

April 18, 1984

Dear Friends:

Yesterday the REB heard the first rough draft of the Perspectives Thesis and discussed it at length. It has the following four parts: I. The World Outlaw, Ronald Reagan -- which revolves around the fact that the appearance of the Great Communicator manifests him as an international outlaw, not because of any departure from his capitalist nature, as the liberals would like us to believe, but because that capitalist-imperialist nature reveals the pull for world domination by a single country (Pax Americana). We must under no circumstances be under any illusion that the Congressional outrage at the mining of the Nicaraguan harbors is on any fundamental ground. Reagan's Nixon-like demand for "four more years" would open the way for not only packing the Supreme Court that will last longer than only "four more years" but for bringing us closer to the actual holocaust with his fantastic "Star Wars". This is what must be stopped and for that we must turn to the masses at home.

II. The True Conditions of Labor, Black, Women and Youth, as they mount the Opposition to Reaganomics. The new in the deteriorating picture of the economy that Reagan has the gall to call a "great recovery" when there are 9 million unemployed, ever-worsening conditions for Black America, especially the youth, & the feminization of poverty -- is this: We are not only confronted with a permanent army of the unemployed, especially in the smokestack industries, but even profitable firms are demanding permanent pay-cuts. The labor bureaucrats have helped the capitalists by forcing more and more concessions from the workers, with the result that Reagan's strike-breaking of PATCO has become the rule throughout the land. This lowering of the whole standard of living for American labor goes on while billions are poured into more and more militarization, which by now has reached the fantastic projection of Star Wars.

III. Abroad at Home, at Home Abroad. Ronald Reagan is diverting attention from the crises here to the crises abroad, confident that he can blame his foreign policy disasters on the Democrats with an appeal to scoundrelly super-patriotism such as rallied to his lethal politics in the Grenada invasion. The many points of crisis, from Central America to the Middle East, from the Caribbean to Africa -- where the disasters resulting from such continuous drought and famine are described even in the bourgeois press as so horrifying that "even the vultures have fled." Where Reagan is making Central America the pivotal point, the more knowledgeable Kissinger, who is conservative enough to approve that focus, nevertheless continues to speak of the fact that you cannot write off Europe, at the same time subordinating it to Pax Americana, as he pushes to "reshape NATO".

IV. Where are the 1980s Going? The imperative need for a totally different direction in both uprooting capitalism and opposing the Left's Kowtowing to one or the other pole of world capital. We were all put to the test in the 1980s. When we contrast the objective situation over the last four years to what we have done in that same period, there is reason to conclude that, as numerically small as we are, we have been meeting the challenge philosophically and practically. Thus, in 1980, when the objective situation became

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so critical that a war with Iran was not excluded, we voted to expand News & Letters to a 12 pager in order to have both more voices from below and more theory in the paper. The slogan "The Year of the Book" (RLWLKM) was not for scholastic purposes but because we were working out as basis for all our activities the new moments Marx experienced in his last decade as a trail to the 1980s. 1981, under Reagan, was the year we came out with the 12 pager and, at the same time, our activities, especially around Women's Liberation, gained greatly from the fact that Marx's philosophy of "revolution in permanence" informed all three parts of the book and was projected as our ground for organization. 1982 -- when the objective situation became so ominous as Thatcher's imperial reach descended on the Falklands; Israel launched its genocidal blitzkrieg into Lebanon; and U.S. imperialism began toying with the possibility of a "prolonged" nuclear war -- was the year when we changed our slogan to "three books, not one" (M&F, P&R and RLWLKM). It was, again, not for scholastic purposes. On the contrary, it was a way to analyze the whole three decades since the new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory had challenged the movement from theory to reach philosophy, the philosophy of revolution in permanence as ground for organization itself. 1983, the Marx Centenary Year, opened many new doors for us through our projection of Marx's Marxism as a totality, in Black dimension, in WL, with the Youth. At the same time, however, the death of our editor increased the difficulties. As we said in the Convention Call, we did have the advantage of his participation in laying the ground for both our Constitutional Convention and our projected move to Chicago. The series of eight classes on our Body of Ideas gave us new self-development, while our extended outreach led to a new local in Salt Lake City as well as new members-at-large in Kentucky/Ohio and Washington D.C., and to new inroads into the Latino world as well as challenging both post-Marx Marxists and non-Marxist scholars. The move to Chicago is rich in both historic roots and todayness of all the fields we now concentrate in -- Black and proletarian, as well as intellectual and international dimensions and struggles. Chicago as the new Marxist-Humanist center and home of News & Letters will be especially fruitful in the present stage of politicalization as concretization both of philosophy and activities.

The most important Convention decision will, therefore, be the move to Chicago. With it, will be the activities that will flow from the three new publications we will have in hand by Convention time: 1) the Miners' General Strike of 1949-50; 2) the new edition of the Afro-Asian Revolutions; 3) the reprint from Praxis of "Marx's 'New Humanism' and Women's Liberation". Along with intensified activities in all fields, we are projecting a new type of class; instead of focusing on any of the books, we will concentrate on ten years of our Perspectives Theses as well as selected PPLs, to the end that we become proficient in being able to analyze current events as they happen from a Marxist-Humanist point of view.

The truly ominous year of 1984 will be the time for transforming the Orwellian year into its absolute opposite, the beginning of new revolutions on the unified field of theory and practice. This, then, is our theoretic preparation for actual revolutions.

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