

Dear S. ...

Nov. 25, 1966

Yours of the 13th was most welcome, especially on the point of collaboration. You will see from the December issue of N&L (which will be sent you air mail from now on) the type of state-capitalist study on a world scale I have in mind. What needs to be done is to study the state of the world economy in the advanced countries, and why there is a constantly widening gap between those and the underdeveloped countries, without forgetting that the rich countries have poor within them while the poor have rich in mind and the striving for the universal that makes them break through economic confines. I assume you have the studies UN puts out annually; the critical period I consider to be 1956-1966 (not to mention the fact that something like the Hungarian Revolution blows skyhigh all Plans).

If you will study Ch. 8 of M&F you will see how I relate what is abstract theory to the reality which sent Rosa deviating from Marx's abstractions only to land in the swamp of underconsumptionism, which is, after all, built into capitalism. But what I am referring to is the need to have the underlying philosophy not merely to "lie under" but to permeate the economics to the marrow of its bones. And the contrast between Marx's treatment of Primitive Accumulation of Capital and Luxemburg's thinking that, by the new, the relationship of capital and labor, has been transferred to a relationship of capitalism to non-capitalist land.

Also, I'm enclosing one of the early articles when I had to argue the question of state-capitalism with Trotskyists; sometimes it is easiest to follow a question in old forms which are familiar to get exactly where the break comes in for it was a traumatic experience to have to break with Trotsky and realize that he was nowhere the theoretician Lenin had been.

On the whole, however, I prefer not to write my ideas of that chapter. I believe that only if something comes spontaneously out of one can one see both movement and attitudes. I would very much love therefore to see, from your very different background, how you would naturally treat such a subject as the relationship of the advanced to the technologically backward countries and what your judgment would be as to the state of the economy. The December issue of N&L will help because Com. Tsushima deals with the problem too much as an economist so that it appears as if capitalism has overcome the worst crises just because the form of appearance is different. I lean backward and deal practically solely as Marxist-Humanist philosopher, but for that first chapter, more economics concrete rigorous study is necessary, something like what I do in Ch. 17 of M&F, especially in the construction of the Statistical Abstract on p. 230. Do please give me your reactions, or wait for the December issue of N&L and then actually write an outline of how you see Ch. 1 of the book, and we can take it from there.

Science & Society is a Stalinist magazine, its claim to independence is due to the fact that it changed from apologists for Russia to those for China; it is even more "professorial" than Studies on the Left; each knows exactly where they are going in their apologetics when they change sides and yet remain exactly in the same place. The same is true of The Modern Monthly which is presently changing a little away from Cuba but is still closer to guerrilla warfare. In any case, all 3 magazines are not the New Left, but the old, old one, playing with sides. Even Prof. Genovese is independent only in very specific areas, and not in others. Aptheker is the worst of all of them, it is true, having written a 600 page "proving" (sic!) the Hungarian Revolution to have been "fascist", but there are no basic differences between Science & Society editors and Sweezy of Modern Monthly, etc. etc. And none have any relationship with the American proletariat; we are the only ones who have not moved away from proletariat just because the youth is at the moment next to the Negro as anti-war and revolutionary; labor will get there yet.

I am looking forward to getting Karel Kosik's work you promised to send.

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Dec.17,1966

Dear S. ...

By now you have received the Dec. issue of N&L, and I am anxiously awaiting your comments on both Tsushima's and my articles on state-capitalism. As you could easily see from my essay, I disagree with Com. Tsushima who lives in old economic categories. Also, as I stressed there, by constantly talking about philosophy vs. economics, I do not mean to say there are no economic problems. Quite the contrary. The very appeal to you to do a chapter on the economic state of the world--the relationship of underdeveloped to developed economies, and the state of poverty within the affluent countries--shows that I wish seriously to show the need for philosophy within materialistic framework. What I do mean by calling his work "economist" is that he wishes problems dealt with as if economic crises are no longer a factor for revolution because the form of appearance is so different that we're not being confronted with an unemployed army of 20 million as we were during the Depression. Most important of all, the solution will not lie within the economic framework, but within the human dimension. I'm therefore also anxious to know not only your comments on the articles, but also whether your task has been in any way clarified for you. Do let me know.

O, yes, I should also call attention, (for the purposes of your work on the economics of Philosophy and Revolution) that the section in the A-A pamphlet which deals with the new departure in theory that Lenin projected at the 2nd CI Congress when he said the East could "skip" capitalism IF..... is much more applicable today than when he projected it.

Season's greetings,

May 11 | 1967

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