

MARX, BLANQUI AND MAJORITY RULE

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I

Is the support of the majority of the population necessary for the socialist transformation of society? Or should a revolutionary party or organisation be prepared to take power without such support and hold on to it even against the wishes of most of the people? The issue, pivotal to socialist debate on democratic theory and practice, divided revolutionaries a hundred and fifty years ago as it divides them today.

The first Marxist party, the League of Communists, was formed in 1847 from the union of two communist currents, which had differed radically on their attitudes to democracy. One trend, represented by the leaders of the League of the Just, sprang from the conspiratorial Babouvist-Blanquist tradition and has been involved in Blanqui's abortive Paris rising of May 12, 1839, of which Engels had written that he did 'not consider such things creditable to any party.'¹ Like most pre-Marxist socialists they were elitist and paternalistic, striving to change society by capturing power for an enlightened minority, which would act for the good of the people without requiring to obtain and retain the support of a majority among them. The other current was that of Marx, whose early 'ultra-democratic opinions'² in favour of 'the self-determination of the people'³ had been extended and combined with the social and economic democracy which he and Engels were advocating through a revolutionary change in the class basis of society led by the working class.

Marx and Engels only agreed to enter the new League after being assured that the leaders of the old one 'were as much convinced of the general correctness of our mode of outlook as of the necessity of freeing the League from the old conspiratorial traditions and forms'.⁴ The first League congress was held in London in June 1847 and a thoroughly democratic constitution was drawn up, which, as Engels later noted, 'barred all hankering after conspiracy, which requires dictatorship'.

Following the congress the League published in London a trial number of a Marxist journal entitled the *Kommunistische Zeitschrift*, appearing in September 1847 with the slogan 'Working men of all countries, unite!' under the title. Its introductory declaration of policy made it very clear with which of the two communist currents the new League identified

itself. 'There certainly are some communists who, with an easy conscience, refuse to countenance personal liberty and would like to shuffle it out of the world because they consider it is a hindrance to complete harmony,' they wrote, stressing that they themselves were 'not among those communists who are out to destroy personal liberty'. On the contrary, they were convinced 'that in no social order will personal freedom be so assured as in a society based upon communal ownership'. It was necessary, they went on, to 'work in order to establish a democratic state wherein each party would be able by word or in writing to win a majority over to its *ideas*'.⁶

At the League's second congress that November Marx and Engels were commissioned to draw up its 'detailed theoretical and practical programme',⁷ which was to appear early the next year as the famous *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. It unequivocally rejected the old Utopian notions of the proletariat as 'a class without any historical initiative (*Selbständigkeit*) or any independent political movement', and made clear its support for 'the gradual, spontaneous class organisation of the proletariat'⁸ as a 'movement of the immense majority',⁹ striving to become the ruling class and 'win the battle of democracy'.¹⁰

This did not however mean the disappearance of the other current in communism, which has continued to find reflection in major controversies right up to the present time. Historically this trend found its clearest and frankest expression in the ideas of Louis Auguste Blanqui, who argued, and organised, for power to be taken by a revolutionary minority on behalf of, and if necessary against the wishes of, the majority of the people and held in their best interests until such time as they had been educated without reactionary influences and production had been greatly increased. It would 'then be possible to speak of self-government'.¹¹ It is a measure of the distortions to which Marx's ideas have been subject in the hundred years since his death that precepts and practices with a striking affinity to these of Blanqui's should be held to be Marxist both by most of those who subscribe to them as well as by critics of Marxism. It is the purpose of this essay to compare the ideas of Blanqui and the tradition from which they sprang with those of Marx and Engels on the question of majority and minority rule on the basis of an examination of their relevant writings.

2

Blanqui was heir to the Jacobin-Blanquist political tradition as transmitted by Buonarroti. That tradition has roots in Rousseau's concept of popular sovereignty as an expression of a metaphysical 'general will'—'always constant, unalterable and pure'—which he distinguished from 'the will of the people', which could be mistaken.¹² (This is a distinction that is still made in some quarters between the 'true' will of the people and

what the majority of the people actually want at a given time.) Rousseau argued that sovereignty should be attributed solely and exclusively to the people, who must be the authors of every law. However, he asked, 'how would a blind multitude, which knows not what is good for it, execute of itself an enterprise so great, so difficult, as a system of legislation?' The general will was always right (*droite*) but the judgment directing it was not always enlightened. 'It must be made to see objects as they are, sometimes as they ought to appear', he wrote. The people needed guides to teach them 'to know what they require'.¹³ It was moreover important, 'in order to have a clear declaration of the general will, that there should be no partial association in the state'¹⁴—in other words, no political parties, because he considered them disruptive of the desired social harmony. Whoever refused to obey 'the general will', should be constrained to do so, which he said in a famous phrase 'means nothing else than that he shall be forced to be free'.¹⁵

In the French Revolution Robespierre and the Jacobins, inspired by Rousseau, were the most intransigent champions of popular sovereignty. Having obtained power in June 1793 as a result of a popular Paris insurrection and removed their Girondin opponents from the National Convention, they introduced the democratic Constitution of 1793 based on universal male suffrage. However the exigencies of war, rebellion and a deteriorating economic situation led them to suspend its operation and enforce a virtual one-party dictatorship from October 1793 to July 1794. The purged National Convention and its Committees of General Security and Public Safety, vested with full executive powers, were to be 'the sole custodians and executors of the "general will"'.¹⁶ Robespierre presented the increasingly centralised rule by the Paris-based 'provisional government of France', resting on the support of a minority of its people, as 'the despotism of liberty against tyranny'. The terror which it applied was, he said, 'an emanation of virtue' and 'a consequence of the general principle of democracy applied to the most pressing needs of the country'.¹⁷

After Robespierre had been overthrown on July 27, 1794 (9th Thermidor) and fallen victim to the same guillotine to which he himself had been instrumental in assigning so many other revolutionaries, the new Thermidorian rulers repealed the economic controls of their predecessors and introduced the Constitution of 1795 with a limited franchise favouring the propertied classes. It was against this shift to the right that Babeuf and his friends organised their 'Conspiracy of Equals' in 1795-6. It aimed to carry through an insurrection to overthrow the government and restore the democratic Constitution of 1793 with modifications and supplement it by the establishment of a pre-industrial form of communism (based primarily, though not exclusively, on distribution rather than production) involving common landholding and the establishment of social equality. At the centre of the conspiracy was a small, secret, self-appointed 'Com-

mittee of Public Safety', grouping around itself a wider circle of sympathisers who were only very partially informed of its plans and objectives. Propaganda was undertaken among the *sans-culotte* masses of Paris, from whom however the hoped for support was not forthcoming. The conspiracy was betrayed and Babeuf and others paid with their lives.

The essential ideas of Babeuf and his associates (Babouvism) were set out in 1828 by one of their number, Buonarroti, in his *Conspiration pour l'Egalité dite de Babeuf*, which was to have a profound effect on Blanqui and other revolutionaries of this period. Babeuf's secret committee were convinced, Buonarroti tells us, that it would be 'neither possible nor without danger to appeal straight away to popular assemblies to elect a legislature and a government in accordance with the Constitution of 1793', which did not provide the people with sufficient 'guarantees' against 'the errors into which it might itself be drawn'.¹⁸ A people whose opinions have been formed under a regime of inequality and despotism, wrote Buonarroti,

is hardly suited, at the beginning of a regenerative revolution, to choose by its votes the men required to lead and consummate that revolution. This difficult task can only be entrusted to wise and courageous citizens, strongly imbued with patriotism and a love of humanity. . . whose knowledge is in advance of their contemporaries' and who, despising wealth and vulgar honours, seek their happiness in rendering themselves immortal by securing the triumph of equality. Perhaps it is necessary at the beginning of a political revolution, even out of respect for the true sovereignty of the people, to be concerned less with winning the votes of the nation than with placing supreme power, in the least arbitrary way possible, in wise and strong revolutionary hands.¹⁹

The secret committee decided that it would exercise such a revolutionary dictatorship until the people of Paris could be called on to elect a national assembly endowed with supreme authority. The committee would however keep itself in existence and carry out detailed 'research' to determine which candidates to propose and then to 'watch over the conduct of the new assembly'.²⁰

Inspired by Babouvist communism, Blanqui sought to organise a relatively small, centralised, hierarchical elite to prepare and lead an insurrection, which would replace capitalist state power by its own temporary revolutionary dictatorship. The *Société des Saisons*, a secret society led by Blanqui and Barbès, consisting mainly of Paris workers or artisans, attempted to carry through the best known of such Blanquist risings in Paris in May 1839. The conspirators seized the *Hôtel de Ville* and proclaimed themselves the legitimate authority in France. They expected that this audacious offensive action would galvanise the people into joining them against their oppressors. There was however no such popular response and not more than eight hundred people in all were

involved in the action, which was defeated after a few days' fighting.

In 1848, immediately after the French February Revolution, Blanqui adopted different tactics. Instead of a clandestine organisation, he formed the *Société républicaine centrale* as an open body, holding public meetings six evenings a week which attracted hundreds of people, although a little later he reconstituted it on the lines of the old secret societies. Organised around an elite core of Blanqui's fellow-insurrectionists of 1839, its purpose, as Samuel Bernstein notes, 'was to be at once a pressure group and a propaganda machine', which 'endeavoured earnestly to start up a groundswell of popular sentiment that might seriously damage the established institutions to their foundations'.²¹ Blanqui opposed the idea of organising a *putsch* as he had attempted to do in 1839. 'If we seize power by a bold *coup de main*', he declared perceptively, 'who can answer for the durability of our power?' What was needed was 'the mass support of the people, the insurgent faubourgs' of Paris rising as they had against the monarchy on August 10, 1792.²² He called for the granting of 'complete and unlimited press freedom' and other liberties, and for the arming of the workers.²³ At the same time he retained his basic Babouvist belief that the majority of the people were not yet ready to choose their own rulers. This now found expression in his demand for the 'indefinite postponement' of the elections which had been fixed for a constituent national assembly. He claimed that 'the freedom of suffrage would be only apparent, all the hostile influences would inevitably conspire to falsify the will of the people'.²⁴ In the countryside the influence of the clergy and the aristocracy predominated. 'A cunning tyranny has stifled all spontaneity in the heart of the masses', he wrote. 'The unfortunate peasants, reduced to the status of serfs, would become a stepping stone for the enemies that oppress and exploit them.' If elections were held before there was time for the people to see the light (*'que la lumière se fasse'*) they would result in the victory of reaction and would lead to civil war.²⁵

More than two decades later Blanqui developed these ideas further in his essay, 'Communism—The Future of Society', written in 1869–70, in which he called for a revolutionary '*dictature parisienne*'. To the suggestion that it constituted 'an admission of minority and violence' to put off elections 'until the full freeing of consciences', he rejoined: 'No! A majority acquired by terror and gagging is not a majority of citizens but a herd of slaves. It is a blind tribunal which for seventy years has heard only one of the two sides. It owes it to itself to listen for seventy years to the opposite side. Since they have not been able to plead together, they will plead one after the other.' In 1848 the republicans had paid the price for granting total freedom to their adversaries. There must be 'no freedom for the enemy' this time, he insisted, setting aside the 'unlimited press freedom' which he had demanded in 1848.²⁶ 'The day when the gag is removed from the mouth of Labour it will be to enter

the mouth of Capital', he went on. 'One year of Parisian dictatorship in 1848 would have spared France and history the quarter of a century which is nearing its end. If this time ten years are needed, there should be no hesitation.' The government of Paris, he claimed in Robespierriest vein, 'is the government of the country by the country, hence the only legitimate one. . . it is a true national representation.'²⁷ Such a conception of 'true representation' clearly has nothing to do with anything empirically verifiable, but corresponds rather to an 'ideal' or metaphysical form. It is in this sense that Blanqui conceived of democracy of which, he claimed, the communists of his school 'have not ceased to constitute the most audacious vanguard'.²⁸

The major task of Blanqui's revolutionary dictatorship would be educational rather than coercive. 'The army, the judiciary, Christianity, public bodies—merely fences. Ignorance—a formidable bastion. One day for the fence; twenty years for the bastion.'²⁹ The introduction of communism, would have to proceed 'step by step' and 'always completely voluntarily'³⁰ after the expulsion from the country of aristocrats and 'the black (clerical) army, male and female'.³¹ Ultimately there would remain 'nothing of that execrable thing called government'.³² Blanqui apparently envisaged arriving at some sort of withering away of the state corresponding to Saint-Simon's aim of replacing the government of men by the administration of things.³³ He distinguished himself from the Utopians, however, by rejecting disputes between socialist schools on the nature of the society which they hoped to establish. They 'argue heatedly on the river bank to decide whether there is a field of maize or of wheat on the other side', he wrote. 'Well, let us cross first. We shall see when we get there.'³⁴ It did not appear to worry him greatly that many people, seeing that they were not going to be consulted about what would be planted there for them, might be reluctant to cross for fear that they might be confronted with neither maize or wheat but deadly nightshade!

3

Marx and Engels held Blanqui in high esteem as a courageous and incorruptible revolutionary. In *The Class Struggle in France*, describing the period from 1848 to 1850, Marx wrote that 'the *proletariat* increasingly organises itself around *revolutionary socialism*, around *communism*, for which the bourgeoisie has invented the name of *Blanqui*'.³⁵ In 1861 Marx described him as 'the head and the heart of the proletarian party in France'.³⁶ At the time of the Paris Commune Marx noted the refusal of Thiers, who headed the Versailles government, to exchange Blanqui whom it held prisoner for Archbishop Darboy, held by the Commune. 'He knew', wrote Marx, 'that with Blanqui he would give the Commune a head.'³⁷

In April 1850, when Blanqui was incarcerated in France (he spent

more than thirty-three of the seventy-six years of his life in nearly thirty different gaols), Marx and Engels concluded a short-lived agreement with French Blanquist leaders in exile in London. Together with them and the left-wing Chartist leader Harney, they established a Universal Society of Revolutionary Communists. Its aim was defined as 'the downfall of all privileged classes, the submission of those classes to the dictatorship of the proletarians (*la dictature des prolétaires*) by maintaining the revolution in permanence (*la révolution en permanence*) until the achievement of communism, which shall be the final form of the constitution of the human family',³⁸

This agreement was made at a time when Marx and Engels still expected a revival of revolution and were anxious to work with the leaders of the main proletarian trends which they thought would be involved in France and Britain. By the late summer of 1850, however, they had reached the conclusion that European capitalism had entered a period of prosperity which precluded a new revolution in the period ahead. This realistic appraisal brought them into conflict with an important minority in the leadership of the League of Communists, headed by Willich and Schapper. At a meeting of the League's Central Authority on September 15, 1850, Schapper declared: 'The question at issue is whether we ourselves chop off a few heads right at the start or whether it is our own heads that will fall. In France the workers will come to power and thereby *we* in Germany too. Were this not the case I would indeed take to my bed.'³⁹ Marx argued that Schapper and Willich saw revolution 'not as the product of the realities of the situation but as the result of an effort of will'.⁴⁰ Marx was here echoing the criticism he had made in 1844 of the belief in 'the *omnipotence* of the will' held by Robespierre,⁴¹ and of the Jacobin methods of coercion and terror, where 'political life seeks to suppress its prerequisite, civil society and the elements composing this society, and to constitute itself as the real species-life of man devoid of contradictions'. This it could achieve, he said, 'only by coming into *violent* contradiction with its own conditions of life'.⁴²

Marx's condemnation of such voluntarism applied to the whole Jacobin-Babouvist-Blanquist tradition, with which it had appeared that Schapper had broken when, with other leaders of the old League of the Just, he joined with Marx and Engels to form the League of Communists. It was to this that he was now reverting under the heady impact of the 1848 revolutions.⁴³ It is not surprising therefore that most of the Blanquists sided with Schapper and Willich when the League split on this issue. On October 9, 1850 Marx, Engels and Harney wrote to the Blanquists to indicate that they had already for some time considered the Universal Society of Revolutionary Communists as *de facto* dissolved.⁴⁴

When Marx and Engels still considered that 'a new revolution is impending', they drew up their famous March (1850) Address on behalf of

the Central Authority of the League of Communists,⁴⁵ which was to be described as 'Blanquist' by Eduard Bernstein and others who have followed him.⁴⁶ In fact, although on immediate tactics it had points of convergence with the Blanquists, which provided the basis for the brief agreement with them at that time, its strategy was quite different from theirs. Instead of envisaging a Communist coup, or even revolution, it foresaw a revolutionary drama in two acts, in the first of which a broadly based workers' party should help to bring the petty bourgeois democrats to power and pressurise them to make the maximum inroads into capitalist property.⁴⁷ The Address recognised that 'the German workers are not able to attain power and achieve their own class interests without completely going through a lengthy revolutionary development'.⁴⁸ When Schapper outlined his immediate perspective of the workers coming to power in Germany, Marx pointed out that this view clashed with that of the March Address and the Communist Manifesto, of which he had approved.⁴⁹

The Manifesto had spoken of Germany being 'on the eve of a bourgeois revolution' which must establish bourgeois supremacy, whilst predicting that 'the bourgeois revolution will be but the prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution'.⁵⁰ The tactics followed by Marx and Engels in Germany in 1848-9 do not bear out Stanley Moore's use of this quotation to support his thesis that from 1844 to 1850 Marx and Engels' tactics 'were primarily influenced by the tradition of Babeuf, Buonarroti and Blanqui'.⁵¹ After returning to their homeland little more than two months after writing the Manifesto, they joined the Democratic Party, 'the party of the petty bourgeoisie',⁵² whose most advanced wing they formed⁵³ until the spring of 1849, and concentrated on editing the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* as a radical, broadly based 'Organ of Democracy'.⁵⁴ The formulation quoted from the final peroration of the *Manifesto* should be ascribed to a flourish of over-optimistic rhetoric by its young authors rather than to Blanquist tactics. It contrasts sharply with the more sober recognition by Engels in his preliminary draft of the *Manifesto* in October 1847 that a communist revolution would be 'slowest and most difficult to carry out in Germany'⁵⁵ and his statement only six or seven months earlier that 'the workers are still far from sufficiently mature to be able to come forward as the ruling class in Germany'.⁵⁶

Around the time that they drew up the March Address, Marx and Engels also wrote a long review article criticising the conspirators of the Paris secret societies as 'the alchemists of revolution', who were 'characterised by exactly the same chaotic thinking and blinkered obsessions as the alchemists of old'.⁵⁷ Conspiracies like that organised by Blanqui in 1839 'never of course embraced the broad mass of the Paris proletariat', even though 'the 1839 revolt was decidedly proletarian and communist'. However experience had proved, they insisted, that 'in the modern revolution this section of the proletariat is insufficient and that only the

proletariat as a whole can carry a revolution through'.⁵⁸



Marx's and Engels' rejection of Blanqui's conception of an educational dictatorship by a revolutionary minority flowed from political and philosophical premises diametrically opposed to the elitist tradition. Marx's first two published articles, written in 1842, are among the most powerful philippics ever penned against press censorship. In them he rebutted the thesis that human beings are 'immature' and need for the sake of their 'education' to be protected from 'the siren song of evil'. In this view, wrote Marx, 'true education consists in keeping a person wrapped up in a cradle throughout his life, for as soon as he learns to walk, he learns also to fall, and only by falling does he learn to walk. But if we all remain in swaddling-clothes, who is to wrap us in them? If we all remain in the cradle, who is to rock us? If we are all prisoners, who is to be prison warden?'⁵⁹ Arguing that censorship is 'a law of suspicion against freedom', resting dubiously on the Jesuit maxim that the end justifies the means, he proclaimed: 'Let us allow the sirens to sing!'⁶⁰

A similar aversion to a paternalist tutelage of the masses was forcefully expressed the next year in Marx's *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*. He found 'truly repulsive' Hegel's insistence on a 'guarantee' that delegates elected to representative assemblies should be individuals who would exercise 'only their objectively recognisable and tested qualities'. Hegel was, he wrote, 'infected through and through with miserable arrogance' which 'grandly looks down on the "self-confidence" of the "people's own subjective opinion"'.⁶¹ The criticism of course applies equally to the 'guarantees' which we saw the Babouvists insisting on against the 'errors' of the electors.

Marx's classical objection to all this kind of elitism is found in his third thesis on Feuerbach, written in 1845:

The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men who change circumstances and that the educator must himself be educated. Hence, this doctrine is bound to divide society into two parts, one of which is superior to society (in Robert Owen, for example).

The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity can be conceived and rationally understood only as revolutionising practice.⁶²

Like Blanqui Marx and Engels recognised the need for independent organisation to provide resolute and clear-sighted leadership in the struggle against the bourgeoisie.⁶³ To this end they sought to promote the building of working class parties, the forms of which varied very greatly in different periods and in different countries.⁶⁴ Unlike Blanqui, however, they sought to give these parties thoroughly democratic structures⁶⁵ and to link them

with the 'real movement' of the working class rather than to 'shape and mould' the labour movement according to 'sectarian principles of their own'.⁶⁶ Above all, as Engels was to explain, 'for the ultimate triumph of the ideas set forth in the *Manifesto* Marx relied solely and exclusively upon the intellectual development of the working class, as it necessarily had to ensue from united action and discussion'.^{66a} 'Substitutism', as it has subsequently been called, was out. 'The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves', as Marx had insisted.⁶⁷ In view of this, they declared it was impossible for them to cooperate with those people in German Social Democracy 'who openly state that the workers are too uneducated to free themselves and must be freed from above by philanthropic big bourgeois and petty bourgeois', who claimed that they alone possessed 'the "time and opportunity" to acquaint themselves with what is good for the workers'.⁶⁸

Setting down the essential differences between Marxism and Blanquism, Engels wrote in 1874:

From Blanqui's conception of every revolution as the *coup de main* of a small revolutionary minority follows of itself the necessity of a dictatorship after it succeeds: the dictatorship, of course, not of the whole revolutionary class, the proletariat, but of the small number of those who carried out the *coup* and who are themselves already in advance organised under the dictatorship of one or a few individuals.⁶⁹

Here is expressed the essential difference between the dictatorship of the proletariat conceived by Marx and Engels to be carried out by 'the whole revolutionary class', and Blanqui's revolutionary dictatorship to be exercised on behalf of the working class by an elite. It was Marx who first used the term 'dictatorship of the proletariat', which he saw as constituting 'the transition to the *abolition of all classes* and to a *classless society*'.⁷⁰ Contrary to widespread belief, there is no record of Blanqui ever having used the expression, although some of his followers were to do so at certain times, notably in 1850, under the influence of Marx.⁷¹

5

In *The Civil War in France* Marx highlighted the tendencies of the Paris Commune which he considered most noteworthy for an experience which he called 'the conquest of power by the working classes'.⁷² and Engels was to characterise as 'the dictatorship of the proletariat'.⁷³ They stand in striking contrast to Blanqui's ideas on revolutionary dictatorship.

In *The Civil War in France*, and the two first drafts that he wrote of it during the seventy-two days of the Commune, Marx underlined above all the creative initiative that it released among the masses on the 'basis of really democratic institutions'⁷⁴ reflecting 'the people acting for itself by itself'.⁷⁵ He presented the Commune as 'a thoroughly expansive political

form, while all previous forms of government had been emphatically repressive'.⁷⁶ In his first draft he quoted an extract from the London *Daily News*, which deplored the fact that the Commune was 'a concourse of equivalent atoms, each one jealous of another and none endowed with supreme control over the others'. Marx underlined the last phrase and noted that 'the bourgeois. . . wants political idols and "great men" immensely'.⁷⁷

The Commune, far from being a one-party system, was divided into a Blanquist majority and a mainly Proudhonist minority, with various other political groups like the middle class *Union Républicaine* functioning freely. Universal suffrage was preserved along with freedom for the bourgeois supporters inside Paris of the counter-revolutionary Versailles government to stand in the elections to the Council of the Commune, in which they obtained fifteen out of eighty seats. Not till two weeks after the Versailles troops started attacking the outskirts of Paris and bombarding the city did the Commune begin to suspend hostile papers,⁷⁸ an action that Marx considered fully justified as a wartime measure.⁷⁹

Before the Commune, Marx and Engels had opposed a Paris rising.⁸⁰ After the proclamation of the third republic on September 4 1870, they expressed their agreement with a perspective of 'restraint' and 'using the freedoms which the republic will necessarily grant for the organisation of the party in France'.⁸¹ Ten years later, looking back on the Commune, Marx recognised that it had been 'merely the rising of a city under exceptional conditions' and that 'a compromise with Versailles useful to the whole mass of the people' of France was 'the only thing that could be reached at the time'.⁸²

The Commune was not the result of a Blanquist rising. Indeed so little had Blanqui expected such an event that he had left Paris, sick and depressed, shortly before its proclamation. As Kautsky remarked unkindly but aptly, the Blanquists 'just had the bad luck that the insurrections which they regularly prepared failed, and the one which succeeded caught them unprepared'.⁸³ The Commune resulted from a spontaneous defensive response to Thiers' attempt to seize the artillery of the National Guard on March 18, 1871. Once it had been proclaimed, Marx and Engels gave it their unstinting, though not uncritical, support. The perspective for which they worked was not the Blanquist one of the dictatorship of Paris over France, which Engels had dismissed as 'a strange idea' since it was the thing 'on which the first French revolution had foundered'.⁸⁴ Marx envisaged, on the contrary, 'all France organised into self-working and self-governing communes, the standing army replaced by the popular militias' and 'the state-functions reduced to a few functions for general national purposes'.⁸⁵ In his first draft of his *Civil War* he devoted a five-page section specifically to the peasantry. In it he sought to show how the Commune represented not only the interests of the working class

but also of the middle strata and 'above all the interest of the *French peasantry*'. He proposed measures of assistance to the peasant, whereby 'being immediately benefitted by the Communal Republic, he would soon confide in it'.⁸⁶

In his 1891 Introduction to *The Civil War in France*, Engels showed how the experience of the Commune led the Blanquists to act contrary to Blanqui's doctrine:

Brought up in the school of conspiracy, and held together by the strict discipline which went with it, they started out from the viewpoint that a relatively small number of resolute, well-organised men would be able, at a given favourable moment, not only to seize the helm of **state**, but also by a display of great, ruthless energy, to maintain power until they succeeded in sweeping the mass of the people into the revolution and ranging them round the small band of leaders. This involved, above all, the strictest, dictatorial centralisation of all power in the hands of the new revolutionary government. And what did the Commune, with its majority of these same Blanquists, actually do? In all its proclamations to the French in the provinces, it appealed to them to form a free federation of all French Communes with Paris, a national organisation which for the first time was really to be created by the nation itself. *•

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Unlike Blanqui, Marx not only envisaged preserving universal suffrage ('nothing could be more foreign to the spirit of the Commune than to supersede universal suffrage by hierarchic investiture'), but also extending it under a workers' government so that 'like the rest of public servants, magistrates and judges were to be elective, responsible and revocable'.⁸⁹ Already in the 1840s Marx and Engels had given their enthusiastic support to the Chartists, as they were to do in the 1860s to the Reform League, for whom universal manhood suffrage was the central demand. Marx wrote in 1852, with rather a large dose of wishful thinking,⁹⁰ that 'universal suffrage is the equivalent for political power for the working class of England, where the proletariat forms the large majority of the population, where, in a long, though underground civil war, it has gained a clear consciousness of its position as a class, and where even the rural districts know no longer any peasants'. For that reason he considered that its implementation in Britain would be 'a far more socialistic measure than anything which has been honoured with that name on the continent'.⁹¹ This did not however prevent Marx and Engels from supporting it in continental countries as well.

In the 1848 Revolution the right of every German over 21 to vote and be elected features prominently as the second point in the *Demands of the Communist Party in Germany*, drafted by Marx and Engels as the programme of the League of Communists in the revolution and repeatedly published in the press and in leaflet form in 1848 and 1849.⁹² It was

clearly central to what Engels had in mind when he demanded a German constitution 'based on the sovereignty of the people and the elimination from the regime actually existing in Germany of everything that contradicted the principle of the sovereignty of the **people**'.⁹³

Referring to the convening of the French Constituent National Assembly in May 1848 which had been so bitterly opposed by Blanqui, Marx wrote in *The Class Struggles in France*:

If universal suffrage was not the miracle-working magic wand for which the republican worthies had taken it, it possessed the incomparably higher merit of unchaining the class struggle, of letting the various middle strata of bourgeois society rapidly get over their illusions and disappointments, of tossing all the sections of the exploiting class at one throw to the apex of the state, and thus tearing from them their deceptive **mask**.⁹⁴

And later in the same work, dealing with the constitution first drafted by that assembly, he observed:

The fundamental contradiction of this constitution consists in the following: The classes whose social slavery the constitution is to perpetuate, proletariat, peasantry, petty bourgeoisie, it puts in possession of political power through universal suffrage. And from the class whose old social power it sanctions, the bourgeoisie, it withdraws the political guarantees of this power. It forces the political rule of the bourgeoisie into democratic conditions, which at every moment help the hostile classes to victory and **jeopardise** the very foundations of bourgeois **society**.⁹⁵

The potential threat of universal suffrage to bourgeois society in a country where the working class constitutes a relatively small part of the population is here very strongly put. Alarmed by the growth of the left in the elections of March 1850, the bourgeois National Assembly proceeded to 'violate the sovereignty of the people' by 'robbing three million Frenchmen of their **franchise**'.⁹⁶ The bourgeoisie, as Marx put it, was openly confessing: ' "*Our dictatorship has hitherto existed by the will of the people; it must now be consolidated against the will of the people.* " '⁹⁷

Commenting on the vote in the National Assembly in May 1850 re-introducing a property qualification, Marx wrote: 'Universal suffrage had fulfilled its mission. The majority of the people had passed through the school of development, which is all that universal suffrage can serve for in a revolutionary period. It had to be set aside by a revolution or by **reaction**'.⁹⁸ The last sentence is descriptive (or predictive) rather than prescriptive. A successful working class revolution in France at that time would necessarily have borne the imprint of Blanqui and his comrades, 'the real leaders of the proletarian party', who, as we have seen, opposed universal suffrage and vainly sought to dissolve the assembly resulting

from it and set up a revolutionary government in its place.⁹⁹ Marx recognised that the Assembly 'represented the nation' and that the attempt 'forcibly to negate its existence' had 'no other result' than the imprisonment of Blanqui and his associates.¹⁰⁰ The French working class was still at a level of development where it was 'incapable of accomplishing its own revolution'.¹⁰¹ Marx justified the June 1848 workers' uprising as a defensive rather than an offensive action. 'The Paris proletariat was forced into the June insurrection by the bourgeoisie. This sufficed to mark its doom. Its immediate, avowed needs did not drive it to engage in a fight for the forcible overthrow of the bourgeoisie, nor was it equal to this task.'¹⁰²

The idea that Marx stood for the abolition of universal suffrage by revolution is contradicted by his writings already quoted on the 1871 'proletarian revolution', as he designated the Paris Commune.¹⁰³ In his first draft of *The Civil War in France* he wrote that 'the general suffrage, till now abused either for the parliamentary sanction of the Holy State Power, or a play in the hands of the ruling classes' was 'adapted to its real purposes, to choose by the communes their own functionaries of administration and initiation'.¹⁰⁴

Marx was well aware that, particularly in countries with a peasant majority, universal suffrage could be used to hold back the working class and sanction reactionary regimes. He discussed this process very clearly in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. However he did not conclude from this, like Blanqui, that the peasant majority should be disenfranchised and dictated to by the revolutionary workers of Paris. On the contrary, he stressed the need to work for unity between the peasantry and the urban workers—their natural ally and leader—so that '*the proletarian revolution will obtain that chorus without which its solo becomes a swan song in all peasant countries*'.¹⁰⁵ The French workers, he had explained in *The Class Struggles in France*

could not take a step forward, could not touch a hair of the bourgeois order, until the course of the revolution had aroused the mass of the nation, the peasants and petty bourgeois, standing between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, against this order, against the rule of capital, and had forced them to attach themselves to the proletarians as their protagonists.¹⁰⁶

Engels was to express the same idea nearly thirty years later after the experience of the Paris Commune. He wrote in 1878 of a basis being created in France for the workers to

ally themselves with the hitherto hostile mass of peasants and thus make future victories not simply as up till now into the short-lived triumphs of Paris over France but into decisive triumphs of all the oppressed classes of France under the leadership of the workers of Paris and the big provincial towns.¹⁰⁷

We have in these statements the essentials of a theory of working class hegemony, which would be elaborated early this century by Lenin and applied by the Bolsheviks under his leadership with such world-shaking effect in the October Revolution.

For Marx and Engels, proletarian revolution did not presuppose the necessity for the working class to have become *sociologically* the majority of the population, as has sometimes been asserted,¹⁰⁸ but rather, whether this was the case or not, to have won majority *political* support. It was not enough to have obtained the backing of the majority of the working class, if this only constituted a minority of the people as a whole. A proletarian revolution, wrote Engels in 1847, 'in the first place will inaugurate a *democratic constitution* and thereby, directly or indirectly, the political rule of the proletariat. Directly in England, where the proletariat already constitutes the majority of the people. Indirectly in France and in Germany, where the majority of the people consists not only of proletarians but also of small peasants and urban petty bourgeois, who are only now being proletarianised and in all their political interests are becoming more and more dependent on the proletariat and therefore soon will have to conform to the demands of the *proletariat*.'¹⁰⁹ In 1895 Engels insisted that for French socialists 'no lasting victory is possible unless they first win the great mass of the people, that is, in this case, the *peasants*'.¹¹⁰

Marx rejected talk of universal suffrage revealing some classless 'will of the whole people'. The latter consisted, in class-divided societies, of 'the separate contradictory "wills" of the separate social estates and classes'. Universal suffrage acted 'as the compass needle which, even if it is only after various fluctuations, nevertheless finally points to the class which is called upon to rule.'¹¹¹ Marx and Engels did not believe in throwing away, or interfering with the working of the compass when it gave uncongenial readings. Engels wrote to Paul Lafargue in 1892: 'Look what a splendid weapon you have now had in your hands in France for forty years in universal suffrage if only you'd known how to make use of it!'¹¹² Forty years before, Louis Bonaparte had brought back universal suffrage to obtain a majority for himself. Engels implied that Socialists should have welcomed its restoration and used it to win and register a majority *for themselves*.

In *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* Engels recognised that 'the possessing class rules directly through the medium of universal suffrage', but only for so long as the working class is 'not yet ripe to emancipate itself'. To the extent that the proletariat 'matures for its self-emancipation', it 'constitutes itself as its own party and elects its own representatives, and not those of the capitalists. Thus universal suffrage is the gauge of the maturity of the working class.'¹¹³

In countries where universal manhood suffrage had in its essentials

been won, Marx stressed the possibility and importance of its being 'transformed from an instrument of deception (*duperie*), which it has been hitherto, into an instrument of emancipation'.¹¹⁴ It would be difficult to imagine a greater contrast between the confidence in the people's ability to change society for themselves expressed in the potential ascribed to universal suffrage here by Marx, and the paternalistic portrayal of helplessness conveyed by Blanqui's picturesque imagery of universal suffrage as 'the poor slave of the ever-sovereign triad Sword-Moneybags-Cassock, marching to the ballot box with the gendarme and the priest holding him by the scruff of the neck and Capital kicking him up the backside'.¹¹⁵

Writing in 1895, in his famous Introduction to Marx's *Class Struggles in France*, Engels quoted Marx's phrase and argued that with the successful use of universal suffrage by German Social Democracy 'an entirely new method of political struggle came into operation', which should be followed in other countries.¹¹⁶ He recognised that their 1848 expectations of successful proletarian revolutions were over-optimistic due to the potential for capitalist economic development and underdeveloped mass consciousness and organisation. 'History has proved us, and all who thought like us, wrong', he wrote referring to those expectations.¹¹⁷ He was not implying, as is sometimes suggested,¹¹⁸ that he and Marx had earlier plumped for a Blanquist scenario of minority revolution, since he went on to emphasise that 'the *Communist Manifesto* had already proclaimed the winning of universal suffrage, of democracy', in contrast to revolutionaries in Latin countries who 'had been wont to regard suffrage as a snare, as an instrument of government trickery'.¹¹⁹ The *Manifesto*, as we have seen, had stressed the majoritarian character of the proletarian movement in contrast to 'all previous historical movements (which) were movements of minorities, or in the interest of minorities'.¹²⁰ Engels, in his 1895 Introduction, was reinforcing this idea on the basis of historical experience and relating it to the new situation where in Western countries universal manhood suffrage, or something approximating to it, had been increasingly introduced. 'The time of surprise attacks, of revolutions carried through by small conscious minorities at the head of unconscious masses, is past', he wrote. 'In order that the masses may understand what is to be done, long, persistent work is required.'¹²¹ His perspective was of German Social Democracy winning, alongside the workers, 'the greater part of the middle strata of society, petty bourgeois and small peasants' and growing into 'the decisive power in the land, before which all other powers will have to bow, whether they like it or not'.¹²²

In 1872 Marx expressed the opinion that the transition to socialism might be attained by peaceful means in countries like America and Britain.¹²³

However at no time in their lives did Marx and Engels come to believe such a possibility to exist in more than a limited number of states with particular 'institutions, customs and traditions'. Marx said in the same speech that 'we must recognise that in most continental countries the lever of revolution will have to be force'.¹²⁴

Engels, writing to Paul Lafargue on April 3, 1895, insisted that he only favoured the peaceful tactics outlined in his 1895 Introduction 'for the *Germany of today* and even then *sous bonne réserve*'. For France, Belgium, Italy and Austria they 'could not be followed in their entirety and for Germany they could become inapplicable tomorrow'.¹²⁵ Engels had agreed reluctantly to the deletion from his Introduction of some passages and formulations, which leaders of the German Social Democratic Party were afraid might be used as a pretext for the government bringing back the Anti-Socialist Law, which had been in force from 1878 till 1890. In doing so he insisted that 'the obligation to legality is a juridical, not a moral one. . . and that it completely ceases when those in power break the law. . . Legality as long and as far as it suits us, but no legality at any price, not even lipservice to it!'¹²⁶

Marx rejected the 'kind of logic which keeps within the limits of what is permitted by the police and not permitted by logic' (except where 'circumstances demand caution') under despotic regimes." However, he favoured making use of bourgeois legality in the interests of democracy. He noted in September 1878:

If in England or the United States the working class wins a majority in Parliament or Congress, it could in a legal way get rid of the laws and institutions blocking its development. . . in so far as social development required this. However the 'peaceful' development could quickly change into a 'violent' one through a rebellion by those with a stake in the old order; if they (as in the American Civil War and the French Revolution) were crushed by force, then it would be as rebels against the 'legal' power.¹²⁷

Even such a strong critic of Marxism as Popper accepts that 'citizens have not only a right but a duty' to offer 'violent resistance to attempts to overthrow democracy' when (as is the case posited by Marx) such resistance is 'unambiguously defensive'.¹²⁹

Communists, as Engels wrote in 1847, considered a revolution by peaceful means to be desirable but believed it at that time to be blocked by their opponents.¹³⁰ Hence they could not but work for and welcome a situation where, on the basis of universal suffrage, 'the representative body concentrates all the power in its hands, where it is possible constitutionally to do what one wants as soon as one has the support of the majority of the people' as he wrote in 1891, adding that such a democratic republic would also be 'the specific form for the dictatorship of the proletariat'.¹³¹



For Marx and Engels the democratic nature of a socialist revolution was not determined by whether conditions allowed it to be carried through peacefully or violently, constitutionally or unconstitutionally. It depended on its enjoying the support of the majority of the people. The majoritarian nature of the proletarian movement was emphasised, as we have seen, in the *Communist Manifesto*, which went on to declare that its ends could 'be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions'.¹³² Similarly, in an interview with the *Chicago Tribune* given on December 18, 1878, Marx explained that although 'there will be a bloody revolution in Russia, Germany, Austria and possibly in Italy. . . these revolutions will be made by a majority. No revolution can be made by a party, but by a nation'.¹³³

The winning of a majority was considered essential by Marx and Engels not only on grounds of expediency, but also because of the democratic nature of the socialist project. If Engels was to write in 1885 that 'if ever Blanquism—the fantastic idea of overturning an entire society by the action of a small conspiracy—had a certain *raison d'être*, that is certainly so now in Petersburg',¹³⁴ it was because he saw it as an 'exceptional case', where such action against the 'unexampled despotism' of tsarism could 'release explosive forces' among a people who were 'approaching their 1789'¹³⁵—i.e. a *bourgeois* revolution. Such methods would be quite inappropriate for a socialist revolution aiming to establish 'the self-government of the producers'¹³⁶ with 'the haughteous masters of the people' replaced by 'their always removable servants. . . continuously under public supervision'.¹³⁷ In such a revolution, wrote Engels, where it is a question of a complete transformation of the social organisation, 'the masses must themselves *already* have grasped what is at stake, what they are going in for with body and soul'.¹³⁸ Moreover the prospect of the withering away of the state was based, as Engels made clear, on 'a free and equal association of producers',¹³⁹ to the effective development of which minority rule would constitute an insuperable obstacle.

From the beginning Marx had rejected the elitist and doctrinaire approach which proclaimed, 'Here is the truth, kneel down before it!' As against that, he wrote in 1843: 'We develop new principles for the world out of the world's own principles. We do not say to the world: Cease your struggles, they are foolish; we will give you the true slogan of struggle. We merely show the world what it is really fighting for, and consciousness is something that it *has to* acquire, even if it does not want to.'¹⁴⁰ This was the spirit in which Engels wrote to Kautsky forty years later, arguing that a socialist government should give independence to colonial countries and let them find their way 'completely of their own accord'—even though it would involve all sorts of uncertainties and

disorders—through whatever 'social and political phases (they) have to pass before they also arrive socialist organisation'. And Engels emphasised: 'One thing alone is certain: the victorious proletariat can force no blessings of any kind on any foreign nation without undermining its own victory by so doing.'¹⁴¹

Marx's and Engels' whole political philosophy and practice marks them off unambiguously from the elitist Jacobin-Babouvist-Blanquist political tradition with what Talmon calls its 'totalitarian democratic ideal' and of which he curiously claims Marxism to be 'the most vital among the various versions'.¹⁴²

The incompatibility of Marxist and Blanquist views on the nature of revolution and post-capitalist society, which this essay has sought to demonstrate, does not of course prove that Marx and Engels were right and Blanqui, or those who consciously or unconsciously share his views today, are wrong. This question, which has considerable importance and relevance for current international socialist controversies, has to be evaluated in its own right both analytically and empirically in the light of the very considerable experience of revolution and post-revolutionary states accumulated in this century. That, however, would take us far beyond the scope of the present essay.

NOTES

1. F. Engels, 'The Times on German Communism', January 1844, Marx/Engels *Collected Works*, Lawrence & Wishart, 1975 onwards, hereafter CW, Vol. 3, p. 411.
2. This was the characterisation made by the Prussian censor in March 1843, quoted by A. Cornu, *Karl Marx et Friedrich Engels* (Paris, 1958) Vol. 2, p. 102.
3. K. Marx, *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*, CW: 3, p. 29.
4. F. Engels, 'On the History of the Communist League', Marx/Engels, *Selected Works* (Moscow/London, 1950) hereafter SW, Vol. 2, p. 314.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 315.
6. D. Ryazanov, ed., *The Communist Manifesto of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels* (London, 1930) Appendix E, p. 292. Ryazanov thinks the article was probably written in collaboration by the London members of the League of Communists headed by Karl Schapper. (*ibid.*, pp. 20-21).
7. Marx/Engels, Preface to 1872 German edition of *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, SW: 1, p. 21.
8. CW: 6, p. 515; Marx/Engels, *Werke* (Berlin, 1956-1968), hereafter MEW, Vol. 4, p. 490.
9. CW: 6, p. 495.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 504.
11. Auguste Blanqui, *Textes Choisis* (Paris, 1971), hereafter TC, p. 189.
12. J.J. Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, trans. by H.Z. Tozer (London, 1909), p. 198 (Book IV, Chapter 1).
13. *Ibid.*, p. 133 (Book II, Chapter 6).
14. *Ibid.*, p. 124 (Book II, Chapter 3).
15. *Ibid.*, p. 113 (Book I, Chapter 7).

16. George Rudé, *Revolutionary Europe—1783–1815* (London, 1964), p. 151.
17. Robespierre, *Discours et Rapports à la Convention* (Paris, 1965), p. 222. (Speech of February 5, 1794.)
18. P. Buonarroti, *Conspiration pour l'Égalité dite de Babeuf* (Paris, 1957), Vol. 1, pp. 109, 102. English translation by B. O'Brien, Augustus M. Kelley (New York 1965).
19. Ibid., p. 111.
20. Ibid., pp. 114–15.
21. Samuel Bernstein, *Auguste Blanqui and the Art of Insurrection* (London, 1971), p. 145.
22. TC, pp. 109–10.
23. Ibid., pp. 111–12.
24. Ibid., p. 112.
25. Ibid., p. 114.
26. Ibid., pp. 165–6.
27. Ibid., pp. 166–7. cf. Robespierre (November 5, 1792) arguing that the action of Paris was '*comme fondé de procuration tacite pour la société tout entière.*' Quoted by Alfred Cobban, *Aspects of the French Revolution* (London, 1971), p. 164.
28. TC, p. 161.
29. Ibid., p. 151.
30. Ibid., pp. 151–2, 167–8.
31. Ibid., pp. 164–5, 168.
32. Ibid., p. 156.
33. S. Bernstein, op. cit., p. 312.
34. TC, p. 46. It is true that Marx and Engels refused to set down 'recipes for the cookshops of the future' (K. Marx, *Capital*, Moscow, 1954, Vol. 1, p. 17) but their indications of the general lines of socialist and communist society have provided two present-day Marx scholars with sufficient material for a book of over five hundred pages on the subject. (See R. Dlubek/R. Merkel, *Marx und Engels über die sozialistische und kommunistische Gesellschaft*, Berlin–GDR, 1981).
35. K. Marx, *The Class Struggles in France (1850)*; CW: 10, hereafter CSF, p. 127. Emphasis in original.
36. Marx to Dr Watteau, November 10, 1861, in R. Garaudy, *Les sources françaises du socialisme scientifique* (Paris, 1948), p. 217. German translation in MEW: 30, p. 617.
37. K. Marx, *The Civil War in France (1871)*, SW: 1, p. 489.
38. D. Ryazanov, 'Zur Frage des Verhältnisses von Marx zu Blanqui', *Unter dem Banner des Marxismus*, II, 112 (Frankfurt a/M., 1928), Appendix 1, p. 144. A not entirely satisfactory English translation is given in CW: 10, p. 614.
39. CW: 10, p. 628. Emphasis in original.
40. Ibid., p. 626. Emphasis in original.
41. K. Marx, 'Critical Marginal Notes on the Article by a Prussian' (1844), CW: 3, p. 199. Emphasis in original.
42. K. Marx, 'On the Jewish Question' (1843), *ibid.*, p. 156. Emphasis in original.
43. Schapper appears later to have regretted this. See Marx to Engels, April 16, 1856, Marx/Engels, *Selected Correspondence* (Moscow/London, 1956), hereafter SC, p. 111, and E.P. Kandel, ed., *Marx und Engels und die ersten proletarischen Revolutionäre* (Berlin–GDR, 1965), pp. 117–8.
44. CW: 10, p. 484.
45. Ibid., pp. 277–87.
46. E. Bernstein, *Die Voraussetzungen des Sozialismus und die Aufgaben der*

- Sozialdemokratie* (Stuttgart, 1899), p. 29; G. Lichtheim, *Marxism* (London, 1961), pp. 124–5; B.D. Wolfe, *Marxism* (London, 1967), pp. 153–4, 157, 163.
47. *CW*: 10, pp. 280, 284, 286.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 286.
49. *Ibid.*, pp. 626, 629.
50. *CW*: 6, p. 519.
51. S. Moore, *Three Tactics: The Background in Marx* (New York, 1963), pp. 22, 32–33.
52. *CW*: 10, p. 277.
53. Engels to Florence Kelley-Wischnewetzky, January 27, 1887, *SC*, p. 476.
54. This was how every issue of the paper designated itself immediately under the title.
55. F. Engels, *Principles of Communism* (1847), *CW*: p. 352.
56. F. Engels, *The Constitutional Question in Germany* (June 1847), *ibid.*, p. 84.
57. *CW*: 10, p. 318. The article was written in March and April 1850.
58. *Ibid.*, pp. 316, 320–1.
59. 'Debates on Freedom of the Press' (May 1842) *CW*: 1, p. 153.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 161.
61. *CW*: 3, pp. 124, 127. According to J.L. Talmon (*Political messianism*, New York, 1960, p. 205) the young Marx in this work is 'entirely within the totalitarian-democratic tradition'!
62. *CW*: 5, p. 7.
63. *Communist Manifesto*, *CW*: 6, p. 497.
64. See my essay, 'Marx and Engels and the Concept of the Party', *Socialist Register* 1967, pp. 121–58.
65. See *ibid.*, esp. pp. 123, 143.
66. *Communist Manifesto*, *loc. cit.*
- 66a. Preface (1890) to German edition of *Communist Manifesto*, *SW*: 1, p. 30.
67. General Rules of the IWMA (drawn up by Marx in October 1864), *SW*: 1, p. 350.
68. Marx/Engels, 'Circular Letter', September 17–18, 1879, *SC*, pp. 395, 389–90.
69. F. Engels, 'The Programme of the Blanquist Communard Refugees', *MEW*: 18, p. 529.
70. Marx to J. Weydemeyer, March 5, 1852, *SC*, p. 86. Emphasis in original.
71. See Hal Draper, 'Marx and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat', *Etudes de Marxologie* (6), *Cahiers de l'Institut de Science Economique Appliquée* (Paris, September 1962) No. 129 (Série S, No. 6), pp. 5–73.
72. Marx's speech at dinner for delegates to London Conference of First International, 1871, in M. Molnar, *Le Déclin de la Première Internationale* (Geneva, 1963), p. 238. German translation in *MEW*: 17, p. 433.
73. F. Engels, Introduction (1891) to *Marx's Civil War in France*, *SW*: 1, p. 440. For an argument that, although Marx did not apply the term to the Commune, it did constitute what he understood by the dictatorship of the proletariat, see my essay, 'The Paris Commune and Marx's Conception of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat', in John Hicks & Robert Tucker, eds., *Revolution and Reaction – The Paris Commune 1871* (Amherst, Massachusetts, 1973) pp. 80–95.
74. *SW*: 1, p. 473.
75. First draft, K. Marx, *The Civil War in France* (Peking, 1966) p. 141.
76. *SW*: 1, p. 473.
77. First draft, *op. cit.*, p. 157. Emphasis in original.
78. See F. Jellinek, *The Paris Commune of 1871* (London, 1937) pp. 227, 295.
79. *SW*: 1, p. 478.
80. Marx to Engels, September 6, 1870, *MEW*: 33, p. 54.
81. Engels to Marx, September 7, 1870; Marx to Engels, September 10, 1870,

- ibid., pp. 59, 60. See also Marx's Second Address of First International on Franco-Prussian War (September, 1870), *SW: 1*, pp. 451-2.
82. Marx to F. Domela-Nieuwenhuis, February 22, 1881, *SC*, p. 410.
83. K. Kautsky, *Terrorismus und Kommunismus* (Berlin, 1919) p. 57.
84. Engels to Marx, July 6, 1869, *MEW: 32*, p. 336.
85. First draft, op. cit., p. 171.
86. Ibid., pp. 173-7. Emphasis in original.
87. *SW: 1*, p. 438.
88. Ibid., p. 472.
89. Ibid., p. 471.
90. It should however be remembered that in Chartist times, at least till 1848, with a more militant working class, universal suffrage would certainly have represented a greater danger to the established order than it was to do later. This is not without some bearing on the fact that it was bitterly resisted by the ruling class in the earlier period but happily extended to the majority of male urban workers by Disraeli in 1867 as a device to 'dish the Whigs'. (See Royden Harrison, *Before the Socialists* (London, 1965) pp. 80-1, 112-33.
91. K. Marx, 'The Chartists' (August 1852), *CW: 11*, pp. 335-6.
92. *CW: 7*, pp. 3, 601.
93. F. Engels, 'The Assembly at Frankfurt' (May 1848) *ibid.*, p. 16.
94. *CSF*, p. 65.
95. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
96. K. Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte (1851-1852)* *CW: 11*, hereafter *EB*, p. 147.
97. *CSF*, p. 131. Emphasis in original.
98. *Ibid.*, p. 137.
99. *EB*, pp. 109-10.
100. *Ibid.*
101. *CSF*, p. 56.
102. *Ibid.*, p. 69. Emphasis in original.
103. *SW: 1*, p. 463.
104. First Draft, op. cit., p. 169.
105. *EB*, pp. 191, 193. Emphasis in original.
106. *CSF*, p. 57.
107. F. Engels, 'The European Workers in 1877' (1878), *MEW: 19*, p. 133.
108. This view was attributed to Marx particularly by German Social Democratic theorists. See, e.g. H. Cunow, *Die Marxsche Geschichts-, Gesellschafts- und Staatsauffassung* (Berlin, 1920), p. 329: 'In Marx's view the proletariat will only come to rule when it already comprises the majority of the population.' Karl Kautsky wrote in his *Dictatorship of the Proletariat* (Manchester, 1919): 'The dictatorship of the proletariat was for (Marx) a condition which necessarily arose in a real democracy, because of the overwhelming numbers of the proletariat.' However, he modified this on the next page, when he stated that 'as a rule the proletariat will only attain to power when it represents the majority of the population, or, at least, has the latter behind it. . . This was the opinion of Marx and Engels.' (pp. 45-6).
109. *Principles of Communism*, *CW: 6*, p. 350. Emphasis in original.
110. *SW: 1*, p. 124.
111. K. Marx, 'The Berlin *National-Zeitung* to the Primary Electors' (January, 1849) *CW: 8*, pp. 271-2.
112. Engels to Lafargue, November 12, 1892, Engels/Lafargue, *Correspondance* (Paris, 1959) Vol. 3, p. 229.
113. *SW: 2*, p. 291.

114. *Considérants du Programme du P.O.F.* (1880) K. Marx, *Oeuvres. Economie I* (Paris, 1963) p. 1538.
115. *TC*, p. 172.
116. *SW*: 1, pp. 119–120, 123–4.
117. *Ibid.*, p. 115.
118. See, e.g. S. Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 54.
119. *SW*: 1, p. 119. The *Manifesto* did not actually speak of universal suffrage, but Engels was indicating here that it was implied by the Manifesto's formulation 'to win the battle of democracy' (*CW*: 6, p. 504).
120. *Ibid.*, p. 495.
121. *SW*: 1, p. 123.
122. *Ibid.*, pp. 124–5.
123. Speech on the Hague Congress (September 8, 1872) *The First International after Marx* (London, 1974) p. 324.
124. *Ibid.*
125. Engels/Lafargue, *Correspondance*, *op. cit.*, p. 404. Emphasis in original.
126. Engels to Richard Fischer, March 8, 1895. *MEW*: 39, pp. 425–6.
127. K. Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme (1875)*, *SW*: 2, p. 31.
128. Notes on Reichstag Debate, *MEW*: 34, pp. 498–9.
129. K.R. Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies* (London, 1980) Vol. 2, p. 152.
130. *Principles of Communism*, *CW*: 6, p. 349.
131. F. Engels, Critique of Draft Social Democratic Programme (1891) *MEW*: 22, pp. 234–5.
132. *CW*: 6, pp. 495, 519.
133. Marx/Engels, *Gesamtausgabe (MEGA)*, Proband (Berlin, 1972), p. 277.
134. Engels to V.I. Zasulich, April 23, 1885, *SC*, pp. 459–60.
135. *Ibid.*, p. 459.
136. *SW*: 1, p. 471.
137. First Draft, *op. cit.*, p. 169 (in Marx's uncorrected English).
138. *SW*: 1, p. 123. My emphasis.
139. *Origin of the Family*, *SW*: 2, p. 292.
140. Letter (September 1843) from *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*, *CW*: 3, p. 144. Emphasis in original.
141. Engels to K. Kautsky, September 12, 1882, *SC*, p. 423. Translation of first sentence slightly modified after *MEW*: 35, p. 358.
142. J.L. Talmon, *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy* (London, 1970) p. 249.