

September 14, 1956

Dear Olga, Andy and Louise:

I chose you three from the NEB members to address this letter on the next stage in our development because West Virginia and the youth have each on their own penetrated some new layers since the convention, in addition to which Louise in her last piece on school integration has shown a new freedom in political matters that was a new stage in itself.

No doubt you all noted in the REB minutes this week that I have raised the question of the outward movement as one of the triad--backlog, fund, and subs(outward move)--which has been paid attention to least and must now become the central point. The point is to approach it not as of old, as a phrase or a wish, but something concrete that nevertheless has embodied in it the Absolute Idea.

Here is what I mean: The absolute idea, or the concept of the new society, means that the totality of crisis is so pervasive that the average person, who might ordinarily have been concerned with but one aspect, such as wages, of his many troubles, now searches instead for a totality of outlook. This means that whereas in "previous ages" only the depression compelled a move toward the revolutionary movement, or only the actual war, now the near fear of each and the very strong desire for a new way of life compels a search for "little groups" or newspapers such as NEWS & LETTERS or just friends that would talk of more than the daily routines.

You know that the last chapter of the book I talk, not of a "party", but of a new unity of theory and practice. This is what "party" means today, if we are to cleanse it of the conceit of party "to lead". This is what NEWS & LETTERS is today if we are to abolish the division between theory and practice as well as between leaders who do nothing but lead and ranks who do nothing but follow. In turn, this means that ranks not only can but want to assume responsibility for "leading" in the sense of developing themselves and their shopmates, or school chums, or the next door neighbor.

Now the point is to get down to the concretization of this so that it results in subs, many subs, contacts who drop in regularly at meetings, friends who wish to become members and for whom you as an individual (whether leader, organizer, or "just rank") feel responsible to move to his next stage of development which, if you really are sure is self-development, you will have no compunction to urge on. How do we transform this from talk to deed is the problem. I began by raising it in the REB by concretely analysing what made the 6 new members come to us and by asking the REB, especially the proletarian members (for proletarianization is of the essence not alone in the sense of activity "for" proletariat but of the proletariat itself activizing itself) to think about this and be ready to come in with ideas and activities next week. I would want you three to do the same--write me within the week on this--so that when we move to this new stage we do so on solid ground on which we not only can stand, but, aminly, take off from to move forward.

Yours, Rae

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