

March 27, 1986

SPECIAL

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"A Preliminary Marxist-Humanist Statement on the Last 48 Hours"

Suddenly-- and not out of the clear blue, which was not the truth of the objective situation-- but out of the clear blue at midday (not exactly at prime-time or when working people would be listening to the TV) came the shocking announcement that shooting had been raging for hours. U.S. missiles knocked out Libyan "missile sites" that supposedly had fired the first shot at them. Two patrol boats in the Gulf of Sidra were also destroyed with all aboard lost.

I was the one to witness the midday press conference when this was ongoing simply because I had fallen, broken my leg, and was hospitalized. I had at once called the office of the Center and told them to turn to the press conference on TV. Within a half hour I called again to say that even though I know it is time for the paste-up of N&L to go to the print shop, some dramatic changes have to be introduced into both the Lead and the Editorial as if it were a daily paper. Such challenges are the proof that philosophy is action and action is Marxist-Humanist organization as it responds to the objective situation as well as the immediate subjective re-organization needed. Mike and Eugene came down at once to the hospital to go over the galley proofs of the Lead and Editorial and suggest re-organization.

The decisions were:

1) To create a single headline over both the Lead and the Editorial as if each was inseparable from the other, with both starting in parallel columns on page one. This is what you will read in the first sentence of each: "Yesterday, March 24, out of the clear blue, the Reagan administration announced that the U.S. had sunk Libyan patrol boats hours before." (Editorial); "The unfolding dialectic of revolt in Haiti has put the question of social revolution on the agenda." (Lead)

2) To show what is involved in the practice of Marxist-Humanist Perspectives in this letter. Clearly, the extraordinary counter-revolutionary Ronald Reagan, proudly designating himself as such, and obsessed with the idea of practicing being Commander-in-Chief of an actual war, doesn't care to which country the imperialist troops are sent. He is playing with, or actually preparing for, a full-scale war. As obvious as has been his ambition to invade Nicaragua-- whether he was in Grenada or Libya-- is this really his ultimate?

I want to tell you what dialectic method and Marx's Marxism achieve for genuine Marxists at all turning points in history. The Spanish Revolution was the most dramatic revolutionary act since the Russian Revolution of 1917. And we as Trotskyists were active in all aspects, from being part of the Debs Brigade to, at the same time, offering critical estimates of the scene.

Yet, frankly, some of us thought that the actions of the Stalinists were not only those of murderous bureaucrats "factionally" getting rid of the Trotskyists in Spain as well as in Russia. What

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else did its ramifications show? (Though those murderous acts themselves were nothing short of paving the way for Counter-revolution.) What dissident Trotskyists were whispering was: couldn't this involve more than just Spanish fascism? Couldn't both Stalin's Russia and Hitler's Germany be testing their weapons for World War?

Now it is true that nothing comparable to the counter-revolutionary situation that followed the defeat of the Spanish Revolution-- the outbreak of World War II-- exists today. Nevertheless, the objectively reactionary situation in the U.S., whether it be over Libya or Latin America, or in the deterioration of thinking, shows us that the dialectic method is as urgent now as it has ever been, whether we are preparing for the decision on the bi-weekly at our Convention, or participating in the present on-going Workshop/Classes (and I will give the last lecture to all the locals on videotape), or studying and projecting the Retrospective/Perspective on 30 Years of N&L.

What is involved is the whole concept of Archives. It is that which demonstrates our historic right to exist. It is not just a question of being an independent Marxist tendency. Marxist-Humanism is epochal in that it sums up the three decades of a movement from practice to theory which is itself a form of theory, and is inseparable from the full-blown philosophy of revolution.

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There is other news to report in this "letter of the week", and it will be reported on next week, so that this statement is seriously discussed right now as the revolutionary journalistic analyses of this week, analyses we couldn't have anticipated when we assigned the Lead and Editorial at the REB.

Yours,

Raya

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