

Nov. 25, 1981

To the RES-NEB (To be read also to all locals)
Dear Colleagues:

Two very important dates--December 13th and January 2,-- loom before us which seem to me to demand elaboration, so permit me a preliminary philosophic-political development here. Dec. 13th is the final class on the book which I will give. The fact that even though we have finally dispatched, corrected, the copy-edited manuscript of ROSALUXEMBURG, WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND MARX'S PHILOSOPHY OF LIBERATION, I cannot yet say it is truly the final draft can be seen from what I am first now sending in as an addition to ftn. 39, p. 3 of Ch. 3. The reason for wanting to make that addition tells even more than the footnote I'll quote in a minute. It is this:

It is of the essence to grasp the fact not only by us (which is easy) but by readers, all readers, that this is not an individual work, by one ED, but a work of Marxist-Humanism which strongly challenges all post-Marx Marxists, beginning with Engels. Now, heretofore, when we said this, it was, while not exactly restricted to Engels' Origin of the Family, was centered around it and, because that was so, looked as if it were a question only of the Man/Woman relationship. Crucial as that was, it was not the whole, however, as became clear both as we contrasted Marx's Ethnological Notebooks to it where the question of unilateral (Engels) was contrasted to Marx's multilateral development of humanity, beginning with the gens. But, once also the footnote omitted by Engels from Vol. II of CAPITAL, and this began demanding of me the last I called "final addition"--the 4-5 final pages I entitled "A 1960s view--the responsibility that falls on all of us with that challenge to post-Marx Marxists is awesome, and we must be prepared for endless, ruthless criticism. So, it isn't only a question of knowing how to project our work, but how to ready ourselves to answer criticism.

With that ground on which to stand, consider the new footnote I propose for Ch. 3 when I first mention Rosdolsky and now wish to expand the personal remembrance of things past. Directly after the reference in that ftn. to my critique of his THE MAKING OF MARX'S CAPITAL in the NAL 1-2/78:

Permit me to add a personal note, since Roman Rosdolsky has made a category of the fact that, in 1948, he "had the good fortune to see one of the then very rare copies of Marx's Rough Draft" (i.e., the German text of the Grundrisse der Kritik politischen Okonomie (Rohentwurf), published by the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute in 1939 in Moscow. That was the year I had also seen a copy of the Grundrisse, and it was the year I made Rosdolsky's acquaintance. Despite the fact that Rosdolsky was still clinging to a concept of Russia as "a degenerated workers' state", while I had, in 1941, developed the theory of state-capitalism (when he was incarcerated in Hitler's concentration camps), our friendship continued for some time. Later, for very different reasons, we each moved to Detroit. By then the differences between us were no longer limited to a single theory, but involved the centrality of dialectics in Marxism. To me philosophy did not mean dialectics only "in general", but, very specifically, "negation of negation" which Marx had called

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"a new Humanism"; to me, this was spelled out most concretely on June 17, 1953, by the East German revolt from under Communist totalitarianism. What had become alive to me was the breakup of the Absolute Idea in the context of second negativity, not just philosophically, but in combat. The whole new movement from practice that came alive with that revolt demanded a totally new relationship of practice to theory had to be established if a new unity of theory and practice was to be achieved. For, as Hegel had articulated it ~~in the context of the Absolute Idea~~ "each of these [the Theoretical and Practical Idea] by itself is one-sided and contains the Idea itself only as a sought Beyond and an unattained goal..." I dare say that a great deal more than the question of Hegel was involved in our dispute, but in any case the break between Rosdolay became complete. [The details of the development of what became Marxist-Humanism, see THE RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA COLLECTION, MARXIST-HUMANISM, 1941 to Today, Its Origin and Development in the U.S./USSR Archives of Labor History and Urban ~~Marxist~~ Affairs, Detroit, 48202]

You can see from this that the Dec. 13th class will be more than a summation of what is in the book, though also less, but a way to project the positive and answer the negative criticisms. And we certainly are ready to undertake all challenges. It will, in some respects, set the basis for our Jan. 2nd expanded REB. In a word, it will be ~~not only~~ a summation of the book, but one of the Perspectives that had been elaborated at our Plenum and which we need to expand and carry out between that day and next convention. So many crises, have since developed, be it in the Middle East or the disarray in the NATO countries or the sharpening of the nuclear threat from US and Russia, that ~~we~~ we need to ~~reorganize~~ ^{reopen} all our activities in mass movement, and especially in labor against whom both management and the Reagan Administration are trying to destroy.

The most positive activities this year have been around Latin America, especially Anne's trip and magnificent achievements. Therefore, this year, as distinguished from all other expanded REB meetings where, generally, the only sub-report to my report was by National Organizer, this year it will be by Anne. Along with, and because that was so centrally around WL, I will be inviting some ~~xxx~~ who are deeply involved in work who may not be NEB. Thus, on the one hand, the organizer of Chicago, Jan; or from NY Russell who is the one who did not only reorganize on question of needing forums on college campuses, but has already established one that would certainly serve as ground for book audience. Or Mariana in Detroit. You will hear more from us as REB will discuss this letter and see what else is involved, whether it be Finances--I'm sure all are meeting their pledges before the end of the year--or the great amount of work both with N&L and the book as they actually become 3 books with new introductions to M&F and P&R.

It is the fact that it is 3 books--and the first fundamental work, M&F is 25 years old and not a word had to be changed, and the fact that all are, at one and the same time, backed up by over 40 years of experience as well as data, philosophy as well as current politics, and projected forward for the 1980s, that, of necessity, spells out our responsibility for the challenge to all other post-Marx Marxists and gives us confidence that is truly both a new year and a new decade where there will be no division between philosophy of revolution and its actuality. Yours, Raya

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TEXT OF ADDITION

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ADD (as new paragraph) to n.33 for chapter III, mss. page 305:

Permit me to add a personal note, since Roman Rosdolsky has made a category of the fact that, in 1948, he "had the good fortune to see one of the then very rare copies of Marx's Rough Draft" (i.e., ^{was referring to} the German text of the Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie (Rechenhaff), 1857-1858, published by the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute in 1939 in Moscow. That year, 1948, was when I first met Rosdolsky; I, too, had been studying the Grundrisse. Despite the fact that Rosdolsky was still clinging to a concept of Russia as "a degenerated workers' state," whereas I had, developed the theory of state-capitalism in 1941 (when he was still incarcerated in Hitler's concentration camps), our friendship continued for some time. Later, for very different reasons, we each moved to Detroit. By then the differences between us were no longer limited to a single theory, but involved the centrality of dialectics in Marxism. To me, philosophy did not mean dialectics only "in general" but, very specifically, "negation of the negation," which Marx had called "a new Humanism." I held that this was spelled out concretely on June 17, 1953, in the East German revolt against Communist totalitarianism. What had become alive to me was the breakup of the Absolute Idea in the context of second negativity, not just philosophically, but in combat. The whole new movement from practice that came alive with that revolt demanded ^{that} a totally new relationship of practice to theory had to be established if a new unity of theory and practice was to be achieved. In summing up the Theoretical/^{Idea} and/^{the} Practical Idea, Hegel had stressed that "each of these by itself is one-sided and contains the Idea itself only as a sought Beyond and an unatti

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an unattain^aed goal." I dare say that a great deal more than the question of Hegel was involved in our dispute, in 1953, but that was when my break with Rosdolsky became complete. (For the details of what became Marxist-Humanism, see The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection: Marxist-Humanism, Its Origin and Development in the U.S., 1941 to Today, 10 vols (Detroit: Wayne State University Labor History Archives, 1981).