

ME: MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 30, 1985

Agenda: I. Trips -- Past and Future; II. November N&L and two pamphlets in January; III. Ongoing Communications; IV. G&W

II. Next Issue of N&L

1. The 1970s and 80s retrospective and the new pamphlet: Raya said that the 30 Year Retrospective, the second part of which will appear in the November issue of N&L, will end as we reach the 1980s but not include those years; the readers will be told that the 1980s will be included along with these two parts in a new pamphlet in January. The reason that I am going to deal only with the 1970s has nothing to do with how long it is, but deals with three points. That reason is directly related to the fact that this year all revolves around the perspective of a bi-weekly next year. The road to a bi-weekly must not remain a slogan. It is of the essence of the philosophy, for journalism, and for projection of the whole of Marxist-Humanism. Take the first point of the three I referred to; it requires making a category of the fact that became so crucial in the 1970s -- that the readers of News & Letters did not really know the whole of Marxist-Humanism. It is true that we have tried to practice our principle of no difference between inside and outside. It is true that we have no internal bulletins, that is to say, anyone can buy any bulletin, all of which are openly advertised in N&L. It is not true that the readership -- as against the number of N&Ls printed and distributed free -- of our bulletins is considerably smaller than the readership of our paper. It was expressed by us whenever the objective situation demanded it when we began publishing, in addition to the monthly paper; a) WPLs and PPLs; b) Perspectives; c) Discussion Bulletins. But it was 1975 before we published the Draft Perspectives, in full, in N&L itself.

The second point is that not only did our PPLs not get the same readership, but the whole question of the process of working on a book, long before it is ever published, was not reflected in the paper. Indeed, I first found that I had left out from the 1960s retrospective what I found in the Archives -- the letters from 1967, long before the Black/Red Conference, which show the process of working on P&R. Indeed, to make the point stronger, the truth is that way back in 1960 in my letter to Marcuse, I had broached the whole question of Absolute Idea and its relationship to the colonial revolutions that were sweeping the Third World.

The third point is the Archives themselves that likewise have to become part of the retrospective, other than just mentioning them. For example, as everyone knows, the March 21 lecture in Detroit at WSU resulted in my telling stories

16665

under what I would call "duress" -- i.e. Dr. Mason's insistence that I had to include some personal events -- but which actually brought to light, in retrospect, how alive and relevant was 1917. It was the Russian Revolution that had its Humanist influence on me as I instinctively without knowing such a category was always searching for new forces of revolution, on labor, on Black dimension, on Youth, and how to fight under the whip of counter-revolution, which then was in the form of the Palmer Raids.

It is all of this that made it imperative for me to separate the 1970s from the 1980s, to leave the 1980s for the pamphlet itself, because -- and I stress that word, because -- it actually so unites philosophy and journalism and the need therefore for the minimum of a bi-weekly that, unless this infuses all of us, in growth of membership, in making this year what will prove the need for the bi-weekly, we will not succeed in realizing it next year.

Finally, Raya reported two meetings she had had with Lou on the new Introduction to the Frantz Fanon pamphlet. Lou felt that the Appendix should not be left only to the African and Caribbean writers on Negritude, but that we should reproduce the PPL on Grenada. Raya reported also a letter from Michelle describing a meeting Michelle had attended where Robt. Hill had made a presentation on reggae music, as if that were the Black dimension. Raya felt it gave us a chance to have a footnote on CLRJ, if we included the Grenada PPL. RD and Lou will meet to work out the actual draft of the Introduction, to be sent to John Alan, on Oct. 9, 10, and 11.