

Dear Raya:

June 6, 1971.

Though I do doubt my comments on your chapter might be as useful as you say in your letter of May 25, I understand why you need them as early as possible. I re-read the chapter during the last two days and wrote down what follows. Thank you very, very much for what you have included in your letter. My remark had not been, however, meant in this way for I shall always have enough money to pay for the mail - it's not as bad as that! Many thanks also from my wife - to all of you as we are well aware material conditions are quite hard for the whole family.

P 1, para.1

A couple of days after the upsurge in Gdansk TRYBUNA LUDU, the official Party paper, wrote - pointing out that the average wage of shipbuilding workers there exceeded that of other industries - on "modernization" and "re-organization" in Polish shipbuilding industry. Those who know the Communist countries from inside rightly conclude that the rise in food prices was but the last spark that brought the accumulated anger to fire: for "modernization and re-organization" does not mean anything less than a radical change /usually for worse/ in working conditions\* + Which, as I already wrote to you on evidence from Polish press, are very bad in Poland - the more so when confronted with the claim of Poland being a "socialist state"/.

Gierek himself admitted in his speech at the CC plenum on Feb. 7 that the anger of the working class had deep roots. He claimed as the main reasons the following facts: (1) satisfaction of social needs was not pursued in practice; (2) neglected development of consumer goods production made impossible an actual growth of real wages - which even declined to some extent; (3) stagnating real wages and growing tension in consumer goods were accompanied by rising social problems, notably housing problems; for many years investment into health service was drastically limited. /Official wording/

I put all these details before you as I think it imperative - especially in view of your readership which will come almost exclusively from the West - ~~to make it~~ to make it perfectly clear that the upsurge was ~~not~~ the outcome of a sudden, precipitated, desperate decision so much as a necessary fruit of a long process the elements of which lay at the very root of the "socialist" system with its deliberate neglect of genuine workers' needs and aspirations.

1, para.2

Most probably only 10,000 strong /see report of the Gdansk daily paper GLOS WYBRZEZA - Voice of the Coast - a unique report published on Dec. 28). A German word-to-word translation is in my possession/ Official statistics - as announced by Gierek in his speech on Feb. 7 - were 45 dead, 1165 wounded /564 civilians, the rest soldiers, policemen, militiamen/ of which 154 with bullet wounds

2, para.2

You may mention the fact /now admitted little by little in Polish press - as I read myself only last week/ that there were many strikes during the first months of 1971 all over Poland

- P.2, para.3 You are perfectly right in stressing that "the essence of the matter" is "the very nearly ceaseless struggle"!
- P.4, para-2 "...the famous philosophers like Ernst Bloch" should read Bloch  
 Were there indeed "heated discussions in the Petöfi clubs as early as 1953? I thought these clubs - or was there not one club only, and that in Budapest? - were founded later since it is hardly possible Rákosi would have allowed these discussion forums.
- 5, last par. Very important the emphasis put on totalitarianism making "mass quest for universality more urgent and more concrete". But is it really only the political totalitarianism? It embraces every sphere of life, both public and private - it's not just political pressure unless you mean this as a *pars pro toto* expression. However, somehow I am not satisfied with the simple statement of the obvious /or so it seems/ link between totalitarianism and universality. I would prefer a more precise formulation of the relation between both - /to me the present one seems to be too general.
- 6, second line 1970 should probably read 1970's since neither the Arab-Israeli war nor the occurrence of the term "state capitalism" emerged in the year of 1970  
 para.1 It was not in 1967 that "Communist theoreticians suddenly came up..." for the term "state capitalism" itself has been very much used before, e.g. by the West German economists to define the West German economic system. Beside, the importance of the term "newly emerging" with the state-capitalist class/ is not further pursued, is not elaborated. Why?  
 as to the Arab-Israeli war - whatever its importance - was it a characteristic so salient for the "state-capitalist ruling class" that it has to be specifically mentioned? Aren't there other political events probably as much evidence of Russian expansionism /since you mention the Mediterranean/? I do not see for myself the "newness" - "uniqueness" of this major event. If the whole paragraph would be dropped - would it change the line of reasoning? Probably not.
- 7, para.1 The 1971-75 plan in Poland will not remain substantially the same, as repeated press reports now indicate. A rise in real wages of 18-20 per cent during this period is something very unusual in East Europe.  
 which of Marx's principles is restated by describing "production for production's sake"?
- para. 2 You write on "the essence of the theoretical discussion" but did not mention any discussion before. It is not clear if this refers to a Polish one - as can be judged from the context - or a Russian one - since you mention Varga on the preceding page.  
 The whole of p.7 /plus the first 6 lines of p.8/ seems to me rather "imposed" on the rest of the text: It is preceded by a statement /"what is new on the part of the state-capitalist ruling class"/ which is not further substantiated, and it is followed by an explanation of developments following the 1950's. It seems to lack coherence.
- 6, last line No doubt Czechoslovakia should read Poland here.
- 8, <sup>first</sup> para. Is there any other evidence but press calculations that Moczar intended to replace Gomulka in the leadership? Why, then, was he not elected to G.'s post in December, 1970?

8, first para. "...no help whatsoever from East Germany.." - no help was ever provided within the Socialist bloc by any other country except Russia, so it could not have been expected in this case, neither. The irony misses its point.

9, second para. What kind of "Russian counter-revolution closed the fifties" - once we assume Stalin's policy was a counter-revolution beginning as far back as in the 30's?

Lidice - should read LIBLICE - as the Kafka conference was held in a castle belonging to the Academy of Sciences, not in the village made famous by its erasure by the Nazis during the war. Also, the name of its convenor is GOLDSTUCKER, not Gold Stucker

11, para 2 "mass media...resisting Dubček" should read, no doubt, assisting Dubček

13/14

I am not sure whether Kolakowski has in mind the state-capitalist ruling class when he writes what you quote. I may check with the Polish edition of his book as to the context. I remember his article The Fate of Marxism in Eastern Europe, Slavic Review, June 1970 - he is slipping away from Marxism and the quotation you use may be just an allusion to Marxist /not orthodox/ thought in general.

The concluding part /pp.15-17/ is very fine, it is persuasively argued, simple and clear. In my opinion, pp.1-5 and the pages following p.9 are more cogent and better organized than pp.6,7,8.

Taken as a whole, however, it's a fine chapter that whets one's appetite for the rest of the book, with a clear, convincing message - what a terrible pity it cannot be publicized here!

Dear Raya, I am not at all sure if this is the kind of criticism you have expected - but this is all I can give as in all other points I am in agreement with you. I am indeed looking forward to the book as a whole!

Once again, many thanks to the whole family from both of us.

Fraternally,