

Nov. 27, 1956

Dear John:

It is 9 p.m. and this is the first I get to write to you since Marcuse left just this minute. We talked for hours on my book. He was so anxious to reemphasize that he will do everything possible to get it published and to write the introduction that he would not even begin criticizing it, until he made the positive feature of wanting to see it published clear all over again. The introduction will not be written until I actually do have a contract, but it will be done promptly then. It will stress the contribution I make and the dialectical approach--until I reach the "notion" of the proletariat. It will then make 3 criticisms: 1) first that I romanticize the workers instead of seeing that "it" too changed along with capitalism, that is to say, is satisfied instead of revolutionary, 2) it will take some exception to state capitalism as a designation of Russia stemming from Marx's foresight, and 3) question my optimistic perspectives. I told him he could criticize it to his heart's content, I certainly don't want agreement, but he kept saying "You are so excellent in handling the dialectic except when you deal with the proletariat" and "Why do you so berate the intellectual? I do not see the relationship of theory to practice that you do; I think theory should be the guide, what you call the prescription instead of you just waiting on the proletariat". These professors--but he is really remarkable for a professor. We had a magnificent seafood dinner, cocktails and all and I fear he was set back some \$10 or more. Still I have another appointment scheduled with him tomorrow. He promised to go over paragraph for paragraph my translation since I did it from the Russian rather than German and let me know how I stand scholastically on that.

Now on the publisher--he agrees it is worth waiting to see if London will accept it, even if it means a couple of months delay, and that I should stall P meanwhile. O, yes, he also proposed that I go to Germany in his stead to be present at some conference on Marxism this winter. I said I would love to but doubt that I would be quite as acceptable. He already began discussing my next book with me, as he feels he will not write again after the publication of his next, and I should carry on, although he disagrees with me. He also told me one interesting point for Saul (I'll send him a copy of this) since he met Rieff and told him, O, I'm in a hurry to make an appointment with RD, whereupon Rieff said, O, yes, her lit. agt. sent me a letter asking us to reconsider and told us she would be in town. Period. Paragraph. End of conversation. Or, as M. put it "No implications in this at all."

His favorite chapter remains "A New Humanism", to which he also added that although he disagrees with my Automation chapter, my interpretation of the Absolute Idea in that form rather than in the letters is "clearest". He kept saying "What would Father Marx say if he lived now" and his eyes lit up as to the paragraph where Marx stopped in the Philosophy of Mind and where my analysis began. If only he could be around some workers--

Am now ready to storm NY Love,

Roe

12148