

hard to improve on Barclay's evaluation, chose it as his Book of the Year. 'The book itself,' he writes,

'is the most moving and beautiful, the most devotional and consistent, the most scriptural and sensitive working out of the radical position I have ever read.'

Many other scholars like Bishop Barry are equally enthusiastic.

I have not quoted any reviewer in order to voice agreement or disagreement. That role is the reader's. I am simply baffled by the strange division among reviewers not only of opinion but of the parties holding the opinion. It was never my intention to become a barrier to ecumenism between priests and non-priests.

One last curiosity: no priest reviewer thought fit to mention the word 'scholarship'. no other reviewer forgot to mention it.

Enough said. Now I can let my tired old theological bones rest underground till Resurrection day. Unless, of course, some other editor asks for an exhumation order to have me hanged again. That will really worry me. Men hanged too often have a nasty habit of being given in the end a pedestal on which to rest their feet.

Giving Away Power

Dick Lobel

In this article I want to enter the Christian-Marxist debate in *New Blackfriars*, but on the terrain of political and economic practice rather than of theory. I want to do this partly because I think that the theoretical debate reached something of an impasse with the challenge thrown down by Francis Barker who, as a follower of Louis Althusser, holds that Christianity, an ideology, is not the epistemological equal of Marxism, a science, but is rather the potential object of that science itself (*New Blackfriars*, September 1976). I think it would be possible to reply to Barker's article—to make a number of possible replies—but would this serve any purpose, when Barker in any case generously concludes:

'A more fruitful unity between Marxism and Christianity will be achieved at the level of political practice. Most Marxists and some Christians find themselves in struggle against capitalism and it is in the exigencies of that struggle that they will find their deepest commitment not only to the revolution but also to each other' (p.424)?

It is exactly on that 'level of political practice' that I want to raise questions and make suggestions—the more so because I fully agree with Barker that to declare oneself in support of 'the revolution of

the capitalist world' is not enough; 'it is not at that level of abstraction that anything will be decided' (p.410). I share Brian Wicker's anxiety to find the answer to the question 'What exactly do I have to do?' in order to be an authentic Marxist, and about the lack of consensus of answers to that question (*New Blackfriars*, October 1975, May 1976). It is in the belief that there are answers within the writings of Marx to these questions about our praxis in the contemporary situation (and that these answers can also be seen, by analysis from a Christian viewpoint, to be authentically Christian) that I write this article; and still more, of course, to share this belief with others, to offer it for criticism, for only in that way can I really find the answer to the question, in Brian Wicker's words,

'...am I a *practising* Marxist or only a sham Marxist?

A practising Christian or only a sham Christian?'

(*New Blackfriars*, October 1975).

I abandon the terrain of theory the more willingly since Althusser himself, while insisting upon the difference between ideology and scientific knowledge, has re-affirmed the aims of the Marxist, the kind of transformation of our society for which he works, in terms which must strike a chord from any Christian who sees his faith as calling him to work for such a transformation too: for example,

'to invert social inequality into social equality, the exploitation of man by man into the mutual co-operation of men',¹ or again, to

'struggle for the suppression of classes',
and for a society

'where one day, all men will be free and brothers'.²

These must also be the aims of a Christian who believes, in the words of the pamphlet *Gospel and Revolution* (published as an appendix to Herbert McCabe's *Law, Love and Language*)

'that the Gospel demands that first fundamental revolution which is called 'conversion' ... This conversion is not merely internal and spiritual ... it has a communal aspect laden with implications for all society'.

Such a Christian finds himself in a society, in the Britain of 1977, where class distinctions are not simply a matter of snobbery, but a harsh reality affecting the lives of the people from such basic matters as death³ to such complex social and cultural matters as true equality before the law. He also finds himself in a world

¹ *For Marx*. Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 1969, p.193 (footnote).

² *Lenin and Philosophy*, NLB, 1971, p.24.

³ If for statistical purposes the death rate of skilled manual workers and their families is taken as an average, unskilled manual workers have a forty-three per cent greater chance of dying from killer diseases, professional workers a twenty-four per cent lesser chance. See *Sunday Times* Colour Magazine, 26 September 1976.

where 'the peoples of the Third World are the proletariat of existing humanity, exploited by the great' (*Gospel and Revolution*). As a Christian I cannot accept these inequalities and injustices as 'natural' or 'inevitable'; they are a denial of that brotherhood and sisterhood of mankind which my faith asks me to accept as a reality and to try to live out in practice. 'Few also are the countries where social equality prevails, an essential condition of true brotherhood, for peace cannot exist without justice' (*Gospel and Revolution*). Now, while acknowledging both the sincerity and the value of the liberal response to such inequalities and injustices, I no longer believe that by itself it is sufficient. This response amounts to an attempt to abolish privilege by sharing it.⁴ Yet the privilege and inequality remain, in spite of all efforts; they seem to be built in to the very structure of the society in which we live. It is here that the Christian turns to Marxism, which offers an explanation of that structure in terms of its 'base', the social relations of production, and shows that these relations involve the essential inequality of exploitation. So to strive for a society where 'social equality prevails' means striving to change these relations: relations between those who possess the means of production (with the wealth, and still more the power that go with them) and those who do not, who possess nothing but their labour power. Marxism suggests that this inequality is the foundation of other inequalities throughout society; it also illuminates the nature of the change that is required, for a change at society's base must be *fundamental*—that is, revolutionary.

To come to this conclusion is something of a *metanoia* for a middle class professional man who has always held the liberal faith in the efficacy of reform; Althusser calls this *metanoia* 'a real rupture, a real revolution in ... consciousness'.⁵ (It is, I believe, attendant upon the greater *metanoia* involved in accepting the living Christ.) But a *metanoia*, we know, is not just a death, but a resurrection of the transformed self which is also the true self. So if, in becoming a socialist, my middle-class 'bourgeois' self has had to die, the true nature of that self is also liberated, free to fulfil itself. In other words, as I see it, the socialist revolution comes not to destroy the bourgeois revolution but to fulfil it, to extend and enlarge those very virtues established and enshrined by the bourgeois revolution—democracy, individual liberty, freedom of conscience—in such a way as to give them true meaning.

⁴ The setting up of Law Centres in working class districts is a good example of what I mean. This was a recognition that even though legal aid was available, scarcity of solicitors in certain areas or deeply ingrained social and cultural responses prevented working class people from approaching and using the law; the law had to go to them. While this was an excellent response to a particular social problem, it did not, and could not, alter the fundamental social structure which caused the problem in the first place.

⁵ *Lenin and Philosophy*, p.96.

It follows from this that such a revolution must be more than just a transfer of power if it is to be true to itself; in the words of 'Comment' in *New Blackfriars* of April 1976, it must be more than 'the replacement of one ruler by another more powerful (if more benign) one'. The aim of the revolution, to continue McCabe's words, is that 'structures are so changed that we cease to take orders at all in the old sense' because 'the very meaning of being a ruler has changed'. Marxism has always claimed that the socialist revolution is a liberation, which will end class domination altogether.

Power is a key word here. Class society, I have suggested, is marked by inequalities of power as significant as economic inequalities. Marx showed how in capitalist society power becomes concentrated because ownership of the means of production is concentrated into fewer and fewer hands. We can see the result of this process today; the big corporation has become the 'structure in dominance' of all capitalist economies. In turn this has created a socio-economic system whereby power is enjoyed in inverse proportion to the closeness of one's work to the actual process of production; compare the freedom and self-determination enjoyed by a 'professional' worker (like myself) with the powerlessness of a worker on the factory floor. It is no wonder that this inequality spreads outwards in a pattern of social and cultural advantage and disadvantage. In a similar way, the powerlessness of the countries of the Third World, compared with the 'great' who 'exploit' them, is as important as the economic inequalities; they may not desire all the 'wealth' of our technological civilisation, but they do want their self-determination, their freedom to be themselves. Now Aneurin Bevan (for all his faults perhaps the greatest socialist politician this country has known) once said memorably, 'The one purpose of having power is to give it away.' Socialism, as I see it, is about *giving away power* (as is Christianity, which celebrates a God who has given away his power in creation and in the incarnation).

But it is exactly here that Marxism as we know it must come under critical scrutiny. We are no longer in the days of Marxism's innocence, when Engels could proclaim that the seizure of power and the giving away of power would be one and the same thing. (*The proletariat seizes political power and turns the means of production into state property. But in doing this it abolishes itself as proletariat, abolishes all class antagonisms, abolishes also the state.*)⁶ At this stage of history we must ask of Marxist revolutions that have taken place and Marxist régimes that have resulted: how far have they 'inverted social inequality into social equality' and brought nearer a society 'where all men are free and brothers';

have they given away power—or transferred it? It is a truism to say that too often under Marxist régimes the power of private capital is replaced by that of the state—but it is true. Thus Charles Bettelheim, the Marxist economist (a follower of Althusser) admits that a supposed progress towards socialism ‘may also lead to renewed forms of capitalism, in particular to state capitalism,’ and concerning the contemporary Soviet Union he writes of ‘the social foundation of present-day Soviet policy and its increasing subordination to the interests of a privileged minority who have *de facto* control of the means of production’.⁷ (That privileged minority is the Soviet bureaucratic elite, and a vivid account of how it forms a society within a society and an economy within an economy can be found in Hedrick Smith’s *The Russians*)⁸. The contemporary Western Marxist parties show an awareness of this problem, but I cannot see that they have as yet put forward programmes which show convincingly how Marxism can in practice be true to its claim to be a liberation.

Yet Marx’s own writings in their total development point clearly in a direction which is the opposite of state bureaucracy and state capitalism. True to his conception that socialist society was maturing in the womb of capitalist society, he pointed to developments in his lifetime which foreshadowed the future of socialism.

Politically, the key event for Marx was the Paris Commune of 1871 (as Althusser writes, Marx ‘attended the School of the Commune in order to be able to map out the future of socialism’)⁹ which convinced him that ‘the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes’. As Marx shows in *The Civil War in France*, the Commune was the *antithesis* of state power; all its political measures stressed decentralisation, dispersal of the centres of power, and democratic accountability of all institutions. Marx leaves us in no doubt that he saw this as ‘the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economic emancipation of labour.’ And we have the authority of Engels and the Marxist tradition for equating it with ‘the dictatorship of the proletariat’.

As regards ‘the economic emancipation of labour’, Marx saw its future in a contemporary development whose form was equally antithetical to state capitalism: the workers’ co-operative. In *Capital* Volume 3, having declared that ‘the co-operative factories furnish the proof that the capitalist has become ... superfluous as a functionary in production’¹⁰ and that ‘in the co-operative factory

⁷ Charles Bettelheim, *The Transition to Socialist Economy*, Harvester Press, 1975, pp. 9, 11.

⁸ Times Books, 1976.

⁹ *Lenin and Philosophy*, p.9.

¹⁰ Marx, *Capital* Vol. 3, F.L.P.H. Moscow, 1962, p.380.

the antagonistic character of the labour of superintendence disappears, since the manager is paid by the labourers instead of representing capital against them', (p.381) he goes on, in his discussion of the joint stock company as an example of the increasing socialisation of production within the capitalist system, to point to the workers' co-operative as the 'positive' outcome of this development:

The co-operative factories of the labourers themselves represent within the old form the first sprouts of the new, although they naturally reproduce, and must reproduce, everywhere in their actual organisation all the shortcomings of the prevailing system. But the antithesis between capital and labour is overcome within them, if at first only by way of making the associated labourers into their own capitalist i.e. by enabling them to use the means of production for the employment of their own labour. They show how a new mode of production gradually grows out of an old one, when the development of the material forces of production and of the corresponding forms of social production have reached a particular stage.... The credit system is not only the principal basis for the gradual transformation of capitalist private enterprises into capitalist stock companies, but equally offers the means for the gradual extension of co-operative enterprises on a national scale.

(p. 431)

In documents and speeches for the First International, Marx makes it very clear that he saw the formation of co-operatives as the means by which the workers could challenge the capitalist system at its foundations. In his *Instructions for Delegates to the Geneva Congress* he devotes a section to this, under the title 'Co-operative Labour',¹¹ and towards the end of the *Inaugural Address*, after referring to the Ten Hours Bill, he writes very stirringly:

There was in store a still greater victory of the political economy of labour over the political economy of property. We speak of the co-operative movement, especially the co-operative factories raised by the unassisted efforts of a few bold 'hands'. The value of these great social experiments cannot be overrated. By deed instead of by argument, they have shown that production on a large scale, and in accordance with the behests of modern science, may be carried on without the existence of a class of masters employing a class of hands; that to bear fruit, the means of labour need not be monopolized as a means of dominion over, or of extortion against, the labouring man himself; and that, like a slave labour, like serf labour, hired labour is but a transitory and inferior form, destined to

¹¹ See Fernbach, ed. *Marx: The First International and After, Political Writings Vol. 3*, Penguin, 1974, p.90.

disappear before associated labour plying its toil with a willing hand, a ready mind and a joyous heart.

In those striking last lines Marx gives a view of human history literally from the base, from its forms of labour, and foretells that history's culmination in freedom: slave labour, serf labour, hired labour, associated labour. As a Christian, I see these as stages in the redemption of labour. The emphasis upon mankind as a *working* animal, which is fundamental to Marxism, is also fundamental to Christianity. In the biblical metaphor of mankind's origin and history, the fall of man brings two results, death and labour: labour in continuing the species—'with sweat on your brow shall you eat your bread...'. Labour becomes for mankind an oppressive, alienating activity. The revolutionary intervention of Jesus Christ in mankind's history brought about the redemption of death; but it also began the process of redeeming labour. The redemption of death, 'the revolution in the body' as Herbert McCabe puts it, is an act of Christ in which man participates by assent. The redemption of labour, however, appropriately enough involves 'the work of human hands'; it is the means by which mankind participates in the process of its redemption as an earthly species which culminates in the coming of the kingdom. The kingdom, of course, comes ultimately from beyond mankind, from God's final revolutionary intervention in human history. But man is an active partner in the process, seeking in the meantime by continued revolutionary activity to remove the obstacles which as a fallen social being he finds he has placed in the path of the coming of the kingdom. So, as I see it, it is a prayerful Christian activity to engage in politics with the aim of bringing about, in McCabe's words, 'a structural change which will deepen and change the very meaning of work and human creativity'—and by that means to come nearer to the realisation in practice of the community of mankind. This account, I realise, could hardly be more 'ideological'—idealist, humanist and historicist. But has it led me to the right praxis?

Certainly it seems clear that Marx saw the co-operative as the new mode of production developing within the old, destined to replace it and to bring 'new, higher relations of production'. And while in the Britain of 1977 capitalism still holds sway, the workers' co-operative also exists, as in Marx's time, to challenge it. Very recently, while Tony Benn was at the Department of Industry, three co-operatives were set up—founded upon 'the unassisted efforts of a few bold hands', workers' occupations of factories in response to their owners' bankruptcies, and helped initially with government loans. Two of these survive, and one—Kirkby Manufacturing and Engineering—seems to be doing well. K.M.E. is a particularly significant example, because at its formation management and shop floor united against capital. A *Guardian* article, describing K.M.E. in its early days, reports the deputy convenor as

saying that the co-operative took over a working factory with the management structure almost intact, identifying with the work force rather than with the departing owners. The article points out that 'the workers have the right to vote down their management and directors' and the works manager is quoted as saying, "If they don't like what I am doing, they can come and tell me so, and throw me out if they want to." But he also says, "Some works managers envy me. In a normal factory I'd be spending almost all my time in labour relations, but not here." The deputy convenor for his part says, "We're all in it together, all workers and trade union members, shop floor or management." It is significant to see how the manager, as well as the workers, has been liberated since 'the antagonistic character of the labour of superintendence' has disappeared and he no longer 'represents capital against' the workers. Many capitalist managers seek to create the spirit of unity and co-operation of effort which prevails at K.M.E., but ultimately fail because they are working in a structure which is fundamentally antagonistic; as the K.M.E. manager says, he is envied by other managers. One might say in fact that the shop floor workers of K.M.E. have 'ceased to take orders at all in the old sense' while for management 'the very meaning of being a ruler has changed'. We are dealing here with something more fundamental than the various reforms which progressive industries and societies have introduced, something which overcomes the 'alienation' (in the *Marxist* sense) inherent in capitalism itself and genuinely puts power into the hands of the 'direct producers'.

This point is illuminated if we examine the charges Marx brings against capitalism in a famous passage in *Capital* (Volume 1, Chapter 23)¹² and reckon how far they have been met by reform within the capitalist system. 'the accumulation of capital at one pole of society involves a simultaneous accumulation of poverty, labour torment, slavery, ignorance, brutalisation, and moral degradation, at the opposite pole...' This is no longer so true of the advanced capitalist countries in so far as they have managed economies and welfare schemes, though it is true of the world as a whole; our 'increasing misery' has been exported. Marx also says that under capitalism 'all the means for developing production ... mutilate the worker into a fragment of a human being, degrade him to become a mere appendage of the machine, make his work such a torment that its essential meaning is destroyed...' This can be alleviated by 'work enlargement' which progressive industries have been gradually introducing—notably in Sweden, with its long tradition of Social Democratic government. But when Marx says that capitalist means for developing production 'estrangle (or 'alien-

¹² I have mainly used the translation by Eden and Cedar Paul (Dent 1930) also consulting the translation by Ben Fowkes, Penguin, 1976.

ate'—*entfremden*) from him (the worker) the intellectual potentialities of the labour process in very proportion to the extent to which science is incorporated into it as an independent power' he points to something which remains as true today, and must remain under the social relations of capitalism, in which capacity to use and influence the productive process is denied to the actual producers, who have no control of the means of production. The human capacity to use intelligence to modify and control the environment, in the productive process, is a privilege in our society, and the closer anyone's work is to actual production, the less of this privilege he has. But in the workers' co-operative, the direct producer has as much power to influence the productive process as any others involved in it. As early as the *1844 Manuscripts*, Marx noted that under capitalism 'the external character of labour for the worker is demonstrated by the fact that it belongs not to him but to another, and that in it he belongs not to himself but to another.' But in the co-operative the work belongs to him and his co-workers.

But in our day, as in Marx's time, co-operatives are the result of the isolated efforts of a relatively small number of workers. In the *Inaugural Address*, Marx says that 'To save the industrious masses, co-operative labour ought to be developed to national dimensions and fostered by national means', and for this, political changes are necessary. It is not surprising, therefore, that in *The Civil War in France*, the text which celebrates the temporary achievement of 'the political form under which to work out the economic emancipation of labour', the co-operative receives central mention. Marx takes up the charges that the Commune aimed to establish 'communism, "impossible" communism':

Why, those members of the ruling classes who are intelligent enough to perceive the impossibility of continuing the present system—and they are many—have become the obtrusive and full-mouthed apostles of co-operative production. If co-operative production is not to remain a sham and a snare; if it is to supersede the capitalist system; if united co-operative societies are to regulate national production upon a common plan, thus taking it under their own control and putting an end to the constant anarchy and periodic convulsions which are the fatality of capitalist production, what else, gentlemen, would it be but communism, 'possible' communism?

The Marxist alternative to our present society, then, I see as being politically, decentralisation, dispersal of state power, the growth of democratic accountability, with the emphasis on co-ordination rather than control as regards the tasks of central government; economically, the replacement of our present relations of production by workers' co-operatives or structures which take the workers' co-operative as their model. I am painfully aware of the enor-

rious number of questions that this still leaves unanswered, but I believe that it is essential to complement Marxism's critique of capitalism with some concrete indication, however tentative, of the kind of alternative society that Marxism proposes—especially in such a way as to allay the fears and confront the hostility of those who associate Marxism with dictatorship, bureaucracy, and monolithic state capitalism (and who, in view of contemporary history, can blame them?). As I have already said, I see true Marxism rather as *extending* democracy, *fulfilling* the bourgeois revolution, taking it to its logical conclusion.¹³ Partly because of this, it is possible that such a programme as I have outlined might attract the support of some who would hesitate to call themselves Marxists or who would not readily be recognised as supporters of Marxism. But this, I think, would not necessarily be an indication that the programme itself is not Marxist. Marx wrote of the Commune: 'The multiplicity of interpretations to which the Commune has been subjected and the multiplicity of interests which have construed it in their favour show that it was a thoroughly expansive political form, while all previous forms of government had been emphatically repressive.' I take it as axiomatic that socialism—'the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interests of the immense majority', as Marx called it in the *Communist Manifesto*—will be 'expansive', capable of satisfying the true needs (somewhat to their surprise, perhaps) of 'a multiplicity of interests'.

This takes me to a further point: that the power needed to bring about socialist changes can and must be sought through the channels of parliamentary democracy and maintained only by consent of the electorate. One can justify this by an appeal to authority—the statements of the mature Marx and Engels as they watched the growth of democratic institutions in Europe towards the end of their lives. Or one can justify it by an 'ideological' commitment to democratic procedures (as I should myself).¹⁴ Or one can appeal simply to realism. I see no way in which a Marxist party, in this country or any other where democratic institutions are well established, could command the force needed to make an insurrec-

¹³ Marx himself seems to suggest this by his use of political metaphors at one point in the *Instructions for Delegates to the Geneva Congress*, where he calls the capitalist system 'despotic' and the workers' co-operative 'republican'. See Fernbach, *op. cit.* p.90.

¹⁴ cf. Rosa Luxemburg: 'Freedom for the supporters of the government alone, freedom only for the members of one party—however numerous they may be—that is no freedom at all. Freedom is always freedom for the one who thinks differently.... Without general elections, without unrestricted freedom of press and assembly, without a free struggle of opinion, life dies out in every public institution, becomes a mere semblance of life, in which only the bureaucracy remains as the active element.' (*The Russian Revolution*, 1922, trans. Bertram Wolfe (N.Y. 1940), chap. 6. See also Hooker, ed. *Rosa Luxemburg: Selected Political Writings*, Cape, 1972. pp. 244-7).

tionary revolution or to maintain itself in power against the will of a majority of the people. It is this consideration as much as any other, I suspect, which has led the European communist parties to declare that they will abide by the rules of parliamentary democracy. A revolution by ballot box promises less excitement than a revolution by armed force, but may still be not less but rather more truly a revolution. In a famous passage from *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*, Marx warned that the socialist revolution would be less exciting than the revolutions of a previous era; that 'bourgeois revolutions storm swiftly from success to success' whereas the socialist revolution would be a much more long drawn-out, patient, self-critical process.¹⁵

But it may be urged, what of the Marxist revolutions which have already taken place throughout the world in this century? A member of an industrial democratic country can hardly take them as a model, for they have occurred in industrially underdeveloped countries without a tradition of democratic institutions; as is often pointed out, history has thus run contrary to Marx's expectation that socialist revolutions would occur first in the advanced capitalist countries. The orthodox Marxist-Leninist explanation ascribes this to imperialism, by which the working classes of metropolitan countries have been bought off by a share in imperialist profits, while the peoples of the exploited, undeveloped countries have become 'the proletariat of existing humanity' and consequently the potential revolutionary vanguard. As David Fernbach writes, 'The first successful proletarian revolution took place in Russia, on the fringe of European capitalism, and since then the revolution has swept through the lands of the Third World before returning to the capitalist heartlands.'¹⁶

This is an elegant argument which contains some essential truth; and one does not have to be a Marxist to believe that many Third World Marxist regimes are better than the colonial or neo-colonial governments they have replaced. But this should not preempt criticism of these 'successful proletarian revolutions'; and the most important criticism is that they tend constantly towards the suppression of democratic freedoms (including freedom of worship).¹⁷ The reasons for this are probably partly ideological, part-

¹⁵ Herbert McCabe, in the April 1976 'Comment', puts forward a view of peaceful revolution which has obvious relevance for a country with established liberal-democratic institutions: 'Now despite what some pseudo-radicals believe, revolutions are not carried out by direct confrontation with the ruling class ... but mostly by pressing for reforms which the regime has to pretend to believe in but cannot in fact accommodate'.

¹⁶ Fernbach, *op. cit.* Introduction, pp. 69-70.

¹⁷ *The Guardian* recently reported that the new régime in Vietnam was 'working towards eliminating organised religion in the South or at least reducing its effectiveness,' and that 'according to several Western and non-aligned diplomats in Bangkok who observe Vietnamese affairs, the authorities have been rounding up those clergymen who were active opponents of the Thieu régime because they were feared as potential organ-

ly social. One likely fact is that the urgent need to mobilise the country into developing its productive forces favours an authoritarian pattern of government; one might almost say that such a country 'cannot afford the luxury' of democratic freedoms. But we need to insist in the same breath that democratic freedoms are not a luxury, that true socialism (which *transcends* liberalism—I use the word in a deliberately Hegelian sense) depends upon incorporating and extending them.

So if the developed industrial nations achieve their own revolutions, it will not just be a case of 'catching up' with those of the Third World. In fulfilling their bourgeois revolutions, in transcending liberalism, they will have something to offer the socialist world. And if power can be given away in the 'capitalist heartlands', the giving away of power throughout the world is made a possibility; the way is open for the 'great' to cease to exploit 'the proletariat of existing humanity',¹⁸ and for Third World socialism, no longer encircled by capitalism, to relax its rigidity and monolithicism and understand how it in turn can be fulfilled by democratic freedom.

These are the thoughts of a 'democratic petty bourgeois' who believes himself to have undergone a conversion to Marxism. But 'am I a practising Marxist or only a sham Marxist'? Only others can tell me.

isers of opposition' (*Guardian* 5 Aug. 1977). The *Sunday Times* 14 Aug. 1977 has reported that according to letters smuggled out of South Vietnam 'the Hanoi government seems intent on destroying the culture, social structure and way of life' of '60,000 hill-tribe people converted to Christianity by French missionaries many years ago.' Both these newspapers carried reports sympathetic to the new régime in its early days.

For a socialist affirmation of freedom of conscience and worship, see Rosa Luxemburg's *Socialism and the Churches*.

¹⁸ 'In proportion as the exploitation of one individual is put to an end, the exploitation of one nation by another will also be put to an end.' (*Communist Manifesto*).