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To Suzanne, Editor of WL Page in N&L, and Diane, Chairwoman of Detroit WL-N&LC (Copies to WL Committee)

Nov. 8, 1983

Dear Suzanne and Diane:

I understand that there will be a Detroit WL-N&L meeting this week regarding the WL page. It is hard when someone reacts to an immediate problem -- and I myself reacted that way to the current issue -- to remember that that single question is not what the Hegelian-Marxian conception of "concrete" is; Concrete is not the individual but the concrete total. Concrete is critique is not attack, is not against an individual, and requires digging into not only original source, but direction of the Subject's ~~next~~ activity.

Here is what I mean concretely: 1) The specific "Woman as Reason" column this issue made me see how love of revolution still persists in leaving out philosophy of revolution, though that is our absolutely original, distinctive, inseparable, 1980-ish, as well as elemental Marxist-Humanist contribution. I was going to conclude, in criticizing that column: It's good that Adrienne Rich is finally for revolution, but how in the heck can that be so uncritically stated as if all that is needed is to contrast being "for" the Nicaraguan revolution, without including philosophy of revolution, and forgetting all she has said on feminism of which we certainly have not been uncritical? Doesn't that practically present Adrienne Rich's tour of Nicaragua as if that were equivalent to our Marxist-Humanist conception? When you consider that ever since Cuba's revolution, called "focoism" and Debray's further including "Leader Maximus" as that new type of ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ what he called "revolution within revolution", it is necessary to be both more concrete and more comprehensive on what is, precisely, a social revolution. I thought the very title of the column "Woman as Reason" meant exactly that, i.e. that philosophy is decisive. And I was going to conclude with the fact that I suspect that radical feminism, in both Adrienne Rich, whom the column praised, and Anne Dworkin, whom the column rejected, have more in common with each other than either has with Marxist-Humanism.

(2) Instead of, as yet, writing a RV on this, I thought: Gee, that's fantastic, because the author of this column is the very one who wrote absolutely one of the best articles during pre-convention discussion, in which she so tightly connected labor and philosophy, all the way from 1950 to 1983, in all of my writings, that I took for granted it also meant philosophy and women's liberation. And here, we see that this relation of philosophy to labor was not extended to philosophy and women's liberation. How did that happen? Doesn't that affect everyone and not just the columnist? And, isn't it true that the age differential has counted, not historically between 19th and 20th centuries, but as if it were a question of individual?

Frankly, by the time I asked these questions, my answer to myself was not only that it is necessary to understand the difference between attack and critique, and not only is it not a question of an individual but the whole WL Committees, nor even a question of a single column or a single page but that I have seriously questioned the WL page ever since Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution was published and I expected a very different, a most fundamental, development of the page to result, but did not see it. So, if I may, I want to take up just the title, itself, of my book,

Rosa Luxemburg was certainly both individual and universal, truly of our age when it comes to no separation of individual and universal, from whom we still have lots to learn -- and yet, and yet, isn't it a fact that we also criticize her fundamentally because it was the 1/2 way dialectic, not the full dialectic, and not only on the National Question but also on the most fundamental "economic" question, the accumulation of Capital.

Women's Liberation, both the newness and the historic uniqueness, pp. 100-101, singles that out. And yet, isn't it a fact that in entitling one of the chapters "The Task That Remains to be Done", we focus ~~on~~ ^{on} philosophy ~~and~~ and their own origins, especially the fact that whether it is the 19th or 20th century, they have not fully comprehended the Black dimension as a Subject? ~~And~~ And they certainly fail to understand what is history -- the historic difference between the 19th and 20th centuries, which should mean in their case, not trying to view a Rosa Luxemburg as if she is a 20th century "personality" as an individual even though she certainly lived her life as both individual and universal in a very futuristic form. If ever I meet a Women's Liberationist who really has dug into the depth and ramifications, at one and the same time, of understanding both the 1905 Revolution and the 1907 break with Jogiches, singling out the moment ~~when she said~~ she said "I am only I, once more, since I have become free of ~~the~~ Leo", as well as why, in the midst of World War I she called upon Penthesilea, I would be most pleasantly surprised.

Marx's Philosophy of Revolution, THE true, original -- historic-philosophic-still-to-be-worked-out-newness -- humanism of Marxism, which extended to ~~the~~ ^{the} first now live in, has not even been touched by many of us. It seems to me that we have hardly got beyond how much more freedom the Iroquois women have as against capitalistic type of patriarchy. If ever there was a time when concretization is an absolute imperative, and a challenge to all original thinking, (it certainly is a fact that EN is "only" notes that cry for a 1980s interpretation comprehensively), this is that time. But it cannot ever be reached if we keep WL in a separate compartment from philosophy of revolution.

Now what has all this to do with your next meeting? Perhaps only a warning not to think that taking up the WL page by itself and for itself when even your national conference had not been followed through as a new point of departure, though Diane certainly raised the question. In a word, just make sure that what you

discuss is considered no more than something for the immediate in the sense of the November issue and the December, which is the last one for 1983, leaving a really serious discussion for after the January 1 Expanded REB. There will, after all, be so many new points of departure for the organization in this expanded REB that even though, (as I see it now) it will have to be mainly organizational, when is organization for Marxist-Humanists separated from "revolution in permanence"?

May I also take advantage of this letter to say that the classes that will be held next year will also have to be first worked out after that January 1 meeting? What I mean is, whether the classes are on RLWLM or on M&F or whatever, the point is that from now on, we have to discuss everything as integral to what we consider a trilogy of revolution, that is to say, we will include some part of each of the books -- and ACOT I consider part of each -- in what will be the central one of the classes. For example, what I discussed with some on M&F was exactly at which point such and such a chapter from PAR and RLWLM should be included; and I even discussed the question that I would have wanted Chapter 5 ("Lenin's References to Dialectics, 1914-1923") of Kevin's thesis on the "Dialectical Sociology of Social Change: a Study of Lenin and Hegel" included in the classes.

Yours,

Raya

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