

MEETING OF REB, MAY 12, 1986

Present: All except Dave, excused; [redacted] by special invitation; Jane as sitter-in. Peter was present as new resident at the Center.  
Agenda: I. Points of Departure as Preparation for the Convention  
Call at Next REB Meeting --Raya; II. N&L going to press, June issue (Lead, Eugene; Editorial, Peter); III. Ongoing Activities -- Mike; IV. G&W

I. Before she began her presentation, Raya welcomed to the REB Peter who had already been active in everything that has happened in the 10 days since he had moved; and N [redacted], who had taken his one-week vacation to be at the Center before returning to New York where so many new developments are now possible.

Raya then reported that the reason she has started our Pre-Convention Discussion so early, with the Special-Special-Special and the Pre-Pre Discussion Bulletin was because of the objective situation. Reagan's foray in the Gulf of Sidra was not just a new stage of retrogression, but the face of neo-fascism that will be confronted right here at home. Chernobyl increased that further. Aren't the Ukrainians human beings? Doesn't anyone care about the deaths from radiation we are yet to see in the days, the weeks, the months, the years to come?

(Raya read in full the Report to the REB on the trip to Spain that had just arrived from Mary and Jim, dated May 5, a copy of which is being sent to each local together with these minutes.)

Everything is related to Vol. XII of our Archives and why it is now called a full half-century of Marxist-Humanism. Everything changed with the Depression. If we were not smart enough to break with the old at once, we clearly did undertake studies that became the ground for our later break. That includes the Spanish Revolution and the analyses of the nature of the Russian economy. When the '30s ended it was clear that neither the Depression nor the Moscow Trials solved anything and that imperialism was heading for WWII -- which ended by putting up markers for where WWII would start. What we have to grasp is how long it took to penetrate to the Absolute Idea, the process. How can anyone look at all the essays on WL that came before there even was a WLM and feel, "We have 2 books on WL!" It was not "on WL"; it was on "Dialectics of Revolution". Any force that thinks it can do it without revolution and philosophy is fooling itself. That is why the Dec. 30, 1984 Expanded REB was devoted to going through the Introduction/Overview of WLDR, paragraph by paragraph.

When we talk about "points of departure" we mean what happened in the objective situation. Why are we so lazy that there is no response until the counter-revolution stares us in the face? It took all the way from 1929 until the actual Hitler-Stalin Pact before anyone saw that it was the end not only of Stalinism, but Trotskyism. We have to recognize what it means when a Tendency is still within something else. The State-Capitalist Tendency couldn't develop fully so long as it was living within Trotskyism.

The Pre-pre-Convention Bulletin is most important as a critique of ourselves. It is urgent to recognize that no others were singling out what we saw in Reagan's assault. Everything cannot be put on the shoulders of the workers again and again. What we have to understand is they can't do it alone anymore than the intellectuals can do it alone. All of this is what we will have to take up in the Call -- which is the focus of the next REB on May 27.

11533