Reply to Steven Lukes, Joseph McCarney, and Koula Mellos

Kai Nielsen

I

I will now turn to Steven Lukes's "Marxism and the Enlightenment." I agree with Lukes's agreement with G. A. Cohen that what Cohen calls the "obstetric doctrine" was common to Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels and much of classical Marxism and that Cohen is right in saying that such a view is at best false and intellectually disastrous. I would only hasten to add that historical materialism as articulated by Cohen himself, Andrew Levine, David Schweickart, and myself, make no such assumption. I further agree with Lukes that both Condorcet and Marx as "social scientists" "had corresponding conceptions of their respective roles: of how, that is, to apply the knowledge that social science delivers to the revolutionary intellectual's task." (But see Joseph McCarney for some important things that Condorcet did not consider that are crucial for an emancipatory social science.)

In his own rich text Lukes depicts central aspects of Marx's and Condorcet's texts. If I had more time I would go over this discussion showing where I agree and disagree. But I will not. I will instead center my discussion on some central questions and answers to these questions that occur in Lukes's concluding remarks. Lukes asks: "Do we, as Nielsen has suggested, find in Marx 'a more developed set of Enlightenment beliefs and conceptions' than in Condorcet? Does Marx give the 'Enlightenment Project' a 'more realistic grounding'? [Again reflect on McCarney here.] Does Marx offer a more convincing way of stating and defending the beliefs and conceptions central to 'Enlightenment humanism' than does this, the last of the philosophes?" Lukes remarks, as I would say as well, in some respects yes and in some respects no, though we may not entirely agree on which respects. So Lukes concludes there

are "obvious respects in which Marx's theorizing is 'more developed' than Condorcet's." But still, he claims, there are features—and crucial features—in which Condorcet "took positions that were more 'developed' and more 'realistic' than did Marx."

I want to comment on this claim and the reasons Lukes gave for it. Lukes takes his question to be: What is the best way to state and defend a commitment to a secular outlook, to reason and to the best practice of social science and to their practical implementation, and the combating of oppression and advancing of equality across the globe? Here we have an on-the-one-hand-and-on-the-other-hand narrative. But I want to attend particularly to the respects in which he thinks that Marx and Marxist thought have, as Lukes puts it, "seriously regressive features" and that, concerning these features, Condorcet's thought, at least in Lukes's view, is definitely superior.

Consider Lukes's claim that much of the Marxist tradition, starting with Marx himself, assumed "a providentially guaranteed philosophy of history, with preordained outcomes, it has viewed politics with unwarranted certainty and it has been systematically blind to the fundamental importance, rather than the strategic and tactical usefulness, of seeking and defending justice and rights, of constitutional guarantees." First, a comparatively minor point. Particularly in the first part of the passage I have just quoted, Lukes gives a not unreasonable but still tendentious description of Marx on historical materialism. We should remember Richard Rorty's and Donald Davidson's point that we can redescribe practically anything to make it look good or bad. Furthermore, and distinctly, Marx might very well deny (pace Lezek Kolakowski and Jon Elster) that he has a *philosophy* of history and say instead he was seeking to give a scientific account of the trajectory that history takes. Recall his dismissive account of philosophy in the *German Ideology*.

However, I will set aside these points, for Lukes does give a reasonable description of how Marx characterizes things and there is such a teleological rendering of history by some Marxists, including *some* contemporary ones. I have never been interested in what Elster aptly calls Marxist fundamentalism, namely, that there is a Marxist canon that just must be believed and followed. That is, if Marx said it, then it must be true. "Orthodox Marxism" (pace Georg Lukács) smells too much like church. But Marx's historical materialism can be demythologized into a nonteleological thesis, as G. A. Cohen, Joshua Cohen, Andrew Levine, and David Schweickart have done. Moreover, they can claim it with considerable plausibility as being Marxist as well and with consider plausibility *period*. Similarly we can believe (pace McCarney), as Lukes, G. A. Cohen, and I do, that Marx was in an important sense wrong about morals and normative political philosophy and remain in the Marxist tradition. Lukes may well be right in this respect both about Marx and some Marxist fundamentalists. He is also right about the unwarranted assumptions of certainty and the doctrinaire quality of some of the writings of Vladimir Lenin, Leon Trotsky, and Georg Lukács, and at the same time he could be mistaken about

an important developing line of the Marxist tradition or, as I would prefer to say, the Marxian tradition. We should treat Marx, Lenin, and Trotsky as critical thinkers, fallible like the rest of us, and not as icons. And that is exactly what is done by analytical Marxists and by many other contemporary Marxists. Fallibilism, I repeat, perhaps ad nauseum, is the name of the game.

Lukes finds regressive features even in what he calls "the social science" of Marx. He remarks that as "social science it has neglected and even resisted the task of furnishing microfoundations for its bold macrotheories and it has propounded the pernicious doctrine that there is no objectivity to be had outside a partisan class-based perspective." The last part of that quotation sounds more like a reference to Lukács rather than to Marx or Engels. Whether or not it sticks to Marx or Engels, it is, as well, plainly a mistaken position and one that analytical Marxists and many other contemporary Marxists would not take.

The business about microfoundations is another matter. Surely microfoundations are important and desirable when we can get them. However, rational choice Marxism has come up with very little if anything here. But we should acknowledge G. A. Cohen's point that as important as they are when we can get them, we can get along without them. Charles Darwin revolutionized biology though it was Gregor Mendel who discovered the crucial mechanism of heredity. Still, in late pre-Darwinian days we had a sound enough sense that there were evolutionary stages without having discovered a micromechanism. We knew *that* evolution occurred, we just didn't know *how* it occurred. The same could be true for historical materialism. Moreover, and distinct from Cohen's point, there is a considerable amount of good social science without micromechanisms, and *perhaps* there are very good conceptual or principled reasons why in much of social science micromechanisms are not to be expected. Think of much of cultural or social anthropology, of history, and of social geography directed at things like what village life was like in what we now call southern France in the Middle Ages. Perhaps similar things can be said for much of social psychology and indeed of clinical psychology. We should beware of *scientism* here. (Here Ludwig Wittgenstein, Peter Winch, and Stephen Toulmin are of considerable help.) Perhaps Condorcet had a lot of that disease before it was identified.

In the last sentences of his essay, Lukes shifts gears. He remarks that "both thinkers, and the traditions we have taken them to represent, exhibited what is sometimes called the 'optimism' that scientific and technological progress made the moral and political progress of mankind probable. Whether that shared assumption can any longer be justified is another question altogether." That, of course, is a—perhaps *the*—central question to ask. It is both fashionable and understandable today to think that no such progress is possible. But this has not been always thought, and is not always thought now. And this has been particularly true of Marxists, including analytical ones. I have always thought of myself as being part of the Enlightenment tradition, as most Marxists and most pragmatists have, though I have rejected Enlightenment *ration-*

alism. (Levine sees this very clearly.) I have argued that such progress is possible, as have Levine, Schweickart, and McCarney. But it takes considerable careful argument and a keen eye for what is going on.[1]

I think, in reconsidering what is at issue here, we should recognize that much more is at issue than just the discoveries of science or its theories. What is crucially at stake, as John Dewey recognized, is whether the very way of thinking that science has engendered was a key factor that made the moral and political progress of humankind probable. The skeptical side is now fashionably dominant as the optimistic side was in the heyday of John Dewey's pervasive influence. The truth is that both sides overstated their case. But, even compensating for the overstatement, the verdict is still out. Lukes's challenge does make an important point here. We should not forget the lessons of Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer in their *Dialectics of the Enlightenment,* a book that marked their decisive break with Marxian optimism. But we should also not forget Jürgen Habermas's Enlightenment-influenced response.

II

I want now to turn to Joseph McCarney's "An Emancipatory Science of Society." I am deeply appreciative of the kind things he says there about my work as well as the carefully argued alternatives he sets out to it. I will briefly allude to where we agree and where we are in the same conceptual ballpark and then turn to his Hegelian Marxism.

McCarney's central theme is the relationship of *theory and practice* in Marx's work. What is most distinctive in his account is where he sets out the Hegelian nature of Marx's work on the relation of theory to practice and what is part of that, namely, the much-debated question of Marx and morality and a Marxian understanding of ideology. We are largely in agreement on this last matter and I shall postpone a discussion of ideology until I discuss Mellos's paper. McCarney, while he gives us what I take to be an essentially correct account of Marx's view of ideology, is too self-effacing. My view of ideology is essentially derived from McCarney's unfortunately neglected *The Real World of Ideology,* which I take to be the best book on ideology that I have ever read. But I will say a few things on a subject I have written extensively on, namely, Marx and morality.

It has often been thought—something that neither McCarney nor I believe—that there is an inconsistency in Marx and often other Marxists' basic conceptions about this topic. Marx, on the one hand, makes very strong claims about the oppression, brutality, and horror of how human beings are treated and the moral degradation caused by the capitalist exploitation of women and children, while, on the other hand, claiming that the rise of communist and socialist views "shatter the basis of all morality"; that talk about rights, duties, and other conceptions is ideological nonsense; and that "workers have no

ideals to realize but to set free the elements of the new society with which old collapsing bourgeois society itself is pregnant." Able philosophers, including Marxist philosophers, have disputed over this and have variously interpreted what is going on here. McCarney and I agree that there is no genuine inconsistency here, that the remarks were made at different theoretical levels and for different purposes. He briefly says sensible things about this and I have in detail addressed these questions in my *Marxism and the Moral Point of View*. Yet here issues are raised that need careful investigation. Still, right or wrong, McCarney and I are on the same side of the fence here.

I now turn to what McCarney regards as the crux of the matter concerning the question of the relationship between *theory and practice*, something that is very central for Marx. We should first note that whatever else we say about Marx and morality we should keep firmly in mind that, as McCarney puts it, "Marx consistently refuses to allow moral appeals a role in the revolutionary movement and, by implication, in his own theoretical work in the service of that movement." Marx strikingly rejects the very common assumption that the *practical must be the normative*. Moreover, and again strikingly and perplexingly, Marx arguably conceived of his theory as being emancipatory without being normative. These are difficult notions to get one's mind around; at least to contemporary ears they are very counterintuitive.

However, to get a start here, when we direct our attention to the high level of theoretical needs of the revolutionary movement, it is clear that Marx denies that "revolutionary theory needs a moral or indeed any normative dimension yet it remains practical: it seeks to change the world, not without understanding it, but still fundamentally to change it." But how can this—or can it—*not* be normative? McCarney's question is apposite: "If Marx's work lacks in his own eyes a moral, or indeed any normative dimension, how is one to account for the fact he also plainly regards it as having practical significance and force?" It is here for McCarney that Hegelianism comes in.

It is also here where McCarney has changed my mind. Like most analytical philosophers of my generation, I had a poor opinion of G. W. F. Hegel. Like Bertrand Russell and Karl Popper, I thought Hegel's work was a lot of nonsense best ignored. One thing that did shine forth for me was that he was reactionary and obscurantist. It was too bad, I thought, that Marx was ever influenced by Hegel and the Young Hegelians. It would have, on the one hand, been better if he had stuck to Adam Smith and David Ricardo and to Condorcet and to Jean-Jacques Rousseau. I came, after reading J. N. Findlay and Charles Taylor on Hegel, to think I was a bit too extreme about Hegel, though I remained, and still am, convinced that one should never write like Hegel. But McCarney has convinced me that on matters close to my heart and head—the unity of theory and practice, the relation of fact to value, and how we should view emancipatory social critique—Hegel had deep (though still obscure) insights that Marx imbibed and built on and which are crucial to his thought. I still don't think we should ever write like Hegel and I don't buy Lenin's claim that he who had

not mastered Hegel's logic could not understand Marx. But I now have become convinced by McCarney that there are things in Hegel that are right-minded and important. They are things that systematically and usefully influenced Marx and that can usefully inform us in our understanding of both society and socialism, if not also in our practice of struggling for socialism, or even, if we do not want to so struggle, in our understanding of socialism.

I will say a little bit about McCarney's rich account here and raise some questions about what I take to be some minor points in it where I think what he says could usefully be set aside. But I do not wish this to obscure the originality and the importance of what McCarney says here.

Both Hegel and Marx—and plainly rightly I think—were hard on the kind of criticism that knows how to judge and condemn the present, but not on how to comprehend it. We have, as McCarney notes, a kind of cognitive failure here, an inability to do justice to the matter at hand. About all we can do is refute and destroy. Scientific cognition, Hegel has it, demands a surrender to the life of the objects studied. We must not take the disdainful and superior attitude of "wisdom" toward circumstances and institutions. Here we begin to get suspicious of the normative. Hegel here, as McCarney remarks, "seems . . . to reject any role for philosophy as a source of practical wisdom," of yielding "prescriptions for life." It should not engage in the task of setting a picture of "a state as it ought to be." Hegel then tells us, in a fine bit of rationalism, that the "task of philosophy is rather to comprehend what is for what is in reason," namely, "its own time comprehended in thought."

Such formulation leads to the charge of conservatism and quietism: "A sanctification of what is that will leave no room for projects of reform, much less of revolution." McCarney thinks this is a misreading of Hegel. To understand his claim that philosophy is to comprehend "what is for what is in reason," we must, McCarney has it, turn to Hegel's famous, or, if you will, infamous, *Doppelsatz*, where in a canonical formulation he says, "What is rational is actual, and what is actual is rational." When I first heard this as an undergraduate, and for a long time afterward, I thought it silly and pretentious. Disconfirming instances came rushing in like the tides. The Holocaust was actual, but it certainly was not rational; that thirty thousand die each day, most of them unnecessarily (even when something could easily be done about it), is actual but certainly not rational; that an adult person may lose Canadian citizenship because her or his father (not mother) renounces his Canadian citizenship is actual—it's the law in Canada—but is certainly not rational; that overfishing is destroying the world's fish stocks is actual but is not rational. We could go on and on with such disconfirming instances without any difficulty. Hegel's canonical statement reminds us of Thomas Hobbes's quip that there is nothing so absurd that some old philosopher has not said it.

However, this youthful judgment about Hegel's *Doppelsatz* is based on a superficial and bad misreading of Hegel. It rests on fastening on a sentence and ignoring whole paragraphs. The rationality of the actual is not so easily

disposed of. This "complex of conceptual claim" may still be mistaken, but at least it is not so obviously mistaken as I took Hegel's claim to be. Everything that *is* may not be *actual*, given Hegel's perhaps useful stipulative usage where only that which is necessary, which does not rest on some "contingent evidence" but is necessarily so, is actual. The actual, according to the way Hegel characterizes things, is *not* whatever *just happens to be* but that which necessarily exists in some sense. "The actual," to repeat McCarney, "is rational just in that whatever mode of existence fails to partake of rationality must lack the necessity that will enable it to qualify as actual." What is necessary is rational. The rational is what is actual and what is actual—given his implicit stipulative definition—is necessary.

Hegel is not speaking of *logical* necessity here, but he seems to not be speaking of empirical necessity either but rather some kind of *ontological* necessity. But this, to put it minimally, is a very obscure matter. What is ontologically or metaphysically necessary as distinct from being empirically necessary? I would ask McCarney to explain what this ontological necessity is and how it is to be distinguished from empirical necessity. "Human beings are mortal," "sugar dissolves in water," "diamonds are hard" are all empirical necessities. "All books in Jane's library are in English" is not, and "all the flowers in Jane's garden are roses" is not. "If there is a cube of sugar in Jane's library, it is dissolvable" sustains a counterfactual. "If there is a book in Jane's room, it is in English" does not sustain a counterfactual.

I would conjecture that McCarney could and should get along (pace Hegel) with his actualities being empirical necessities. He does not need "ontological necessities"—a mysterious something, we know not what. Among the empirical generalities there are accidental generalizations, that is, "All Jane's books are in English," and lawlike generalizations, that is, "All humans are mortal." Only the latter ones are to be said to be necessary—empirically necessary—while the former are said to be contingently true. As many philosophers now talk, W. V. O. Quine and Donald Davidson for example, contingently true is pleonastic as it is for me. But McCarney's and Hegel's way of talking (as understood by McCarney) is perfectly intelligible and perhaps in some contexts useful.

However, what about the first side of the *Doppelsatz*: "What is rational is actual"? Sometimes in his lectures Hegel expressed it this way: "What is rational must be," "All that is rational must be," "What is rational becomes actual." But is this so, or do we have good reason to think that it is so? "The Tobin tax is rational but it will never become law," "Allowing Catholic priests to marry is rational but it will never become church policy," "Banning private cars and motorcycles from the center of Rome and only allowing taxis and non-motor bikes is rational but it will never become a city ordinance." We can multiply such plausible claims ad nauseum. They seem plainly to infirm the claim that what is rational must be, or becomes, actual. McCarney thinks that this is what the Hegelian thesis is and as well is correct: "[t]hat the rational has

to be actual existence in time; that is, become actual, and that theory is conscious of this process." Dialectical reasoning will teach us that this is so, and only with dialectical reasoning will we come to understand it. I do not see why we should believe any of this is so. (In such a way I remain my old self.)

In light of this, how can I say that McCarney has changed my mind about anything substantial? There is a lot in his rich and thought-provoking paper that I do not pretend to even understand. A part of it that I think I have a handle on is his discussion of the diminished force of the normative for emancipatory theory and how our hopes should be diminished concerning the effectiveness of the spread of ideas as to how things ought to be: a shift, if you will, from the Young Hegel to the Old Hegel. Hegel here, as well as Theodor Adorno, is on to something. I have a sense of that in both cases, but I may well have a poor man's understanding of how it is to be understood in Hegel's case as well as Adorno's and of what is in large measure common to Hegel and to Marx on theory and practice and the emancipatory force of this. Still, in this way my thinking has been changed substantially.

To try to come to grips with this, let me return to some remarks that I have previously highlighted and to some questions rooted in these remarks. When Marx, McCarney says, directs a "relatively high level of self-conscious attention on the theoretical needs of a revolutionary movement, his chief concern [I would say one of his chief concerns] is to deny that revolutionary theory needs a moral, or indeed any normative, dimension." Thinking about such matters and the predictable responses to them, the following question should be formulated: "If Marx's work lacks in his own eyes a moral, or indeed any normative, dimension, how is one to account for the fact that he also plainly regards it as having practical significance and force?" It is normally assumed, even by many Marxists, that *the practical must be normative*. While sticking to an emancipatory account of the world and our place in it, Hegel and Marx, McCarney plausibly has it, challenge that assumption. How is it, McCarney asks, that Marx can have a theory which can be emancipatory without being normative? He gives a very complicated answer, only part of which I will reproduce. I want, I hope in the spirit of Marx and Hegel and of McCarney as well, to give (though in my own way of putting it) what I take to be an answer that is important and perhaps even right. Here I risk having misunderstood them. But at least I hope I will give something that is at least suggestive.

We can start by recalling how McCarney contrasts Marx and Hegel on the problem of poverty. In their time as in ours there was an enormous disparity between life conditions and the life prospects of the poor and the rich, and many of the poor were (are) very poor. Then, as now, masses of people all over the world lived in dire poverty while a few had great wealth and often power over how society was to be organized and run. People lived, as they now live, in degradation without enough to eat and worked (if they had work at all) long hours, as they do now, under terrible conditions. Sometimes children were employed. Exploitation was (and is) very steep; people lived (and live) in

shacks in squalor without adequate food, water, or heating. Marx saw this condition of life as integrally linked with capitalism, with the private ownership and control of the means of production, and believed that it would only be ended with the coming and sustaining of socialism, with the social ownership and control of the means of production. He, as we have seen, believes he has described *the laws of motion of social life.* What he thinks he has described is the inescapable necessity of immiserization and degradation under capitalism (particularly when we look at things globally), with socialism providing the only way out. This was, in his view, not just a contingent matter but an empirical necessity just as much as it is that we are mortals and that we must die. (That this is actually so, for the reasons we have seen Andrew Levine and G. A. Cohen giving, is probably false as an empirical necessity, but it could be an empirical necessity. We need not go metaphysical, to claim that this is true.)

For Marx but not for Hegel, the belief in the inescapability of immiserization was not for all time empirically necessary. Hegel was not prepared to jettison the proposition that a well-functioning society must have private ownership and control of productive property and that some immiserization would always be with us. I am not concerned to argue here who is right, or even if we can ascertain who is right, Hegel or Marx (if either is), but with the descriptions given to their positions. Neither was prepared to argue his case on moral or normative grounds. Both indeed used morally and otherwise normative-laden terms in setting out their positions. Marx, for example, used graphic moral terms—terms that have come to be taken as terms expressive of thick moral concepts—to describe the condition of the proletariat. But they are *also* descriptive terms. Indeed, as people such as Philippa Foot, Isaiah Berlin, Bernard Williams, Thomas Scanlon, and lately Hilary Putnam have argued, the descriptive and the normative aspects of the terms characteristically concerned cannot be pried apart—there is a thorough entanglement in such uses of language of fact and value. It was the inescapable descriptive side of things in such characterizations with which Marx was concerned. He wanted to describe conditions—and to describe them accurately—under which exploitation was inescapable under capitalism. This is, his claim goes, the way things *must*—empirically must—go under capitalism: under the reign of private property, life for the proletariat is and will remain intolerable. "Intolerable" is itself a thick, heavily morally weighted term and in a way also metaphorical, for most did tolerate it, but it has an empirical content here as well, as do all thick uses of moral and normative terms. Marx is attempting not to moralize, or at least not just to moralize, but to show how things, empirically speaking, must be under certain circumstances. If he has told it like it is and given what in this way it empirically must be (as an empirically *lawlike* necessity), then he is right and Hegel is wrong. The dispute is about claimed *empirical necessities, not about moral theory, moral claims, or even moral stances.* If Hegel can show, as some people, even some social democrats such as Sidney Hook and Richard Rorty think they can show (pace Marx) that there are no rational (empirically neces-

sary) alternatives to capitalism—that Margaret Thatcher is right that there are no alternatives—if, that is, it can be shown that in modern conditions socialism would be too inefficient to work, then what is said to be "intolerable" becomes of necessity tolerable. The dispute, if it is rational, must be about such empirical necessities or about whether there are any such empirical necessities. If we can show that there are and what they are then the argument is over. *The practical is in this context the nonnormative.* Hegel's stipulations are indeed useful.

Why, to make that important point, do we need McCarney's talk about ontological or metaphysical necessities, about inner necessities, about dialectics, about metaphysical theories, and the like? I think of the appropriateness of John Wisdom's remark, "It's the manner not the matter that stultifies." McCarney has some distinctive, striking, powerful, and I believe, if I have understood him, well-justified things to say about the relationship of theory and practice, about their intimacy in Marx's thought, and about an emancipatory theory. Why does he have to lug all that metaphysical jungle along with him?

III

I turn now to Koula Mellos's paper. Mellos principally discusses ideology. She rightly points out that Marxists intersect with their conception of class struggle and historical materialism and with this they bring into sharper focus the issue of theory and practice. Mellos is centrally concerned with how ideology represents itself as making claims to validity while representing particularistic claims that promote an interest of a social class or sometimes classes. This phenomenon has become particularly strong with the rise of capitalist modernity. In our circumstances it is the case that we get claims to political universality and radical political autonomy that are "readily susceptible to approximation for the purpose of legitimizing an order in which the interests of capital prevail, as they do more and more." We get a lot of talk in contemporary philosophical political discourse about "the return of the citizen," the importance of citizenship, and of republican virtues, while in reality we get more and more the power of dominant-class particularism of a dominant elite. In contemporary discourses about society there are, as Mellos points out, economic themes, arguments about principles, and issues such as citizenship, rights, political action, republicanism, and democracy. They are placed "in a normative framework in which the political assumes an autonomy free of any economic determinancy." Equality is an important issue in such discussions, but the kind of equality that gets most stressed is equal citizenship—through-and-through political equality—and less attention is paid to what economic equality should come to or how it enters in. Democracy comes to be exclusively political democracy. Little attention is paid to workplace democracy or to power relations between people and between classes of people, as if these

things had nothing to do with democracy or equality and as if nothing much could be done about them anyway. Mellos remarks, "Contemporary discourses on democracy that claim political autonomy without addressing the issue of the class relations of the market economy take on a thick ideological veil." The underlying economic determinants of political action are concealed. Here the dominant ideology protects and enhances global capitalist class interests. We need, Mellos argues, to overcome this ideological orientation and to struggle to achieve an inclusionary community articulated in a political project of transformation of (exclusionary) capitalist productive relations to (inclusionary) social productive relations. This in simpler terms means the transformation from capitalist societies to socialist societies. It is an ideological illusion to think that we can get to a humane and adequate social order in a capitalist world, though some forms of capitalism will be worse than others. Better Sweden's social democracy than the Washington consensus, to say nothing of Bush's postdemocracy.

I agree with this. The first question I will direct to Mellos is: "Have I read you rightly?" And the second question, assuming that I have read her roughly correctly, is Lenin's question: "What [then] is to be done?" It seems to me—to put it bluntly—that what must (empirically "must") be done—as hard and difficult as that is—is to make (when there is a reasonable chance of success) a worldwide genuinely socialist and genuinely democratic revolution that, though it may not start there, must rapidly spread to the powerful industrialized countries and most centrally to the United States. Difficult as that is, there is, as far as I can see, no other alternative that continues, without evasion, to respect the equal worth of all human beings. David Braybrooke reproached me during the conference for playing to the audience: making with such talk the grand gesture. That certainly was neither my intent nor one that I need at all to be understood as making. Moreover, do we have another way to gain a world that is deeply egalitarian, just, and solidaristic? Is our social world not as intolerable as Marx thought it to be and as Noam Chomsky now thinks it to be? As unsettling as this talk of revolution is, is it not necessary to seriously consider and, when the time is ripe, to make it actual, if we are ever to come to have a decent world? Was not Marx right about this?[2]

NOTES

1. Chandra Kumar, in his article in *Imprints*, has perspicuously made a case for this. See Chandra Kumar, "Progress, Freedom, Human Nature, and Critical Theory," *Imprints* 7, no. 2 (2003).

2. On revolution see my remarks concerning Jon Mandle's article in this volume. See especially my remarks in the first paragraph of section III of my reply to him.