

PD
September 24, 1985

Dear Allen:

Naturally, I was glad to get your letter of Sept. 19, which spoke of your approval of the ideas for a new Introduction and Appendix for the Frantz Fanon pamphlet. How could you possibly think that you would need a "but" on the question of that new Introduction including South Africa? How could it possibly be otherwise, after what I did on it at the Plenum and The "and" with which I finished that sentence is due to the fact that I want you to see what it is that I am doing to make that Perspectives into the Lead for this issue of N&L. I think that is what I'm always surprised at -- that you know so much and yet, unless I ask a direct question, I do not get the information which you should regularly send the Center. For example, it is certainly most important to learn about the latest developments at Berkeley, concerning the ANC, PAC and BCM becoming "one". We must not be a naive as we were when the Biko development or lack of it occurred in Berkeley. They would become our enemies when they suddenly decided to unite and use, once again, "unity" as the excuse not to enter the battle of ideas and the needed attacks on State-Capitalism I want to make. Could you write your next column about these developments, and contrast that to our preparation for a new edition of the FF pamphlet, in which you could quote from the present Lead and develop some of your ideas that we might perhaps include in our new Introduction?

Oh yes, please do send us the photo of Depestre and others you think we might be able to use.

What is new in the Bay Area? I don't remember whether I sent you a copy of the letter I sent Ron on his essay article on Sartre/. I don't know how he reacts to copies being sent around to others, so keep this for your information only.

As for the "realistic photo of John Alan", do please ask Lillian to send that to us, and give us her our best.

Yours,
Ray

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Berkeley, Ca
September 19, 1985

Dear Raya:

I think that it is a great idea to have the "voices" of the Caribbean and Africa in the appendix of the new edition of FFSABT. René Depestre's article is an excellent choice; he has managed to bring out concretely the dualism that has always existed in the negritude movement as in the example of "Papa Doc". From almost the beginning, we have had the radical negritude of Aimé Césaire, Léon Damas, et al and the conservative negritude of a Léopold Sédar Senghor who saw negritude as an intellectual, culture expression that could find an affinity with French culture. It was this that turned the young Fanon away from Senghor.

Critics consider René Depestre to be an expression of the younger generation of negritude poets that came to maturity in the middle 1940's at the time of the war. Depestre is now in Cuba. He has lived in exile from Haiti since 1950; and as you may know, he has had a long association with European communism.

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's essay on THE LANGUAGE OF AFRICAN LITERATURE takes off from where Fanon stopped in BLACK SKIN WHITE MASK. Fanon showed that the French used their language as a weapon of domination. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o has shown that the language of the ex-colonial rulers still remains a potent weapon of class domination in the hands of African intellectual elite in the era of neo-colonialism. This essay is well written, but I fear that it is too long for the pamphlet. I am quite sure that we will have to excerpt it.

I know that we are going to take-up Grenada, this is of paramount importance, but I believe that we must also deal with the near revolution in South Africa. As the South African masses push the apartheid regime closer to the moment of revolution, all the elitist elements are rushing to assume leadership. Here in Berkeley there is a sudden cohesion of the ANC, PAC and the BCM people not just to rally a united opposition to apartheid, but to silence all discussion of the kind of society that the revolutionary masses in S.A. want. They hid their differences and reduce theoretical and philosophical issues to the simple issue that all that is needed is to KNOW THY ENEMY. There is a studied attempt to play down the decisive role that the masses are playing; they "honor" Biko and minimize the new high point of consciousness and activity that he represented. It has been us alone that has grasped that high point in the African Revolution, not the BCM who are at this moment-along with the rest-are presenting Biko simply as a martyr. The BCM people are now hostile to us. This may only be the local group, I don't know.

Further, I would like to suggest that the new edition include new photos, such as the anti-apartheid protest in the US and the on going revolt in S.A. There should be a picture of Maurice Bishop and probably Tutu. I have a small photo of René Depestre. I also think that there should be a more realistic photo of John Alan.

Yours

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