August 6,1956

Dear Saul:

Everything takes longer to do because I can work on nothing now without going to its philosophic roots. I believe I now have the logical foundations of the Second and its downfall and what Lenin must have thought of as he was working at Hegel. Enclosed, then, is The Interlude which please pass around the REB. The same "strictures" hold for it as for the other chapter--no excitement, no discussion, read in strike, though I hope everyone "used" all this theory to win some new members, or at least bring more workers closer to us.

I began writing a letter to Olga but it remained unfinished as I thought the chapter would be the best answer. Nevertheless I enclose the copy of that letter too for the processes of coming to any conclusion are always as important as the conclusion itself. Don't know which chapter I will approach next or how. I wake at 7:30 a.m., take a short brisk 15 minute walk, eat breakfast at 8 and take a longer, (45 minute walk), then I get down to the typewriter, the books, the thinking and working things out, without any interruptions except for meals and, if it is very hot, perhaps a ½ hour for a swim (or what I call a swim). The light gets turned out at midnight. I don't know how to hurry or get more out--there are just no beaten paths. It is all so new even where one thinks nothing is new, as I thought when I first considered this part and thought I would follow the path of Lenin. He too doesn't live today and our age demands more and must get the total view in every single phase. So be it,

Yrs,

Rae

12125

Aug.4,1956

Dear Olga:

chapter I appreciate the serious piece of criticism you did nn the on Hegel and it will come in very handily in the reworking of the chapter. Not only that, even in your original presentation on the chapter in which there was not much that was new, you have been of great assistance because in just trying seriou sly to grapple with the dialectic and needing to rephrase it in xxxxx terms which make sense to you, you have aided in the rewriting. You are absolutely right when you say that you feel that is the key to the book. It is not only that, Olga, it is the key to any fundamental understanding of the problems of the age, and of the past. That is why I am chosing to address you to show you some of t he problems that now face me as I am working on the so-called interl ude--that is the Second Internation al.

As you know, I had intended to do very little with it, In fact, I had not even listed it as a separate part in the original outline. Only after a talk with Marcuse who said, No matter how much you have no use for the 2nd, you cannot skip from the death of the founders of Marxism down to the great divide in Marxism; something happened between 1889-1914. I answered rather offishly, o.k. I will have a chapter on it, but I don't know that there is anything to say 1)after life itself proved its betrayal, and 2)after the profound analysis of Lenin. I intended pretty much to repeat what Lenin had said.

Now I get down to working it out and, as always, more time than I counted on is needed. In fact I am not anywhere near finished; I'm just clearing up my own mind. And here is the difficulty: if I am going to deal with it only as betrayal, even where I show its non-accidental nature, what is there to say about the necessity of it back in 1889 for just as its betrayal was no accident neither were its achievements. You see that man Hegel just won't let you get away by merely being disgusted or even finding economic reasons for collapse, you have to show the positive in the negative and the positive in the negative of 1914 is easy enou gh: it is the Russian Revolution and Leninism; what was the positive in 1889? The organization of the proletariat , of course, in trade unions and mass political parties. Well, if it was an achievement, then you cannot dismiss it by saying that tho it had a million members, etc.etc. it folded up. Here is what you miss when you put it that way:

Lenin and Luxemburg were members of it and they saw either none of what was to happen (Lenin) or where they saw some of it (Luxemburg knew Kautsky and knew he'd never lead a revolution) still the philosophic base was so much the same as the official one (the e conomic goes witho ut saying in her case since she only ended by revising Marx's theory of accumulation) that you could not separate the one from the other. Error as dynamic of truth? Yes, but that's not the whole truth; it never is.

For example Luxemburg with her theory of spontaneity does seem to have been in advance philosophically of Lenin pre-1914; she certainly thought so. But it just isn't true for the opposite of spontaneity is organization and you can keep the two apart but must jam them up one against the other and then get something quite different--that direct relationship of

theory to practice, beginning from practice, which I spoke so much about in the Perspectives speech in an organizational "narrow" sense but which is actually the key to Marxism as is evident by the structure of CAPITAL and his whole life.

Now once you state that you can see that the beginning of the end of the Second--there was a beginning of the end; it had not happened suddenly, that betrayal--came with 1905 Russian Revolution which was not even placed on the agenda of the next congress of the Second, although many "tributes" were made to it.

So we have to account for the positive only from 1889 to 1905; then have the actual revolution come in bold as life and the non-seriousness abou t it. What happens when you don't get the positive achievements is that y ou see mistakes, mistakes, mistakes, and the world and humanity developing only by accident.

Not only that. The differences in ages and the inescapability of mistakes. You cannot know before you know.