to be taken seriously, must be taken as a hyperbole. After all we can hardly let infants, children, the disabled and the aged starve. Still, assuming a plausible reading, the moral of the maxim remains intact.

³⁹ It is here where the charge of utopianism is often made. Is it bourgeois cynicism to persist in seeing utopianism here? Is to see these things as *possibilities* to depart from any ability to look at the world without evasion? Cf. Isaac Deutscher, 'On Socialist Man', *Marxism in Our time*, San Francisco, CA, Ramparts Press 1971.

⁴⁰ Bertell Ollman, 'Marx's Vision of Communism: A Reconstruction', in *Radical Vision of the Future*, Seweryn Bialer and Sophia Sluzer (eds.), Boulder, CO, Westview Press, 1977.

⁴¹ For the theory behind this see G. A. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defence*, Oxford, England, Clarendon Press 1978; William H. Shaw, *Marx's Theory of History*, Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press 1976; Allen W. Wood, *Karl Marx*, pp. 61–122; and Kai Nielsen, 'On Taking Historical Materialism Seriously', *Dialogue* XXII (1983), pp. 319–338.

⁴² Charles Taylor points to some of the problems here in his 'The Politics of the Steady State', *New Universities Quarterly* 32 (1978).

⁴³ For a particularly probing form of that pessimism see Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, Notre Dame, IN, University of Notre Dame Press 1981. See for a response, see my 'Cultural Pessimism and the Setting Aside of Marxism', *Analyse & Kritik*, no. 1 (1985) and my 'Critique of Virtue: Animadversions on a Virtue-Based Ethic' in Earl E. Shelp (ed.), *Virtue and Medicine*, Dordrecht, Holland, D. Reidel Publishing Company 1984, pp. 133–150.

⁴⁴ If one sticks, as Collier does, to the thesis of value-elimination in the *social sciences* then one should also recognize that there are items in Marx's corpus that are not social science but are bits of normative politicizing. But it is also true, as Collier stresses, that these are hardly central and distinctive aspects of Marx's canon.

⁴⁵ Edward Nell and Onora Nell, 'On Justice Under Socialism', p. 439. In conjunction with this article Jon Elster's 'Exploitation, Freedom and Injustice' should also be read.

⁴⁶ Edward Nell and Onora Nell, *op. cit.*, p. 439.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 438.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 440–446.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 440–441.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 441.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 443.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 444. That there seems little evidence of such motivation in the Soviet Union says more (a) about its being a society emerging from a society that was largely a peasant society and (b) about its being a statist society in which there is not genuine worker control of the means of production. For an elucidation of the concept of a statist society see Svetozar Stojanovic, *Between Ideals and Reality*, New York, NY, Oxford University Press 1973, trans. Gerson S. Sher, Chapter 3.

⁵⁵ Edward and Onora Nell, *op. cit.*, pp. 445–6.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 446.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ See here my 'On Not Needing to Justify Equality' (forthcoming); 'On Liberty and Equality: A Case for Radical Egalitarianism', *Windsor Yearbook of Access to Justice* (1985) and *Equality and Liberty*, Totowa, NJ, Rowman and Allenheld 1985, pp. 13–44, 281–314.

⁵⁹ Cf. Kai Nielsen, *Equality and Liberty*.

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