

October 31, 1984

Dear Friends:

I don't know whether you made a category of what I had hailed as Ron's important breakthrough on the relationship of Marx's Mathematical Notebooks to the question of high tech. If you will look at the "Dear Colleagues" letter I wrote on June 14, 1984, you will see why I was asking each one to study Ron's essay on "The Fetish of High Tech." It certainly opened up several unexpected avenues, including Malcolm's beautiful response which we received just before the Convention, on June 27. It was followed by Franklin's serious analysis, in his letter to Ron on August 27, an analysis which did not limit itself to the discussion of the relationship of Marx's Manuscripts to the high tech problem, but also made a brilliant critique of the Stalinist introductions to the published Manuscripts by Kol'man and Yanovskaya.

By then I became interested all over again in Bukharin's 1931 paper given at a London world "Science" conference, because I was absolutely positive that my original interest in that 1931 talk (which had continued through the 1940s when I worked out the analysis of the three Five Year Plans) stemmed from my opposition to the vulgar materialist conception -- with its administrative mentality which treats workers, in a typically capitalistic manner, as production robots. I felt it all flowed from Bukharin's non-dialectical, scholastic mind, meekly following Stalin's barbaric vision of "production for production's sake." In my letter to Franklin on Oct. 5, I raised a call for all to search for a book the Russians had issued in English in 1931 (and evidently reprinted in 1971) under the title: Science at the Crossroads: Papers Presented to the International Congress of the History of Science and Technology, held in London from June 29 to July 3, 1931, by the Delegation of the USSR.

Jane, who is a truly creative librarian, became the heroine of that week by actually discovering that 1931 book. It did, however, include only those papers presented by the Russians, revealing other Russian theoreticians, especially the mathematicians, who had just found Marx's Mathematical Manuscripts, but had not yet analyzed and perverted them as openly as Kol'man and Yanovskaya had done in the 1968-83 Introduction to the published Manuscripts Franklin critiqued very obviously emboldened by Stalin's 1943 violation of the dialectical structure of Marx's Capital.

While Science at the Crossroads does not include any of the views of the British scientists and technologists, I am pretty sure that more important for us than those views are the views of the economists who were not present at that conference, and who were creating a "revolution" of their own. I am referring to the Keynesians who were trying to deal with the crisis of the Depression in the West just as the Russians were dealing with their crisis in the East.

I don't know when I'll get back to viewing the Plans from yet one more view. At this moment, what I'm concerned with is that the views thus far expressed in these letters be issued in a bulletin-form, to include Ron's essay (in his revised form of August) and the letters mentioned above from me, Malcolm and Franklin. We are so overwhelmed at the Center that I am asking the Bay Area (where it all began) to take responsibility for producing such a bulletin by the end of the year. In fact, could we have it by December 15?

Yours, RAYA

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