

ON THE OCCASION OF  
THE  
KARL 1983 A  
MARY CENTENARY SPECIAL CONSTITUTIONAL  
CONVENTION OF  
NEWS & LETTERS COMMITTEES

Pre-convention Discussion Bulletin Number Four

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Published by NEWS AND LETTERS COMMITTEES  
2832 East Grand Blvd. #316 Detroit, Michigan 48211

August 1983

Price: 50¢

Aug. 1, 1983

REVOLUTIONS AND PHILOSOPHIES:

How Marxists view these when movement is from practice; when to a movement from theory; and when practice and theory unite in a philosophy of revolution as preparation for an actual revolution.

"Cognition is reconstructed and united with the Practical Idea, the actuality which is found as given is at the same time determined as the realized absolute end --- not however (as in inquiring Cognition) merely as objective world without the subjectivity of the Notion, but as objective world whose inner ground and actual persistence is the Notion. This is the Absolute Idea."

-- Hegel, Science of Logic  
Vol. II, p. 465

TO THE REB-MEB. (Plus Raymond and Frank as participants-collaborators of the projected 1949-50 Miners General Strike pamphlet)

Dear Colleagues:

Because of the three month-long National Tour this year I have had but one chance to address the new leadership that was elected at the last Convention. Generally several letters follow the Convention addressed to the new leadership. Though belatedly, allow me to initiate, at least briefly, this historic/philosophic/revolutionary

dialogue. Let's begin at the beginning with Marxism and Freedom. Since however this means covering a whole age of revolutions -- political-economic-intellectual -- that followed the birth of the industrial age, let us first ground ourselves in Marx's discovery of a whole new continent of thought and of revolution which Marx hoped would put an end to utopianism, sectarianism, clique-ism, not to mention the conspiratorial, self-styled, organizational leaders who had so little belief in the reason of the masses that they practiced their elitist concepts within a small group who alone would know "the real plan of revolution".

As against such pre-Marxian conceptions of paths to social revolution, Marx named his philosophy "a new Humanism" and the proletarian revolution, a human revolution.

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I. HOW TO EMBARK ON THE PATH OF REVOLUTION IN YOUR EPOCH

The historic, epochal, revolutionary, global concept of Marx's Marxism had, first, however, to engage in the battle of ideas not only against the ideologues of the existing state Marx aimed to overthrow, but with a great variety of tendencies who emerged to claim adherence to that philosophy of mass-revolution but wished to amend its "tactics" and "one-man rule". The "how" to embark on the path of revolution was left, at best to the strategy as if that strategy could be worked out irrespective of the philosophy. That this was not just a "tactical" question, much less a "collective" versus a "one-man rule"<sup>question</sup> was tragically enough proven once World War I broke out and the German Social Democracy betrayed and voted war credits to the Kaiser. It took a very long, hard thirty-nine year struggle before it became crystal clear that one couldn't be both for Marx and for Lassalle and that disregarding the 1875 Critique of the Gotha Program meant being on the opposite side of the barricades. Too late then to dig into philosophy? Not for Lenin but then he was the only one who felt that objective compulsion, inseparable from the subjective necessity to return to Marx's deep rootedness in the Hegelian dialectic.

In contrast to the 1914 generation, the maturity of this age, born out of a movement from practice that began in the 1950s manifested itself anew in 1978, the year the Iranian revolution unfolded. It is then the Iranian comrades chose, at one and the same time, to translate the 1844 Humanist Essays that were published as appendix to Marxism and Freedom, and chose from the book itself that unusual chapter that constituted a whole part by itself and was entitled, "Worker and Intellectual at a Turning Point in History: 1848-1861" With that choice to mark their return to Iran the Iranian comrades proved (1) that the 1848 revolutions were not past history but present; and (2) that the combination of actual revolutions with Marx's philosophy of revolution showed so totally new an attitude to objectivity that one couldn't possibly stop with the opposition to the Shah, but had also to show what one was for and engage in concrete battle of ideas with the other Left tendencies.

It becomes necessary to look at ourselves who first singled out the movement from practice that was itself a form of theory as the concrete new of our epoch which was so universal that it actually was true of history in general. It allowed us to have the first chapter of M&E entitled the age of revolutions, though it referred to a period before Marx and moreover referred not only to the American and French revolutions but to the intellectual ones both in Classical Political Economy (Smith, Ricardo) and philosophic (Hegel). No post-Marx Marxists, no matter how "orthodox" or deviant takes issue so long as Hegel is mentioned along with political economists and especially if Hegel is just one among other philosophers. The claim was that Kant too lived in the epoch of the French revolution. That 1914 generation much preferred Kant. Some also liked to refer to the fact that long before either Kant or Hegel there was Spinoza whom Marx himself quoted and praised especially highly the dialectical profundity of Spinoza's declaration -- "Every determination is a negation". What they all forgot is that what was the determinant for Marx was neither Kant nor Spinoza, but Hegel. The Hegelian dialectic, re-created as dialectics of revolution, was Marx's "Absolute Method."

Hegel, in praising Kant for re-establishing the dialectic for the "modern world", critiqued him sharply however -- and both Marx and Lenin fully accepted that critique -- for having "stopped dead"\* before ever reaching the "negation of the negation", i.e., before the positive in that negative had achieved a new unification of reason and reality. What Marx criticized Hegel for was for "dehumanizing" the idea as if consciousness developed by itself instead of people thinking. Marx not only transcended idealism but he broke also with materialism, including that of Feuerbach.

\*Science of Logic, Vol. II, p. 226

As against Engels who had much overpraised Feuerbach, Marx's very first of the eleven "Theses on Feuerbach" credits the idealist dialectic for having developed "the active side, in contradistinction to materialism". Marx's break with Feuerbach was over that little phrase, "negation of the negation", for failing to see its creative, revolutionary nature.

In a word it is not philosophers and philosophies but the Hegelian dialectic and only that which Marx judged to be the "source of all dialectic". It is not "materialism" but only Marxian materialism that never separated from Hegelian dialectics. Engels was not Marx. What Marx did in recreating the Hegelian dialectic and in his revolutionary demystification of Hegel was to show that what was missing was that Hegel's philosophy appreciated subjectivity only when it was without subject. Marx, in specifying the proletariat as the subject showed that the Enrages of France had only been <sup>an</sup> embryonic proletariat and there Hegel met his historic limit.

As against that historic limit for bourgeois thought, Marx's break with capitalism in following the development of the proletarian masses let his Promethean vision to single out at once also the Man/Woman relationship and new forces of revolution. Nor could Marx be stopped by defeat of those revolutions. Thus it was that the defeat of the 1848 Revolutions only led Marx to transform the 1843 phrase into a whole theory of "revolution in permanence" which he delivered in 1850 to the Communist League. Marx's next return to Hegel, in 1857-58 as he worked out the Grundrisse led to both a new appreciation of Hegelian dialectics as Marx worked it out in his study of economics, and, at the same time, studied the pre-capitalist societies in so totally a new way that he concluded that there had been a new epochal stage of human development he named "Asiatic

Mode of Production". It was this indeed which was the actual beginning of what, after completing Volume I of Capital Marx/so assiduously in his last years both for Vols. III of Capital and what we know as the Ethnological Notebooks in which we have found the trail to the 1980s.

II. A New Age of Revolutions; Different Historic Periods and the Black Philosophic Dimension

In Lenin's day, when he was confronted with the Second International's betrayal, his return to Hegel led him to single out the abstract principle of each unit containing the opposite within itself. As a revolutionary he wasn't interested only in showing what life itself showed clearly enough -- the betrayal -- but how to transform that opposite into a revolutionary stage. Everyone knows the slogan "turn the imperialist war into a civil war". Some know the national revolutions as "bacillus" for proletarian revolution. None, and that includes Trotsky, knew how to work out "if not Berlin, perhaps Peking"; in a word, how to extend revolution to the Third World. A new age had arrived when the first workers' state had <sup>been</sup> transformed into its opposite, a state-capitalist society and, with it, a new form of workers' revolt. The need <sup>was</sup> to find a link to Marx's Marrisism. This is what L&F achieved in establishing both the American and Humanist roots of Marxism. It doesn't mean that either Marx or Lenin solved the problems of our age. No one can solve the problems of one's age except those who live in it. It does mean that without ground and method,

the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic method, that is to say the unchained dialectic method, we could not have seen that great movement from practice as a form of theory. In singling that out for our age we could see, both in the workers battling automation, in the East European workers new forms of revolt, and in the Montgomery Bus Boycott, new stages of revolution long before they were so recognized by all others.

What, philosophically, that Black Dimension signified is first fully developed in Philosophy and Revolution, to which I will get <sup>to</sup> in a moment. What I wish to do here, i.e., as we first embark on the path to revolution is to stress what Frantz Fanon had achieved with his Black Skin / White Masks. This wasn't available in English until the 1960s but it was actually written in 1952. Had the Existentialist Sartre known how to listen to those new voices he would not have exposed the racism inherent in the Left intellectual as well, which led him to call Africa "ahistorical". Just as it was a great leap forward when Marx re-interpreted the Master/Servant relationship as the class struggle, so it was a breakthrough for Frantz Fanon to show that Hegel had created a vicious circle by not seeing -- being literally sightless before Black consciousness. The "Invisible Man" here rises to say, "At the foundation of Hegelian dialectic there is an absolute reciprocity which must be emphasized. It is in the degree to which I go beyond my own immediate being that I apprehend the existence of the other . . ." (p. 217)

"For Hegel with reciprocity, here the Master laughs at the consciousness of the slave. What he wants from the slave is not recognition but work." (p. 220)

"Thus human reality in-itself for-itself can be achieved only through conflict and through the risk that conflict implies . . ."

"... I am for somewhere else and for something else, I demand notice be taken of my negating activity... insofar as I do battle for a creation of a new world..."

Fanon

That new world for which/was battling in the early 1950s was fully worked out both philosophically in 'WRETCHED OF THE EARTH' and concretely as he renounced French citizenship and fully aligned with actual revolutions, the ongoing African revolutions, and by naming his philosophy, as Marx's, "a new Humanism" as a world revolutionary.

Now let us take a second look at different historic periods, this time by looking at philosophy, in-and-for-itself, as well as ground for organization.

### III. Our Organizational-Constitutional Tasks Now That we Have the Trilogy of Revolution

First let us consider the different historic periods after Marx, and why the post-Marx Marxists had to return to Hegel even as Marx himself, long after he had transcended Hegel philosophically as well politically, i.e., as a revolutionary as the revolutionary masses in motion were creating ever new historic turning points. Take a deeper look at Marx's Promethean vision when he first broke from capitalist society. His new continent of thought and of revolution did not stop at naming the proletariat as Subject. Just as he had singled out the man/woman relationship as a most fundamental human relationship, so his philosophy, "a new Humanism" was by no means confined to fighting for civil rights (the specific case then was civil rights for Jews). On the contrary,

in explaining why gaining political civil rights in a capitalist society is but a minor victory; that what was needed



for a new human society was "revolution in permanence." This didn't mean that because he already had that concept as his aim as was the question of world revolution that he wouldn't fight in the concrete for both civil rights and for national liberation. In the time of Marx it was both for Poland against Tsarist Russia, and for Ireland against British imperialism, even as Lenin, in his day, recognized the Easter Rebellion as the dialectics of revolution in-and-for-itself as well as "bacillus" for proletarian revolution, as against Rosa Luxemburg's "3-way dialectic" in not recognizing the revolutionary struggle of national liberation.

Secondly, let's hold on tightly to the fact that it wasn't only the "vanguard party" concept that had Lenin recognize in Critique of the Gotha Program the need to destroy the bourgeois state, and not the new type of party which would be grounded in philosophy of revolution in permanence. After all, despite the vanguardism Lenin was great enough to see the Soviets, to call for "All power to the Soviets" and indeed go all the way to workers' control in the hands of the masses "to every man, woman and child. In a word, if he was willing enough to forget vanguardism as not even to mention it/State and Revolution, and certainly was for no separation between theory and practice, then why did he run short in philosophy and so give up that last paragraph in Absolute Idea as never to go into Philosophy of Mind? As I said when I first broke through on the Absolute Idea, the truth is the objective situation had completely changed and Lenin, even as he was calling for the removal of Stalin, it was done only on the question of bureaucracy and "accumulation of too much power in his hands" and Lenin wasn't sure he "knew how to use that." In a word, unless one sees Stalin, not just as a bureaucrat but representing an alien class, there is no way to see either the existence of state-capitalism or the only way to oppose that leadership is a new form of workers' revolt, not just a dilution of leadership. And it was only our age where state-capitalism and the new form of workers' revolt had developed and because of that great movement from practice, and not simply being "smarter" that allowed us to break both with the concept of the "party to lead" and a new stage in cognition.

Rosa Luxemburg was not the only one who thought that since internationalism transcended nationalism that all who fight

"alone" are "backward", even if it was none less than Marx who said otherwise. The Bolshevik Bukharin held a point of view similar to Luxemburg's on the National Question, specifically the Irish Rebellion. And, just as Trotsky's ultra-leftism on his type of permanent revolution skipping over the peasantry in order to have a "pure" proletarian revolution, so none of them could really grasp the dialectics of liberation, though all were, as individuals, revolutionaries. Had Lenin not held on to his position of the creativity of national liberation movement, it isn't only the Russian Revolution that likewise would have remained unfinished, but he never would have had that flash of genius of what we call now the Third World with his declaration, "If not through Berlin, then perhaps through Peking."

With that he surely left us a great revolutionary legacy. But just as surely, it was not on the question of organization and its imperative need for as philosophic a ground as his break with his philosophic past when it came to the question of "transformation into the opposite" applying also to the "aristocracy of labor.". For that matter, where theory of state-capitalism was the theoretic foundation for total break with Stalinism and Trotskyism, it didn't reach up to philosophy of revolution, as was evident enough in the break-up of J-F T and the reconnecting with Marx's Marxism which MARXISM AND FREEDOM achieved both in recreating "the new Humanism" for our age.

By the mid-1960s and the emergence of a whole new Third World, and the new stage of cognition when it comes to Black--Franz Fannn--even if the New Left youth kept calling only for activism and more activism, relegating theory to be picked up "en route" rather than developed to the point of philosophy. What that great movement from practice that was itself a form of theory did achieve was to so illuminate those final 3 syllogisms of Hegel's Philosophy of Mind--paragraphs 575, 576, 577--that it disclosed the unique originality of Marxist-Humanists in breaking through where none before had trod. In a word, the need for and development of Philosophy and Revolution was no mere update of M&F. It was new in the philosophic view of new, epochally new, or, to use, Marx's concept of "new moments", stages of development and self-development, objective and subjective self-development. Put differently, the New Left Youth were wrong, not only

because they counterposed activism to theory. It was wrong because they couldn't see the new revolutionary forces as Reason. Had they rooted themselves there, as did Fanon, they could have embarked on that new stage of hard "labor, patience and suffering of the negative" which brought us, and us alone to those final syllogisms in Hegel and their recreation for our age, which P&R did both by laying that totally new foundation in Ch.1 and carried it through all the chapters, which didn't stop, in Part I just with Hegel, but go through with Marx and Lenin; then to consider all Alternatives, whether that was Trotsky or Mao but also include that "Outsider Looking In", Sartre; and finally Part III when all new realities of those new forms of revolt, be it in Africa within world economy; in East Europe within confines of state-capitalism, and finally the "New Passions and New Forces" whether that meant Black Dimension, or anti-Vietnam War Youth, or Women's Liberation. Indeed because P&R was so deep into new paths of philosophy and revolution that it could lay ground for ROSA LUXEMBURG, WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND MARX'S PHILOSOPHY OF REVOLUTION so that, finally, we had ground also for philosophy and organization, as we grappled, on the one side with Marx's Critique of the Gotha Program in toto and recreated it for our age.

Because nothing is more important for us for this Constitutional Convention than what it means to have a new type of member --and by new we mean not simply who joins us today or will tomorrow, but we ourselves even where we are among the founding members of Marxist-Humanism, i.e., New and Letters Committees, now that we do have a trilogy of revolution, let us take a second look at both the totality and the individual historic-philosophic ground those 3 last syllogisms created not only for P&R where they are dealt with in detail but for RLWLKM where they are not dealt with in any direct way for they certainly helped in the discovery of Marx's last decade which brought us to the challenge to all post-Marx Marxists.

The first ( 575) of the Syllogisms simply lists the 3 major works of Hegel, as fact, Topic-Nature-Mind. But what that fact manifests makes you look twice at the middle since middle, philosophically is nothing short of mediation, and here <sup>is what</sup> Hegel draws from it: "Nature, standing between the Mind and its essence, sunders them, not indeed to extremes of finite abstraction, nor itself

to something away from them and independent...." (p. 40, PAR) In a word, now the question is relatedness, and having sundered both Logic and Mind and thus reminded you what he did as he stood on the threshold of the Absolute Idea in Science of Logic when he compelled you to think not "merely as objective world without subjectivity of the Notion, but as objective world whose inner ground and actual persistence is the Notion", you are prepared to go from Nature (whether you take it, as Sartre as "exteriority", or, as Lenin, as stretching a hand to Practice) you are ready for subjectivity.

O.K. #576, Nature-Mind-Logic, it is Mind itself which is now Mediation". philosophy appears as a subjective cognition of which liberty is the aim, and which is itself way to produce it." (p. 41, PAR) Now comes the true shock. He doesn't proceed to follow the sequence of those books as facts which would have led you to where Logic becomes Mediation. No, Logic is altogether replaced! Instead of fact we now go back to Idea, and it is Self-Thinking Idea which becomes par/577 and if anything ever sounded more mystical, if not plain insane, then it is the way these philosophers look at Marxism that now equates it to Self-bringing forth of liberty.

Just compare the way Hegel expresses #577: "It is the nature of the fact, the notion which causes the movement and development, yet this same movement is equally the act of cognition." (p. 42, PAR) And now read Gramsci: "The philosophy of Praxis is consciousness full of contradictions in which the philosopher himself, understood both individually and as an entire social group, not merely grasps the contradictions, but posits himself as an element of the contradictions and elevates this element to a principle of knowledge and therefore of action." (My emphasis, rd)

Perhaps, this didn't help either, but when you think of something concrete, it will help, and here I had a conversation with Andy about that projected 1949-50 pamphlet on the General Miners Strike, and when I said I know how crazy Self-Thinking Idea is, sounds, but nevertheless we need to concretize it in a way that they would understand Self-Bringing Forth of Liberty as reality for indeed there is also a spontaneity of ideas and not just of masses in motion. Suddenly, Andy said, but it isn't true that spontaneity of the masses means that, just because they arise, all at once, and no one expected it, the truth is that.

they have been thinking their own thoughts for quite some time before the action burst forth. They have talked with each other: the spontaneity of the masses didn't just happen, out of the blue. As thought, it was there long before it exploded spontaneously.

Spontaneity of ideas, I thought, is an excellent word-meaning for Self-determination of the Idea and Self-Thinking Idea. Just as Hegel replaced Logic, we can replace Self-determination of the Idea with spontaneity of the idea, provided we understand how long it had been brewing before it exploded, i.e., the hard labor it took to create a new category out of the new experience or a generalization of the new unity, new relationship out of thought and action.

In conclusion, reread that very first paragraph with which I began this Dear Colleagues letter and ask yourselves what organizational conclusion had Marx drawn when, having discovered a new continent of thought and of revolution, he decided to hit out against the utopian, sectarian, conspiratorial groups, not to mention the clique-ism that sprung up with the Proudhons, Bakunins, Lasalles? And how does that apply to us now that we have a trilogy of revolution which demands that not only must there be a new relationship, a new unity of theory and practice, but philosophy and organization? Organization cannot be a preserve free of philosophy.

This is the last chance I'll have to address you as I must now get down to working out the Perspectives of the Convention. See you there.

Yours,

RAYA

## ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH and the DIALECTICS OF "REVOLUTION IN PERMANENCE"

by Peter, LA

An essential point as well as concluding note of the Marxist-Humanist Draft Perspectives for 1983/4 concerns the need for new organizational growth by the Committees. This is hardly the first time we have raised either that or the need for a new kind of member, but it is the first time discussion of them follows a section entitled, "Marx's Last Writings Lets us Hear Marx Thinking".

The need for organizational growth thus flows from the new ground established by the Trilogy of Revolution, Marx's last decade, and the new view of Marx both have revealed. What follows are some notes on how the philosophic/organizational vantage point developed this year illuminates some aspects of Marxist-Humanism's unique historic contribution, thereby indicating possible ways of achieving the organizational growth so imperative in the year ahead.

### I. Marx's Last Decade and its Challenge for Organization

The Draft Perspectives lets us hear Marx think as he developed new pathways to revolution in his last decade. These writings are important not only for the particular views of Marx on agrarian societies, the peasantry, or the Russian revolution, but most of all because they reveal the concreteness and totality of Marx's method.

Thus, in tracing out a pathway to revolution for the Third World, Marx presented several conditions required for the creation of an indigenous socialism. Marx had already traced out the objective material condition for socialism in the West with his chapter "The Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation" in Capital. There, he showed how socialism arises from out of the socialized relations of production of capitalism (the factory system) and the revolutionary praxis of the proletariat which fights them. But this could hardly apply to the "East" which had neither experienced capitalism or (except for Japan) feudalism.

Marx thus tried to find an indigenous condition for socialism in the East, discovering it in the village commune. Whereas communal relations of working the land had vanished long before in the West, in the East they persisted and could therefore serve as a material condition for a new society.

But the mere existence of the village communes could not in and of themselves create socialism. After all, the communes had existed for millenia, and thus far no socialism had arisen from them. Furthermore, the communes were plagued with caste relations, slave relations, patriarchal relations; these would have to be removed before freedom could issue from the communal form. Needed was a revolution to strip away all elements within the commune which stood in the way of a new society. Only a revolutionary subject--which, Marx said, could in certain cases be the peasantry--could do that uprooting.

But even this was not enough to ensure the creation of a Third World socialism, for how was the peasantry to obtain the insight,

maturity and strength to fight not only against imperialism or backwardness but also for a new society? How would it develop relations with the workers of the West, how could it develop the germ of communalism into a nation-wide system of freely associated production? Marx indicated an approach to an answer in his draft letter to Zasulich:

To save the Russian commune...there must be a Russian revolution...if the revolution takes place in time, if it concentrates all its force (and if the intelligent sector of Russian society, the Russian intellect) concentrates all the living forces of the country, (the commune) will soon develop as a regenerating element of Russian society.

To create a new pathway to revolution, Marx was saying, neither the objective material conditions nor the subjective revolutionary forces will alone suffice; also required is "intellect", cognition, what we call a philosophy of revolution to so inter-relate the two as to develop new pathways to a total uprising. What we can now see thanks to Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution is that in his last decade Marx projected philosophy as a force of revolution.

Such inter-relating of dialectics with "revolution in permanence" characterized all of Marx's development. The basis for his writings in the last decade were the changes he introduced to the French edition of Capital (especially the final Part VII) where he specified that Capital applied only to Western development, and that the growth of colonialism would not vitiate the laws of capitalist crisis. For Marx, such conceptions were not just "theories" but the very ground for organization. Thus, in his 1875 Critique of the Gotha Program he mercilessly criticized the German socialists for separating Marxian principle from an organizational program and sent a covering letter to the "Marxist" leadership saying he would soon send "the final part" of the French edition of Capital and a new edition of the Revolutions Concerning the Cologne Communist Trial. That work contained his 1850 Address on Permanent Revolution. Marx was in effect telling the German socialists (but most of all, ourselves) that internalizing and projecting the philosophy of "revolution in permanence" was the only thing that gives a revolutionary organization its historic right to exist. Just as no pathway to revolution could open up for the Third World where no philosophy was present, so could none open for the West so long as philosophy and organization were kept in separate realms.

We have seen from Part III of RLWLMPR that such inter-relating of dialectics and activism constituted the essence and totality of all of Marx's development, from 1841 when he posed the need for philosophy to turn to reality, to 1843 when he wrote "theory too becomes a material force when it seizes the masses" (in the very essay where he first makes use of the term "proletariat") to his work as organization man in his Critique of the Gotha Program.

In giving us a new vantage point from which to view Marx's Marxism, RLWLMPR also provides a new vantage point from which to view Marxist-Humanism's unique historic contribution, especially as contained in chapter one of Philosophy & Revolution and the 1953 Letters on the Absolute Idea.

## II. Absolute Negativity as New Beginning and its Challenge to Organization

Philosophy & Revolution called for a new unity of theory and practice from which a new beginning can arise in today's revolutionary movement. As Raya wrote in Chapter 9, "as against the concept that endless activity, though it be mindless, is sufficient 'to make the revolution', what is needed is a re-statement for our age of Marx's concept of the 'realization' of philosophy, i.e., the inseparability of philosophy and revolution." This inseparability is developed by tracing through Hegel's central philosophic category of the Absolute in his major works--Phenomenology of Mind, Science of Logic, Philosophy of Mind. As Raya wrote in Chapter 1, "because our hunger for theory arises from the totality of the present crisis, Hegel's Absolute Method becomes irresistible." The Hegelian-Marxian method of liberation, Absolute Method, is presented as what needs to be concretized and re-created in order for our age to achieve the unity of theory and practice required for making a successful revolution.

Ever since P&R was published, we have been trying to break down this conception as the ground for organizational growth. The question of how to relate Hegel's Absolutes to organization, far from being new to us, is in fact our unique historic contribution, as disclosed in our actual "founding document", the 1953 Letters on the Absolute Idea. Reviewing the contents of these letters can both shed light on some of our perspectives for 1983/4 as well as indicate the relation of Marx's Humanism to Marxist-Humanism.

Raya's first letter (May 12) consists of a patient tracing through of how Hegel's Absolute Idea relates to what was then referred to as "the dialectic of the party". Raya follows Hegel step by step through the 27 paragraphs of the final chapter of the Science of Logic, working out each concept's implications for creating a new form of revolutionary organization.

She begins by quoting Hegel on the very first page: "The Absolute Idea has turned out to be the identity of the Theoretical and the Practical Idea". Raya writes in response, "to me this means that the party is the identity or unity of the activity of the leadership and the activity of the masses." Revolutionary organization, in a word, has to be grounded in Hegel's Absolutes, beginning with the unity of thinkers and activists. Hegel, of course, does not stop at the unity of theory and practice, and neither does Raya, as she quotes him thusly: "What remains therefore to be considered here is not a content as such, but the universal elements of its (i.e., the Absolute Idea's) form--that is, the method." To Raya this means that "the forms of relations between leaders and ranks, between the various layers, and within each layer, tells the whole story." The method obtained from uniting theory with practice becomes key, so key that Hegel insists from here that "every beginning must be made with the Absolute". Raya comments that this means that the new society lives in the shell of the old and that revolutionaries must absorb that theoretically and practically so as to give revolutionary action its direction.

Raya then quotes Hegel: "The second negative, the negative of the negative, which we have reached is this transcendence of the contradiction, but it is no more the activity of an external reflection than the contradiction is; it is the innermost and most objective moment of life and Spirit by virtue of which a Subject is"



personal and free." Raya sees in this the "abolition of the distinction of theory and practice" and the ground for a new kind of practice. She comments on Hegel's attack on the inattitude of those who try to reach the goal without helping the Subject absorb the Absolute (the unity of theory and practice) as method. She also for the first time issues a criticism of Lenin, for not developing "the creativity" of cognition when he reached the Absolute Idea in his Philosophic Note-books. Later she will deepen this criticism, showing how Hegel's concept of the transition from Logic to Nature so illuminated the world Lenin confronted in 1914-17, that Lenin did not move on to grapple with the stage beyond "transition"--the absolute method. By being so enamored of transition, Lenin clung to the need for a mediator to move the dialectic ahead and thereby failed to work out the dialectic "as such" in relation to organization. Raya also mentions in this section the need to "go beyond 1948", i.e., CLR James' Notes on the Dialectic. We begin to glimpse the very emergence of Marxist-Humanism as Raya talks less of "the dialectic of the party" or party as the mediator and instead stresses the method of action and cognition, the dialectic of negativity, as the new which must be worked out as "a totally new revolt in which everyone experiences absolute liberation."

The first letter culminates in Raya quoting Hegel's statement that "The Notion arises as free existence...out of externality has passed into itself; arises to perfect its self-liberation in the Philosophy of Spirit." Raya asks Grace Lee for a copy of Philosophy of Mind so she can follow Hegel on this new course of "self-liberation" and criticizes their earlier approach of presenting "the party" as the mediator between the idea of socialism and the mass struggles: "now I believe that the Dialectic of the Absolute Idea is the dialectic of the party, I feel that Mind is the new society gestating in the shell of the old." In a word, Raya has grasped that the pathway to new stages of liberation rests, not upon a mediator, but upon mediation; when Mind, philosophy, the vision of the new society becomes so internal and concrete to the subjects of revolt as to give direction to their struggles, the future will truly issue from the present of their class struggles,

This is where the Letter of May 20 begins, a letter where Raya delves into the three final syllogisms of Hegel's Philosophy of Mind, developing the uniquely Marxist-Humanist ground upon which we stand. The first syllogism--Logic-Nature-Mind--illuminates the new of our day, the movement from practice which is itself a form of theory. The spontaneous struggles from below give birth to new questions, new ideas new theoretical departures which, when internalized and projected anew can become the ground for creating a new society. When practice, "Nature", gives birth to new ideas of freedom, those ideas must be developed into a full philosophy of freedom which can become the determinant, the mediation, to further struggle. Thus, the second syllogism--Nature-Mind-Logic--flows organically from the first, as the underlying theory of freedom which upsurges from practice becomes the mediation to the new. When that philosophy becomes fully integrated in revolutionary action, we have reached the development of a living, creative, continuous method of human liberation--the Absolute Method. It is this method, when broken down concretely, which initiates a new beginning. The last paragraph from Philosophy of Mind--the Self-Thinking Idea, or the Self-Bringing Forth of Liberty--means that in order for the movement from practice to reach its fullest revol-

tionary potential, it must connect with a method of liberation, the dialectical method, a method worked out through the "labor, patience, seriousness and suffering" of the negative."

What these letters on the Absolute Idea reveal is the ground for revolutionary organization today. The role of the revolutionary organization is neither that of being the mediator between the struggle and the goal, nor is it one of placing all responsibility for forging new pathways to revolution on the backs of spontaneity. Rather, the revolutionary organization has responsibility for connecting the revolutionary philosophy with the mass revolts so their full revolutionary potential can hear itself speak. Indeed, for our entire 30 year history we have been trying to connect such a method with action in catching the spontaneous struggles from below as a movement from practice to theory, developing that underlying theory into a full philosophy of liberation, and in turn concretizing that philosophy through daily political/organizational work in the mass movements and battle of ideas. This is what makes the upcoming pamphlet on the 1949/50 Miners Strike so very exciting; for now that we are taking notice of our organizational relation to the very development of that strike, we can see how it was the first moment in Marxist-Humanism's recreation of the dialectic for our age. Raya caught the underlying theory in the miners' actions, developed it into the full philosophy of Marxist-Humanism, a philosophy that was given an organizational form in News & Letters Committees; so concretely was this done that even 33 years later it becomes possible to hold up the miners' actions as a vision of an alternative to the new "re-structured" economy" which gives jobs to robots but not to workers.

### III. Our Organizational Perspectives and the Challenge of Marx's Marxism

What is new this year, is that armed with the Trilogy of Revolution and the new view of Marx we have obtained in this year of his Centenary, it becomes possible to obtain a much more concrete idea of how to actually develop our organization on the ground of its unique historic contributions. For was not Marx also developing absolute method as the mediation to the new society in his constant effort to develop "revolution in permanence"? Was he not telling us that the job of a revolutionary organizer is to help develop the new passions for freedom which come from below into a method of advancing the struggles, a method arising from mass action AND from the conscious effort of a cadre of "professional" revolutionaries?

Indeed, the trilogy of revolution allows us to see how every moment of Marx's development was inseparable from practicing the method of "revolution in permanence", absolute negativity. As organization man Marx concretized this method continuously, whether in the 1848 revolutions in helping the workers ally with the then-revolutionary bourgeoisie at one and the same time as helping them form independent organizations and ideas to keep their struggles going after the inevitable bourgeois betrayal; whether in his work as a revolutionary journalist where he united action and thought in his Neues Rheinische Zeitung; whether his activity in the First International which culminated in his Critique of the Gotha Program; or in his last decade where he hewed out new pathways to liberation on the basis of the creative nature of his mind. Now that we have the totality of Marx's Marxism in hand, it becomes possible to see how a practicing

revolutionary concretely breaks down the dialectic of negativity; surely, this can help us do the same for our age in developing News & Letters newspaper, connecting to the Third World both at home and abroad, intervention in the class struggle as well as women's liberation movement; all in such a way as to not only support the ongoing struggles but also project what we are for so that we grow as an organization.

In the coming year we are sure to have discussion on the relation of Part III of RLMLHP to Part I of P&L; the Constitutional Convention will itself lay the ground for that. The notes presented here are at most mere outlines, some preliminary notions. But there can be no doubt that the challenge of organizational growth rests upon connecting with the creative mind of Marx. As Raya says in the new paragraph to RLMLHP that serves as the centerpiece for the new edition of American Civilization on Trial, Marx's last decade "brought to a conclusion the dialectic he had unchained when he first broke with bourgeois society"; which is not an end but "a new beginning, a new vision" by which revolutionaries can meet the challenge of the age. As Hegel himself expressed it as he reached the climax of the Absolute Idea in the Science of Logic,

By virtue of the method just indicated, the science exhibits itself as a circle returning upon itself, the end being wound back into the beginning, the simple ground, by the mediation; the circle is moreover a circle of circles, for each individual member or as ensouled by the method is reflected into itself, so that in returning into the beginning it is at the same time the beginning of a new member.

The "new member" we are looking for in the year ahead is a far more concrete and revolutionary question than Hegel could ever have imagined. By absorbing the newest developments of Marxist-Humanism, we will reach a new stage not only in thought but in activity, which can result in winning the new kind of member our Perspectives demand.

Michelle, Los Angeles

Some notes on the 1949-50 philosophic correspondence:  
From STATE-CAPITALISM AND MARXISM to MARXISM AND FREEDOM

As we now prepare for nothing less than a Constitutional Convention of News and Letters Committees, we are simultaneously projecting a pamphlet on our "origins" i.e. the birth of both a new stage of production and of cognition, and of a new kind of organization, News and Letters Committees, in/out of the 1949-50 Miners General Strike against Automation. With this view from 1983, it is illuminating to return to study the Marxist-Humanist Archives for the '49-50 period, the main item of which is the philosophic correspondence between Raya Dunayevskaya, CLR James, and Grace Lee (Boggs).

Reading the correspondence is like embarking on an adventure: the letters are permeated with the excitement of a new world opening, both in cognition and in life. There is a live intercommunication between the ages, as RD first translates and comments on Lenin's Abstract of Hegel's Science of Logic, and then the correspondence becomes a three-cornered discussion of Lenin, philosophy, organization, and revolution. The new ground being broken is not for history's sake. The three are looking at the questions Lenin faced in his break, his Great Divide, as preparation for their own definitive break from Trotskyism, their own new beginnings as an independent Marxist tendency with a new form of organization. \*

By Jan. 1950, RD had returned from "hearing Lenin think" to Marx. (Not insignificantly, neither CLRJ nor GL accompanied her on this journey.) It is her 3/14/50 letter that makes a direct relationship to the ongoing miners strike, \*\* but the entire correspondence cannot be separated from that objective historic context.

There is a wealth of material in the letters that requires several serious readings. What I have chosen to present here are some thoughts on one dimension within the correspondence, the transformation of "State-Capitalism and Marxism" into Marxism and Freedom. I am thus not discussing here the critical dimension of the divergences appearing in the Johnson-Forest Tendency in that '49-50 period, though they stand out to us in 1983, as we see CLRJ wanting to confine the discussion of philosophy to "the dialectics of the party."\*\*\*

Intriguing also for us today is the discussion of Rosa Luxemburg -- not only regarding Accumulation of Capital, but also spontaneity and organization. This is a discussion that was not included in M&F; it was to be another 25 years before a new historic vantage point compelled RD to return to Luxemburg once more, to work out her legacy for our age.

Both the Convention Call and the Draft Perspectives Thesis single out the relationship between the 1949-50 Miners General Strike and

\*All three, however, are not drawing the same conclusions.

\*\*It begins: "My dear Marx is always on the spot. Yes, he was in the very latest mine strike ..."

\*\*\*Along with the Prologue to our 25-year history and RD's Oct. 1982 PPE "On the Battle of Ideas" (subtitled "Philosophic-Theoretic Points of Departure as Political Tendencies Respond to the Objective Situation"), I learned much from reviewing RD's 1978 essay "Reflections on Notes from a Diary: Lenin's Philosophic Notebooks and the State-Capitalist Tendency."

the transformation of the book RD had been working on, "State-Capitalism and Marxism," into what became Marxism and Freedom. Indeed, in the July 1956 Perspectives Report to the founding Convention of News and Letters Committees, Raya said: "Although the ideas for this book had been germinating in my head for many years prior to the 1949-50 strike, it first took shape only then because it was the actual concrete stage of the class struggle which gave it its form... It took me ten years of direct work on Marxist theory before the miners' strike of 1950 illuminated for me the form this book must take."

What emerges from a study of the Archives is: (1) that the leap RD made in the period '49-50 is under the impact of both the miners' strike and her study of Lenin, Hegel, and Marx: the activity and the philosophic probing are intertwined, illuminating each other for her; and (2) that despite the leap made in that period, it was nonetheless not until after her 1953 breakthrough on the final three syllogisms in Hegel's Philosophy of Mind that the structure of M&F became what it is today.

To appreciate the transformation the book underwent in '49-50, one has to first see what it was, in outline, before then. Raya wrote the first draft, entitled "State-Capitalism and Marxism," in 1947. The Archives show its concentration on an argument with other theoreticians; like Marx's 1859 Critique of Political Economy, it was "an intellectual, that is, a remote work, a theoretical answer to an actual problem ..." (M&F p.87) \*

When RD begins the philosophic correspondence, 2/18/49, sending CLRJ her translation of and commentary on Lenin's notes on Being from Hegel's Science of Logic, it is clear that she is with Lenin, in his "study room," and, like him, is swept up by the dialectic. Her 2/25/49 letter, accompanying the translation of Lenin on Essence, ends: "Always it is: Connection, relation, mediation, necessity, motion, unity of opposites, break-up of identity, transition and motion, motion and transition, and that is totality"; and her 3/12/49 letter, accompanying Lenin's Notes on Motion, emphasizes Lenin's new grasp of the interrelationship between objective and subjective:

"Lenin begins with the fact that 'The dialectic is road to cognition of truth is from living observation to abstract thinking and from this to practice' and never lets go of this for a single second." "Lenin was looking for a new Universal. He found Hegel's Idea, and said... hic Rhodus, hic salta. And even then Lenin couldn't fashion his new universal: revolution to a man: until there appeared the Soviets, 1917 version. The Idea had him pose the question correctly; the Russian masses supplied the practice; and then Lenin arrived and unified the two and called it: State and Revolution." Raya ends the letter: "I am dying to get down to apply all this to two things: (1) the American economy to which I hope to get to seriously this summer; (2) to Marx's Capital ..."

In RD's following letters, one can trace the chapters on Lenin in M&F being worked out, whether that be on the relationship of the dialectic to Lenin's new analysis of the collapse of the Second International, of imperialism, of the urgency of self-determination, or

\*Substitute "Dunayevskaya" for "Marx" in the following continuation of the M&F quote: "As the proletariat began to move positively towards its own emancipation, they illuminated all the studies Marx had undertaken in the previous period, and gave new insights into the development of capitalist production."

on the development in his concept and practice of organization from 1903 through 1905, to 1914, to State and Revolution and the revolution itself as well as "What happens after?" The heart is the manner in which Lenin, having studied Hegel and seen self-development as the core of the dialectic, now sees in the 1917 revolution how "the masses showed in life the HOW of the relationship between concrete and abstract, between ideal and real, the impulse to self-movement, the unprecedented initiative, the individual full development ..." (letter of 7/20/49: and note the date -- because the miners strike is now on.)

It is after she has extensively worked out these concepts in Lenin that RD returns to Marx. So infused is she with method, the dialectic, and so alive the contemporary class battles, that it is precisely that single dialectic that she is working out in Marx. What we are witness to, in these letters, is Raya restructuring her book, under the impact of the miners strike against Automation -- which she views with the eyes of Lenin's Philosophic Notebooks -- even as she discovers how Marx restructured Capital, as recreation of the dialectic emerging from the workers struggles of his day.

Thus, on Feb. 15, 1950 Dunayevskaya leads a discussion on her proposed new form of the book-in-the-making; for the first time a worker, JZ, is present, together with CLRJ and GL. \* RD presents the two new vantage points for the book as the American proletariat and Lenin's Philosophic Notebooks, and begins by stating: "... the struggle of miners and new content they have infused into 'No contract, no work' is what gave me impulse to go into essential dialectical development of Marx himself."

It is at that meeting that RD presents, for the first time, her fully worked out tracing of Marx's restructuring of Capital (material that will become Chapters 5 and 6 of MSF.) We are in a very, very different world from the 1947 outline of the book. And yet ... there still remains one "element" missing from the presentation that becomes key to the discussion in MSF itself: RD has not yet made a category of Marx's break with the concept of theory. This despite the fact that she has already explicitly recognized "the limitations of thinking, even the thinking of a Marx, unless proletarian action propels forward" (2/15/50); she has lived the proof of this concept for Marx, for Lenin, and for herself. She is as well already implicitly recognizing the movement from practice as itself a form of theory, as she singles out the miners questions in their general strike as a profound challenge to the division between mental and manual labor.

Yet when we read the 1952 draft of the book in the Archives (then being referred to as "the Lenin book"), we are struck with what still remains to be worked out on form. We confront a Part One on Lenin and a Part Two on Marx, rather than a book structured on the movement from practice to theory. \*\*

\*Note here a sequence of dates: Eleven days later, Feb. 26, 1950, was the special tri-state meeting of the SNP and discussion with RD on the miners strike.

\*\* That draft is, nonetheless, interesting to us, with eyes of Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution. The outline has a prefatory note on the SPD and Kautsky's popularization of Marx; Part One of the book is entitled "Organization  
(continued)"

Clearly, the '49-50 period had prepared RD for her 1953 philosophic breakthrough; equally clearly, it was not until after that philosophic breakthrough on the final three syllogisms of Hegel's Philosophy of Mind that she could work out the full ramifications of the '49-50 period.

Or, rather, even that is not quite accurate: it was only the breakup of the Johnson-Forest Tendency that permitted the development of state-capitalist theory into the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism, with its own organizational form. It was at the first conference of News and Letters Committees, April 1955, that both the decision was carried that the new publication, News & Letters, would be edited by a production worker, and that Raya was assigned the task of completing the book on Marxism, published in 1958 as Marxism and Freedom... from 1776 until Today.

(continued)

and Spontaneity"; Part Two is titled "Karl Marx's Capital, 1843-1883."

Included also in the Archives with the book draft is a letter from RD to CLRJ, 1/7/52, in which she states: "... it was the concrete -- our organization -- that made me think of the general form. It was in fact that which made G and me search for Marx's conception of party and permanent revolution ..."

And the prefatory note comments as follows on the relationship between activity and theory -- and Rosa Luxemburg: "... it is not the activity 'as such' which stimulates 'theory' ... There is a dialectical relationship between the 'advance in study' and the actual creation of the new society by the masses which escaped the theorist of spontaneity, Rosa Luxemburg."

From Azadkar, Los Angeles/Detroit

PHILOSOPHY/ORGANIZATION IN LIGHT OF REVOLUTION AND COUNTER-  
REVOLUTION IN IRAN

That the question of organization can be posed only in relation to revolution hardly needs elaboration once we look at the absolute human crisis brought about by the degeneracy of capitalism today. What needs elaboration -- and by that I mean serious labor -- is what Raya called "the burning question of the relationship of spontaneity to organization..." (RLWELKM, p.154); or put differently and more specifically, the relationship of a Marxist-Humanist organization to spontaneously-created organizations of mass movements -- what Marx called the "real" movement. Such posing of the question, I think, will bring us closer to an actual revolution where the battle for a new human society is fought and thus puts in perspective the specifically Marxist-Humanist conception: philosophy of "revolution in permanence" as ground for organization.

Furthermore, as Middle-Eastern revolutionaries who have witnessed one of the greatest revolutions of our times -- the 1979 Iranian Revolution -- transformed to such a monstrosity of counter-revolution within so short a period, we are confronted with the challenge of measuring our Marxist-Humanist development against the highest point achieved during the revolution, in order to see what kind of organization we can build now, as we are preparing ourselves for the future stage of the mass uprising in Iran. Naturally, I hope the relationship of internationalism to the form of such organization would also flow from its content.

I believe this year of the Karl Marx centenary, when we are approaching the constitutional convention with a trilogy of revolution in hand represents an appropriate time to begin thinking about these questions. But first we have to ask:

I. WHAT HAPPENED DURING THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION?

The spontaneous shoras were the overwhelming form of mass organizations which included workers, peasants, soldiers, women and youth; in the factories and government offices, in high schools and universities, and in the neighborhoods everywhere. These were the organs of self-control of the masses, which stood opposed to all the military and civilian institutions of the Shah's regime, and which, to some extent, later opposed Khomeini's institutionalization of the Islamic Republic. They represented the power of people against that of the state. As long as the revolution was continuing, these organizations developed in depth and number so rapidly and became so massive that it was unprecedented in anyone's memory. Every economic demand became political and culminated in the single call: "Shah must go!" -- and he left even before the February insurrection that toppled many of the state institutions, all of which Khomeini and Bazargan had hoped to "capture" intact. Bazargan cried: "we prayed for rain and got a storm!"



For as long as the revolution was ongoing, both before and after the overthrow, we experienced such a freedom that it was unmeasurable by any bourgeois yardstick as the feeling of mass cooperation and camaraderie prevailed. In March, when Khomeini first began testing the waters to launch his counter-revolution, Women's Liberationists poured into the streets by the thousands to defend the revolution and demand freedom. This was soon followed by the sit-ins of the unemployed workers; by the Kurds throwing out Khomeini's "delegation" and demanding autonomy; by the students, even those in the elementary schools, wanting to discuss different political ideologies in their classes; and by peasants, some of whom had left their villages to come to the universities where they could hear the political discussions, while others in Gonbad (on the Russian border) began an armed uprising against Khomeini's "revolutionary guards".

Seeing such a revolutionary March, the new rulers shook as they awaited the arrival of "a Lenin" and his "April Theses" -- which never materialized. Even in May, which began with a demonstration of 500 thousand workers demanding jobs and workers' control, everyone was certain that there could be an October Revolution, as the contradictions were reaching a decisive turning point. It was only during the months of June, July and August, after Khomeini became certain that the Left had no independent banner to unfurl, and that he could rally them around his "anti-imperialism", that he succeeded in turning the tide against the revolution and could proceed to commit all the atrocities that have "transformed Iran to one big prison" for the masses.

The question that arises now is this: What happened to that "one percent of Marxists" whom Bazargan so feared? The confusion of the Left, and its tailending of Khomeini's "anti-imperialism" following the hostage crisis, notwithstanding, what about those of us who had, so to speak, a "correct analysis"? Let us begin with the positive:

Our elementary exposure to Marxist-Humanism was a direct result of the impact the ideas of News & Letters had on us in face of the objective events at the very beginning of the Iranian Revolution. It meant greeting that revolution 1) with the translation and publication of Marx's 1844 Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts ("Alienated Labor" and "Private Property and Communism") which spelled out "new Humanism" as against both private property and "vulgar communism", as well as the Man/Woman relationship; 2) with the translation and publication, in several thousand copies, of Chapter IV of Marxism and Freedom, which illuminated the difference between the attitudes of Marx and Lassalle toward the workers, the latter seeing them as "mob" and as "ignorant" masses who needed him, Lassalle, as "the head" for their emancipation, and of course always with the "State's aid"; and 3) with the translation of Raya Dunayevskaya's March 1979 Political-Philosophic Letter on-

titled "Unfoldment of and Contradictions in the Iranian Revolution," which, on the one hand, spelled out many "spectres" haunting Khomeini's regime, such as the women liberationists who tried to open up the second chapter of the revolution, and on the other hand, warned against the grave contradictions that resulted from the Left's tailending of Khomeini's "anti-imperialism" and their failure to develop a philosophy of revolution.

Despite these contributions which surely went beyond any narrow view of Marxism, the major obstacle preventing us from putting the philosophy into action was our lack of comprehension of the relationship between philosophy and organization, particularly as it has now been expressed in Chapter XI of Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution, "The Philosopher of Permanent Revolution Creates Ground for Organization."

## II. MARXIST-HUMANISM'S BREAKTHROUGH ON PHILOSOPHY/ORGANIZATION: 1979-1983

We have come a long way since the Iranian Revolution of 1979. We have become oppressively aware that what seemed to be the eve of the greatest revolution since 1917, what was an outstanding, powerful and sustained mass mobilization for months, culminating in a general strike of oil workers which preceded the three-day insurrection of Feb. 9-12, 1979 with all its spontaneous organizations -- has finally been defeated at the hands of a counter-revolution that was virtually "built into" the revolution from the beginning.

While everyone in the opposition to Khomeini "accepted" this defeat as their ground, we felt that it was high time to raise a new banner of philosophy of revolution on the basis of the high-points achieved in theory and in practice, during the course of that revolution. In illuminating the relationship of philosophy to organization, it becomes necessary to take a closer look at the development of Marxist-Humanism and the process of the completion of RL'YKX, in light of the revolution and counter-revolution in Iran.

Let me begin by referring everyone to the Draft Perspectives of 1979-80 in the July 1979 issue of N&L, particularly Part III on "Organizational Conclusions." It begins by stating: "Let us take one more look at the Iranian Revolution, this time as it relates to our organization..." After showing the counter-revolutionary process through which all the spontaneous forms of mass organization were replaced by the re-emergence of the old organizations of the capitalist class so that the masses were the very ones who now had no organization, it concluded: "It is high time...that we recognize ourselves not just as a tendency but as an organization." And it was at that convention that a deadline was set for finishing the new book.

Then followed all the many letters and discussions on the process and changes in the actual structure of the book. First, it was to consist of 8 chapters; then there were 10 chapters in two parts; then a single chapter 6 grew into a whole new Part on Women's Liberation; and finally, when everyone thought that the book was complete, a whole new Chapter XII was added as the "Last Writings of Marx Point a Trail to the 1980s," which posed not organization but the need for "revolution in permanence" as the "absolute challenge to our age." Here, however, I want to concentrate on the breakthrough on the question of organization, particularly in relationship to the Critique of the Gotha Programme.

In her Dear Friends letter of Dec. 16, 1980, Raya said: "I felt that the chapter on organization in Part I of the book was insufficient. What I mean is that the relationship of spontaneity to organization, when it is within the framework of her (Rosa Luxemburg's) debate with Lenin, would not really answer the burning question of our day. That could only be worked out if we returned to Marx and especially if we returned on the ground that has never been considered an "organization document" -- the Critique of the Gotha Programme.

We know that when Marx wrote this greatest historic document in 1875 it was modestly called "Marginal Notes" to the Unity Programme of Lassalleans and Eisenachists, and was sent only to a few party leaders. It never became public until 16 years later, when, in 1891, Engels insisted that Marx's Critique be published in response to the Erfurt Program of the German Social-Democracy. Even then it was published by Kautsky as "a contribution to the discussion" and after Engels had "deleted and altered everything you and Dietz have objected to..." (Engels to Karl Kautsky, Feb. 23, 1891). It took another 26 years, on the eve of the 1917 Revolution, before Lenin returned to the Critique to make it and Marx's Civil War in France the basis for his State and Revolution. But even Lenin saw in it only "the connection between the development of communism and the withering away of the state." (State and Revolution, Ch. V) and not a ground for the "Party."

It is essential to remember the crucial nature of the year 1875, when Marx was summing up three decades of theoretical and practical developments. It was in this year that Marx completed the editing of the French edition of Capital where he added a new paragraph that gives another proof of his anticipation of imperialism. 1875 is also the year that Marx reproduced his 1850 Address on permanent revolution as an appendix to the Revelations Concerning the Communist Trials in Cologne. This not only shows Marx both as an organization man, from his 1845-47 International Correspondence Committees to the Communist League and International Workingmen's Association; and as a philosopher of permanent revolution, who lived through the revolutions of 1848-49 and the Paris Commune of 1871, but it also becomes a new opening for Marx to return to the study

of what he had called "Asiatic Mode of Production" in projecting still newer forces and paths to revolutions in technologically backward lands. All these illuminations were brought about in the process of compilation of RIFLE, which led to nothing short of a Marxist-Humanist breakthrough on philosophy and organization.

It was at this time, when the Expanded RER of Jan. 3, 1981, Raya underlined the word "opening" in reference to Marx's new continent of thought, that I wrote a letter to Raya to discuss the possibility of beginning the publication of a journal which became Engelab va Azad (E & A) -- Revolution and Liberation. Raya answered by saying: "Begin, just begin, firmly and flexibly!" The first issue of E&A came off the press on May Day 1981.

My point is that just as the Iranian Revolution had manifested the urgency of working out the relationship between philosophy and organization for News and Letters Committees, so our beginnings as a Marxist-Humanist tendency in the Iranian Revolution, too, had an organizational manifestation.

### III. THE TASK THAT REMAINS TO BE DONE

Today, in this 1983, the centenary year of Karl Marx, we not only have the new book, but a trilogy of revolution in our hands which spells out the movement from practice and movement from theory reaching a whole philosophy -- i.e. a vision of total liberation. We also have had the experience of publishing E&A for more than two years. The growing response that we are now receiving from the readers, particularly from independent Marxist intellectuals and from women liberationists, is proof that Marxist-Humanism, as we express and concretize it, is an integral part of the preparation for an actual revolution in Iran.

However, despite this tremendous response we are receiving from many individuals throughout Europe, Canada and the U.S., this has not resulted in any organizational growth. Clearly, we are faced with a contradiction. So much so that we are unable even to fulfill the much-needed dialogue that is required with our readers. Furthermore, when this dialogue is possible, it is limited to the ideas and not the organization which embodies those ideas. I believe that in confronting such a contradiction, we must clarify ourselves theoretically and practically in relationship to Philosophy/Organization, for which those words are but a mere beginning.

Thus, I propose some preliminary practical suggestions:

- 1- An Essay Article on the Marxist-Humanist concept of organization in E & A.
- 2- A monthly Dear Friends Letter composed of an analysis of the current objective situation and critique of different tendencies

was reflected in journals and publications, to be sent to E&A readers.

3- Where possible, regular weekly, public meetings of Anjuman-e-Azadi (the name of the E&A organization), with special invitations to the subscribers in the area.

4- Occasional public meetings (where weekly meetings are not possible) to be called to discuss E&A articles and other publications.

5- Visiting trips to nearby cities where E&A subscribers are located.

6- A trip to Europe, to establish organizational relationship with our correspondents, particularly the independent Women's Group in West Germany.

I'm sure that after the Convention, we will all have many creative ideas on the much-needed Philosophic/Organizational followthrough.

Aug. 12, 1983, AZADKAR

## PHILOSOPHY AS GROUND FOR ORGANIZATION AND OUR TASKS IN CHICAGO

by David Park

NOTE: The following is the text of my lead off discussion on the July 12 REB Minutes which summarized Michael's organization report. This presentation was made at a Chicago Local Meeting on August 1, 1983. The discussion is in three parts: I News and Letters Committees 1982-83; II What Does It Mean To Say, Philosophy As Ground For Organization; III How Do We Project Our Philosophy of Organization?

### I NEWS AND LETTERS COMMITTEES, 1982-83

In Michael's report he concluded the section on our past year by saying: "Our Organization was attempting to do something this year in grounding organization in philosophy of revolution that has never been done before, not by anyone." The perspectives coming out of last year's Convention were written upon the completion of a new major work in Marxist-Humanism, RLWL+KM. He stressed in last year's perspectives that it was the totality of Marx's works and the entire history of Marxist-Humanism as developed in three books not one (what was later termed a "trilogy of revolution) that was the ground for the new book and for the intensification of our activity in all of the freedom movements whether that be in women's liberation, the Black dimension, Youth, Labor or Latino. Not only did we not separate theory from practice, but we began a process of challenging post Marx Marxists with the contributions of Marxist-Humanism as we organized RD's national tour and in the process took individual responsibility for the challenge we were making. And while we did take individual responsibility as Michael describes in his report both for that challenge and in the process for our own self development, the course of the year demonstrated for me the truth of Marx's insight in the 1844 Essays:

"Whenever I am active scientifically, etc. engaged in activity which I myself can pursue alone, without any direct association with others, I act socially nevertheless because I am active as a man. Not only the material of my activity is given to me as a social product--as is the case even with language in which the thinker is active--but my own existence is social activity inasmuch as what I make for myself, I make also for the society and with the consciousness of myself as a social being."

As the past year went by we gained new insights from the very process of our activities and study--whether that meant the opportunity to listen to the voices of freedom in Guatemala and produce a new pamphlet which opened up even further opportunities for development, or whether it was the new interactions in preparation for the tour, and during the tour itself; or how all of our activities as an organization opened up new insights into the history of our own organization thus concretizing philosophy even further; or how this individual work both shaped and was shaped by our own leadership which in turned informed our individual work even further. For example, even before the new book was off the press, we received a letter from our National Chairwoman (October 5, "On the Battle of Ideas") which further grounded the new book in Hegel's dialectic, related this to our own organizational beginnings in our break with Johnsonism, reviewed the continual additions to the new book even as it is being printed and adding yet one more paragraph. The point was and is that the philosophy we project must be continually concretized in all of our work.

Then at the meeting in January of the Expanded NEB, our perspectives were further illuminated by RD's report "Marxist-Humanism 1983: The Summation That is A New Beginning, Subjectively and Objectively." The report began by stating that the "here and now" demands a deeper probing into the creative mind of Marx. It went on to illuminate Marx's method of grounding organization in philosophy as a Summation that is a New Beginning and an answer to the question "How To Begin

Anew?" That Summation continued and continues to be concretized through all of our activities. Our work in all the Freedom movements, the preparation for Raya's Tour, the Tour itself, the international trips have all contributed. Already we have two new pamphlets coming off the press, a new Farsi edition with an introduction by Raha to the Afro Asian Revolutions pamphlet, and a new edition of American Civilization On Trial with an entirely new section that shows the todayness of Marx for the black liberation struggle. Our own work in Chicago has opened up new relationships with labor through the work at Agar, and with youth--especially through our work at UIC both in study groups and Central America, and with the Latin dimension through our Central American work generally. Our work on the national tour has also opened up new relationships not limited to Chicago and has led to our designation as Sub-Center. All of this can contribute further to the question of how to begin anew. It also shows how our own internal practice as an organization of Marxist-Humanists does not separate individual from collective; theory from practice; philosophy of revolution from preparation for actual revolution; philosophy from organization. Yet I believe that on this last relationship--philosophy/organization--we are still in need of much further understanding and concretization. Indeed this is central to our Constitutional Convention. So I want to share with you the state of my own understanding of what it means to say Philosophy as Ground For Organization--as a focus for our own deliberations on this crucial relationship.

## II WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO SAY, "PHILOSOPHY AS GROUND FOR ORGANIZATION?"

I want to begin the discussion with Marx's own development--particularly as manifested in the 1875 Critique of the Gotha Program. Gotha Program came after LaSalle's death and was an effort to unify LaSalle's followers with Marxists. Marx had respected LaSalle for his commitment to revolution and for his role in igniting the German Workers movement. As Marx put it in a letter to Schweitzer (who later became the leader of the very party Marx criticized in Gotha) written in 1868.

"After a 15 year slumber, LaSalle reawakened the workers movement in Germany--and this remains his immortal service."

Yet, at the same time, Marx totally opposed LaSalle on philosophy and all of its ramifications. He opposed him in life and after his death Marx fought with his followers. He often became so furious with LaSalle that he not only denounced him publically but also privately in letters to LaSalle himself--to the point that Marx admitted to Engels that he had been "rude as hell." But what was behind such passion? In the same letter to Schweitzer he explains that LaSalle permitted himself to be "dominated too much by the immediate circumstances of the time." He had developed the same theme a number of years earlier in 1865 in a letter to Kugelmann where he accused LaSalle of being a "realpolitiker" similar to many bourgeois politicians of his day. And in doing so Marx said;

"...he shook hands with Bismarck in the interest of the proletariat. Those gentlemen (bourgeois politicians) had greater justification than LaSalle insofar as the bourgeois is accustomed to regard the interest immediately before his nose as reality, and as in fact this class has generally achieved a compromise everywhere, even with feudalism, while in the nature of things the working class must be sincerely revolutionary."

And in being a realpolitiker as Marx called him, LaSalle failed to look to the high points of mass activity. He failed to see masses in motion as Reason and instead saw theory (his theory) divorced from practice. In the letter to Schweitzer Marx said:

like every man who maintains that he has in his pocket a panacea for the sufferings of mankind, he gave his agitation a religious and sectarian character. He fell into the same error as Proudhon, and instead of looking

among the actual elements of the class movement for the real basis of his agitation, he tried to ascribe its course to these elements according to a certain dogmatic recipe.

In 1875 he wrote his Critique and sent it to members of the German parties through Bracke. In the cover letter to Bracke he explains that the desire of German workers for unity is being achieved at too high a price. The price is to establish certain principles dictated by the appearance of necessity at that moment in time which "sets up before the whole world landmarks by which it measures the level of the Party Movement." Marx's philosophy of revolution in permanence leads him to sharply oppose the "practical" unity program. He says in the letter to Bracke that if conditions of the time did not permit it to go beyond the immediate practicalities, they should simply have developed an "agreement for common action against a common enemy." Which led Marx to the statement singled out by Raya on page 155 of RLIL+KI, "every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programs." Thus the "Critique of the Gotha Program" is made from the perspective of a philosophy of "revolution in permanence" as ground for organization as opposed to the Lasalleians' pragmatism. As Raya points out in her January report, "Summation as New Beginning" There was to be no bargaining over principles."

I don't have time to go through the Critique point by point. I think it is important to study the Critique along with both Summation as New Beginning and Chapter XI of RLIL+KI where the Critique is discussed. But I do want to bring out a few points. Marx objected very strongly to the phrase in the Gotha Program that, relative to the working class "all other classes are only one reactionary mass." He called this nonsense pointing out that various class forces could be revolutionary at particular times and particularly singling out peasants. And it was Marx's philosophy that led him to lay out a very different principle of looking to masses in motion. Similarly he opposes the Program's emphasis on distribution of the "proceeds" of labor on the basis of equal right. He points out this can be twisted by those who are champions of the existing state. In the German state of that time he notes that equal right is bourgeois. The standard for equality is labor.

"But one man is superior to another physically or mentally and so supplies more labor in the same time or can work for a longer time...This equal right is unequal right for unequal labor...Right can never be higher than the economic structure of society."

Here Marx is developing the need for the total destruction of the state and to go beyond "economics" to totally new human relationships. He spells this out as an elimination of the division between mental and manual labor. He also states: "after the productive forces have also increased with the all round development of the individual...only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability to each according to his needs!" He develops the point further in his attack on the statement of the Gotha Program that "The working class strives for its emancipation first of all within the framework of the present day national state." He calls this the "narrowest national standpoint."

I think what is crucial about reading the critique is what Raya develops both in RLIL+KI and in "Summation as New Beginning." She singles out the Critique as one of four "New Moments" in Marx during his last decade,--and as part of Marx's own Summation as New Beginning. She explains the term moment as follows:

A "moment" speaking in terms of Hegelian-Marxian dialectics, is not a moment in time unless it is an historic moment, a new stage in history, a new factor of development, a new stage in the self-determination of Ideas and in the self development of the individual reaching Universality...  
Moment is time only when and if we define time as Marx did--as "space for



human development." A new moment, therefore, is one that emerges after a lengthy period of "labor, patience, seriousness and suffering" of the negative.

Marx was looking both at the 30 years of masses in motion since 1844 and at his own theoretical development and practicing summation as a new beginning. And what he was saying is that for an organization to be grounded in the unity of theory and practice expressed as revolution in permanence--it can't make a principle out of the appearance of immediate necessity but must promote a continuous revolution to the point where it can cross the "narrow horizon of bourgeois right." How this contrasts with today's stalinists who read the Critique and use it to justify the idea that you have to go through a stage of socialism before you can get to communism! That is the very thing Marx was so dead set against in the Critique itself.

Unfortunately Lenin, himself, made a principle of the appearance of immediate necessity in 1902 when he wrote *What Is To Be Done?* He looked at the state of oppression in Russia and at the lack of movement in the working class and concluded that "...the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade union consciousness." He then went on to develop the theory of the Vanguard Party which had the very impact Marx so feared about the Gotha Program in his letter to Bracke--that it would become a landmark by which "the whole world measures the Party movement." Nevermind the fact that Lenin made contradictory statements later--at one point stating that the "working class is spontaneously social democratic," and his slogan in 1917 "All Power to the Soviets." The landmark remains to haunt us to this day. As RLNL+KIA so clearly develops, Lenin did undergo a philosophic reorganization after the collapse of the Second International which allowed him to see Revolutionary subjects. That reorganization brought him to the famous slogan "All Power to the Soviets!" and informed the writing of his greatest works--from *State and Revolution* to his theses on the national and colonial question. Yet he never developed the integrality of philosophy and organization.

But we are now at a point where we must go beyond simply opposing Vanguardism in its superficial characteristic of its centralized form. The movement from practice over the past 30 years provides a stinging renunciation of Vanguardism. But we, as Marxist-Humanists, must also work out what we are for. And the place to start, in my view, is with the realization that the origins of Vanguardism lies in the separation between philosophy and organization which LaSalle certainly was guilty of but which all post-Marx Marxists make. Look at RD's statement in *Summation, As New Beginning*

In each decade, the book moved beyond the "au courant"--that is to say, it anticipated the future in the present, once the movement from practice emerged as a form of theory itself. Thus the new Marxism and Freedom was not just state-capitalism but Marxist-Humanism. In a word, it delved further into what was new and developed it theoretically to the point of philosophy. It is high time for us to project that, just that. Until we do so, the elitists will have it over us by sticking to the Party towering over philosophy because supposedly action is not within philosophy's province which thereby entitles one to "Leadership" over the masses..

So, today, as we root ourselves more deeply in all the freedom movements, we need to be ever conscious of looking to masses in motion as Reason--as a form of theory, and look for the high points in each struggle, meeting them with theory to bring them to a point of philosophy.

To simply focus our attention on form is to make the same errors as Rosa Luxemburg who, despite her sensitivity to the creativity of spontaneity, was able to praise LaSalle over Marx on organization and stick with her own organization which she had labeled a "stinking corpse." To concretize the point further let us

turn to Mike's development in his organization report where he states that the question is not simply centralization vs. decentralization. In RLNL+K! Raya illuminates the greatness of the women's liberation movement of TODAY in its initial challenge to the left. And because it came from within the left it went beyond simply seeing women's oppression as an attribute of capitalism but posed how deep and total an uprooting is needed. Part of the form of this challenge went to organization, whether that was apartidarismo in Portugal, or autonomy/decentralization in the U.S. But as the book shows, this was not just a question of organizational form. Raya argues that the demand for decentralization involves two pivotal questions of the day--

First, the totality and depth of the necessary uprooting of this exploitative, sexist racist society. Second, the dual rhythm of revolution, not just the overthrow of the old, but the creation of the new; not just the reorganization of the objective material foundations but the release of subjective personal freedom, creativity and talents. In a word, there must be such appreciation of the movement from below, from practice, that we never again let theory and practice get separated. That is the cornerstone.

But taken out of this philosophical context, the form of decentralization is meaningless and in fact can become a fetter on the very philosophical principles that were at its origins. In fact, at last year's convention, Lauri from the Bay Area Committee, talked about how decentralization had become twisted in the anti-nuke movement to mean that everyone does what they want to do, which hampered the development of the movement itself. And it is this separation of philosophy and organization that allows a Sheila Rowbotham to reduce a women's liberation movement as it raises those two pivotal questions quoted above, to an organizing idea where women, rather than being seen as revolutionary subjects are viewed as the object of an effort to organize them into the vanguard party.

Or let me take one more example. In my neighborhood of Pilsen, there exists an adult education program called Instituto del Progreso Latino which is based on the ideas of Paulo Freire. Some of you know of Freire's work. His teaching method is to utilize "facilitators" to get people to talk about the problems they face in their own lives and use this as a basis for teaching literacy, history and other subjects. The idea has all the appearance of recognizing the students as subjects and Freire states this in his book. He sees his pedagogy as liberating in that the oppressed set the terms for their liberation. At the school the students are supposed to actually run the school. It is decentralization par excellence. Yet Freire's book sees his ideas separate theory from practice. His theories are an eclectic hodge-podge of Marx, Mao, Lenin, and Sartre to name a few. They are not grounded in a movement from practice. The students are subjects as individuals -- but not as masses in motion. The organizational form of his schools is not grounded in philosophy but is instead a parallel development that raises form--decentralization--in isolation from human development. The decentralized form separated from philosophy leaves it vulnerable to Stalinists, who have infiltrated the school by placing party people in the role of facilitators and pitting school administration officials and students against each other for the sake of trying to take the school over as a party organ. Thus Freire's idea of the individual human subject is being turned into its opposite (if the entire school doesn't go down the tubes). The dilemma posed here reminds me of RD's observation about the women's liberation movement in RLNL+K!.

Let us realize that we are confronted with two seemingly opposite facts--that the individuality of each woman liberationist is a microcosm of the whole, and yet, that the movement is not a sum of so many individuals but masses in motion. (p 83)

It is Freire's failure to see this which leads to an elevation of form over philos-

ophy, and which in turn leaves his non-elitist school vulnerable to the designs of the vanguardists. Isn't this an example of what RD was talking about when she said that until we can project philosophy as ground for organization "the elitists will have it all over us by sticking to the Party towering over philosophy because supposedly action is not within philosophy's province which thereby entitles one to 'leadership' over the masses." But this then raises the question which is the subject of the third and final part of this presentation:

### III HOW DO WE PROJECT OUR PHILOSOPHY OF ORGANIZATION

What I have to say here is just the barest of beginning of a discussion. I must say that I have often felt a lot of discouragement on this question. The separation of philosophy and organization is not just the province of Stalinists but virtually all forms of organization. In our Central American work we face coalitions formed on the basis of a philosophy that excludes masses as Reason and this applies as much to the Freedom organizations themselves like OSGua and Casa El Salvador as it does to the Stalinists that are vying for control of all coalitions. But we have faced a similar problem in our work in the Anti-Nuke Movement this year. Lasalle lives in CANPI. And in some groups decentralization has been elevated to the status of a universal. In Pilsen, the Stalinists move to take over or wreck every genuine people's movement. And those working on Agar must deal with the meat cutters union.

I think that the place to start is with News and Letters itself. Our perspective of grounding organization in philosophy is a new moment in Marxist-Humanism in the same sense that Marx's "Critique of the Gotha Program" represented a new moment in Marx's Marxism. Like develops this in his report when he states that the January 1 meeting and the National Chairwoman's Report "Summation as New Beginning" marked the first time in 100 years of Marxism and 30 years of Marxist-Humanism that we became historically and philosophically conscious of "Critique of the Gotha Program" as ground for organization. And we were able to see this only with the perspective of all of Marx's work and 30 years of our own development and the development of masses in motion as Reason in the three books. He points out this is why we are having a Constitutional Convention and this was the ground for the National Tour. And so we must continue the process of Summation as New Beginning right into our own convention so that we can better understand "How to Begin Anew?" The new openings that our work (described in Part 1 of my presentation) have given us are openings both to challenge post-Marx Marxists on the question of organization and the ground for a new kind of member. Thus the emphasis on our own 30 years of contributions are not just historical facts but the kind of understanding of how the movement from practice as a form of theory has been met with a movement from theory for 30 years and with that understanding we can further develop this critical moment in Marxist-Humanism.

It is important to note in this regard the point Raya makes about how Marxism and Freedom went beyond mere opposition to state capitalism to develop an original category of the movement from practice as a form of theory--delving further into what is new and developing it theoretically to the point of philosophy. What happened after the publication of Marxism and Freedom is equally important. There were a series of pamphlets that developed the book even further: Afro Asian Revolutions in 1959; Workers Battle Automation, 1960; Freedom Riders Speak For Themselves, 1961; the articles in Africa Today on the African Trip in 1962; American Civilization On Trial 1963; The Free Speech Movement and the Negro Revolution, We Speak in Many Voices, Notes on ML 1969. The point is that not one of the three books was ever completed as a book but continued to be developed through our own activity as an organization. That is why it is so exciting that before the presses have even cooled down from the publication of RLM+KF, three pamphlets are heating that press up again: a new now expanded edition of ACOT; a pamphlet on the 1949-50 Miners General Strike; a pamphlet on the E.I. and their relationship to today's third world revolutions. Thus we are projecting philosophy as ground for organiza-

tion through the development of this new moment in Marxist-Humanism. The pamphlets both show the type of organization we are and reach out to ever new audiences.

Secondly, I want to return to the question of intervention. What I believe is crucial is to get beyond first negativity, and to avoid treating organizational form as a fixed particular and criticizing movements from that perspective. Rather we need to be so deeply rooted in all Freedom activities that we can pick out what is new--the high points--in the development of masses in motion as Reason. Even if that activity is rapidly being corrupted by party leaders to say nothing of the capitalists, we should set our sights on what is new in the same way that Marx looked at the Paris Commune, The Civil War in the U.S. and the struggle for the 8 hr day. Our Central American work is a good illustration.

It does no good whatsoever to criticize groups like CISPES on their own ground. Nor should we fall into the trap of folding our work into that organizational framework. What we can do is what Marx advised Bracke--to agree to unite on common action while never bargaining over principles. At the same time we cannot be continuously criticizing what the freedom fighters in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala are doing in the heat of battle. What we can do is to strive to be so firmly rooted in these movements that we can listen to the voices from below and pick out what is new and meet that with theory. With that emphasis we don't fall into the elitist trap of groups like the Sparts nor do we become tail ending Third Worldists. But if we can grasp Marx's philosophy of revolution in permanence as our ground and keep our eyes and ears focused on masses in motion as Reason, and project that to those we work with, we are establishing a critical relationship to the freedom movements and projecting Marxist-Humanism. It was very instructive to me to look at the difference between what we excerpted from the transcript I made of Domingo Iztoy's speech and compare it to what the Pacific News Service excerpted from the same transcript. In the latter case you would think that Guatemalans do nothing but get killed! The fact that we as an organization were able to produce the pamphlet we did, provides us with a concrete projection of the integrality of theory/practice; philosophy/revolution; philosophy/organization.

Thirdly, Chicago is a real center of intellectual activity--much of it pretty bad. The work of News & Letters during the past year in intervention at intellectual gatherings was an important way we projected Marxist-Humanism. The papers Terry and I did at the Third World Conference and the participation of most of the Local in lit sales and discussions at that conference was an important forum for us. Terry's work at the Women's Studies Conference with other N&L women was likewise of importance. We might consider extending that perspective in the coming year and systematically keeping track of such activity in our area and maintaining a presence there.

Finally, our participation in the paper is an essential element--both writing and distribution. We discussed this in the paper report so I won't elaborate further except to say that we could each think of ways to expand that participation.

In conclusion, working out this new moment in Marxist-Humanism involves both our own organizational development as News and Letters Committees and our work with those outside of News and Letters. We should not separate the two. Both the development of our 30 years as Marxist-Humanists and our specific work in the coming year with the Freedom movements are crucial to working out philosophy: as ground for organization, for revolution and for illuminating the question of what happens after.

DISCUSSION OF SOME ISSUES IN CHAPTER 9 OF REVOLUTION

by John P. ...

How is it that a study of Luxemburg, Lenin, Trotsky and Engels supports a challenge to all post-Marx Marxists? How can such different attitudes be taken together as a category? What does this challenge mean for say, young activists and revolutionaries who have no special respect for Marx? What does it mean for Marxist Luxemburgists who do feel the urgency to learn from Marx at a time when nearly all of his writings are available? I brought these questions to a recent reading of chapter 9, especially section 1 of REVOLUTION. Here are some thoughts about it.

It at once come into contact with many issues when we see how philosophy can become real for a revolutionary by way of the crises and needs of the period. 1914 shows this most vividly because in Lenin the needs and the undertaking were so historic a burden. Against both the outbreak of world war and the collapse of established Marxism he not only found his way through the highest categories of Hegel's Science of Logic but related it to the structure of Capital, attacked post-Marx Marxism for its treatment of the dialectic and reshaped his perspectives on what to do in Russia.

Here this "Preliminary Note" moves to the dual significance of 1914 and after--in how Lenin did not develop the break-through publicly--we are shown the nature of a post-Marx Marxist attitude where it would seem least likely. After all, this is not from a new generation's view that the times have changed and Marx must be re-evaluated on that basis. Rather, it is part of the outcome of a "return," an attempt to establish a new and different kind of Marxism. This seems to make Lenin central to both the re-establishment of Marx's Marxism and the difficulty of breaking with post-Marx Marxist attitudes. I still do not understand much of the "inner principles" of post-Marx Marxism, how much is a logic originating with Engels and how much is just plain divergence, without reason or rhyme.

In Luxemburg we see the need for a philosophy of revolution from the standpoint of her revolutionism and its needs. Luxemburg was so attuned and sensitive to the movement from below that she developed original concepts of revolution on spontaneity, on proletarian tactics, on autonomy and on socialist democracy. It is painful to hear Luxemburg call Marx's early essays "hotly, disjointed" fragments, not just because we know better but because the unifying principle of Marx's "new humanism" was what Luxemburg's theory called for. Because she lacked that systematic wholeness in her concepts were left to develop through polemics with the right-wing party leadership. In chapter 4

RD argues not that Luxemburg should have simply moved to Marx's position on the question of national self-determination for the sake of being "correct," but that "self-determination as a revolutionary potential demanded a broadening of the very concept of a philosophy of revolution as a totality."

But we go even deeper into Luxemburg's attitude toward Marx where she attempts to summarize his contribution in "Stagnation and Progress in Marxism." She writes that Marx's methodology, "greatly transcends the needs of the working-class," as a practical weapon and could be put to full use only in a socialist society. No doubt this illuminates more about Marxism than Luxemburg intended for its points to how no Marxist can ever grasp the comprehensiveness of the dialectic when it is left as an abstraction. Having spent many evenings at the New York Marxist School this year I have seen a like appreciation for Marxian theory coming from all directions. Yet nearly always, as soon as these "serious" Marxists take a moment to "turn" to the topic of Marx's methodology, they turn away from everything that would make the encounter meaningful. Certain words like "totality" and "praxis" have become so vitiated that one hesitates using them at all there. Yet what draws the most general interest from the floor is Marx himself, what he did, dates, exact quotes, etc. More than one speaker has been shocked to hear about Marxian principles in the context of Marx's life of all places!

It seems now that a confrontation with post-Marx Marxism is most important for bringing new kinds of attention to Marx. Marx's refusal to leave anything at the level of a phrase, an empty abstraction, surely characterized all of his developments beginning with when, as a youth living in a backward police state he confronted the way the philosopher Hegel had gone no further into analyzing the institutions of German society than as though they were "thought entities." Wouldn't he have abandoned the dialectic then and there if it were only a tool of abstraction? It was rather its centrality to the actual transformation of reality which he caught and never reduced, even under so extreme a practical test as to say, "theory can be realized in a people only insofar as it is the realization of the people's needs." (CW 3:195) But the "radical needs" of proletarian revolution disclosed not "historic necessity" but the self-developing "new humanism." This new universal, at once confronted Hegel's abstractness, the "sham universal" of vulgar communism, the stupid tautology of political economy's concept of labor--as well as Mikhailovsky making his own universal out of "Historic Tendency of Capital Accumulation."

8-6-83

Regression versus Philosophic Ground for Organization  
(After reading Hegel's chapter on Third Attitude to Objectivity)  
--Dave, Britain

Raya says in the July 12 REB that it is only with the section in the new book on the 1980s view that we put forward philosophy as ground for organization. Mike mentions the roots of Marxist-Humanism in Trotskyism and the experience demonstrating what happens when philosophy and organization get separated.

In Britain today, the state of philosophy on the left is not good. Where there is not a void, there is retrogression. E.P. Thompson, having hammered Althusser and the structuralists in his mammoth "Poverty of Theory", now seems to think that he can just go back to empiricism-- reducing the anti-war movement to a nationalist, pro-freeze strategy based on new Popular Frontism, saying that this strategy follows from the June election result in which the anti-Cruise/Trident vote was said to be in the majority despite the Tory victory.

Structuralists of the Labour Party left and Euro-Communism, reared on Althusser and academic privilege, now merely restate the end of ideology of the 1950s and Richard Crossland's warning then about the workers losing interest in the LP. Their main target for attack now seems to be militant trade unionists who are branded as "economists"; presumably because of their disinterest in Popular Front politics. (See Barry Hindess, Beatrix Campbell, et.al. in the New Statesman)

Since World War II the actual existence of the Particulars that Trotsky made into Universals has sent the Trotskyists reeling in myriad splits. The doctrine of "Soviet-Defencism" confronts anti-war activists who oppose both NATO and the Warsaw Pact. The belief in the LP as "the organization of the working class" and years of numbing "entry work" has resulted in two members of the Trotskyist "Militant Tendency" getting elected to Parliament, having taken over the Labour Party organization in two safe seats. They have managed to do so without having to explain to the voters just how they differ from Foot and Kinnock other than by degrees of Left-ness.

The tail-ending of narrow nationalism led Ernest Mandel's British supporters to support the Argentine junta in the South Atlantic war. "Force the Lefts to fight" being the eternal cry of this group, even their own concept of an independent Trotskyist party becomes just as much an abstract universal to them as socialism itself, which is always reduced to the nationalised economy, hence the endless tail-ending of bureaucrats and career politicians. Hegel complained of "shapeless repetition of one and the same idea which is applied in an external fashion to different material, the wearisome reiteration of it keeping up the semblance of diversity".

We know that near the end of his life, Hegel, having witnessed the first capitalist crisis of 1825-- a regressive dimension in the progress of industrialism-- extended the section in the Encyclopedia on Jacobi. Having dealt with Faith (pre-Rationalism) and going to Dialectics and the "Speculative Philosophy", he added a Third Attitude -- regression to Faith and "the Beautiful Soul". Such philosophers Heinrich Heine must have had in mind when he complained of a new age in which:

"our philosophers no longer criticize the ultimate grounds of knowledge and being, they no longer soar in the realm of abstraction. They have sought instead, for grounds on which to justify that which exists. They have become apologists for that which is."

Heine compared them with the Jesuits, though he called them "dwarf-like" by comparison.

In the 1980s defending a status quo is pragmatism's response to its own premise -- "does it work?" This has nothing to do with the knowledge of reality. Lenin notes in the Logic:

"the trick of Cognition, which one-sidedly takes up the data of experience ... and does away with refutation from experience by proposing and taking as valid experience not in its concrete totality but as example and only in that direction which is servicable to the hypotheses and the theory. Concrete experience thus being subordinated to the presupposed determinations..." (Beside which Lenin wrote "remarkably correct and profound".)

The "Does it work" philosophy of Gerry Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party answers with a resounding "yes" to any questioning of their alliance, yes alliance,

with Col. Gaddafi. After all, he is sufficiently "anti-imperialist" in opposing the interests of Britain/France/US in the Mid-East and also to believe that the WRP are sufficiently capable of causing problems for the British government at home (as well as giving him a good press) to be worth investing in. Libya has invested literally millions in the WRP's hi-tech printing plant. The WRP are now able to print a daily newspaper in colour and among the other publications they have launched, the weekly Labour Herald, which is supposedly the voice of Left LP politicians who sufficiently agree with the WRP's analysis of British capitalism as being the closest to collapse owing to its dependence on the banks' overseas investments which are threatened by Third World bankruptcies. As the expulsion of Trotskyists gets going in the Labour Party Gerry Healy will get what he wants-- publicity, a faction fight, and hopefully a daily newspaper. It will no doubt be called Daily Herald-- which was a workers' paper in the 1920s. Such is the power of Imagination.

Gerry Healy, who tries to reconcile "Empirio-Criticism" with the Philosophical Notebooks, has a philosophy which, in the words of Hegel attacking Jacobi, "abandons itself to wild vagaries of imagination and assertion, to a moral priggishness and sentimental arrogance, or to a reckless dogmatism and lust of argument, which is loudest against philosophy". The WRP's other philosopher, Cliff Slaughter/Cyril Smith, whose "polemical philosophy" has been aimed at RD in his "Lenin on Dialectics", made a hopeless attempt to deny the break in Lenin's thought in 1914, which could only have been written on the assumption that no loyal reader would check out Raya's original text (or Lenin's). His latest venture is publishing Marx's Mathematical Notebooks of 1881 with an introduction in which he claims that these notes "prove" the affinity of Marx and Engels. Accident or not, this is "philosophic" Trotskyism's response to the Ethnological Notebooks of the same period, rather than deal with the awkward questions we will be raising for them."

The Socialist Workers Party (Tony Cliff) has welcomed on board the anti-humanism of the Althusser school with Alex Callinicos aspiring to the mantle of Party Philosopher. Once again Lenin could feel them of another shortcoming, besides not understanding dialectics, (see MCTGC), that they share with Bukharin-eclecticism. Those old I.S.'ers e.g. Paul Foot, who have always regarded Marxism as Humanism are not happy about this. In their counter-attacks (see recent International Socialisms) they never got beyond Lukacs, the defender of Concrete Totality against the abstractions of the empiricists, and fail to recognize that Marx didn't reject Absolutes, he just wanted them unseparated from real living human beings and saw them as new beginnings.

Our debate on Constitution and Perspectives and our political work in London, along with an earlier trip to Glasgow for a discussion with Harry McShane, has made 1983 a year of subjective deepening of Marxist-Humanism in the face of degenerate capitalism approaching 1984. Orwell's vision of state-capitalist totalitarian Britain indeed maintains its grip to this day, notwithstanding his underestimation of their technology. And the "proles" are not those passive victims whom he hoped would somehow inherit the earth. In 1983 workers are resisting the ruination of the northern industrial base and the closure and privatisations in the public sector; the Black youth suffering 80 percent unemployment in some areas are fighting state harassment; and women have organized against war preparation rather than stay in the home where Thatcher says they belong.

GROUND-- Starting with the break with Trotskyism on state-capitalism, then the rejection of the centralized party to lead in favour of decentralized committees, it seems we are at a new stage-- especially with Marx's entire works now available for study and Raya's Trilogy, which enables us still working for permanent revolution a hundred years after Marx's death "to hear Marx thinking".

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\* An analysis of the Mathematical Notebooks will have to be done elsewhere and certainly not by me who has difficulty enough understanding the following, by G. Healy, presumably an attempt to update the pre-1914 Lenin: "The dialectical materialist method of cognition is able to study the movement and change of both the micro and macro worlds as well as the mega-measurements of the energy changes in space...if we consider the dialectical relations between the revolutionary party as the micro and the masses as the macro, it is possible to analyse the problems of the party as a reflection of the problems of the masses." (The Third Attitude as both Party and Mad Scientist!)



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The Black movement in Britain has no great disdain for philosophy as shown by the warm reception accorded Frantz Fanon, Soweto and American Black Thought. Fanon is widely read and many Black intellectuals have been influenced by CLRJ's 1947 critique of Trotskyism (and its philosophic method), "Notes on Dialectics". Jamesism however has not become philosophic ground. James, who stopped at spontaneity, has influenced many of the new generation of activists and of just in Britain (e.g. Italy). Hegel referred to a "halfness and inadequacy"-- "immediacy means, upon the whole, an abstract reference-to-self, that is, an abstract identity or abstract universality". And theory can't be got en route.

The philosophic ground for organization makes us unique as a political tendency. The thing is that any serious revolutionary who, unlike the Trotskyists, has broken with all the ruling factions of society, who can see the need for philosophy rather than just economics or just politics as ground for organization should be able to seriously consider working with us, working out self-development in and for the revolution.

THE UNFOLDMENT OF ABSOLUTE IDEA AS NEW BEGINNING: 1953-1983 Eugene

This year marks the 30th anniversary of Raya's Letters on the Absolute Idea (May 12 and May 20, 1953). Their twin vantage points were conversations with revolutionary philosophers -- Lenin, Hegel, Marx -- on the dialectic, and on our revolutionary age and What To Do. Objectively, we were beginning the era of automation and, (unknown to us) at the brink of an epoch of revolts and revolutions in East Europe, as well as African, Asian and Latin American revolutions.

However, this breakthrough on the Absolute Idea required a break-out from the restrictive context that James and Lee wished to put the philosophic discussion that was occurring within the Johnson-Forest Tendency. For them, there was a rush, now that the vanguard party to lead had been rejected, to discern what form of organization should be undertaken. "How can Hegel's dialectic yield us the Dialectic of the Party?" might be the way to most succinctly put it. Dunayevskaya, in her Letters on the Absolute Idea, rejects this framework which James and Lee wish to impose on the dialectic. She does it not a priori, but by tracing through that dialectic of Absolute Idea to show where it leads: not to the party, but to the Self-Thinking Idea. Or as Raya ends the letter of May 20, "We have entered the new society."

Today, we are still working out What To Do. But after 30 years of labor, of working out ramifications of the breakthrough on Absolute Idea as New Beginning, we are returning not to the "dialectics of the Party," but to the dialectics of organization. It is no mere shift in phraseology. It has taken these three decades for us to now approach explicitly dialectics of organization through "The Philosopher of Permanent Revolution Creates New Ground for Organization." Let us follow the unfoldment of Absolute Idea as New Beginning to see how he arrive at this moment of dialectics of organization.

I. Absolute Idea as New Beginning -- The Movement from Practices that is Itself a Form of Theory

This seminal form of Absolute Idea as New Beginning was what Dunayevskaya first worked out. It did not come full blown in 1953 when she wrote the Letters. Rather, that sets her upon a journey working out this breakthrough. Thus the categories of Marx's humanism and Marxist-Humanism were not present in 1953. It is true that before the Absolute Idea letters, the J-F tendency had written a great deal on Marx, including on his humanist essays. See especially RD's Labor and Society, 1943, and the 3-way correspondence, 1949-50, as well as the early drafts of what would become M&F. But it was only four years after the 1953 Letters that the category of Marx's humanism emerges in M&F, and we then begin to think of ourselves as Marxist-Humanists. Wasn't it only in the process of looking at

Marx after the 53 Letters that we saw this category emerge? We have often spoken of looking at Hegel through the eyes of Marx. This certainly is crucial when it is not vulgarized by those who wish to disregard Hegel and say Marx turned him upside down. After all, the magnificent Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts give us Marx's "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic." But at the same time one of the great contributions of Marxist-Humanism has been the return to Hegel in and for himself. This only fully becomes worked out after MSF, first in summaries of Hegel's works and then in chapter I of PAR. We will talk about this shortly. Here, I want to trace something different: Not alone Hegel through Marx, and Hegel in and for himself, but how we as Marxist-Humanists worked out a fuller and deeper relationship to Marx from MSF through PAR to RLVLMK by a deeper working out of Hegel's Absolutes. It has been Hegel's absolutes that has helped to give us new eyes with which to see Marx, as much as it has been today's objective-subjective events that make us return to Marx. The unfoldment of Absolute Idea as New Beginning has meant a development of how we view Marx, 1957, '73, '83.

It was our post World War II period which allowed the movement from practice that is itself a form of theory to be made into an explicit category. But it was not a category restricted to our age. Rather, it was the vantage point of our age which allowed Raya to recreate the whole history of the age of revolutions -- industrial, social-political, intellectual -- as beginning with a movement from practice to theory. Marxism and Freedom was cast precisely in this manner. Each revolutionary movement was shown to be an unfolding of new mass activities, new mass forms of organization, a new upsurge of thought from below. Just go through MSF and trace all the magnificent forms of action, organization, struggle, thought, that are brought forth,

the Parisian masses meeting in permanent session in the various neighborhoods in 1789; the discovery of democracy in the masses' method of action; the continuous revolts of the workers in the 1820s, 30s, Luddite riots, trade unions, finally the Silesian weavers that inspired Marx; 1848, the revolutionary workers' clubs, the June barricades in Paris; the 1850-60s, Abolitionism, underground railway, Black regiments in the Civil War, 8 hour leagues, First International; 1871 Paris Commune, Commune workshops, Commission of Labor and Exchange, Society for the Defense of Paris and Aid to the Wounded; the forms of workers' association that Marx points out in Capital and that Raya calls attention to: unemployed army as army of revolt, chapter on working day and workers self-organization, section on Strife between workers and Machinery;

I need not continue with more in the 19th century that are pointed to in MSF, nor in the 20th Century. Nor to show how all these forms from below are contrasted to all the petit-bourgeois forms from Proudhon, to Lassalle, to Bakunin.

After such a recasting of a full two centuries of revolutionary history, we have as well the movement globally in the 1960s, and the very, very new vantage

point that we as Marxist-Humanists have for viewing it with MSF in hand. A tracing of all our pamphlets from Workers-Battle Automation, Freedom Riders, and the Free-Speech Movement to Maryland Freedom Union and Notes on Women's Liberation will show how we practice this new vantage point. Of special importance are American Civilization on Trial and Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions. These pamphlets, especially the latter, are ones which anticipate the next moment of Absolute Idea as New Beginning.

II. Absolute Idea as New Beginning: The Movement from Theory which Strives both to Meet the Movement from Practice and to Reach the Fullness of Philosophy

We do not in any sense wish to stagify or compartmentalize Absolute Idea as New Beginning. It is after all this Unchained Dialectic. However, it is crucial to see that Absolute Idea as New Beginning is not born in one moment. It itself has undergone these past 30 years of self-development, unfolding; for it itself is in the absolute movement of becoming, is the self-thinking idea. Thus, certain dimensions of Absolute Idea as New Beginning become more explicit at different moments. If the movement from practice to theory is what gave birth to our committee form and to our newspaper, it was never done outside of theory meeting that movement from practice. It was always implicit within MSF, and indeed in the chapters on Marx and Lenin, was explicit as well.

But it is within Philosophy and Revolution that the dimension of Absolute Idea as New Beginning as a movement from theory becomes most explicit. We had thrown out a challenge with MSF, saying here is the movement from practice to theory. If you take it seriously -- philosophically -- as we are posing it in MSF, then what is your role as revolutionaries with regard to that movement? The international trips were undertaken by RD in the sixties both to see that movement from practice in Africa, in Asia, and to see what cothinkers would undertake the revolutionary journey to theory as part of Absolute Idea as New Beginning with us. But in the end, the further unfolding as theoretic response becomes ours alone in P&R. But what became clear in the process of looking for cothinkers, and even more in the decade since P&R's publication, is the dual role of theory. In fact, it was the inability to fully grasp this dual role, which stopped the young revolutionary intellectuals we met in that period, and who had in fact been born under the impact of that movement from practice, and associated themselves very much with it, from taking the full journey to become cothinkers with us. What P&R shows most explicitly is the intertwining of this dual role of theory. It is to meet the movement from practice to theory with revolutionary theory, but it is as well that theory must itself be rooted in and strive towards revolutionary philosophy.

Theory seems to me to be the mediation of the movement from practice and the universality of philosophy. Isn't in fact the Achilles Heel of the Alternatives, their refusal to recognize this dual role of theory, their refusal to root themselves in the totality of the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic? For all the Alternatives did want to unite with a movement from practice, but they always misunderstood what it represented. Trotsky and his theory of permanent revolution was without a subject of revolution; Mao with his "poor and blank" peasants was rooted not in Hegelian contradiction let alone Absolute, but in his own "primary and secondary contradictions"; Sartre's "practico-inert" became the category of his Progressive-Regressive method. In truth, you cannot grasp the movement from practice to theory as a form of theory without yourself being rooted in revolutionary philosophy. After all, wasn't that concept itself born from RD's labor through Hegel's Absolutes? And without grasping that, what can your response be but an external, non-dialectical, imposition. It is for this reason that all understanding of the movement from practice as a form of theory and therefore your response as a revolutionary to it, rests on grasping Hegel's Absolutes as New Beginnings as they are presented in Part I, especially chapter I of P&R.

It is chapter I of P&R which creates the ground for how we now view both Marx and Lenin. We have emphasized how first Marx and then Lenin felt compelled to grapple with the Hegelian dialectic at certain objective moments. Can we not also say that what part I of P&R, "Why Hegel Why Now?" represents on one level is how the Hegelian dialectic in turn, through the labor of Marxist-Humanism grapples with Marx and Lenin? One can see this in how part I of P&R has moved from Marxism and Freedom's Marxism as the Unity of Theory and Practice to Marxism as a New Continent of Thought, and how the view of Lenin expands from Lenin and the Dialectic: A Mind in Action to The Philosophic Ambivalence of Lenin. It is not a question of a change of our position from MEF to P&R on Marx and Lenin. Rather it is an expanding and deepening of our vision of them under the impact of how Marxist-Humanism in unfolding Absolute Idea as New Beginning from the 1950s and 60s into the 70s. Didn't this give us, for instance, new eyes with which to look at Lenin and the Party? And in looking at Hegel in and for himself, it is important to see that Absolute Idea as New Beginning itself only becomes articulated in that language with chapter I of P&R "Absolute Negativity as New Beginning". It was not expressed in such a manner in the 53 letters or in MEF.

With P&R we as Marxist-Humanists answered the challenge of creating revolutionary theory that had been thrown out in MEF. But in turn this meant a new challenge and further unfolding of Absolute Idea as New Beginning. Now that we had pinpointed the new of our age as the explicitness of the movement from practice

as itself a form of theory, and now that we have met that movement with a movement from theory rooted in and striving to become the fullness of philosophy, then and only then could we concentrate on what had been implicit in Absolute Idea as New Beginning: How to concretize Absolute Idea as New Beginning as the Dialectic of Organization for Marxist-Humanism.

III. Absolute Idea as New Beginning: Perspectives for Dialectics of Marxist-Humanist Organization

Let me say at the beginning we have practiced as a Marxist-Humanist organization for almost thirty years. So we are not at all without a revolutionary beginning. In fact the new pamphlet to be on the 1949-50 Miners' General Strike will show how a Marxist-Humanist tendency practiced even before we were a Marxist-Humanist organization. What is the distinguishing mark in the period we are now within, the 1980s, is not that we are first discovering or becoming a Marxist-Humanist organization. Rather it is that with the working out of Rosa Luxemburg Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution, and with very specifically Marx's ground for organization as unseparated from revolution in permanence, we are now making explicit, not alone that there can be no revolution without a philosophy of revolution, but that there cannot be revolutionary organization without the deep persistence of philosophy within it.

Think where we have traveled to come to this revolutionary moment. We have rejected any concept of Trotsky's permanent revolution as a kind of continuator of Marx's revolution in permanence. We have separated ourselves sharply from Lenin's failure to have the deep persistence of philosophy within his organization even as we grasp and absorb his revolutionary encounter on transformation into opposite from Hegel's dialectic. We have embraced Luxemburg's appreciation of the spontaneity of the masses and her posing the question of revolutionary democracy after the revolution, but find no aid in her refusal to create a new organizational form in her day, her refusal to have dialectics be more than a tool against others, not a pathway for her own revolutionary self-development. We have denied Marx-Engels as one on attitude to man-woman, to revolutions in non-capitalist lands, to the fullness of Marx's concept of a philosophy of revolution.

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But most important we have traveled the full length and breath of Marx's new continent of thought 1841-1883, and have now explicitly brought forth Marx as philosopher of revolution in permanence creating new ground for organization. This concept, a central one in the new book, in turn had its roots very much in chapter I of PER. In RELATION we have spoken about how parts I and II in their separate ways helped compel part III. This is no doubt true. But what is equally true is

that it is our view of Hegel's work which helped give decisive shape to how we view Marx in the 1980s. For isn't Marx's revolution in permanence, Marxist-Humanism's translation of Absolute Negativity as New Beginning as characterizing the life-work of Marx? We are not here speaking of Marx as theorist of permanent revolution, though that, especially through his 1850 Address to the Communist League, was also true. Instead when we speak of a philosopher of permanent revolution we are encompassing how Marxist-Humanism views the totality of Marx's work 1841-1883, how he was constantly looking at new forms of production, new subjects of revolution, new points of departure in non-capitalist lands. How his life was one series of new revolutionary beginnings in thought. We have pointed out how Marx had many different specific names for his philosophy at different historic moments. What we have chosen to do with RIMLMH is to summarize as a new beginning how we view Marx, -- philosopher of revolution in permanence. We now proceed with how to concretize that for our day as ground for organization.

(I hope to continue this question in terms of revolutionary organization and our participation in Latin American Revolutions at the Convention)

OUR PARTICIPATION IN THE 1949/50 STRIKE  
(Raymond, Los Angeles)

The 1949/50 miners strike and our participation in it was one of the greatest highpoints I have witnessed in the revolutionary movement. The miners general strike came in response to the introduction of automation in the coalfields, where several of us in the Johnson-Forest Tendency had been doing political work for some years.

The central issue in the strike was over seniority; the miners never had seniority rights, so you could be fired for anything. Often the strongest man would be put on the machine, and a lot of favoritism was used by the foreman in choosing who would run it.

When the continuous miner came in, it changed the mode of production within the mines; for every continuous mining machine about 18 miners became unemployed. It was an unsafe and dangerous machine, a man killer. That's what the workers called it. The workers wanted to keep off that machine, so they struck for seniority rights, which miners did not have at that time.

The strike lasted several months and involved about 100,000 miners, all through northern West Virginia. It was a new stage because the strike was not sanctioned by the union leadership. John L. Lewis opposed the strike, calling the continuous miner "progress" no matter how many workers it consumed. This is the attitude of all union bureaucrats, before and after 1949, to consider any kind of automation as "progress" even when it kills you. There are a number of union locals who voted in favor of the strike. In one of those locals Johnson-Forest people were active; I believe Andy was its local president. What also figured in the strike was the Taft-Hartley anti-labor law, which had been passed not long before. The miners were challenging the machine, the union, the government.

We had an organization down there at the time, which played a part in the strike. All of us had been active in the mines for some period of time; I had been fired and blacklisted not long after getting in (this was before the strike). We were all veterans, college students, who went to West Virginia knowing that the miners were the most revolutionary sector of the American workers. The miners went out on strike in 1943, right in the middle of the war, and we knew that. So we went to West Virginia because we wanted to have a miners' voice within the American Revolution. All of us had grown up in the depression and went through the war, and we didn't see capitalism giving us anything except more depression and war. So, first as a tendency within the Workers Party, and later as one within the Socialist Workers Party, we went to do work in mining country. After being blacklisted myself and some others re-enlisted in school at the University of West Virginia at Morgantown.



When the strike broke out there were several Johnson-Forest members working in the mines in addition to those of us on the campus. The union fund was exhausted when the strike began, but the workers said to hell with that, we aren't going to let that stop us from striking against the continuous miner. So as the strike progressed there was hunger and starvation in Scotts Run. We had a local organization and a national organization and we used it to help the miners. Miners were going spontaneously from place to place asking for support and assistance from other workers. We had contacts in Detroit, Johnny Zupan and Charles Denby in particular, and we gave their address to two miners who then made a trip to Detroit. We also called them in Detroit to set up some work for the miners. In the UA' there was considerable sympathy with the strike, since so many workers in Detroit originally come from mining country.

The result was that Zupan and Denby were active, and their work resulted in UA' Local 600 spearheading a city-wide drive and got 7 trailer trucks full of food and clothing for the striking miners. It gave us a real lift to see how much a small group of radicals could achieve.

At the same time we had our group at the university. We must have written hundreds of letters to every labor organization in the Eastern and Mid-West United States trying to get their support for the strike. We got some responses and collected some money this way. Then we got the idea to picket a basketball game at the campus, the most important basketball game of the year. This wasn't such a common thing to do at the time since the West Virginia University was run by the mine operators. They were on its Board of Trustees, they ran the place. At that time the school was mostly upper class or upper middle class. But there were a lot of veterans coming onto the campus who were a real breath of fresh air.

So we set up this picket line at the basketball game in order to collect money and inform students of the strike. This was our way of breaking down the division between mental and manual, between 'hardhats' and students. Now at this time those of us in the Johnson-Forest Tendency on campus were very few, so we approached the Workers Party on campus and asked for them to join in our picket line. They had their own "workers fraternity house" on the campus, though I don't think they had anyone in the mines. You never heard so many excuses as to why they couldn't join us on the picket line--though in the end they came by and joined it. We kept the picket up all through the game and collected quite a bit of money. When it was over, we said to the WP, since you guys are in the majority here, we'll give you the honor of delivering the money to the miners at Scott's Run. But they refused to do it; nothing could make them go to the Scotts Run working class area. So we had one of our own people in the J-FT go down and give it to the miners.

The other radicals responded to the strike in the same "maybe I support you, maybe I don't" way. The SWP took the position that John L. Lewis was a "great labor leader". They printed that in The Militant right at the height of the strike. The JFT was within the SWP at the time, but we wouldn't distribute The Militant when that came out. We said, hell, the miners are going out on strike against John L. Lewis and the SWP says we should consider him a great labor leader! The SWP didn't like what we in the JFT were doing in West Virginia, not from the start. They called us "adventurers", and you always heard accusations of "small mass partyism" being thrown at us. The SWP had a Tri-State Meeting up in Youngstown where some national representatives (including Harry Braverman) tried to talk us out of supporting the strike. We said to ourselves, if the SWP wants to force us to stop supporting the miners, we'll issue a bulletin and split from them on the spot. All through the strike they continued to put out material saying how great John L. Lewis was, when we opposed everything he stood for.

I don't believe the SWP ever came out as strong for Lewis, though they certainly didn't like what we were doing either. They had to be pushed to do anything about the strike, and they didn't recognize what it represented. They were more interested in chasing after the politicians. All through this period we heard talk that the JFT in West Virginia was "anti-leadership". I didn't know where that kind of talk was coming from at the time, nor did I understand it, since all I was doing was supporting the miners. But after the split in the JFT I heard C.L.R. James was the one calling us "anti-leadership". He also didn't have much of a relation to the strike. He only came down to West Virginia once, and that was to take a walk through the university. He didn't even bother making the customary visit to Scott's Run. It seems he was more interested in the goings-on in New York than West Virginia.

Raya on the other hand had moved down to Pittsburgh around 1947, and made several trips to West Virginia before and during the strike. There was contact with miners and I believe this experience had much to do with the development of Marxism and Freedom. What Raya saw in the strike was that production had changed with the introduction of automation, and therefore the practice of the workers would change as well. The workers' struggles would mean raising new issues and questions. The strike became the taking off point for a new form of practice, and it was from this idea that Marxism and Freedom developed.

Our active support of the strike came from understanding the mode of production and its relation to society. To us there was no doubt that the introduction of the automated miner meant a drastic change in the mode of production. When you talk about hundreds of thousands of jobs being eliminated by the continuous miner, you are

talking about a drastic change in production. There was no question on our part that both the introduction of the continuous miner and the miners strike against it represented a new stage, something the other radicals could not see.

I believe a factor in our understanding that was that, even before the strike, we had discussions and study on Marx and Marxism. More than anything at the University, we had classes and discussions on Marxism. We read the classic works--Marx, Lenin, Trotsky. We had classes on Marx's Capital; I recall one thing we studied was Raya's polemic with Carter over Capital, in addition to the other things by her we read. We weren't the greatest, but we knew theory, we knew that the capital/labor relation at the point of production was key. I don't believe any of the other radicals put the kind of emphasis we did in studying the mode of production and how Marx understood it.

When the strike broke out, we didn't know all of what it represented. It was only later, in the 1950's, that it became clearer. At the time of the strike, we knew it was important when a miner asked "What kind of labor should man perform?". Our members in the mines brought in some statements from miners that showed us the struggle was important. It gave us a sense of how new the strike was, though I think Raya caught more of what was new, in that it became the basis for her to develop Marxist-Humanism and Marxism and Freedom.

Looking back you can say that even though the strike may not have won, it did something important. It challenged the continuous miner, Automation. Instead of bringing in progress like Lewis said it would it created Appalachia, something the sociologists are still trying to explain today. It was a great experience to see miners challenge the government, the union, the mode of production, all at once. It was an exciting experience for me, because as a revolutionary who had an organization and worked on the campus it showed what kind of work you can do for the working class.

DISCUSSION ON 1949-50 MINERS GENERAL STRIKE  
(Frank, Bay Area)

May 23, 1983

Dear Andy,

Enclosed are two copies of manuscripts I just discovered in my collection of papers. They are so relevant to the projected pamphlet that I thought it best to duplicate them for you and send them off post-haste.

I've made no corrections. The typed one was one of the documents that preceded the correction, not "preceded" but obviously, after reading the end of it, that followed the split with the SWP. It must have been written, then in 1952 and would have been one of the documents in the hands of members of the Johnson-Forest group at that time.

The other one, handwritten, was obviously addressed to C.L.R. James. I'd completely forgotten about it and even now don't know what was done with it. I assume I sent a copy of it off to CLRJ -- but I'm not at all sure that that is so. Nevertheless, after reading over quickly, as well as the typed one, I think, even now, that they are together invaluable portraits of that time and place. I have no idea at the moment, what might be done with them other than that you and anyone else working on the projected pamphlet should see them, and we might begin discussing them as an aid to the work ahead.

Do let me say briefly for now the following: we're not concerned, certainly, with a mere chronicling of the significant events of that period. The real question is how we can bring to bear the philosophical insights we have acquired since.

One thing strikes me now is how completely absent from our whole struggle was CLRJ! Everyone gets mentioned and is involved -- everyone but CLRJ! I suspect the Resident Editorial Board minutes of May 16, and Olga's discovery of the first bulletin is on the right track. CLRJ, I suspect, was performing a careful balancing act back then, keeping in good graces with the SWP leadership without saying or doing anything openly against us. Though his blast at Raya (which I had never forgotten and which I recalled to Mary later Raya's presentation to us all in Oakland last month), was perhaps, come to think of it now, as much a blast at the great actions we and the miners were taking. This had never occurred to me before.

Obviously there are judgements contained in the documents which I would alter now. Still, they are useful, perhaps, even in their innocence. Another thing strikes me: it was that strike that pro-

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pelled us toward the break with the CIO, which had performed so poorly in that period. I had missed, of course, CLM's weaknesses at the time. Now it is all too clear.

If necessary, I think I can identify almost all of the names and the events mentioned in guarded terms throughout. One or two escape me for now but we can hold up on such details for the moment.

I still have more digging into my papers to do. But this can start us going for now.

June 3, 1983

Dear Andy,

I had hoped that the two old manuscripts of 1951, '52 I sent you on the 1949-50 Miner's General Strike would have served to present the objective accounts of that massive event. But now that you also stress my recollections of that period, I find myself hard pressed. What more can I add? Let me try, however:

Raya presented the idea of the pamphlet in public for the first time in L.A. She twisted our arms, as only she can do, and I found myself speaking publicly on those ancient affairs with no serious preparations to speak of but I did feel, as she, we should begin to grapple with the whole thing. (There's a tape around: would it be useful for someone to transcribe our comments -- Raya's, Raymond's or mine?)

One point worth repeating from my L.A. remarks, I think, was that no small part of our success was perhaps due to our penchant for philosophy, Hegel, etc. I recalled how Raya had briefed me on the whole question of "the other", which we, the leadership that is, was examining. This connection, between philosophy and that event had never occurred to me before. I'm not too sure as to how significant it is. Still, it may be worth considering.

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But as I probe the event I find myself examining an earlier and later period as well. For example, Raya's point about CLRJ's charging her with "small mass partyism" even as he set our course on an underground preparation for the public for about a year and a half. Raya's proposal then, that the miners' strike and activities be used as the basis for the launching of the new paper (new to me even now, some thirty years later), remarkable then and now, inspires further thoughts. CLRJ, obviously, was nervous before the great American masses. He had been completely absent from our most magnificent period, the miners' strike of '49-'50. Now, he indulged his somewhat precious notion as to how the paper -- and the organization would grow -- hot-house fashion, away from the great natural world of life and struggle. Good! But hadn't this same hesitancy affected him and us -- back when we were leaving the Workers Party? Why did we waste more time in the SVP, which we joined in late '47(?) and left four years later in '51? Philosophy would have a hard time dispelling the murkiness we practiced.

The point, I think, is nothing more clearly defined the distinctions than the '49-'50 miners' strike. And, no one, to be sure, began to see it more clearly than Raya, who properly pursued the philosophic roots (the Absolute Idea) of the problem that faced us. Nevertheless, as we say now (1983), it was the miners' strike that propelled us in the new direction, that in effect, declared an end to such Jamesian hesitancy. Had it not provided us with assurance that we were better than the "best". Had not the "best" been the SVP, with their proletarian experience and network, reasons for which we had joined them? Was not this CLRJ's elaborate reasons for joining them rather than venturing into the world directly? Now, after '49-'50, we had proven definitively we were their superiors. We had beaten them in the most challenging proletarian environment of that time, the miners' struggle!

It had never occurred to me until now that the break that did come in the summer of '51 from the SVP came because of this event more than anything else. Typical of CLRJ; he missed the point completely. When the '50 convention of the SVP came, he had behind him the marvelous achievements of W. Virginia and the terrible threat of Pablo and his Stalinist conception of the revolutionary Eastern Europe. If he, James, had missed the moment for a real "engagement" (he had once quoted Napoleon's "Ons' engage et plus on voit!" in leaving the WP in 1947 now he had a great moment in 1950. He flubbed it! Having flubbed it, he sought to regain the initiative in the summer of '51 when he moved for the break. But he missed this up too! He circulated a special "secret" document, which purported to show how the SVP was dehumanized and Stalinized enough to interfere in his personal life!! A tragic travesty of the basis for the break with the SVP! What should have been a great moment of celebration of our philosophical-organizational independence -- thanks to our experience!

N. Virginia -- shriveled into a miserable "affaire d'honneur", as the French would say!

It is true to say that we could see this more clearly only after Raya's work on the Absolute Idea. But this also ignores that organization can itself be -- philosophy (witness our re-discovery of Marx's Critique of the Gotha Programme). Our conviction that organization was itself philosophical was too weak to stand up to his muddying the issues. We were not as respectful of our N. Virginia achievements in '51 as we now are rightly, in '83! Had we been, we might have reached the stage we're in much sooner.

But this is not meant as a forlorn exercise in hindsight. It is meant to make clear, now more than ever that the breakthrough that came with the birth of News and Letters in 1955 was as much the product of Raya's philosophical convictions as it was of the new spirit that had emerged from the miners' struggle of '49-'50. Andy and Olga, certainly, sensed this (far better than I did by that time). Raymond, also originally of N. Virginia, did too.

It might be helpful here, in fact, to contrast my own feelings about our leaving the SVP in 1951 and the split that occurred in Correspondence in 1955. I had been absolutely exultant when the break occurred in 1951 -- I can still recall with considerable clarity, for example, how buoyant I felt as a small caravan which had begun in N.Y., moved north through Pittsburgh, (picking N. Va. people up along the way, I think) on to Detroit, for our first large gathering after the break with the SVP. The popular song of that time was "Come on-a-my house, etc." written by William Saroyan and sung by Rosemary Clooney. I sang and whistled it continuously as we wended our way to Detroit, at which point Raya the first of our leadership, who went to Detroit, provided the bathroom of her hotel-room as community bath for us intrepid itinerants.

It had not occurred to me as explicitly until now, 1983, that the great pleasure I felt then derived essentially, from the contrast between the great spirit of independence created by the miners' in their strike of '49-'50 and the plodding, pretentious attitudes of the SVP, so typical of countless petty officials and bureaucrats from one end of America to another! Hadn't I met the same breed only a few years earlier, 1945-46, when I had been rehabilitated in Walter Reed General Hospital and when we amputees had fought to win from the government an automobile-for-the-amputees? The same mulish, plodding, pretentious bureaucrats obstructed us all along the way, in the great halls of Congress, as we handful of amputees made our way down from the hospital almost daily to lobby for our cause. We eventually won! Now, 1951, we were free and victorious once again! This time not the bureaucrats of the capitalist establishment but of

the labor movement, the SWP, were the force from which we had freed ourselves.

1954, 1955, the split in the ranks of the old Correspondence was for me the opposite occurrence at the time. It is clear now that the break was inevitable and necessary, that in a sense that we have been discovering more and more the last few years, it was also the continuation of the best of the earlier period, climaxing now, 1983 with our awareness that even the great strike of '49-'50 belonged not to James and Correspondence, so to speak, but to us later, News and Letters, Marxist-Humanism, 1983. Still, the fact is, at the time, this break came to me, fundamentally, as a great tragedy. Those hints and suggestions of the future, those elements of '49-'50 which had translated themselves into the spirit of the new organization of News and Letters, which had begun to shape themselves into the philosophy of the Absolute Idea of Raya's work, had escaped me. No matter now, of course: all's well, that ends well, but then it was near devastating. What matters here, though, is that now, 1983, we have begun to recover that great upheaval of '49-'50 and formally embrace it as part of the rich heritage of Marxist-Humanism, despite the fact that in time it appears to be part of what we left behind. This conscious appropriation of such a creative moment should even now, thirty and more years later, provide even more inspiration for our growth and development.

Still, one of the elements of my confusion of 1954-1955 might be considered, James, as I mentioned above had tried to reduce the essence of the break of 1951 into an "affaire d'honneur" (an affair of the heart). He began to do the same thing with his departure from the U.S. in 1953, when the government refused to renew his visa (He was not expelled!) He contrived the elaborate effort, Mariners Renegades and Castaways, a Marxist-cultural analysis of Herman Melville, with the climactic last chapter focused on James' effort to stay in the States, including even a hunger strike; all, as I say, as an elaborate effort to create a martyr, a "castaway", an expulsee; to reduce in short, a blow by the bourgeoisie against the organization into a petty-personal event, enlisting even, in the process, one of the great cultural creations of the nation; Melville's Moby Dick!

What has this got to do with the miners' strike of '49-'50? That's the point! What does it have to do with it? Didn't we have to undertake it as a major product of our work in the coal fields the year of '52 and '53, just before James' departure? Were we not somehow required to marry the achievements of '49-'50 with the James' critique of Melville? When friends in the coalfields wondered what we were about, weren't we advised to ignore the structure of the book itself and verbally advance the last chapter, the account of James' encounter with the immigration authorities, as the true center



of the book? All in all, wasn't both the book and this extra effort to retrieve its last chapter, only a more elaborate way of dulling the great spirit that had infused us with the strike?

I think so and I think so even now that as we review that period in the light of '49-'50 strike. Certainly I wondered about it at the time, deep in my soul of souls. And yet, soon, I think it helped disorient me. I had always had a fondness for matters artistic and cultural, whether it was art, music, drama, or literature. Here now was a vigorous cultural event, couched in Marxist language and advanced by our Lenin-of-1953, hounded by the bourgeoisie, in the figure then of immigration authorities and McCarthy. The fact is, I wasn't ready for 1954-'55. I believe now that James' "great opus" on Melville's Moby-Dick muddled me.

To be sure, the personal disorientation is of no great matter. All's well that ends well. But the point is that it helps further define the significance of the miners' strike of '49-'50. It is by contrast to this event that the others that both preceded and followed are better judged. The murkiness, hesitancy, personality cult: all are more clearly outlined by the miners' strike (now too, if not then!). It is fitting that we readjust its place in the past.

Sincerely,

Frank

Labor in NY

John Marcotte

This year has shown no let up in the sharpest attack on US labor in decades. The attack has been political--Reaganism--economic--depression--and ideological--industrial unions forcing concessions on workers. With the first great concession of the No-Strike Pledge of WW II union leadership began its suicidal path of collaboration and its fruits of McCarthyism, purges of militants, anti-labor laws and the first acceptance of Automation by John L. Lewis in the late 40s and early 50s; a path which today means the virtual self-destruction of these unions who know only how to retreat before the onslaught of Reaganism.

I felt last year that all this would breed a tremendous rank-and-file revolt. But as Charles Denby has said, you can look out on a calm sea and never know when a mighty wave will arise. There have been important strikes this year, many anti-concession strikes. They are as yet individual and isolated. Everyday I feel in the shop the very real objective force of massive unemployment and fear of losing your job, keeping workers down. There can be no setting a timetable on the reaction to Reaganomics. And you can really feel at work that the labor bureaucracy is the last barrier to the self-organization of workers for freedom.

But I believe the unions have dealt themselves a death-blow to any credibility they had left with these concessions. Just as the transformation into the opposite of what they were created to be is total, the workers' break with the labor bureaucracy is total. The form the opposition will take is all that remains to be worked out. Production workers are even saying, "Better with no union to sell you out."

Look at the Art Steel workers' demonstration inside union headquarters. Their attitude is that the union is the immediate enemy standing in your way to fight the company, that there is no hope of changing anything in the union, no work from within is possible, you can only attack it. The workers in my shop, for all the fear that prevents action for now, have exactly the same attitude. I think only some of the Left have not shed their illusion of reforming the unions.

What does this mean in the shop? Seeking first shop-floor unity, the union of the workers. Without this nothing is possible. This can include a struggle to organize a union or get certain reforms in your local. There is no contradiction in that. I reject any fatalism on the part of workers that, since the unions can't be reformed, there is nothing to be done. But because I recognize that nothing less than the abolition of the capital/labor relation can solve our problems, I cannot respond with only activism without bringing in Marx's understanding of our situation and the way out of it. The force of this vision together with the shop floor struggles form the process that must begin today to lead to the classless society. I reject the Left's attempts to organize factions in the unions and get elected to positions,

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not because that may not be the right tactics for certain struggles, but because of the way I've seen it done.

I feel there's a lack of respect for and serious dealing with, when workers are saying you can't change things that way, there is a fine line between fatalism and the truth! You've got to deal with it. The Left, including anarchists, goes on like the Old Left in unions and the reforms and union positions are taken too seriously divorced from a real rank-and-file movement.

Working with immigrant labor has its own particularities. Our friend Runa has found that when faced with the tremendous exploitation and abuses in a shop and the seeming passivity and fear of the workers, he has had to first help his fellow workers know their rights and what's in the contract, since it's in English and a well-kept secret by the union. He would then help the workers gain the confidence to begin demanding those rights, using tactics which all could agree on such as a letter to the union signed by a majority of the workers. In his experience, this patient work has been able to initiate a whole process of struggle which escalates with each new victory and repression. It has similarities to the process initiated by the Theology of Liberation in Latin America, where beginning by listening to the peasants and telling them they are human and have certain rights leads to a cycle of newer and newer forms of struggle and consciousness meeting every wave of repression--because of course they don't have those "rights" until they seize them.

The point is to not get impatient of the process. Activity in labor is not to gain any particular reforms no matter how great nor any union positions no matter if you would take over a local. The means is the end--helping the growing ~~self-organization~~ self-organization, self-confidence and self-awareness of labor as Subject of history, from individual workers to whole shops, which necessitates both this practical experience and what we call Marx's Humanism. As long as capitalism exists any reforms can be reversed but this "intellectual sediment" is what remains to build on and to create the new society based on Freely Associated Labor.

Some fellow members in my union tried to set up an opposition caucus of sorts this year. They felt the time was right because of tremendous dissatisfaction in the union over loss of membership, financial mismanagement, corruption and a question of where the union was going to. The meetings were attended by various shop stewards and some opposition staff members. I felt uneasy at the lack of rank-and-filers but I said ok, who knows? If it can present itself to the workers in the shops as an alternative, and if the workers decide this is a form of struggle they want, and make it their own...well, it's a chance. But the gap between the caucus which included anarchists and other left, and the shop floor was too great. A caucus like this could work if it was the result of a shop floor struggle, which got to the stage of seeing the need to reach out beyond the one shop and a caucus of shops in opposition or struggle formed. The way it was, I would

go to a meeting, learn all the crap that was going on in the union, and of plans to oppose this at the general meetings of stewards and local officers--which is the wrong ground, is the ground of the bureaucrats, and as we found out in a battle of words they are the meanest. I thought our function should have been to simply try to open up communication between the shops, with a newsletter which could both share some of this information with the members and invite them to share their experiences and ideas. Then we would see if we had something. But the "caucus" wanted to fight the bureaucracy themselves, and got nowhere.

So I'd go back to the shop, and the workers' attitude was, the union is the enemy, it's a mafia, you can't reform it. So what's the use of tactics to oppose this or that corruption of the bureaucrats if it's not part of the shop floor struggle; if it's not a step in the self-organization of the workers? It means nothing to them, no more than voting for a democrat instead of a republican, it's not their form of struggle. The Left cannot hear the workers' criticism even in their seeming passivity. The years of work Runa did culminating in the workers making him steward, and this kind of Left "organizing", start at opposite ends. I liked anarchists compared to the rest of the Left for their position on labor. But in practice Marxist-Humanism is far more radical than them on labor. They act like social-democrats, despite the professed ultimate goals.

Marxist-Humanists cannot simply wait for new forms of workers organization to spring up like Solidarnosc--recognizing Solidarnosc sprang up spontaneously not in a void but in the ground prepared by KOR. The unity of workers with intellectuals; of workers' own way of knowing with Marx's method of knowing, must be worked on now, and for that we must participate in the struggles. News & Letters remains one of our principal forms for the difficult work of fostering this unity. And in NY labor, Noticias y Cartas is an indispensable part of News & Letters.

## A WORKERS PERSPECTIVE

by Dale, LA

I started my career as a full time wage slave in 1966 at Gerity Schultz, a die casting factory in Toledo, Ohio. For the most part I operated punch presses that trimmed the excess metal off of castings. All the jobs were repetitive, monotonous and excruciatingly boring. We had to wear straps on our wrist that were attached to a cable on a overhead cam. When the punch press came down the cable would jerk our hands back (if they were close to the machine) to keep us from having our fingers or hands chopped off (which frequently happened to workers who forgot to put on the wrist straps.) The worst job I had there was trimming these little bottle-cap-shaped pieces; the rate was 250 pieces per hour. We were paid piece rate and what I got above 250 was a bonus, but the job was timed down to the last second. Fortunately, the rate was even too fast for the machine, and it kept breaking down (with a little help from me).

In August 1966 I got a job at a Chrysler plant in Highland Park, Michigan. The plant was to be transferred to a suburb of Toledo. Our plan was to work in Highland Park for a few months and then be transferred to the new plant in Ohio, and therefore have an advantage of seniority over the locals who would hire in afterwards.

My crisis in Auto came about after my stint in the Army. I was drafted in August 1967. My experiences in the military were a real turning point in my life. Up until then I had a typical capitalistic mentality. It was in the military that I became aware that there was something radically wrong with the objective situation and my place within it. (I have recently discovered through News & Letters (specifically the pamphlets and books American Civilization on Trial, Indignant Heart: A Black Workers Journal, and others) that my awakening had a lot to do with the Black struggle for freedom which was reaching a new stage at the time. There were tremendous social upheavals during my military internment--the Detroit insurrection, the assassination of Martin Luther King, the Chicago Democratic Party riots, and the Czechoslovakian revolts. The latter kept me from Vietnam, as I was sent to Germany instead. In the military I began to rebel by not saluting officers and disobeying orders. I basically played the game when I was in, but when I was finally released they made it a point to tell me I was barred from re-enlistment, which I thought was just hilarious.

At first, when I got out of the service, I had the illusion that now I was a "free" man. But when I went back to work at Chrysler I found myself being ordered about, this time not by men, but by machines on the assembly line. The conditions were the same as before I was drafted, but now they had become unbearable. One day I was installing weather strips which I had to extract from a tank of boiling water and oil, when all of a sudden I almost passed out for no apparent reason. It scared the hell out of me, and I quit Chrysler shortly thereafter. I've had many jobs since then in other factories, in construction, as a semi-trailer driver, and I've presently been roofing for the past seven years. In roofing we don't so much work with machines, as much as like a machine, a roofing machine.

One thing that prompted me to write about work was reading Herbert Marcuse's Preface to Marxism & Freedom. A few of his views irritated me. The first was his view that work will "always" be alienated and that the most we can hope for is a shorter work day and increased leisure time. Marcuse obviously hadn't worked much in a factory, and for a man who seemingly had a profound understanding of Marx, his own split between mental and manual is revealed in his writings on labor and leisure time. In fact, "alienated leisure follows alienated work."

Another comment Marcuse made there is that workers are less likely to revolt now, because workers as a class have risen in status and enjoy more benefits, supposedly due to the successful efforts of the labor bureaucracy. But it was labor out in the streets shedding blood in class struggles that brought about these gains, not the labor bureaucracy. The labor leaders have since come to be in open opposition to labor on every issue, serving as the body guard of capital. Marcuse also disregarded how increased alienation brought about by automation and speed up, will supply new material conditions for revolt.

What seemed to me to underpin all these errors was Marcuse's acceptance as a universal of what to Marx was a development taking place only in Western Europe, namely, the development of socialism as following that of capitalism. This view leaves out the Third World, where capitalism has never been a viable option. Capitalism took centuries to develop in the West and it is not necessarily a historical phase in which all parts of the world eventually have to go through. Where Marcuse seems to have a technological determinism, genuine Marxism focuses on the human dimension. The Third World basically faces the choice of Humanist Socialism or Totalitarianism.

As against any unilinear determinism, technological or otherwise I believe work can be freed from the alienation that characterizes it now in the form of mindless, repetitive monotony, not to mention reckless disregard to the safety and health of the workers. This is a situation in which "dead labor" (machines) lords over living labor. It is a situation which destroys souls and rots brains. But this does not signal the end for the worker. As Raya Dunayevskaya wrote in Dialectics of Liberation, "abstract labor degrades the concrete laborer but cannot destroy him for he is "subject", that is to say, the active human being whose "quest for universality" is only the more intense by this degradation of the capitalist process of production."

Only when workers have seized the means of production and placed them in their own control of freely associated labor can the brutality of alienation that workers experience be overcome.

So why hasn't freely associated labor yet come, when especially now the process of alienation seems to be reaching its peak with even more advanced automation (unimation, rototics)? Millions of workers are being thrown out of work, most of whom will never again get their jobs back, creating a permanent army of the unemployed.

I believe it will take the vision of a better life to overcome the feelings of powerlessness, apathy, and resignation brought about by the alienation of work. A vision which is not rooted in some abstract "Utopia" but which is in the concrete historical struggles and revolts of workers, such as the Paris Commune. News & Letters

has the task of communicating this vision to labor because News & Letters is the only organization to develop the dialectical methodology of Marx, a methodology that places emphasis on the problem and not laying out any particular solution for everyone to "follow". There is no specific formula for arriving at this new vision because we don't know what form the revolution will take. But what we can do is study the various revolts and arrive at a vision that doesn't stress form, as much as the passions for freedom that are common to all.

CRITIQUE OF A CRITIQUE: THE AFRICAN REVOLUTIONS AND MARXIST-HUMANISM

-- Lou Turner, Detroit

Ugokwe's so-called "critique" of Ch. 7 of Philosophy and Revolution discloses such great anxiety for criticizing its author that, though he does quote our Constitution to show how important we hold that work to be, he seems to be totally unconscious of the fact that therefore: 1) he is arguing with the Marxist-Humanist organization, 2) who, as a principle, never writes a work as if it were that single person's view, and, in fact, the specific work in question had gone through quite a few drafts during the 1968/69-73 period, and 3) had been taken up by the organization in convention and there voted on en masse. In a word, he is arguing not just against RD, the founder of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S., but News and Letters Committees.

Ugokwe should have taken full advantage of the fact that he is not a member and take advantage of that fact to disagree, not just on any single fact or group of facts, but with the very premise of Marxist-Humanism, which in the very first sentence of the chapter in question, articulates itself most unambiguously as "The African revolutions opened a new page in the dialectic of thought as well as in world history." Your departure from that premise is indeed a great departure, Ugokwe, from the Marxist-Humanist view of the African Revolutions which you surely damn in that last sentence in your thesis, you think so revolutionary, when you say you oppose "colonialism, no matter what form." You mean that the new is neo-colonialism, rather than the African revolutions which took the whole world by storm in the 1960s (indeed they started in the 1950s) and had achieved nothing just because the weight of counter-revolution, especially the two super-powers, nuclearly armed and tightly intervening won over them.

This, indeed, light years removed from Marx who chose, just when the 1848 Revolutions were defeated to pronounce "revolution in permanence." AND THIS MARX PROJECTED NOT ONLY AS "THEORY", BUT IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE TAIPING REBELLION A FEW YEARS AFTERWARD -- and Marx surely had no illusions that it would win 100 years ago -- as the struggle that should serve not only as "encouragement" to the advanced West European proletariat who were quiescent just because they had lost. Rather, the Taiping Rebellion was a model that Marx himself remained faithful enough to for a whole decade thereafter to bring it into Capital itself in the Fetishism of Commodities chapter, AND AT THE END OF HIS LIFE TURN TO ANTHROPOLOGY, wherein he discovered new paths of revolution.

You quite correctly state that P&R is one of the three books that represent N&L's theoretical foundations, but how from that can you draw the conclusion that supposedly Ch.7 is not "in the spirit of the whole book"? You never really explain those supposed "conspicuous ambiguities", but do take time out to quite condescendingly speak of not denying some relevance Marx may have for Africa, though, obviously, according to your superior knowledge, not state-capitalism which Raya also develops in that chapter.

Though the sentence that precedes that 1973 amendment to the Constitution emphasized that these foundation works are not a "program" because of our desire to project the fact that we really are open to working with others, nevertheless, what needs to be stressed here is what "contribution" to theoretic preparation for revolution means. This is the nub of the question of what precisely is the "premise" of Ch.7 of P&R. 7882



Let's now look again and actually see if Ch.7 "falls short of the spirit of the whole book," and see if the ground can be cleared of all the errors you committed not alone in method and grasp of the structure of P&R, but just in the actual facts of the African Revolutions. The ground I refer to is the Marxist-Humanist ground which anyone, though not a Marxist-Humanist like yourself, must confront if he is at all serious about revolutionary transformation on the African continent and worldwide.

The form that Raya creates for Ch.7 more than any other discloses the continuity from M&F to P&R, and from P&R to RLWLKM. The objective world developments from the period of M&F to P&R saw the emerging discordance between ideology and economic reality in Africa. M&F moved from Hegel's absolutes in an age of Revolutions to the philosophic questions being raised from below in the 1950s age of automation and the new humanism. What Ch. 7 both reflects of the movement from M&F to P&R and the movement within P&R is the fact that the questions of technology and state-capitalism posed in the advanced West and East and if could man be free from under the weight of both had to be posed anew in technologically backward Africa. Moreover, in 1958 when M&F came off the press the dialectics of liberation of the African revolutions had barely begun with the Gold Coast becoming Ghana.

A decade later, the genocidal war in Biafra which slaughtered two million people in two-and-a-half years to the tune of the super-powers contending for economic interests in the oil-rich Riverine deltas and for geo-political position in West Africa became a modern horror story that grows all the more tragic when abstract intellectuals offer the cosy demurrer that "'Biafran independence' rested on the hysteria created by Ojukwu and company." Let's listen for a moment to a letter from a Biafran Marxist from inside the country at the height of the war and judge for ourselves whether it is hysteria or the passion for freedom we hear:

"The quarrel between Nigeria and Biafra is simply a quarrel between Anglo-American capital and the progressives of Eastern Nigeria. It is over oil and markets. All other legalistic talk about unity, secession, etc., is so much eye-wash. No group has wished for secession more than the group which Gowon represents -- Northern Nigeria. But the January 1966 coup by Major Nzeogwu et al scared the imperialists stiff, hence they organized the counter-coup by Gowon...

"One last point on Biafra. A revolution is going on here. Our struggle is not just a war against massacre maniacs. Ours is, strictly defined, an anti-imperialist struggle against British and American investors who are merely using our Nigerian brothers as agents. It is profitable to create hatred. Recall how the U.S. uses the South Vietnamese. We also struggle against the shameless Soviet manifestations -- MIGs, rockets, etc. sent to an imperialist cum feudalist regime in Lagos!! some things passeth our understanding.

"We, the Biafrans, do not lose sight of the negative implications of secession, and we pride ourselves on our long and dedicated efforts to build a strong, united Nigeria in the past. But what we have now resolved to fight against to the bitter end

is a country unified for imperialism. No true progressive fights for a unity based on the supremacy of reaction! We have vowed to continue this struggle because our people have been greatly brutalized, and the future is one of gloom unless we are allowed our self-determination. Above all, our war of self-determination has the revolutionary dimension of the emergence of a NEW SOCIETY -- a progressive black people's republic that is destined to play a decisive role not only in Africa, but in the world. Whatever the role may be whether in victory or defeat we cannot say, but to struggle as Africans seeking self-determination for Africa is revolutionary, for we stand alone without political support from the outside except from other Africans. For us, therefore to abandon the fight would mean to abandon the revolution of the masses. Biafra is more than a government or a place; it is an idea about freedom. To fight for it, perhaps live for it, if one is lucky, is our consuming passion." (11/1/68)

Could it escape anyone that out of such "new passions and new forces" the single term that unites Ch.1 and Ch.7 is self-determination as ideas and as nations. The question is: can the self-determination of the Idea and of nations be seen in their fullness separated from each other? Raya's rediscovery of Hegel's absolutes in the 1950s had just intimated what meaning the self-determination of the Idea would have as the struggles for self-determination in state-capitalist Eastern Europe unfolded. By the time the dialectic of liberation had drawn into its current the underdeveloped Third World struggles against the technologically advanced West, any Marxist theoretician who had not caught the concreteness of Hegel's self-determining idea of freedom -- the cogency of absolute negativity for a "birth-time of history" -- had not only moved far away from dialectics but away from revolution.

Lenin singled out this type of Marxist in 1916 when he summed up his thesis on self-determination of nations: "To imagine that social revolution is conceivable without revolts by small nations in the colonies and in Europe...is to repudiate social revolution...Whoever expects a 'pure' social revolution will never live to see it. Such a person pays lip-service to revolution without understanding what revolution is."

In our period, the crisis in philosophy didn't so much mean searching for new pathways to revolution -- they were being blazed in every region of the post-war world, in developed and underdeveloped lands. Rather, it meant searching for a new theoretical environment, for new strata of theoreticians to carry on the needed dialogue to work out the new dialectic of liberation that was emerging. Today, we recognize what it meant to "discover" a Frantz Fanon as co-thinker. The Black Consciousness Movement's independent discovery of Fanon in 1976 confirmed what Ch.7 had singled out.

However, the process and labor of getting to a Fanon in the Third World saw a very rich and profound interchange not only with a broad range of intellectuals, including Senghor, Azikiwe and Nkrumah -- whom, incidentally, Raya never accepted and made that clear openly -- but also <sup>meetings</sup> with youth groups in Senegal, Nigeria and the Gambia. The

same is true with labor leaders and rank-and-file workers with whom she participated in many demonstrations, one of which should have especially interested Ogoke since it was with Hausa youth in back of Zik's palace in which all the participants yelled so loud against Zik, that there was no way for him not to hear it.

Ironically, that kind of theoretical dialogue on dialectics could not be conducted with those within the "established" Marxist movement representing what Raya called "Alternatives". Today it is as if Raya compelled to deepen that dialogue with revolutionary post-Marx Marxists like Luxemburg and Lenin, and finds them wanting when measured against Marx's philosophy of "revolution in permanence", and the new pathways he discovered in his last decade.

In the 1960s and 70s the dialogue had to be conducted globally with those faced with the dialectics of liberation and the crisis of the world economy. This took Raya to West Africa in 1962. It was in this theoretical terrain that philosophy itself could be subjected to absolute negativity, if it wasn't to be relegated to intellectual discourse or merely become a "treatise on the universal," as Fanon noted.

Thus, you have only to think of the last three decades of African revolutions, which overnight redrew the very geography of the world that imperialism had originally carved up nearly 100 years earlier, to see what illumination they cast on Lenin's 1915 formulation -- "Man's cognition not only reflects the objective world but creates it." Lenin never had the chance to work that out, and it remains the stopping point of today's African and Third World theoreticians.

It is true that Lenin states this as he approaches the Absolute Idea, and it is also true that everyone would rather stress method than the Absolute Idea where method gets so fully developed as absolute negativity that it intimates new stages of cognition -- the philosophies of Nature (practice) and Mind (theory). However, it is precisely here that the problem appears, when method gets degraded to being nothing more than a "tool" to be applied.

Hegel explains that to grasp the dialectic as method we must return to the absolute as beginning, which while defective, nevertheless, is "endowed with the impulse of self-development." I don't whether or not it is necessary to stop here to point out that this conception points to the integrality of Ch.1's Absolute Idea as new beginning and the "impulse of self-development" in the African revolutions, despite the defectiveness that is inherent in all beginnings, such as neo-colonialism.

Nevertheless, the key to absolute method is that second negation is the turning of the whole development of thought and revolution. Thus, if anything distinguishes vulgar materialism from Marx's dialectical materialism it is the relationship of first to second negation or absolute negativity. What Raya caught in the Absolute Idea and recreates in RLWLKM as Marx's "revolution in permanence" was that attitude which is stuck in first negativity only views subjectivity as a purpose, an end, for the negation of what is. The dialectical attitude to objectivity, on the other hand, grasps subjectivity as the means through which the second negation, the creation of the new, is brought forth. The vulgar materialist never gets beyond the economic reality and his attitude that the aim of subjectivity is the opposition to that reality.

From the final part of the last paragraph on the Absolute Idea Hegel then opens forth with such entirely new vistas as "absolute liberation," that, again, we are able to recognize from the vantage point of today's liberation struggles that "in this freedom...no transition takes place" for "the passage is...to be understood here rather in this manner, that the idea freely releases itself in its absolute self-assurance and inner poise."

Hegel's philosophic summation gave his mind such a release and prescience in sensing the future in the present that whomever would dismiss Hegel's Absolute Idea as the product of a pre-technological age only proves thereby that they have stopped at the Logic and not entered the Philosophy of Mind. For this is what Hegel states in para. 526: "The labor which thus becomes more abstract tends on one hand by its uniformity to make labor easier and to increase production -- on another to limit each person to a single kind of technical skill, and thus produce more unconditional dependence on the social system. The skill itself becomes in this way mechanical, and gets the capability of letting the machine take the place of human labor."

What compels us to turn to Hegel's absolutes are the proletarian struggles in the technologically developed West and East as well as the national struggles in the pre-technological Third World. What is cogent for today's Third World reality is that having reached the ultimate in technological development on a world-scale, the responses of the masses in the pre-technological Third World economies illuminates altogether new dimensions in the Hegelian dialectic. Inseparable, however, from what one's age illuminates is its historical limitations which both creates the concrete universal and exhausts it; thus making imperative the need to return to the dialectic "in and for itself," to work out the new universal which will become concrete through "new passions and new forces."

What the administrative mentality of the African intellectual has disclosed is a Feuerbachian, contemplative attitude to reality in which science and technology are regarded as Subject at the expense of the self-developing African masses. In the Third World a new beginning can not be made from technology any more than the capitalist can expect a machine rather than the living laborer to produce surplus value in the industrialized West and East. A new beginning can only be made from the Subject who has created the new "reality of the nation" in the Third World.

The administrative mentality of the African intellectual takes the empirical elements of technological backwardness as the real, whereas the dialectic discloses the categories of Freedom, Subjectivity, Self-determination, etc. as the method by which to comprehend objective reality and change it. Through the dual movement of these categories and the masses we arrive at a new subjectivity and a new stage of cognition that has absorbed the objective stage from which it issued. The administrative mentality is not so much an attitude to objectivity as it is an attitude to self-developing subject.

Because the Absolute Idea is not a system but the method of cognition for an epoch of freedom struggles, the logic and scope of Marx's Capital too didn't stop at the technological West but extended to the pre-technological world. Marx subsumed "so-called primitive accumula-

tion" within Part 7's absolute general law of capitalist accumulation. This is what he took exception to in his critique of Mikhailovsky and what he returned to in his EN.

In a certain sense, we might have discerned the relationship between Hegel's absolutes and the non-capitalist world in Marx's being able to break more definitively with classical political economy (wherein he discovered labor as subject in the technological world) than he was able to break with the Hegelian dialectic (whose self-determining Idea continued to reappear as the self-determination of nations once, on a world-scale, capitalism had extended itself to the pre-technological Third World). It is true that while Marx counterposed classical political economy to Hegel's de-humanization of the Idea, his break with classical political economy was complete. He, however, continued to return to Hegel. It isn't accidental then that his next return to Hegel was for the 1857-58 Grundrisse which goes into both technology and pre-capitalist economic formations following the Taiping Rebellion; that the 1860s return was made as he restructured Capital under the impact of the American Civil War and its pre-proletarian Black dimension; then follows his 1870s return with the new French edition of Capital in the period of the Paris Commune and Critique of the Gotha Programme; and in the 1880s on both Wagner and in the EN he kept repeating "dialectics."

Furthermore, the 20th century has shown that the broader extension of capitalism into the pre-technological Third World means a greater technological concentration in the developed lands. However, the administrative mentality characterizes that attitude which arises in both to immediately "organize" the results of the revolution because it sees no further need for dialectical development. Yet, it is precisely at this turning point of the second negativity of having achieved the revolution, that we enter the realm of the self-liberating subjectivity of the Phil. of Mind.

Indeed,, this is the premise, ground and totality of Ch.7 and the whole of P&R for it is so concrete for our age and couldn't even have been that concrete for Marx who had broken off on the Absolute and promised to return. I'm referring to those last three syllogisms in Phil. of Mind. Had Ugukwe bothered to ask himself how does it happen that in that very last section on Phil. of Mind Raya gave it the sub-heading "Movement from Practice?" it would be clear that she was saying: it isn't that we are "smarter" than the founder of revolutionary Marxism -- Marx -- but that the movement from practice characterizing our age wasn't present in Marx's and it is precisely Ch.9 on "New Passions and New Forces" which made us so smart, and thus is our challenge to work out philosophy as action for age.

Therefore, what justifies beginning with the most abstract in P&R, i.e., with Hegel's absolutes, is what necessitated ending RVLKLM with a "1980s View". The "1970s view" of the decade of the '60s that necessitated beginning "abstractly" with philosophy has often been attributed to the need to fill the theoretic void at the core of the '60s' activism. However, making the beginning with philosophy was also necessary for the future when the abstract suddenly could become the concrete universal. In the final syllogism (para.577) of the Phil. of Mind Hegel calls this the Idea of Philosophy. This process unfolded in a succession of revolutions in the Third World in the 1970s and 1980, from

South Africa to Iran to Nicaragua, and in the developed state-capitalist world, from Portugal to Poland.

Because Ch.1's categories in P&R are not exhausted in a single reading or by a given period, it may help us grasp RLWLKM. The "Idea of Philosophy" always presents a new set of categories once a new stage is reached and the old categories prove insufficient. This also allows for a discovery of new moments in Marx which lead to a new subjective/objective vantage point from which to view his philosophy, e.g., Marx and the Black world, Marx's concept of Woman, Marx's theory of organization.

Moreover, it isn't that Hegel's Absolute Method contains only abstract universals. Rather, it is the process by which the mind forms notions of itself and experiences the self-determination of those notions as its drive to freedom. This Lenin noted when he wrote that "The forming of abstract notions already includes consciousness of law so that the simplest forming of notions (judgments, syllogisms, etc.) signifies ever deeper knowledge of objective world connections. Here is the significance of the Hegelian Logic." Whether it was Fanon's conclusion that national consciousness was to be found in the African peasantry, or Raya's description of whole villages "to a man, woman and child" turning out to discuss the political destiny of independence, or the mass character of the BCM and its organizational principle of consultation -- the forming of the "abstract" notion of the nation is at once the subjective drive of the self-determination of the nation. And that drive and consciousness is continent-wide to this day in Africa. In other words, Hegel's doctrine of the Notion is the revolutionary politics of today's freedom struggles because as method it parallels the masses overcoming the opposition between subject and object, theory and practice, idea of the nation and the reality of colonialism and neo-colonialism, and the division between mental and manual labor.

Neo-colonialism and "home rule" could not have so rapidly asserted themselves had not the integrality of ideology and economic policy provided the point of entry for the contending poles of world capitalism. And where the original attraction to Marxism which emerged out of the initial unity of the African intellectual and masses became transformed into "Nkrumahism" and an abstract rather than concrete African socialism following independence, the separation of leaders from masses was canonized as the state plan from above.

Of course, there is something more than the inter-class rivalries of the native and foreign bourgeoisie propelling Ujokwe's reversal of theory and reality. It is his attitude to the African masses: "That the 'African revolutions opened up a new page in the dialectic of thought as well as in world history' was possible only in the sense that they were devoid of class struggles. The preoccupation with the new nations obscured the manifestation of the 'half way dialectic' within the mass movement." As stated earlier this is not simply a disagreement over the facts, but a retrogressive departure from the very premise, ground and totality of Marxist-Humanism.

## LOS ANGELES LOCAL ORGANIZERS REPORT

The organizational perspectives of Marxist-Humanism contained new developments for the Los Angeles local this year, for never before have we so sought to integrate the philosophy of revolution with our daily local activities. Now that we have the Trilogy of Revolution in hand, and with it a view of Marx's Marxism as a totality which no prior generation possessed, it becomes possible to build our organization on new ground--on the ground of what we as Marxist-Humanists are for.

It was this new stage which demanded the concentration on the National Lecture Tour (the most extensive ever) and the intensive preparation for it in "Have thumb, will travel" which began as early as last September. Whether it be book sales, intervention at conferences, building the tour, or following through on it with work at the campuses, we tried to orient at the Karl Marx Centenary become not just the commemoration of a date, but the projection of the uniqueness of Marxist-Humanism to others.

This focus on philosophy as an organizational force opened several doors for us, most of all in travels to outlying areas. Local members traveled to Riverside, San Diego, Santa Barbara and Seattle, meeting dozens who were new to our ideas as well as others more acquainted with them who did not know of our organization. A high point in the travels was the local's participation in the UPE conference at Riverside, where we presented the "new moments" of Marx's last decade for the first time in the area. That resulted in vigorous discussions with dozens of students and activists and the essays that will soon be published as the pamphlet, "Marx and the Third World".

The travels which opened the best doors for us were those of Raya herself; all her lectures were well-attended. Foremost were the new relations established with Black intellectuals in Los Angeles and Santa Barbara, who expressed considerable interest in Marxist-Humanism as a tendency within Black liberation. That resulted in the Santa Barbara video-tape on Raya's relation to the Black struggle, which is an historic document in itself and will be used in classes at that school. In Los Angeles, the tour brought out a new generation of youth wanting to know more about Marx, especially at Cal State LA, where Raya's talk on "Marx and the Crisis in Human Freedom" put us in touch with several who later joined us in a study group on Part I of Philosophy & Revolution. At the same time, a number of intellectuals (particularly in San Diego) were not through the tour who had been studying our ideas. That projection of the trilogy of revolution is the ground of organizational growth we show in this report, the first met us at Raya's talk in Santa Barbara, joined soon afterward, and made the decision to do some "have thumb" of his own by moving to LA to work with the local.

That concentration on philosophy opened our doors in the effort of connecting with others highlights the essence of our work to come, for the challenge now is to concretize these ideas with all the forces of revolution. New developments, as well as much unfinished work, occurred in this area.

One area of activity informed by deeper focus on our own contributions has been with the Black Dimension. In the earlier we

had worked with other organizations in the Black community--such as Black United Against Genocide and NBIPP--this summer Karl and Gene produced a leaflet on the new edition of American Civilization on Trial for direct distribution in the Black community. From regular street-corner distributions such as these can arise regular meetings in the Black community on the new edition of ACOT. At a time when Black youth have shown themselves unwilling to follow any established leadership, Black or white, the pathway to liberation disclosed in the new edition of ACOT becomes a concrete way to further work in the Black dimension.

Likewise, the activities at the campus had new dimensions, as two study groups were held at Cal State LA during the year, one on Part III of RLWLMPR and another on Part I of P&R. These study groups were preceded by numerous meetings sponsored by ourselves: a panel discussion on the Lebanon crisis; meeting on Guatemala featuring Manuela Saque, Mary speaking on her Mexico trip, John Alan talking on Martin Luther King and the Black revolt today, Peter speaking with draft resister David Wayte on the new anti-militarism. While this year's campus discussions were more integrated with local meetings than before, we still await the kind of organizational growth that the urgency of the times demand. At UCLA, on the other hand, we have not succeeded in establishing a regular presence, despite the fact that Raya's lecture there was well attended. One way to achieve more organizational presence there next year can be through a series of meetings on "Marx and the Third World."

It is the Third World within this country, specifically the Latino dimension, which needs most development by the local. This year the participation of Maria in local activities contributed the dimensions not only of Latina and woman but also of high school youth. Her attraction to Marxist-Humanism, which is on the basis of our ideas as much as our activities, testifies to the kind of youth we are looking for in the 1980's. As a local we have been active in all Central American solidarity events, involving some met from them in local activities, but the greatest need is for connection with the Latino dimension north of the border. One way we can begin is with more regularized work with Noticias & Cartas.

On the Labor front, this has also been a year of new developments, developments dictated by the changing objective situation, as major plants closed and unemployment became the central concern. We responded with Unemployment Lines newsletter and regular distributions at unemployment offices, which resulted in copy for the paper and significant sales by Felix Martin and others. Another objective change in capitalist production--the creation of a mobile labor force--was felt right within the local, as Ned was compelled to move to Oklahoma to work in the GM plant there. Ned has continued to correspond with the local, and these communications can prove helpful in stimulating the follow-through to our labor distributions here in such a way as to bring workers from them to local meetings.

Where some limitations in our working with the books, especially RLWLMPR appeared, was with the women's liberation movement. This is not to say important work was not done, nor that major effort by the local in meeting women (especially by Michelle) was not done. The



women participated in several WL meetings and conferences, having speakers from the podium in several of them. But the fact that women's liberation is the centerpoint of the new book has not been reflected in attendance of new women either at the local or the women's committee. Clearly, we are still learning how to work with the books in a creative manner, especially integrating Part II in with Parts I and III.

One place where effort has been made to present our ideas in a new form has been by the comrades of E&A. The publication of the Afro-Asian Revolutions pamphlet in Farsi will hardly sit passive on lit tables, shown by the new meetings started by E&A on that pamphlet at USC. These meetings include readings from the new book as well as from Marx's last decade. They have helped renew interest in E&A from sections of the Iranian student community as well as convince some former sympathisers to renew their relations with Marxist-Humanism.

What we have learned from the year past is that being rooted in philosophy, in ideas, in what we are for does indeed open new doors of communication with others. This does not mean that leads to automatic acceptance of our ideas by the "outside". Rather, it means what is crucial at this stage is to find those workers, intellectuals, and movement activists who are thirsting for a new kind of organization, one that transcends the limits of post-Marx Marxism without being independant of Marx. Finding such persons requires not only "support actions" but critical action, action that presents what we are for. As we enter the actual Constitutional Convention, we will be absorbing anew the unique contributions of Marxist-Humanism. This will give us the ground to so work with the forces of revolt as to truly win the new kind of member our Perspectives demand.

---Peter

#### CHICAGO LOCAL ORGANIZER'S REPORT

The work of the Chicago Local this year can be viewed by looking at 3 periods: 1) From the Convention to the month-long visit by the National Co-Organizer, Michael Connolly, and soon after that the Expanded REB meeting of Jan. 1. 2) From the Expanded REB to the Tour itself, including particularly the Local's sum-up meeting with Raya 3) From the Tour to the Constitutional Convention.

We began almost immediately on our return from the Convention to embark on the organizational perspectives of "Have Thumb, Will Travel"--indeed, some had begun even before the Convention--where those involved found that there was no way one could set up a lecture without grappling with taking responsibility for projecting RLWLSMPR. What had to be worked out for each meeting was what we could bring to life in RLWLSMPR for each person we were meeting. For all the varied people we talked to we found that RLWLSMPR provided not only a point of discussion, but in many cases, confrontation with post-Marx Marxists. We arranged 6 lectures for Raya in the Midwest including our own. Even if one looks at the 3 universities where we weren't able to get a lecture, the contacts made and the discussions that took place, may well bear fruit sometime in the future.

The visit of the National Co-Organizer helped to focus our work on the tour and in the Local itself. Franklin's anti-nuclear work took a different direction and, after Raya's Tour, became even more of a concentration on the Marxist-Humanist contribution to the Youth movement. It was Michael who suggested that David and Terry submit abstracts, which were later accepted, to the 9th Annual 3rd World Conference. He brought us new ideas for our work on campuses and the contribution to the Guatemala pamphlet from Istoy was the result of a suggestion from Michael and very creative follow through by David Park. It was during Michael's visit that Erica expanded her work in the Latin dimension and Beth's work at Agar began in earnest. Michael helped give the local a form to begin thinking of our work in terms of the four forces of revolution including--especially for Chicago--the Latin dimension. In one short month after Michael's visit came the January 1 REB.

I think that this new beginning for the organization was not caught immediately by most in the Chicago Local with the possible exception of David Park and Erica. That this is true can be seen, I think, from Raya's May 5th letter where she points out the contradiction in the development of the Chicago Local where David Park's magnificent attitude to, and work on, the lecture Tour could result in Chicago as both sub-center and David's election to the NEB; while at the same time we had virtually no outsiders at our local Tour sum-up meeting. This was also evident in the failure of our proposed non-campus study group in RLWLSMPR that was to continue the work and contacts Michael had begun. We had to abandon it after the second meeting when no non-members showed up. It was in this same period that we began a study group on RLWLSMPR at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) that did become serious and ongoing.

The Tour, including especially the sum-up meeting, was a new beginning for the Local. Because David Park and I wrote a very detailed letter on the Tour itself, I won't go into it again here. What is important to stress is that Raya brought Marxist-Humanism to Chicago in a way not done before. Those who heard these lectures could see that this new view of Marx was being presented and developed by a Marxist-Humanist. This had an impact on all our work. After the tour our activity in Chicago took on new breadth and depth as we tried to work out in our activities Philosophy as ground for organization not separated from Philosophy as force for freedom. It was after the Tour that our work at UIC deepened so that the second chapter of our study group, this time on M&F and selected readings from Marx, now includes six non-members who exude a genuine excitement about the readings. Three of these members were in the first UIC study group and wanted to continue the

relationship. What was new after the Tour, was the study group meant not only an opportunity to learn about Marx on your lunch hour, but a way to delve into the Marxist-Humanist contribution. This is true as well of the new participants. One young woman history student who came on the basis of David's leaflet, for example, said that she loved M&F because she felt that, after all her history classes, this is real history--history she had never learned in college. This study group continues to grow with a young woman who we met in our work with another UIC organization, joining us next week.

Several of the people involved in our study group are also active with the UIC Committee in Support of El Salvador and Central America. One could almost say that this group owes its existence to the decision we made to help it develop. It is there we are not only meeting young activists, including Latins and Iranians, but all involved are meeting Marxist-Humanism and seeing at each meeting the difference between us and other groups be that RSL, Workers World, the Marxist Leninists or the CP. What is exciting about this youth work is that many of the people we are meeting are activists who are also open and interested in ideas. Franklin made sure that he became part of this youth work by joining the study group; and it is from these two groups that we hope to bring people to our Convention.

Our work with the Latin dimension has not limited itself to the UIC campus. What is absolutely new for the Chicago Local is the inroads we have made since the Tour in that dimension which in Chicago, which has the 3rd largest Latin population in the U.S., can not be underestimated. What we found when we had our public meeting in Pilsen, a mostly Mexican neighborhood, is that we have much work still to do; but there is no question that we have made a beginning. To get a fuller picture of beginnings made, see David Park's lead article in the June N&L. What we have also learned from our work in this area and Eugene's meeting, is an appreciation for what Marxist-Humanism has to offer as so much of the support organizations do not meet, either in activity or theory, the movement from practice of the workers/peasants/Indians/women in Guatemala, El Salvador or Nicaragua.

In fact, it is our work with the Black and Latin dimensions in Chicago that poses one of our most difficult challenges. What we are facing is some of the same attitudes that were so prevalent in the 1960s, that is, the primacy of activity so that philosophy is not only not ground for organization, but is not even what gives all the activity, activity, activity a direction. Certainly the importance of P&R is apparent as strategy and tactics becomes all and what Raya said in her Jan. 1 REB presentation, and what David Park singled out in his presentation to the Chicago Local on Mike's Organization Report, is key: "In each decade, the book moved beyond the 'au courart'--that is to say, it anticipated the future in the present, once the movement from practice emerged as a form of theory itself. Thus the new in Marxism and Freedom was not just state-capitalism but Marxist-Humanism. In a word, it delved further into what was new and developed it theoretically to the point of philosophy. It is high time for us to project that, just that. Until we do so, the elitists will have it over us by sticking to the Party towering over philosophy because supposedly action is not within philosophy's province which thereby entitles one to 'leadership' over the masses."

It is for some of these reasons that our work in the Black dimension has not been as deep as we wish although we have made some new contacts and are trying new things. We had one meeting where we shared our platform with 2 Black community activists who had worked on the Washington election; and we are projecting a meeting after the Convention where Harry, who will have had the experience of participating in the March on Washington and working with the very new ACOT, will speak with a young Black woman we know from UIC who will also have participated in the march. I don't want to go into details on the 3rd World Conference as we reported on it at the time. Most of our work in the Black dimension has been with individuals. We still have plans to follow up on the young Black woman professor who

chaired Terry's workshop at the 3rd World Conference and showed an interest in Marxist-Humanism.

We have done most of our women's liberation work at conferences and have definitely helped the new book and Raya become known. Wolff spoke on the feminist dimension of Rosa Luxemburg for the Chicago Area Women's History Conference where we sold a number of the new books and this same group wants Terry to speak in May on Women After Revolution in Iran and Zimbabwe, a talk which will certainly be grounded in RLW&MPR. Jan conducted the battle of ideas in a so-called "feminist" anthropology study group; and, through our UIC study group and Raya's Tour, Terry was asked to speak in a history class on Sheila Rowbotham's, Hidden from History. Terry's talk at the only workshop on women at the 3rd World Conference brought an audience of 50 and helped the new work to be known in that important context. The National Women's Studies Association was another opportunity for us to project the new book to the academic women's movement--a part of the WLM that has all too often tried to ignore the contributions of Marx and would certainly try and treat RD as a non-person if they could. We are showing them they can't and finding women interested in our ideas at the same time.

Beth's work at Agar has been our most persistent and important contribution to the work with labor in Chicago. The plant closings at Schwinn decimated our contacts and we have, at least for now, abandoned our distribution there. What is exciting to see is how Beth can develop herself as a writer and how the Agar Supplement can evolve into a very organizational document. That work at Agar and with the Supplement is part of our work in the Latin dimension and it has helped both Erica and Franklin evolve as more confident translators and their participation on the distributions, together with Harry's, Jane and Jan's have created a distribution team that Agar workers look forward to seeing once a month. As Beth heard from a supervisor complaining about those "damn communists": "All the workers are reading that paper and asking me questions that I can't answer." Franklin, Jane and Beth will now be working together on the Agar Supplement which will give it a new character. There is no question that we would like our work in the labor dimension to expand next year.

As we try and sum-up this past year so that we can begin anew at the Convention itself, many challenges confront us. We need to work out what it means to be sub-center. We made a good beginning with "Have Thumb, Will Travel" and the Tour. The problem that confronts us now is how to develop that beginning when we have yet to find those one or two people in each locality who would help us create a continuity with Marxist-Humanism/Chicago as sub-center. We want to deepen our relationship with all the forces as Reason in Chicago. In thinking of this we need to ask ourselves have we used N&L to help us? In looking at the REB minutes of July 19 what leaped off the page at me was Peter Mallory saying "Each undistributed paper is a laid-off organizer." In putting together a years packets of N&L for our local, I literally, had just thrown away hundreds of "laid-off organizers" who were becoming a storage problem. If we follow what happened with the article David did on Istory, we see it is not only how his article differed from what the Pacific News Service picked up from the same speech, but how we used it and the Guatemala pamphlet to show our friends what we mean that the movement from practice is itself a form of theory. We need to find and create new places to distribute N&L as well as use it so creatively in other areas. We as well need to pick up the gap in our bookstore literature distributions that has developed since Jane and Wolff so creatively organized bookstore responsibility before the Tour.

What is very difficult, but is as well the only activity that is going to help us in all our concrete tasks, is working out the way philosophy becomes ground for organization. To help us we have M&E, P&R, RLW&MPR as well as all our archives, that is, a summation of not only the totality of Marx, but a summation of Marxist-Humanism as well.

--Terry Moon

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SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA ORGANIZER'S REPORT

from Mary Holmes 6/7/83

The activities of Marxist-Humanists in the Bay Area for the past year can be viewed as "before" and "after" the national lecture tour. After the convention last year, although we did not travel too far geographically, we did engage academics and activists on a number of campuses (Santa Cruz, SF State, Stanford and Berkeley) in discussing RLWLKM with the aim of possible reviews and lectures. We also attended many conferences and meetings (American Sociological Association, National Black Studies, UMSS; to name only a few) to "publicize" the trilogy as sales and as challenge. Where it was not possible to have lit tables, we took the floor, and through these activities we did meet a number of intellectuals, hostile as well as friendly. It remains for us to continue this kind of battle of ideas, for while the trilogy, and RLWLKM in particular, have been widely placed by us in bookstores here, and individual sales continue, we still want to create the quality of forum that is possible in the Bay Area, as an "academic-cultural" milieu. We saw this need in the fact that, despite good "sales" prior to the lecture, we didn't secure any serious outside reports for the lectures themselves.

The focus of the whole local on the tour also concentrated our presence on the Berkeley campus: to have regular lit tables; to attend many and varied political and academic meetings; to have local meetings on campus at least once a month (including Black History Month, IWD, and on Mexico). The best results of campus work came with follow through from the lit tables, whether as the contact which led to Slavic Studies lecture sponsorship and for the Mexico trip, or the opportunity to meet and talk with students and with Middle East activists.

The impact of the national tour and pre-convention discussion has provided a different way to look at our campus work in relation to the tour. Among the 125+ who attended Raya's Berkeley lecture were many whom we knew already, who had bought RLWLKM--and yet we faced many problems in a serious follow-through there. That has made us look again at what was the nature of our campus relationships before the lecture; on the eve of the lecture in particular, how were we bringing together the "activity" at Berkeley (which figured so prominently in the April N&L lead), our own history and philosophical action in the period of the FSM which "produced" that pamphlet during the lecture tour by Raya then, and the 1983 lecture itself--the only Marx centenary event held at Berkeley campus this year? Thus while we did increase our campus activity focusing on the tour, we have been reconsidering how the tour can point to a new direction there next year, particularly as we want to gain a serious periphery within the new generation of Berkeley youth, i.e. actual students.

The anti-nuke/anti-war movement is where we have most attempted to politicize our philosophy. This has ranged from participation by Allen, Laurie and Urszula in the January LAG teach-in; our own meetings on the anti-nuke/anti-war movement; Laurie's review of RLWLKM in Direct Action (LAG); as well as work with youth who participated in our meetings and wrote for N&L. As this movement consists of many tendencies trying to mislead youth away from social revolution (via pacifism and "neutrality") we increasingly have felt the need to not only raise political opposition to other tendencies within the movement, but to further develop how we are an organization that provides a full philosophic alternative. The enthusiastic response by youth to Raya's

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New York Local Organizer's Report  
by Kevin 8/9/83

During July and August, the Local was on the move, projecting NH to a wide variety of audiences: We sold over \$100 in literature and RL T-shirts at the July 2 Central America demo in Washington, and by our Perspectives discussion on July 24, drew 8 outsiders to our meeting. Some of them will attend our Constitutional Convention. We also distributed accumulated back issues to students and antiwar demonstrators. The August 27 March on Washington and Raya's projected late September lectures here will give us some new opportunities to develop a periphery on the East Coast. We have seen in the last year that it is possible to be active in a number of areas - Central America work, anti-nuke, Black, campus, labor - and keep a focus on the new book as well. Bert's activity as a totally bilingual person in Latin America work needs special mention here. This has resulted in translations for Noticias y Cartas and ongoing dialogue with serious Latin and North American revolutionaries. It also led to the decision by the NY Guatemala Committee where he works to officially distribute 50 copies of N&L's Guatemala pamphlet, which as we know, does include discussion not only of that country, but of the perspectives of RLWLM. Anne and Susan's trip to the Seneca women's peace camp late in July meant not only distributing N&L and participating in the camp, along with Martina, who brought along a new edition of her beautiful RL T-shirts. It also meant holding a good workshop with 6 people on RLWLM. Have we achieved the same type of relationship to the new book with our campus work, with our Central America support work, or with anti-nuke? Not yet, although the NY Mobilizer is soon to publish a report by Kevin on the West German movement based on his trip. It is not that the outside is uninterested --we ourselves are sometimes surprised by their interest in the new book, for example when 2 sold very quickly at the Washington Central America demo. Far from being finished, working with the new book is only beginning on the East Coast and in New York. Part of that responsibility for us is working in NY as a world intellectual center. That was the ground for the longer lecture tour here than in other cities in March, and the additional short lecture tour planned for late September. Do any youths from other Locals want to spend September in NY working to build an audience on the campus for that?

The centerpoint of our activity for the year was of course the March lecture tour on the new book. About 200 people were drawn to 4 lectures here, plus 50 to the one in Philadelphia, and another 50 to the one in Washington at the time Raya also spoke before the Iranian revolutionaries at their CIRA conference as the keynote speaker. In New York among our own periphery it was mainly the young feminists who actually came out to hear Raya. While that was very good, as a whole the tour did not attract the type of larger, newer, and more independent audiences that we had hoped for and that other areas such as the West Coast were able to achieve. While the difficulties of attracting an audience in NY should not be underestimated, due objectively to the large number of competing tendencies and events and the sheer size of the city and region, we should note at the same time that our city and region did attract nearly "mass" audiences for two Marx centenary conferences, which shows part of the type of potential audience which does exist there. There are also the Latin America solidarity, feminist, Black, anti-nuke, and student audiences, to name a few. The most enthusiastic audience on the East Coast was achieved not in NY but in Philadelphia among the student youth at Penn and in direct confrontation with a conservative prof who introduced HD on RL. Also important was the fact that our newest member, Craig, nearly single-handedly organized the New School lecture, which drew 75.

Our own work to build the tour began in October not only in NY, but with trips to other cities. The lecture tour was organized to embrace NY, Philadelphia and D.C. and we tried very hard for Boston as well. By now we have placed the new book and other lit. in bookstores in the following cities: D.C., Baltimore, Philadelphia, NY, New Haven, Amherst, Providence and Boston. But on the tour itself, perhaps the most important immediate result was Raya's interview on WBAI for a serious hour-long discussion on the new book with Bertell Ollman, which was broadcast in June. In addition, the Tamiment labor library asked to tape a

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a conversation with RD for their archives. The discussion which emerged there illuminated the relationship of the 1949-50 miners' strike to the birth of MH in a way that is being developed in the new pamphlet Andy is writing. The small CUNY grad center audience heard a very new type of presentation on the EN which connected Marx's new last writings integrally to the whole of his work on dialectics and on revolution in permanence. That tape and the one from Tamiment are worth studying by NY and other Locals. Raya also appeared in a less serious half-hour format on Casper Citron's nationally syndicated radio show on WQXR, and the broadcast in NY was listed in the NY Times radio listing.

In fall and winter we attended and sold literature at national academic conferences such as anthropologists (there selling \$100 worth), philosophers, and economists on the East Coast. At the latter Kevin got to give a MH critique of Rubel. Lou and Ray attended, sold lit. and took the floor at a Marx centenary conference in Maryland. Russell and Kevin helped EEA comrades project MH at the ME studies conference. Russell and Kate got onto radio at Brandeis when they visited Boston and found youth interested in studying RLWLKM. They came close to getting a paid lecture at Brandeis and also attempted to get a lecture at Harvard, whose ivory towers have never permitted a paid lecture by RD, even though they were among the first to order the archives for their library. Anne and Diane spoke in Gloria Joseph's class on Black women in Mass., and Anne later also spoke in Hartford on the new book. Kevin got to speak to a large philosophy class, taught by an East European prof at Penn and at the NY DSA Marx conference. We were also able to get Lou talks at CCNY's Black Studies Department, the largest in the country, where he was extremely well received, and on a national Black radio show. Anne and Kevin have published reviews of the new book in outside journals, Womannows and Africa Today, while Russell's has a good chance of appearing soon in an important publication. NY comrades Anne and Kevin were also responsible for two month-long international trips this year, to Britain and Germany/France. The addition of Cal from LA and Dave from Chicago to the Local has been an important one for our work with youth and intellectuals.

It is clear that the comrades worked very hard in the fall and winter to get the book into stores, to set up an East Coast lecture tour and to build an audience. It is also clear that important results were achieved from this. What we have then to examine is how and why the Local did not follow through very well after the tour. Not only did our follow-through fail to contact or draw many new people into our periphery. We did not even succeed in keeping up regular distributions of N&L. By July, the Local literature closet was bursting with the majority of copies received of the March through June N&L, still undistributed.

Besides the continuing problem of a lack of collectivity in the Local, the biggest factor I feel may have been impatience upon our organizational efforts in the fall and winter to build the tour did not immediately achieve membership growth and attendance of lots of new people at regular Local meetings. We need more of Hegel's "labor, patience and suffering of the negative" as an attitude toward organizational work. In a city and region where more lit. than ever before (well over \$2000) was sold this year, one third of which was from RLWLKM, there surely are plenty of opportunities for MH organizational growth on the basis of the new book.

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Stanford lecture underlined this necessity. We were able to follow through there with a special meeting with Felix Martin, as well as several individual discussions that look to continuing relations there this fall. (The meeting with Felix Martin, and talks by Allen and Mary in LA, point to how LA/Bay Area trips can be one way for all to be West Coast organizers for Marxist-Humanism; that is, based on what each contributes (and not, as in the past here, because the Bay Area local was so "small"--it ain't so anymore!)

Our work within the Black freedom movement presented a diversity of challenges this year, ranging from participation at the Black Studies Conference and at an all-day discussion on Fanon by Allen at an Oakland high school, to a meeting at Laney College we sponsored around MLK's birthday, as well as our own local meetings which brought together Marxist-Humanism and Black thought and revolution in the Marx centenary. While the sponsors in Berkeley Afro-American studies moved away from Raya's lecture when the day came, what the national tour brought out was the new seriousness in the Black movement towards Marxist-Humanism, especially in taking up Marxism and WL. This experience has helped us to look for new ways of continuing dialogue with Black thinkers and activists, in academia and within the WLM, and, through the new edition of ACOT, working with Black youth directly, beginning with the Aug. 27 events here and continuing in the fall at Laney.

While we attempted to start a WL-N&L Committee last fall which met on campus, we found that it's not alone calling a meeting and constituting ourselves as such that "makes it so." Some of our most exciting and successful meetings this year focused on WL, and we did attend many other events: conferences at Berkeley and Stanford, myriad smaller meetings and demonstrations, as well as outside platforms for ourselves at Sonoma and in Sacramento. At all these events we saw the most serious and therefore vital discussions to be where WL was taken up in relation to Marxism (ASA), to the Black Dimension (NBSC), to ongoing revolutions (Berkeley conferences on Latin America), and within the anti-nuke/anti-war movement (LAG teach-in). The list could be "endless" except that we are well and long past the point of just looking at how WL is a dimension of every freedom struggle. What Raya's tour brought out is how the initial enthusiasm from women did not continue as a serious enthusiasm about breaking through the theoretical/practical plateau of WLM's "unique and unfinished contribution."

We confronted that here with the Berkeley Feminist Alliance who were the main student organization sponsors for Raya. (It was a woman from a Maoist party in BFA who insisted RD speak because "she is a woman revolutionary".) But we also need to confront some of it in ourselves, and how can we practice the "new energizing principle" to unite this passion for action with the passion for ideas and for direction. This is particularly important for us because the Bay Area has so many opportunities, and so many pitfalls, when it comes to WLM, if we're not clear on what we want to be our contribution to the movement. Our perspectives begin with not forgetting that initial enthusiasm towards RLWLKM and Raya, not to mention the lectures themselves.

The international dimension of the national lecture tour has also made itself felt here, not limited to the response to Marxist-Humanism especially from Third World revolutionaries. On the one hand, we had the experience



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last fall involving the disintegration of the Polish Solidarity Support Committee (through which Urszula had the opportunity to speak at many public meetings) because they judged the movement crushed under martial law. It's true that this brought out the sharp political differences which had been simmering for some time. But it has also raised the need for us to work out what is the fullness of our kind of internationalism, not limiting ourselves to the fact that though a support committee may be dead, the Polish freedom struggle is still a point of living inspiration for many in the movements here (especially now within the anti-nuke/anti-war movement as it looks to its relation to the European movement, East and West).

On the other hand, the tour which I followed with the trip to Mexico brought home to me the concreteness of how we work out dialectics of world revolution and the central weakness of our work with Latin American revolutionaries here in the Bay Area. While we have met a significant number of Latino activists--youth, women and intellectuals--through lit tables, at support meetings and at conferences, this "number" had not added up to a serious presentation of, and relationship with, Marxist-Humanism. In fact, we held only one meeting the entire year on Latin American revolutions--on Mexico, which turned out to be one of our more successful campus meetings. Eugene's discussion on working with Noticias y Cartas has provided some new ideas. But it's because the relationship to Latin American revolutions is so deeply a dimension of our 30 years and current perspectives that it is now a question for us (myself in particular) to "do it."

While we want to establish a new attitude towards our regular contributions to N&L, the paper has been one way of meeting workers in labor struggles here, most recently, the new dialogue which Ron has begun with Fremont auto workers. Our roots in labor struggles here go back to the 1934 General Strike; and this year reach forward to the new that came out of the tour on the Miners' General Strike and our own origins, and here Frank can contribute as we work out this new ground for the Bay Area.

Although we have to report that concretizing the lecture tour through the pre-convention discussion has not yet meant a serious periphery on that basis, it has compelled the beginning of needed reorganization for each of us to meet the exciting demands of the coming period, for which the tour and its ramifications have laid new ground here in the Bay Area.

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Detroit Local News and Letters Organizational Report -- Lou

What makes 1982-83 a very different kind year to look at the work and activity of the Detroit local is the way in which the National Chairwoman so creatively combined the Marx centenary and the publication of RMLKM into the most extensive and exciting national tour that the organization has ever undertaken. So no one will be surprised if I break down this report into three areas: 1) before Raya's tour, 2) after the tour, and 3) where that leaves us on the eve of the Constitutional Convention.

Following Lou's return to Detroit we did become active in some new areas of the Black dimension with Black intellectuals, WL and campus. However the focus was gaining the 4 lectures at Oakland U., Windsor, and 2 at Ann Arbor. It was through that work that we made new contacts, established some earlier relationships and following the Ann Arbor study group gained a new member, Mary.

The first First of the year was, of course, the publication of RMLKM. The Nov 7 lecture and book party gave us a point of concentration for our various activities as we invited those we had been active with to attend. We had been active at Highland Park Coll., at the hospital, WSU lit. tables and lectures and with unemployed workers, and anti-nuclear activists. After the holidays, however, the main focus became the lecture tour.

At Windsor U. we met a whole new circle of contacts, from student activists and feminist professors to East Indian anthropologists. At Oakland U. we were, with the help of a Kenyan professor and an old friend, able to bring Raya there to make a second IMD talk. At Ann Arbor on the basis of a class and wide publicity Raya addressed an overflow audience of students on Marx's Capital and his last decade. And what may have seemed the most disappointing in terms of audience turn out and lack of support from the sponsors, the lecture on Marx and the Black world actually turned out having the greatest ramifications. It re-established relations with Mary who joined, and established relations with two serious Black intellectuals as a kind of theoretical periphery. In all, Raya's Michigan-Canada audience numbered more than 300 and the lit. sales, especially with the trilogy of revolution and RMLKM, was the best ever.

What flowed from the tour can be broken into two areas: 1) the areas of work in Detroit, especially as reflected in N&L and 2) what Detroit members were able to project outside of Detroit as "Have Thumb Will Travel" continued after the tour. We have some modest beginnings in the key areas of Women's Liberation, labor and youth, as well as the Black dimension in all. N&L reflects our activity in the Detroit teacher's strike, with Black construction laborers, at the hospital, with Black workers around health and safety, the Teamsters and U.S. Auto radiator where we continue to have ongoing coverage of women workers at the point of production. Following Olga's lead on the crisis in education we held a forum co-sponsored with the Anti-Hunger Project and Black Parents for Quality Education. And in the Latino dimension Eugene's presentation at the National Chicano Studies Conference, Miriam's work with CISES, and our perspective of continuing Michael's work with health and safety activists on Central America with a forum in the Fall are all openings that can be further developed.

Peripheries around WL-N&L at the office and around youth work on the campus need immediate follow through for the Convention. Jim's work at WSU created N&L forums and future perspectives at Ann Arbor with Mary. The recent contact with Black women at WL and local meetings and Jim's contact with Youth Corp workers are the most promising prospects for inviting Detroiters to the Convention, along with the two intellectuals from ISU. However, if we reconsider again those we met from the tour I'm sure that we would find others to invite.

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Although the Tour ended, the have thumb will travel didn't as we participated in series of conferences outside of Detroit, especially Women's Liberation. Lou's trips to Wash., D.C. helped to establish relations with BCM students following Raya's lecture tour there, and some will be joining us at Convention. Three Women's Liberation conferences continued our outreach and dialogue with the new book; Tommie and Diane at the Atlanta Black women's health conference, Suzanne and Mary Joan at the Ohio NWSA conference where Suzanne gave a paper, and Neda's presentation at a Boston Iranian woman's conference. Lit. sales were high but more importantly discussion and the battle of ideas really projected "L-N&L from Detroit as, what Suzanne noted, a "national organization."

The Marx centenary conferences that we attended also took us into the battle of ideas following Raya's tour both in Ann Arbor and Maryland. With the new category that was created out of the tour of Marx and the Black world and the new edition of ACOT that battle of ideas and dialogue is sure to continue in the coming year. And our own ground will be set with study groups on the trilogy of revolution and ACOT.

As we go into the Convention<sup>WG</sup> will have both our latest publication, the new edition of ACOT, and the experience of the March on Washington (which many of us will be attending) to add to the new and exciting range of experiences that we have had in this year of the Marx centenary and RLWLK. The pull of working out future perspectives for Detroit and Ann Arbor will surely require new vistas, not the least of which for finances and new ways of putting those laid off "organizers" (N&L) back to work establishing new peripheries and winning new members for Marxist-Humanism.

--Lou

The Central America solidarity movement in NY

John Marcotte

The latest military coup in Guatemala points out the desperation of Central America's native and U.S. rulers. For us in the solidarity movement this desperation is both a measure of the power of the revolutionary freedom movement, and a warning that Reagan and Congress will stop at nothing.

Our participation in the solidarity movement is particularly urgent to us because of our Marxist-Humanist, Leninist understanding of the 2-way road between national liberation movements in the Third World and social revolution in the imperialist country, as explained in Philosophy and Revolution, ch. 7, and the Afro-Asian Revolutions pamphlet. We are not involved in solidarity work like the many third-worldists who have given up on revolution here at home, nor in mere horror at the genocide ~~xxx~~ practiced in our names. We are in solidarity with the creativity and vision of the Central American revolutions, especially the new dimensions of Indigenous peoples, women, peasants and youth. Our responsibility is both to explore this vision and ~~COMMUNIST TEXTS TO THE~~ ~~COOK~~ share it with the forces for revolution here, and to help it be conscious of itself, appreciate its originality, not spend itself after seizing power but go on to build such a new society. It inspires the whole world to a whole new series of revolutions. News & Letters and Noticias y Cartas is certainly a form for working on both of these projects.

The solidarity movement may soon face a tremendous challenge if Reagan continues to escalate his war and prosecute draft resisters. Relating to these youth as well as to Blacks, Latinos and rank-and-file labor is the greatest challenge to the movement. I hope our work in the Guatemala committee (CSPG) can focus on youth this fall, both campus and high school. CISPES wants to do more teach-ins and is concentrating on tabling and door-to-door visiting building up to the Nov 12 demonstration. And NISGUA (network in solidarity with Guatemala) will be coordinating with CISPES to regionalize solidarity work, which we hope to do at a local level in NY. But besides all these tactics, most important will be our attitude: will we be open to these ~~xxx~~ youth when they seek us out? What attitude will we present to Blacks and labor on Aug. 27? This attitude, openness, or vision (philosophy) is both critical and the hardest thing to work out. We cannot claim to have all the answers in News & Letters Committees, only ideas of the process that is necessary. This was the base of our many disagreements with NY CISPES last year.

Practically it comes down to such questions as: what is a social revolution? who makes it? who are its allies here? who do we reach out to? There is a very difficult dialog, which is yet to be, of knowing how to listen to the North American dimensions of Blacks, youth, women and labor and shape the solidarity movement to their ideas and forms of struggle. Look at John Alan's column on Blacks and anti-nuke written after the July 12 demonstration last year. Maybe Washington marches are not the best way. Maybe midtown Manhattan picket lines are not the way. Can you expect a disfranchised class, who do not have the power to get

jobs or control their living or working conditions to feel writing their congressperson or marching downtown is the way to change anything? Is there a form of struggle that would involve them? Have we asked?

The basic difficulties we have met in the movement are:

- 1) an attitude of activism opposed to taking time for theoretical understanding. In opposing this we have sold and ~~lent~~ lent out a number of books and pamphlets and had some discussion. CSPG will finally start having monthly study groups or educational. Whether these will get to theory remains to be done.
- 2) an attitude of unthinking ~~Stalinism~~ Stalinism or "Marxist-Leninism" as taken for granted, sometimes including a narrow nationalism. It is an ~~anti-imperialism~~ anti-imperialism which doesn't go near as deep as Marx on the capital/labor relation, let alone the man/woman and mental/manual labor division. Lenin's dialectic of the 2-way road to world revolution is either totally unknown or given lip service. On the positive side I find a lot of the younger and newer companeros/as have apparently never been exposed to any alternative Marxism and are open to discuss, making our intervention all the more urgent.
- 3) an attitude of vanguardism and sectarianism in general. This was seen at its worst on July 2, when the need for a massive show of opposition to Reagan's war got lost because PAM's ~~English~~ high-handed tactics created a division with CISPES and others and only 8,000 turned out.

NY News & Letters has been well received in the NY solidarity movement for our very active support. We are also appreciated for what is seen as our "expertise" on the North American revolutionary dimensions. How much we are appreciated for the philosophy behind that is another question. That involves patient work seeking out those companeros/as who are ready to strengthen their solidarity work with a totally revolutionary outlook. Language also limits us, limiting both who feels able to attend N&L meetings, where we have not had success, and leaving the dialog to a few comrades.

What attracted me to CSPG was its combination of North Americans, several of them libertarians, and Central Americans. Unlike the Salvadoran solidarity movement which is organizationally separated not only between the N. Americans and the Central Americans but in different Salvadoran competing tendencies, we have tried to maintain a broad solidarity committee which would avoid those mistakes, which are always a danger. Two things that the committee needs to develop besides outreach and the study groups is the specificity of the Indigenous, Women's Liberation, and peasant character of the revolution.

We must not lose ourselves in pragmatic activism. We saw where that led in the 60s. Equally wrong would be to walk away from this movement, of being so critical we don't participate and just stand outside saying, "it needs philosophy". In continuing our involvement this year, working out or proving the difference Marx's Marxism can make to the movement is the way to both affect the direction of the movement and meet future Marxist-

Humanists. A couple of Marxist\*Humanists even in leadership positions cannot affect the direction of the whole solidarity movement. If we can affect a portion of the movement, if we can gain new Marxist-Humanists on the basis of working out a serious theoretical contribution rooted in our activity and in Marx's vision, that will be a lasting contribution to solidarity.

To help other comrades in the movement, following are my brief impressions of the major Guatemalan political-military organizations:

ORPA--of all the organizations I would like to know more about the Organization of the People in Arms, but very few documents are available. They are said to be closest to the Indians, and ~~95%~~ 95% of their founding members when they split from FAR in 1971 over the importance of the "ethnic question" were Indian. One of their theoretical roots is Franz Fanon, which is clear in the one document I've seen, "Concerning Racism". From 1971 to 1979 when they went public, they learned from and sank roots in the mostly Indian peasants and agricultural workers of the highlands. I have also heard it said they are more libertarian, saying they want neither US nor Russia, but I cannot document that.

EGP--the Guerrilla Army of the Poor is the biggest and best-known of the four, and best at publicizing itself abroad. It too spent the early 70s sinking roots in the Indian communities. But I was bothered that an otherwise good analysis of Indigenous Peoples and the Guatemalan Revolution stated, "The main danger is that the national-ethnic factors will burst forth in detriment of class factors."

FAR--the Rebel Armed Forces, descendant of the FAR of the 60s, was active in labor unions in the 1970s with the PGT. I feel their reassessment after the failure of the 60s was purely tactical. They are most pro-Cuba. The first half of a 1980 Manifesto is a defense of Cuba. They, like the PGT, take the old Stalinist view that class is primary and Indigenous and ~~Women's~~ Women's Liberation will be settled after the revolution.

PGT--the Guatemalan Labor Party, now split in three, is the traditional CP. The PGT-Nucleo de Direccion Nacional, together with the EGP, ORPA and ~~FAR~~ FAR form the URNG, the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity.

Even the US Embassy has had to admit eight out of ten guerrillas are Indians. But I have a lack of theoretical material on that, and on the massive participation of women. For more background, I recommend NACLA jan/feb 83 and mar/april 83, and Guatemala in Rebellion: Unfinished History, Grove Press.

A DOCUMENT FROM THE EAST GERMAN INDEPENDENT PEACE MOVEMENT  
by Dave, NY

At 3:17 on the morning of June 8, the D 301 Berlin-Munich train crossed from East into West Germany and pulled into the Ludwigstadt station. The train's porter told border police that there was a young man locked in the last car, and then handed them an official-looking piece of paper which read: "EXIT VISA--ONE-WAY ONLY--FOR EMIGRATION TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY. VALID UNTIL 7 A.M., 6/8/83. DUTY-FREE." The only passenger on the train's last sleeping car was Roland Jahn, a 29 year-old trucker at the Zeiss works in Jena and an activist in the E. German independent peace movement. The day before, he had gone to Jena's city hall to see about subletting a friend's apartment; he found that the authorities had their own plan for his future residence. What follows is my translation of excerpts from Jahn's account of the activities which led to his unwilling exile, as published late in June in W. Germany.

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The GDR could not have chosen a more inauspicious date for my forcible deportation. After the initial disorientation of my arrival in the West, the reason for much of the intense interest in me quickly became clear: I had arrived just in time for June 17 [the 30th anniversary of the E. German workers' revolt--Tr.] as star witness to the inhumanity of the GDR regime. But for me, now, that is all too simple.

I am no enemy of the system: now as before I consider myself a socialist, even though I have found fault with a great many things in the "real, existing socialism" of the GDR. This was evidently misunderstood by some in the Federal Republic, who would much rather have heard me damn the SS-20 missiles root and branch without criticizing the NATO arms buildup.

One soon feels exploited, hitched to everyone else's bandwagon. On Tuesday afternoon last week, I was invited to a Radio Free Berlin studio in Berlin to join a roundtable discussion for Bavarian TV's third channel. The title of the broadcast was "Deported But Not Silenced," something I could certainly identify myself with. But when I found out that it was about June 17, I almost fell out of my chair. I certainly have my own opinion on the workers' fight for their rights on June 17, 1953, but I can't stand the anti-communist background of celebrations like these. At first I wanted to leave the studio--but then I said to myself no, this is the one you have to stay for now. And the program turned out quite differently from what some of the participants had imagined.

As an exile you have to watch yourself if you don't want to just go to the dogs in the West. And it was not at all easy to explain why I don't want a West German passport, and why I want back in the state that expelled me in such a shabby way. I want to make something happen from the inside, not from outside. Because I can understand the people in Jena who say: "First you shoot the shit, then you take a powder, and here we are when it hits the fan."

I come from a typical E. German family, somewhat petty bourgeois but decent people. . . . My politicalization began slowly. At the end of the '60s there was an administrative order banning long hair in the schools . . . At this age, in the 7th, 8th and 9th grades . . . even in little things like hair length, clothing, music--two bands, the Fuhdys and Ton, Steinc, Scherben, were especially loathed by the teachers--the fine line between making it and not making it became evident among the students, between those who kept their mouths shut and quietly graduated and those who wouldn't swallow everything. For me as a youth, the greatest break came with my service in the military police. That was what made me rethink the questions of war and military service. Before I went in, I didn't even know that you could refuse armed service and go into the engineer corps. Besides, I wanted

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to study [military service is a condition for admission to East German universities--Tr.] because at that time I believed you have to make compromises if you want to accomplish anything. Today I have a different opinion on this: you have to watch yourself very closely indeed, so that your march through the institutions doesn't turn into a rotten compromise.

In 1972, when I had just turned 19, I did my military service in Rudolstadt in the Gera district--so I would have been sent to Jena in the event of riots there. Our performance on such riot duty was regularly tested. In maneuvers near Jena we learned how to break up student demonstrations; we would take our positions on the main traffic arteries, chase after "lawless elements" who had fled to the hills around Jena, herd the longhairs together and then knock them down and disperse them with water cannons. . . .

Because I was in these exercises as a common soldier, not a police officer, naturally enough I asked myself: What would you do if this was for real? I was certain that no matter what, I would have to go on sick call or "pass out" on the spot--it was impossible, I couldn't take part in something like that.

We called our officers "the Red SA." The way they stood there with those leather belts and shoulder straps over their tunics, in those riding breeches . . . they looked just like the Nazi villains in the movies, the ones who went after the communists and other anti-fascists.

But for all that I never became a radical pacifist, I'm still not one today. Many of my friends can't understand this. I do not entirely reject the use of weapons. For example, I know that in certain situations I myself would take up arms--but what am I supposed to be doing, turning weapons on my own people?

After a year and a half of military service . . . in the fall of 1975 I began to study economics at Friedrich Schiller University in Jena. . . . I chose this field of study because I was already quite politically motivated. I looking for controversy under the cover of discussions, above all with economic and party functionaries. There were plenty of opportunities for this in the faculties of political economy and philosophy, but also in economic history. The department head didn't appreciate this too much. Once he ironically told me: "You champion the 'will of the people' too much for my taste."

This intellectual arrogance is typical of the university milieu in the GDR. And it is specifically on economic problems that, according to accepted opinion, ordinary people have nothing to say because most of them understand nothing of these matters. Because I spent a lot of my free time with workers, this really stunk to me. Most of my fellow students had no contact with workers at all. I preferred getting together with my old friends from Jena. About four fifths of the students came in from outside [the majority of East German university students commute to campus from suburbs or other towns--Tr.], so they had no connection with the city. That is why not much of a movement in the city could come out of the university, the students were tremendously brave but nothing came of it.

For example, this showed itself in the elections to the People's Chamber in 1976. We all had to vote at the university, although you normally cast your ballot where you live. They'd set up two voting booths but no one used them, whoever used the booth had already put himself under suspicion. I went in, crossed off all the names on the list and throw my sealed ballot into the box. After the election, the university administration asked my professors for evaluations of me. That was a warning signal.

In Jena, as in other cities at that time, a sort of scene had developed--an expression which I really don't like, because it is borrowed straight from the West. There were people who no longer wanted to play the game. Some wanted to drop out, others (like me) wanted to "integrate" themselves and shake up the system's rigor mortis from within.

Circles of friends formed, often not even politically motivated, in which

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attempts were made to work out alternatives. People met in apartments, held private art exhibits and festivals. Somehow, it was all quite interrelated. Sibylle Havemann, Robert Havemann's daughter, studied in Jena; Wolf Biermann and the singer Bettina Wegner were often there . . . \* The lyric circle around Iutz Rathenow and Jürgen Fuchs, a friend of Biermann and Havemann, was especially active. On account of their political stand and their private readings, for which often 30 or 40 people would meet in an apartment, they had to leave the university. Naturally that turned us all up. Then in 1976 came the business with Biermann, when they took away his citizenship. For many of us he was a symbolic figure, an idol. We protested. Whereupon seven or eight young people, all members of a very active reading circle, were arrested and together with Fuchs were deported in summer, 1976--without a trial.

And it was here that the party made a decisive error: for it was then that the Jena-W.Berlin connection originated, which would later have such great importance for the peace movement. With these expatriations the party itself created the publicity, without which the alternative peace movement in Jena would never have been able to spread as widely as it did.

The deportations had other consequences, too. For many who didn't fit in in Jena, they were a depressing experience. Two factions formed. Some said: "What am I doing here? I'm getting out too," and they filed for emigration. And then there were the notorious stay-at-homes, who thought: "Now get serious."

My own opinion was that you have to change things right there, where you live. When something rubs me the wrong way, I've always had trouble keeping my mouth shut. Hence, in 1976 I took a stand on the expatriation in a university seminar. Some of my fellow students warned me: "Biermann is taboo! Cool it, they'll do a number on you!" Yeah, sure--and meanwhile, one of them had taken down secretly in shorthand that I publicly solidarized with Biermann. . . .

They got around to my expulsion in January, 1977. I had connections with "the Jena underworld," that was the grounds they gave; the FDJ [Free German Youth, the E.German state youth organization--Tr.] formally requested that my name be taken off the student roll. My seminar colleagues were required to vote on this: 13 were for kicking me out, one against. Later I found out that the university administration had talked to all of them in advance, one by one. This was the line: "Don't you know what the Western newspapers are going to say? 'Jena student expelled while classmates protest!' Surely you don't want them to be able to slander us like that?"

Then I got a copy of the university disciplinary code and determined that my expulsion was illegal. Namely, there was supposed to have been a disciplinary hearing; and since they hadn't bothered holding one, I went on cruising around the university as though nothing had changed. That was a new one on them, they'd already expelled hundreds of students in this simple way without anything ever happening. So I finally got my hearing, then--an orderly, bureaucratic out-the-door. The chairman of the disciplinary committee told me in parting that when I'd proved myself in production, I could think about applying for readmission.

At that time, getting a job was no problem. I figured that I'd do best as a transport worker: you don't need heavy qualifications for that, you get around a lot and make a lot too. And it turned out well, I got a job at Zeiss in a section that hauled heavy machinery around. . . .

\*Robert Havemann, sentenced to death by the Third Reich in 1943, survived the war to become a prominent scientist and spokesperson of the E.German opposition; self-described "critical communist" and advocate of "socialist democracy"; stripped of academic position, died early this year under house arrest. Wolf Biermann is equally popular (and unpopular) in both Germanies as a political balladeer; forbidden to record, perform or publish in the GDR, he was stripped of E.German citizenship in 1976 while on a concert tour in the West.

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Starting in the early '70s, a lot of students began coming into Jena from outside. It really enlivened the youth scene: they'd run into our groups and we were getting a steady stream of new ideas from them. Many had given up trying to cope with the structure of big plants like Zeiss or Jenapharm and were looking for alternative lifestyles. We thought of ourselves as a society in solidarity; some of us began living communally too, a thing that had been very rare in the GDR. . . . We kept in touch with each other--for example, by meeting most mornings at 9 for breakfast in the university cafeteria.

Around this time we began to put together art portfolios which could be passed around as mini-showings of artists who weren't allowed to exhibit publicly. At first we wanted to call the portfolios "Jena Impressions," but many thought that would draw too much heat. Artists tend to be a little nervous, from what I've seen.

So then we also began to make postcards with pictures and captions that had double meanings.\* We sent these all over the republic, all quite official through the mails with a stamp on the back. Many went to prominent personalities, for example Hermann Kant of the Writers' Union. Groups in other cities were mailing out cards like these too, it turned into a real minor art form. Most were done with simple materials and in limited numbers. But it was an important medium because we couldn't paste up posters or get out a newsletter. We were showing something; that we were there, whether anyone saw us or not.

.....

The circle of friends in which I was active was, like many others, involved in the discussion of peace. We felt ourselves threatened, not by militarism and war alone, but by the state's violence and abuse of power . . .

Up till then we had looked for collective activities chiefly on two levels: we met either in apartments, in small circles, or in festivals, outings, or readings in which up to 100 people often participated. Many things also went on under the protection of the church . . .

But for us in Jena, relations with the church organizations were ticklish to say the least. Officially, there was public youth activity which was open to anyone within the framework of the Youth Congregation (JG). I always regarded the JG as a kind of forum where one could exchange ideas and experiences.

The catch was that the superintendent responsible for all the congregations in Jena controlled the planning of such "JG Evenings." He always wanted to know in advance what was going to be discussed. In practice, you had to let him censor the presentations. Even a religious commemoration of the 37th anniversary of Jena's bombing was rejected out of hand.

I myself never stood too close to the church, I only went to the "workshops": that is, programs with sing-alongs, art exhibits and discussions, often there'd be photos and poems hung on the walls. Yes, and in Jena the youth pastor would put in an appearance now and then, delicately touch his finger to this poem or the other and say: "That has to come down."

The church leadership was afraid of conflicts. "We are not a loudspeaker," they said, "we won't let ourselves be used as a platform for political purposes." That is why many turned their backs on the JG and came together outside the church. In a circle of people concerned with the problems of military service, for example.

It was from this group that the idea came for the first minute of silence on November 14, 1982. At the time I was sitting in jail, so I only know what

\* One of the postcards was a photograph of Jahn, made-up as a Hitler/Stalin harlequin. For promenading the streets of Jena in this attire on May Day, 1982, and for flying a Polish flag from his bicycle, Jahn was held six months in investigative arrest on charges of "public disrespect for the state order."

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happened from hearsay. That evening around 5 pm, about 70 young people gathered on the central plaza in Jena, the "Plaza of the Cosmonauts" as it is now called. They just stood there in a silent circle facing outward, with signs bearing the word "Peace." It was a simple invitation to thought, but this was already on the borderline of what the state power would tolerate.

Soon there were conversations with passers-by, little discussion groups formed. The police and the Stasi [State Security Service, the E. German political police--Tr.] had no idea what was going on because everything was organized immediately beforehand.

An important date for us: it was the Jena peace movement's first public appearance outside the church.

At the second minute of silence on December 24--once again I was unable to participate--things didn't go quite as smoothly. The police got wind of our plans in advance, they seized a few of us in preventive arrest. Hundreds of police sealed off the city that holiday evening, no one from outside could get in. Some who lived in the inner city finally succeeded in getting to the central plaza. There, they were roughed up by plainclothes Stasi agents . . . They'd blocked all the highways into Jena too, because they believed it would escalate into something really big.

With their needless show of force, the authorities had once again taken care of the agitation for us and at the same time welded the Jena peace community even more closely together. The more massive the pressure grew from State Security, who sniffed out treason behind every action, the more tightly the still isolated peace circles would draw together.

The church in Thuringia did just the opposite: they began to keep their distance. This began when they publicly disassociated themselves from the minute of silence on Christmas eve. A news release from the church's press office informed Western correspondents that the church had nothing to do with the action of December 24, and that information from ex-Jenan emigres in W. Berlin should be taken with a grain of salt. This didn't exactly bring us closer to the pastors.

And then there was this youth worker in the Youth Congregation who turned out to be a Stasi spy. He was about 29, just my age, and was running straight to the State Security people with whatever was planned in the JG. Someone once said: "If you want something spread around, go to the JG and talk about it there." Although the church knew about it, they did nothing. There were some who didn't appreciate this. Then when about a dozen especially active people in Jena were arrested in January '83, relations with the church grew even worse. Everywhere in the country, from Berlin-Brandenburg to Mecklenburg, the imprisoned Jenans were mentioned in church services to show that they didn't stand alone--everywhere but in Thuringia, everywhere but Jena, that was the macabre part. It was due, above all, to solidarity within the peace movement that almost all of them were hastily released in February. Members of the W. German Greens like Gert Bastian and Petra Kelly interceded for us, the W. Berlin Alternative Liste appealed directly to state and party chief Honecker.

At the beginning of March, we--the released prisoners and others--made an attempt to get our business straight with the church. For a long time we had planned a meeting with Werner Leich, bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thuringia; on March 1 it came off. We openly told him that we felt in need of protection, and we asked the church to give us the possibility of continuing our work. The bishop turned us down flat. Even the expression "peace circle" was anathema to him, as we used it. Of course one could be active in the church, he told us, but only in the form which the church itself proscribed. Moreover, non-Christians could never play a leading role. . . .

So then in March we decided to join more closely together in self-defense, and to make that clear to the outside we named ourselves the Jena Peace Community.

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That was the first time in the GDR that a group of people came together and said here we are, this is what we want, and stepped into the public limelight . . . To define our standpoint we drew up a paper outlining our concepts. The slogan was: for us peace is no far-off, distant goal, but something immediate, vital, here and now.

We planned our next public appearance for March 18. We applied quite officially to the city council and the police--using the name "Jena Peace Community" for the first time--to hold a public minute of silence on the 38th anniversary of Jena's bombing. The refusal came the next day. The grounds: a public memorial was already scheduled for the 18th. "That's fine with us," we said, "we'll hold ours on the 19th then." That date was also taken they quickly replied, another commemoration was planned in the inner city on that day too.

We regarded this as a subterfuge. But to keep up appearances, within three days they had conjured up a wall with a new memorial tablet in the marketplace, very inconveniently set between the newspaper stand and the beer garden. . . . It was at this monument, we were informed, that a wreath-laying was planned for the 19th. They hoped that would cool us out, but we decided to take part in the official ceremonies on the 18th . . .

We started from Johannis Gate and marched the 400 meters to the market place down Johannis Street, which is a pedestrian mall with many shops; passers-by spontaneously joined the 30 members of our peace group. About ten thousand people were gathered in the market place, among them many involuntary participants from the schools and factories. A wall of marshals formed around our group to keep us separated from the others. I heard one of the spectators whisper: "If only nothing happens . . ." Others said "Oh-oh! These are the ones that were in prison." Yes--and then the hassle started. They started shoving us, acting out "the wrath of the people"--all Stasi people and other state functionaries, a lot of teachers were with them too. It was a really nasty situation because we'd brought our children along, and only a few people tried to help by standing between us and the others. They brutally tore down our signs and ripped them up, we had to leave on the run.

The next day, March 19, we left the children at home. We'd put together a wreath with a sowed memorial ribbon that said "Jena Peace Community" and "Swords Into Plowshares." With a delegation of ten or twelve we marched at the end of the official procession to the wreath-laying at the new monument. Suddenly, about 50 men bulled up to us from all sides. We'd hardly set our wreath down when one of them jumped out and twisted the ribbon so no one could read what it said. Then I went up and turned it back around, we went back and forth like that a few times until the ribbon tore.

Actually we only wanted to stand there for a minute in silence, but we were immediately pushed away. So we waited until the official participants had gone and then gathered at the monument again for our minute. About 100 men from the Stasi, the party and the city council stayed with us there in the pouring rain because they thought we were up to something. It was really touching. One of the officials took up his stand right next to us, mumbling out of the corner of his mouth: "You jailbirds, we'll bust your heads good . . ." Instead, we got them to join us in an hour of silence.

The incident on the 18th was later even reported by W.German TV news, who tried to use it in a mudslinging attack on the W.German Easter march.

At this time we made many trips to other cities like Berlin, Dresden and Halle, participated in exhibitions and readings in private apartments and showed documentary displays on our actions. These contacts were important for our mutual understanding, because some groups in other cities who for years had been just as active as us in the alternative peace work in their own communities, within the church or in private circles of friends, now felt themselves cast under our shadow

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because Jena had become the idea. On one hand, we were admired because we had had the courage to come out in the open. On the other hand some reproached us, they claimed we were only showboating. But Jena had never been the germinal cell of the peace movement. We had only found new forms to bring our demands before the public.

Finally even State Security tried to adapt to the situation. Since the incidents of the 18th and 19 they had noticeably held themselves back; they were trying to work out a new tactic, to appear to go along with us so they could bring us under control.

At the Pentecost rally of the Free German Youth in Jena on May 19 they even allowed us semi-official participation. A swarm of Stasi agents escorted us from Johannes Gato to the central plaza. "You have the fifth spot in the march column" they told me, we were supposed to position ourselves somewhere way back in the rear. "Of course" we said, and then we went all the way up front, right under the speakers' platform.

We were greeted over the loudspeakers, and an FDJ functionary from the university began to attack our "Swords Into Plowshares" signs. He was reading a prepared text off a sheet of paper; they had gotten our number in advance, they wanted to show us up in public. "If you want a discussion," the speaker pompously challenged us, "step forward." He didn't have to ask me twice. They put the microphone in my hand. It was a crazy situation; you know they can take the microphone away at any moment, you have to say something fast--something placative, but something that will make an impression too. . . . I bellowed across the plaza: "Swords into plowshares, the order of the day for all peoples--this was the demand of Radio Moscow on May 15, 1982 at 21:00 hours!" I used all the official slogans, e.g. "We support Erich Honecker's proposal for renunciation of the use of force" . . . but when I shouted "We will not allow anyone to forbid us to express our own ideas on peace" they grabbed the microphone away from me. The limits of the possible had been reached, once again.

In the meantime, some especially gung-ho FDJers had surrounded our little group and little signs with their gigantic banners so that we were completely hidden from sight. As I climbed down from the platform they tore up my picket sign and I caught a couple of good ones in the face. My friends rushed up, it instantly turned into a brawl. Suddenly a pair of Stasi people began frantically signaling them to stop. "You're not supposed to do that!" I heard them shout. "You guys have gone nuts!" The scheme apparently had been to leave us alone.

And then something totally new happened; discussion broke out all over the plaza, many of the FDJers suddenly sympathized with us, we sensed that something had been set in motion. We felt that we were the victors.

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Suggested Amendments for Consideration at Constitutional  
Convention of N&L Committees, 1983

From Eugene:

1. When each book is first mentioned we should put date of publication in parenthesis. Or in summary sentence (see below) mention the dates for each writing.

2. On the fourth page of Preamble, after the sentence which reads "As against 'the party to lead' concept, such integrality of dialectics and organization reflects the revolutionary maturity of the age and its passion for a philosophy of liberation" the following paragraph is suggested --

Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution has shown that the integrality of dialectics and organization is grounded in working out the fullness of Marx's "revolution-in-permanence." This view of the totality of Marx's works, including his last writings, the Ethnological Notebooks, disclosed new points of departure for our age on revolutionary organization, on Man/Woman relations, on revolutions in technologically underdeveloped lands -- the Third World. This presentation of Marx's "revolution-in-permanence" provides the vantage point for engaging the generations of revolutionaries after Marx -- Luxemburg and Lenin most especially -- in a critical manner. At the same time, today's movement for freedom -- the Women's Liberation Movement, the Black Dimension, labor and youth -- are seen as linked to Marx's philosophy of liberation and as revolutionary Reason striving for a new human beginning.

Marxism and Freedom (1957), Philosophy and Revolution (1973) and Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution (1983) together with American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard (1973, 1983) are the theoretical foundations of the Marxist-Humanist Organization, News and Letters Committees. (Now continue with "However they are not a 'program'...")

From Andy:

Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution both deepens and expands the philosophic foundations and principles established in the two earlier works by illuminating the practical organizational guides in Marx's concept of "revolution in permanence," and by opening entirely new revolutionary third-world perspectives that were discovered in the process of analyzing Marx's latest but heretofore ignored work, his Ethnological Notebooks.

Marxism and Freedom, Philosophy and Revolution, and Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution are our theoretical foundations. However, they are not a "program" ... etc.

From Peter:

(This paragraph would follow the end of the first italicized sentence on p. 4, that ends "integrality also of philosophy and organization.")

Just as Philosophy and Revolution re-stated the revolutionary dialectic for our age, so has Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution posed the inseparability of the philosophy of revolution from revolutionary organization. Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution presents "new moments" from Marx's last decade (especially his Ethnological Notebooks) which lets us hear Marx think as he relates new subjects of revolt to new concepts of liberation, thereby forging new pathways to revolution. Now that all of Marx's major works have been pried from the archives, at the same time as new subjects of revolt such as Women's Liberation, a new Third World, and youth anti-nuclear struggles have arisen, it becomes possible to fuse Marx's critical-practical-revolutionary method with revolutionary organization itself. As against the post-Marx Marxists who kept philosophy and organization in separate compartments, Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution challenges our age to make philosophy the very ground of organization.

(The text would then continue as is; the proposed addition to the second paragraph on p. 4 contained in the REB minutes of July 24, 1983 reads very well, and I have no additions for that.) There is one minor change I would suggest at the top of p. 3 where we say "N&L shall be published once a month". Since we publish not once a month but ten times a year, I suggest we say, instead "N&L shall be published at least 10 times a year."

From Jim:

In considering what to add to the constitution, the relationship between organization and revolution is central. Trying to recreate what Marx expressed for the relationship between the individual and society has relevance for today when the world is full of revolutionaries whose relationships to the world are being worked out as revolutionary organization. The concept in Marx is:

"My universal consciousness is only the theoretical form of the living form, which is the real communal, social existence inasmuch as nowadays universal consciousness is an abstraction from real life and, as such, is hostile to it. Hence also the activity of my universal consciousness, as such, is my theoretical existence as a social being."

Thus, in the fourth paragraph from the end of "preamble," add RLWLMK to the beginning, and conclude the paragraph with:

This trilogy of revolution promotes the organization of philosophy that itself achieves the act of infusing action with Marx's concept of revolution in permanence.

In the paragraph preceding (that begins on p. 3) after the sentence ending with "philosophy and organization", add the following:

It is in the 1980s, with a view of the totality of Marx's life and work, that Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution brings together the problematic of revolutionary transformation of reality with Marx's philosophy of revolution. In Marx's humanism revolutions truly find new paths -- new forces as Reason, globally, and transcending capitalism. It is the fact of Women's Liberation that challenges revolutions to answer "what happens after" which also has demonstrated how deep the necessary uprooting of capitalism must be as well as shown the depth of Marx's humanism. The challenge to all revolutions -- beginning with Marxists after Marx -- is to catch the link with Marx's Marxism and to end the history of incomplete revolutions and begin human history.

From Terry:

... The only contribution I feel I can make at this point is still "first negativity", that is, I can say what I don't like about the paragraph in the Minutes of 7/24/83. What I felt was that somehow our contribution was missing, our 35 year development. The paragraph tries to tell everything but it doesn't show it. Perhaps that is the wrong thing to try to reach for in the Constitution. What I found was that I liked the Who We Are Statement better because it shows the process: "By tracing and paralleling this age's 30-year movement from practice to theory with our own theoretical development..."

The rest may seem like nit-picking. In the first sentence, rather than say "spelled out" wouldn't it be better to say "deepened" or "developed"? Also, I wondered why WLM has to go "along with" Rosa Luxemburg. Is it because we were trying to say that what the WLM raised on forms of organization "along with" RL's ideas on spontaneity "helped us" to work out a different conception of organization? But is that really what is important to single out -- since we do have to single out only one or two things? What I liked so much in the book is what RD says the WLM raised: 1) how deep and total the revolution has to be, and 2) the dual nature of revolution. It is true that WLM leads directly to the Marx section but instead of saying it "helped us to work out" wouldn't it be truer to say that the unfinished nature of those two points compels a grounding in Marx? Yes, they helped us work it out, but that help came in the form of the movement being so unfinished and undeveloped.