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OUR ORGANIZATION
report of national chairman

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OUR ORGANIZATION -- Report of National Chairman,
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I.--What We Have Achieved and What We Lack

The two years since our last convention in July 1956 have been rich in the doings of the masses:

(1) The Hungarian Revolution sounded the tocsin for enslaved men to fight for their freedom if even the enemy be the mightiest totalitarian power on earth and they have only their bare hands. Thereby they rocked the whole world to its foundations with the challenge of Workers' Councils that did not divide worker and intellectual, adult and youth, women and even children, but unified the whole nation against the state.

(2) On the other hand, the Suez crisis, brought on by the "old" imperialists, even as the present Middle East battleground between the "new" contenders for world power--Russia and America--has brought us near the brink of World War III.

(3) At the same time, Montgomery, Alabama, and Little Rock, Arkansas revealed the high stage of self-activity of the Negro people for their full freedom in this country while wildcatting in coal, auto, steel, along with the new rank and file revolts within these unions, has disclosed a new stage of struggle against the labor bureaucracy here, accompanied with the mass exodus from the CPs in Western Europe.

Thus, on both sides of the Atlantic, mass struggle has been directed not only against capitalism, but also against their own established labor leadership.

(4) On the other hand, the rise of De Gaulle to power has shown that the fangs of state capitalism are not Russian or Communist only, but are present throughout the world--and especially in the very heart of West European culture, France, where, to be an "intellectual" does not invite the epithet "egghead", but the welcome of the authorities, the adulation as "leader."

The whip of the counter-revolution--emerging Fascism--has thus thrown out a challenge to the theoreticians--either join the state capitalists in making the gulf between leaders and masses unbridgeable so that the workers continue to toil while the leaders continue to lead them--into the abyss of barbarism.

Either that -- or

Assume responsibility of eliciting from workers the elements of the new society present but buried, concealed, tangled in with the old, in fear that the new may bring only new divisions and not a unifying principle that will abolish once and for all the gulf between mental and manual labor.

In these same two years our little group has:

- (1) published NEWS & LETTERS, the only paper that is edited by a production worker that had the force to give some powerful blows to the labor bureaucracy as well as reflect the positive in the Negro struggle;
- (2) produced the first Marxist work in America that uncovered both the American roots of Marxism and the world concepts in its original Humanist form--MARXISM AND FREEDOM;
- (3) broke into entirely new and broad fields and audiences--lecture platforms, radio, TV--that no group 20 times our size has been able to do hitherto;
- (4) kept the organization going despite some powerful blows from unemployment and a couple of inevitable defections;
- (5) can record the first live contacts with groups abroad that spells out our importance internationally, at the same time bringing new life and new lessons to us; and
- (6) our greatest achievement of all: constant, persistent, all-rounded proletarianization.

Not only is the workingclass stamp of the paper assured through having a worker as editor, through decentralized writing and the greater space assured articles by workers, in and out of, the organization through the very form of the paper. But we have revealed that our proletarianization is so organic--part of the very organism which goes to make up the heart, body and soul of our Committees--that, whenever we are in a crisis, we move, not toward the easiest and sometimes "most efficient" way out by going toward the so-called technical intelligentsia, but once again to the worker-members. Thus the managing editor now is also a worker and the same worker is financial secretary, which has certainly brought about a stringent accounting.

I know of no other organization, ever, anywhere, that has so consciously done in practice what it has preached in theory.

And yet my talk today is not on these achievements, but on our outstanding failure to grow as an organization, with its natural concomitant--lack of organizational consciousness. Whether you call this "cause" or "effect" does not matter. The point is we are still organizational innocents.

It is time we lost this--if even it invokes the "wrath of the gods" and our expulsion from "paradise". Paradise or otherwise, we cannot afford the luxury of organizational innocence.

We may be only two or three years old as an independent group. But we have accumulated 17 years of independent theoretical development. Some of us have had more than a quarter of a century experience in other organizations. Above all, 100 years and over of the dual traditions of Abolitionism and Marxism have put a responsibility upon us, a historic, an urgent responsibility, to break out of our isolation.

The way to do it is to gain that one new dimension: ORGANIZATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS, consciousness of our organization, what we have to contribute

which we are yet to know half as well as we do what we have to learn from others.

We have plenty to give: first, the unfurled banner of Marxist Humanism. Secondly, a workers' newspaper. Thirdly, the nucleus of an organization—a unique combination of worker and intellectual.

We need to set straight our perspectives for the next two years, but the greatest need of all is to spell out what we must do now.

II--Organizational Consciousness: Objectivity and Subjectivity

Two years ago when our Convention spelled out WHERE TO BEGIN-- publish a workers' paper and write a book on Marxism--we did much better than one year ago when the Plenum spelled out WHAT TO DO-- selling book as founders of a new Marxist Humanist movement.

Now that we must extend this "What To Do" by establishing a solid financial foundation for the continuation of NEWS & LETTERS, we cannot fail either as salesmen and/or as founders.

Let us consider the objective and subjective factors that militated against us:

First, there was the rottenness we inherited from Johnsonism, which held that it was not so much the organization that was the repository of workers' knowing, but the individual, J, who was the measure of all things. Some of this stuck as late as a few months back when finally Arthur dropped out, promising to tell us exactly what was wrong and how to right it in three, short, profound pages which we're still waiting breathlessly to hear.

You know that philosopher Hegel had a word for it. He said that when the subjective, instead of the objective, is made the point of departure, then: "In place of revolt appears arrogance."

Arthur wouldn't deserve this full minute of notice were it not that an element of him must still be in some--or we wouldn't have gotten proof of such fantastic lack of organizational sense on the part of those whom he went to see to try to break them away from the organization, that these friends didn't immediately call the organizer to inform him of the visit.

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There may be others who/it --perhaps to a milder degree, perhaps to the same degree. The point is: if you don't get rid of it--no matter how mild the degree it affects you is--you will never gain organizational consciousness, if even you number 25 years in the movement physically.

Secondly. There is the smallness of the organization to befuddle our sense of organization. The simple knowing of each one by name seems to work against gaining a sense of organization. What comes naturally to a mass organization--that it is the unifying principle of all who join--comes hard to a small group where the individual and the sum of individuals seem to be not so far apart. Yet it is in the totality and the variety that make up what (1) gives each what none have separately, and (2) enables us to reach for

new members in a way that they know that only together will we finally achieve what we are after.

This organizational quality has nothing whatever to do with smallness or largeness of an organization, as we should know well from our dual tradition of Abolitionism and Marxism which helped a mass of human beings become the architects of their own future because a few such persisted, for decades, not merely in swimming against the tide when that represented the unholy alliance of capitalist and landlord, political leaders and the educated, but in swimming with the tide when that represented the slave desiring freedom, the new, the Civil War.

The organizational method of not separating one's life from the ideas one lives by -- that one is in the organization "for keeps", and that it, and not one's own personality, is forever the point of departure. In the case of the Abolitionists that was our problem--the problem that remains a key question to this day--the Negro Question. Indeed, the spontaneous affinity of ideas with those of Marx during the civil war are more cogent today than ever, and explain why, organizationally, the Abolitionists anticipated Bolshevism some 70 years.

Our organizational quality emanates as much from an inter-communication between the ages as it does from the urgency of our times.

Unfortunately, capitalism has added its sorry stamp to some who are so weighted down with the preoccupation of money that they are willing to live on their laurels: "We have done our share." Even Hegel who himself capitulated to the Prussian state, could see the corruption of other philosophers of reconciliation, saying of the Enlightenment that it "translated the poetry of grief into the satisfaction of the finite world." As if the world would now stand still, no doubt bowing to them as they enter their comfortable front parlors and frustrated lives.

This attempt to prostitute the very reason for being of the organization in the eyes of the youth and the new members will get nowhere in the organization. I say youth not only because they are our most precious source for development. They are the ones where idealism in the finest sense of the word combines with opposition to the existing adult society in so unique a way that it literally clears them of their petty-bourgeois origins, bringing them alongside of the workers as builders of the new society

And it isn't only in Hungary that they did a fine construction job. They will outshine us all when it comes to remaking America out of the whole cloth, so to speak.

It is time therefore to say openly of the preoccupiers with the money question in L.A.--they are corrupting their youth, making it impossible for them to hold on to the ideas--when the people before them are so narrow-visioned. It isn't the NIOO to assure NEWS & LETTERS' existence that creates this myopia; it is surrounding capitalism. I trust the conviction will once and for all put an end to this type of dual life which is willing to let its soul for a mess of pottage.

(3) Finally, there was the simple fact that we began, not with theory, but with the result of theory -- the paper. It was absolutely essential to do so for it was much more important to begin to listen to workers instead of arguing with old radicals. Moreover, we really didn't know all that was new in our theory for we had some learning to do, learning from workers, their thoughts, their attitudes to Automation. It is no small thing that at least we knew where to look for the new.

But to begin with result does have one great disadvantage; you lose sight of the process which brought the result about -- and the process was some long, hard, patient labor lasting 12 years -- and in losing this consciousness we began mistaking the part for the whole.

The whole, you young members, I hope are studying in the other room to gain at least 2 truths: 1) the labor, patience and more labor and more patience and then painstaking labor that goes into theory, and 2) that the proletariat remains its only source; no matter what painstaking struggle with ideas, there can be no forward movement without a return to the proletarian source.

The whole, you worker members, young or old, will see is not only theory but 17 years of the class struggle captured as the continuous movement for freedom on the part of humanity.

The whole, finally, is needed to see the critical points of transition--in this case 1950. Let me read you just one paragraph, from a discussion the book held with a worker present for the first time:

"Mistake, then, that Marx/in first ^{made} structure of Capital, in contrasting essence to form. is what has been repeated by subsequent revolutionists. When you don't have notion of future, you just counter-
pose essence to form; is that what this means?
I said Yes, the Paris Commune form illuminated that.

"At last we are on the track of something."
(Incidentally, Johnson in that one sensed all the new by saying "Take Rae 's letter (1/24/50) where she speaks of Marx's shifting from history of theory to history of production relations. A whole essay could be written.)
That this part--the paper--was not the whole was seen in the very fact that Correspondence could split into two when the war question arose.

On the other hand, that this part was the nub of the whole was seen both by the very fact that Correspondence soon departed from its very reason for being--editing by a worker--and the fact that News & Letters did show that it could catch a present

moment--Automation--and make it historic--both in fact and in the new departure for a Marxist Humanist theory for our day.

III--What is to be

We must first be clear on what is to be before we can know what is to be done. Because what is to be--a vanguard party--was transformed into a fetish, the golden calf that everybody worshipped--what is to be done lost its proletarian direction. It was as if everyone had put blinders on in order to make sure to miss the road.

Let's stop here a moment and consider the facts:

The fact that the first workers state was transformed into its opposite--the first state capitalist society--did not stop every Marxist, including those who saw the total transformation, from going about worrying about "The Party," "The Vanguard." No one--not even those who looked for "new forms" of proletarian revolt--looked seriously at the content, the source, the only source that could give ACTION ITS DIRECTION--the proletariat itself, the proletariat as it thought, whether it was at the moment in open revolt or not.

It must be emphasized over and over again that even we--I'm referring to the state capitalist theoretical grouping--did not question "The Party"--unless shuttling back and forth between parties can pass for a challenge. And when we left the old radical parties altogether, each one pulled in a different direction, without anyone saying where they were headed for. The result has been the corker the Johnsonites have come up with--"to record the socialist society which already exists."

This is the first time anywhere that contemplating one's own navel has been that highly gilded!

On the other hand, it is clear that we reject "the party to lead" not in order to transform the Marxist grouping into a recording machine, but because it is clear that Marxist thought was numbed after Lenin's death while workers' actions on their own accomplished wonders whether your point of departure is the CIO or the Spanish Revolution; the Negro demonstrations or the Italian partisans; the colonial revolts or the Hungarian Revolution.

THESE ARE NO MEAN ACHIEVEMENTS. But they passed over the "vanguardists" who could not see that in this movement from practice to a new society A NEW THEORY WAS LIKEWISE BORN.

Watch the process if even you can not hold back from saying: if what is to be is a Marxist Humanist movement, if we saw it first, if we thereby knew what to put in the place of "the vanguard party to lead," and if finally we did all the things we did indeed do these past 3 years, why do we still lack ORGANIZATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS?

That is a good question, though a bit long-winded. It is a good question because it leads us, not to finding small fault with individuals, but finding root causes. We must return once again to the objective movement -- 1950-53 -- which created the ground upon which we stand:

- (1) The 1950 miners' strike forced upon us the recognition that any work on Marxism must have two new vantage points: a) America, b) philosophy, not as a private matter as I's Notebooks, but public, in the everyday life of the workers.

However, we were in another party and even attempted to write the book to pass their "censorship" by stopping with Lenin's death and not going on to the problems of our own age. No wonder the book was never written!

On the other hand, just as the Absolute Idea we discovered in Hegel was actually the strivings on the part of the masses for a new unity of Life and Thought, so the actual strivings of the workers was tied up in knots because they live where all of us live -- in bourgeois society. It takes its toll!

It would be wrong, for example, to think that because the movement from practice, and specifically so the miners' strike of 1950, produced, so to speak, M & F, that thereby the miners know all that they inspired -- any more than I knew all that I unlocked by "discovering" the Absolute Idea.

You know, some hard-bitten type of Marxists thought that it proved the "idealism" of the young Marx rather than the truth of the relation of objective and subjective development, when he said:

"It is not enough that thought tends towards reality, the reality itself must move in the direction of thought... The world has had for a long time the dream of a thing which it has failed to possess in reality solely because it lacked the consciousness."

There is a movement from practice to theory -- but there is a movement also from theory. We come in from both ends.

Many, many forces will coalesce when these two together merge to become the new Marxist Humanist movement.

We are one of these forces, and while others, greater than we, will come later -- and we are preparing for them by rooting out from ourselves any vestige of the theory of the "elite" -- the point is that we cannot either (1) bury our heads in the sands of time, or (2) fail to recognize that it is not by accident that we are there first.

For example: The Absolute Idea was an unconscious discovery -- until NEWS & LETTERS said: "Prove it by me. Prove it by the fact that I have made something historic out of the present stage of Automation.

You say: a new epoch has opened up throughout the world. This is true, but it is not the whole truth, for the new epoch arose, not with the reach for outer space, nor by being grounded with automation, but purely and simply by the workers' attitudes towards both. These attitudes to the objective world spell out a new stage of cognition. Now, if you'll catch this, just this stage of cognition, with the precision with which I'll record what workers say, we're in business and philosophy will no longer be the preoccupation of the intellectual, but the everyday concern of the worker."

This is no small achievement, combining theory and practice in this unique way.

It doesn't matter if all these statements were figurative or actual. What does matter is the time to concretize this truth is NOW. The instrumentality through which to do this is OUR ORGANIZATION. The people to do it are ourselves.

IT IS TIME WE KNEW WHAT, OBJECTIVELY AND SUBJECTIVELY, WE DID REPRESENT.

Let us return to the chronological listing of the process of development, and get yet another look at the dialectical relationship of objective and subjective:

(2) The second big development was the May 1953 breakthrough of the "sound barrier" of Hegel's Absolute Idea which was only semi-conscious because it had no ORGANIZATIONAL CONSEQUENCES.

Correspondence proceeded with its own convention as the ABSOLUTE IDEA was a matter for J to decide (after he had beaten down the philosopher, Grace, who had dared to be moved by the discovery although the discoverer was not J).

While the East German revolt that soon followed did give birth to a lot of hot air -- neither event, in Life or in Thought -- was allowed to disturb J's preoccupation with his own departure from this country. The plans for the paper he chose to leave with us were certainly vague and confusing enough so that we would be compelled to turn to him. This American movement was never to get its wings till it broke with him.

(3) In 1955, we finally did spell out this breakthrough in thought in ORGANIZATIONAL TERMS.

The paper edited by a worker and put out in a decentralized manner was concrete enough. But the theory became the assignment of "one."

(4) THE CONCLUSION FOR 1958 IS SELF-EVIDENT:
WHAT WAS THE TASK OF ONE MUST BECOME THE LIFE OF ALL.

(Let me say, in passing, that there are also the really innocent, the new who don't know how to be ingenious in the inner help they give the organization -- to be in the office whether asked or not; to learn to regard the person in office as the center, whether "big shot" or otherwise; to recognize that the European trip, though floated through personal sacrifice, was not a personal tour, and invent extra ways in which to help; to know that if one give only 25¢ a week and is in good standing -- as the unemployed certainly are -- but another gives \$15 a week, that some deeper digging into one's own pockets -- and those of their friends! -- would be great, even if not "required."

All these, however, are little things that one learns almost as a matter of routine -- PROVIDED that the tone and temper of the leadership is set. But that is another matter that will have to be dealt with when I deal with relationships of leaders and ranks at the executive session. Presently I wish merely to reiterate that the lack of organizational consciousness is not limited to ranks only, but includes the leaders, NEB and REB.)

Now then, to grasp OBJECTIVITY of the groundswell for a New Humanism, you cannot be all tied up inside of you with preoccupations of your own personality.

You must give ear to the urgency of the objective movement.

You must be turned completely outwards and be so open inwards as to receive impulses and, as Lenin somewhere put it "shell it out" GRASP, figuratively and literally, the new society struggling to be born.

ONLY THEN do you know it lives in all of us, worker and intellectual alike, and you have your task cut out for you: GIVE IT REALITY.

It is the only way to gain that new dimension, ORGANIZATION CONSCIOUSNESS, for only then do you have need of an organization.

When the task of one becomes the life of all, it will not be an easy life, but it will be a very exciting one, full of discoveries and organizational growth.

H & F, for example, has made 1950 come alive not only in the history of actions, but in that of ideas. Some of you don't know yet all the factors that went in to catch the attitude of the miners to Automation, in that 1949-50 strike, as the very bones and sinews of the Absolute Idea, that striving for the unity of theory and practice that would reconstruct the wholeness of man.

The REB Resolution has pointed out that it is only where the seemingly simple conclusion -- to publish a workers' newspaper -- came from a profound theory held by dedicated people, that there was born the energy, the moneys, the sacrifice, the organization to put the idea into effect. In a word, activity is the movement which translates idea into fact -- the idea of a workers' paper into the existence of NEWS & LETTERS.

What the RES Resolution took for granted, and what should not be taken for granted, is this: when your theory points to admissibility by a worker, a worker doesn't rise up and shout, "That's me."

Quite the contrary. Capitalism has given him so many views that even when he has the confidence that he can do many things that have been the prerogative of intellectuals, he is quite shy about saying it.

He knows he can run production without management and the labor bureaucracy because he does it -- and he knows that the others are only there to discipline him, not to produce. This is what is meant by being organized, united by the very mechanism of production.

But there is no such mechanism to give him the experience in doing things that have been "reserved for theoreticians only." In that case, though his instinct and talent is far superior to the mere experience and grammar of the intellectual, shyness plus -- by no means ever to be forgotten by the intellectual -- his disbelief in anything you tell him -- these take over and he says, even to his accepted Marxist leader, "Not me. Let the intellectual do it; he knows how."

It took, for example, years of kinship on political questions, months of dictating his own life story and seeing himself as author, another year as columnist plus much "labor, patience, and suffering of the negative" on the part of the intellectuals as well as the worker before CD said, "Yes, I'll edit, or rather at first, co-edit the paper." Can he now do the same for others -- and not only CD, but every one in the organization for those talents outside that have not and cannot, under capitalism, find themselves.

In a word, the discovery to be made your own is: TO TRANSMIT TO OTHERS WHAT WE HAVE, TO GIVE AND THEY TO CONTRIBUTE SO THAT TOGETHER WE FOUND THE NEW HUMANIST MOVEMENT.

IV -- To Transmit To Others What We Have To Give And They To Contribute

"Workmen of the world, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains. You have a world to gain."

To say that, over 100 years ago, cleared a NEW ROAD. It was said by an intellectual, named Karl Marx, when he met up with and joined a group of workers who searched for a way out of "the injustice" of exploitation. They were called the League of the Just, but now renamed themselves the Communist League. As their Manifesto, with its challenge, came off the press, revolutions broke out throughout the length and breadth of Europe.

What will clear a new road now -- release the creative energies of the great masses? That is the question that faces the organization which has penned M & F, and for that reason every single member must feel himself the author and grapple with that problem.

What this means, first of all, is not so much to know theory -- although that most certainly helps and we are not going to leave theory to the theoreticians -- It means, first of all, to know what is our most precious commodity.

It is not subs and expansion of NEWS & LETTERS, although that is the heart of it -- and plenty of leg work.

It is not the sales and spreading of M & F, although that is the soul of it -- plus more leg work.

It is, in fact, not for sale. IT IS A GIVEAWAY -- a giveaway that requires even more leg work.

But to be able to give it away, whether you do it by going out or staying in the office, you must first of all possess it as a dimension of yourself. Everyone has it -- much, much more than he or she is aware of. It is, after all is said and done, the creative overflow of each of us here.

IT IS SELF-DEVELOPMENT.

This self-development must now be transmitted to others -- to make them realize that they have something to contribute.

The true mark of leadership -- I don't mean under capitalism which is merely a way of saying to order workers about -- nor do I mean it only as leader vs. ranks, although many a leader would do well to acquire that trait; I mean the relationship of members in a Marxist organization to the great outside that has not experienced the liberating effect of Marxist theory. The mark of true leadership is the ability to discover talent -- the organizing talent in millions of workers, and the latent talent in the single person who "drops in" to an editing session.

The millions discover it by themselves in the spontaneity of their action that changes the course of history.

The single individual in the quiet of an evening has no such knowledge of his own abilities. You're not going to find it easy to reveal it to him, even after you discover it.

Hegel once said that the whole job of philosophy could be summed up in the single sentence: "TO ELICIT NECESSITY CONCEALED UNDER SEMBLANCE OF CONTINGENCY."

In simple language it means: to be able to reveal that this or that event is no accident; but the true, the necessary course of history which makes possible the leap into a new stage of freedom for humanity.

Now that is the job of a Marxist grouping such as ours. As the REB Resolution puts it: "There are no ideas 'as such.' There are only: -- people who have such ideas."

Let me put it this way. While our activity is not the activity of the great masses that can reconstruct society on new foundations, it is the activity which translates idea into fact where that is reachable, as N&L was reachable.

The first stage toward it is organizational growth and development of organizational consciousness. It is within reach of all-- every single one of us; leader, rank; intellectual, worker; adult, youth; new member or old--ALL, provided we shed our organizational innocence and begin with what the founders of this movement began with: SELF*DEVELOPMENT OF OTHERS.

To be able to do that one must stop living two lives. I don't mean being in the movement on Sundays only and looking for a career the other days. If there is anything we are not guilty of in this organization, it is the sickness of careerism.

Nor do I mean that only intellectuals live two lives-- and workers are free from it. Not at all. Our workers too have yet to learn to live 24 hours of every day as organization people, although they have no desire to go to any other place.

But so much is asked of them and such different things-- for they surely cannot leave theory to the theoreticians unless they wish once again to give birth to an intellectual elite--that they do hold back, just a little.

GD caught the spirit of what I meant at once when I first made my report to the REB and he said: "Organizational growth and consciousness must be in every single person to the point where it penetrates every one we meet...Organizational consciousness, then, is to be viewed from the totality within each. Some leaders are not only not out to lead the proletariat--they are evading leadership responsibility in failing to build the organization."

Inez too was very clear on the point of what was new in this transition point we have reached. She said: "I always thought of myself as thinking of the organization 24 hours a day. But it has boiled down only to being ready to do whatever the organization asked. But as for penetrating all people we meet--that is much harder and I have not yet got it." I'm sure I need not tell the organization that no one--absolutely no one--does more for the organization than does Inez. Her job as managing and associate editor is magnificent; her proletarian scrupulousness with finances has stretched the dollar so we could come out. We could not have continued at all when we had to give up a paid functionary if it had not been for her. Nor do I know what we will do now that her unemployment insurance has run out. The fact, however, that she has gone on working every day, although the REB asked for only 2-3 days, and is helped by others only when directly asked, is itself proof of lack of organizational consciousness, failure to be governed by organizational consciousness in the ranks and in the leadership.

She has no sin of innocence to shed. Yet she feels strongly the something new in the oft-repeated 24-hours a day organizational consciousness to others--for therein is the key to breaking out of our isolation.

When you bring in other talents and show them the way to self-development, you assure expansion of N&L as well as sales of N&L as founders.

This all-pervasive spirit must be so deeply organic as to be articulated in every word, no matter what the subject; to be present in every relationship, inside or out.

You must be conscious of what went into establishing N&L not merely in theory but in people. That is why I mentioned the question of the worker-editor. Can CD and Inez and Barbara and Morgan and Eugene as well as the theoreticians--for I am by no means excluding from this lack of organizational consciousness the leaders--transmit this feeling to others?

And there ARE others, right at hand too, inside and outside.

The two I have in mind are: 1) Shorty, that Southern white production worker who has already added so much to the paper. It is true he resists that without which he cannot know all his talents--Marxist theory. But he has much more in him than he has yet poured out--many more talents than he even dreams about--and they have not been elicited by worker or intellectual because we lack that organizational sense of objectivity which the founders of this movement had.

2) Walter, who, besides, has tremendous organizational experiences, and many more friends from ever deeper layers of the population, white and Negro, that could enrich, profoundly enrich this organization.

But to neither one, on the inside and out, have we given the feeling that we labored so hard to give CD--that he had something to contribute that NO ONE ELSE POSSIBLY COULD.

AND SO HAVE THEY

And there are many others. I have limited myself to two to point a direction of what must be done--and I'll let you find still others.

The point to transmit is the feeling that TOGETHER we WILL become part of the evolving Marxist Humanist movement.

Why else should they wish to join us if it is not together that we can achieve the new society?

I have this much more to add: What was sufficient when we had assigned a book to be written is insufficient when the book is written, and all must ^{be} author in order to be able to move to the next stage of organizational growth.

What was sufficient when the Committee cleared its head is insufficient when the Committee must also grow a body.

What was sufficient to create a nucleus, a working class nucleus, to put out a workers' paper, is insufficient if that paper is to grow and expand, be more comprehensive in the industries it covers and in the "reporters" who cover it. It must find new talents, WORKER AND INTELLECTUAL—and, believe me, we need badly some new intellectuals as well as workers—and new sources for finances to assure its continuance.

What was sufficient when we rejected the old "party to lead" concept, but had nothing to put in its place, is insufficient when we know what will take its place—and must put out shoulder to the wheel and feel it a privilege, not a burden.

What was sufficient when we searched for American roots only is insufficient when those American roots have sprouted world concepts—and the center of all Western civilization now considers MARXISM AND FREEDOM a focal point for international regroupment.

We must transform into reality that which moves in the deepest, least articulate layers of the population, that is struggling its way outward, and give alike ear to its urgency and that of W. E. and the colonial world, which knows there will be no new way of life until the division between mental and manual is abolished and the condition for the freedom of all is the freedom of each one.

Hegel saw it, saw that the self-development of humanity meant that the evolution of humanity to ever higher stages of freedom present themselves, as he put it rather idealistically, as "natural principles" and that the people who receive these "natural principles" are imbued with a mission to applying it."

Marx made this much clearer when he specified the people as the working class and answered the attacks on his alleged "glorification" of the workers, thus:

"When socialist writers attribute a world-historic role to the proletariat it is not because they consider the proletariat god-like. Far from it. Because the abstraction of humanity from itself is achieved in the fully-formed proletariat, because the paroxysms of the most inhuman of all conditions of life are subsumed in the life of the proletariat; because in this existence, man is not only lost, but THEORETICALLY CONSCIOUS OF THIS FACT and is impelled by the imperious, unavoidable and immediate misery—the practical expression of this necessity—to revolt against this inhumanity; because of this the proletariat can and must necessarily liberate itself. But it cannot liberate itself without suppressing its proper conditions of life. And it cannot end its proper conditions of life without ending all the inhuman conditions of the society around it."

This was no abdication on the part of Marx of the responsibility of the theoretician. Quite the contrary. Marx never separated the theoretical and the practical from each other. To him they were but two aspects of a single totality: the revolutionary process of society. WE ARE AS NATURAL AN OUTGROWTH AS THE CLASS STRUGGLE ITSELF.

Indeed, while the knowledge of reality which is at the center of dialectical method cannot be separated from the attitudes of the workers, there is a danger that a new division between knowing, which finds expression in a unique organizational form of workers and intellectuals--whether that be on the part of the vanguardists who think the proletariat cannot make the revolution without them, or on the part of the opponents who think such an organization has nothing to do but to record--the division between knowing, I repeat, which takes organizational form of workers and intellectuals, and activity in the class struggle which is of necessity only workers should SPIRIT AWAY THE TOTALITY WHICH GIVES ACTION ITS HISTORIC DIRECTION.

The REB Resolution spends a good deal of time on the Abolitionists for its priceless heritage of the totally new type of organization it bequeathed to us--a new type of organization where ideas determined one's way of life in and out of the movement, and a sense of organization which was indistinguishable from the goal of freedom all held together.

(Page 4, paragraph 3) "Having dedicated themselves to the cause of freedom, the relations within their own group--between black and white, men and women, men and men--were so totally new that no one could ever mistake an Abolitionist, whether he was a non-violent resister like Garrison, or John Brown attacking Harper's Ferry. The uncompromising attitude towards slavery, the unflinching behavior that could withstand any attack, the principled character of his behavior. Indeed, no one could distinguish an Abolitionist's private behavior from his public behavior. The firm convictions he held and was willing to die for determined all else." (Page 16) "Membership in an Abolitionist society was more than mere money. It was their way of life and their way of death."

One--Wendell Phillips--came over to the labor movement and declared that to be the "grandest and most comprehensive movement of the ages," even as he hailed the Paris Commune "as the vanguard of the masses of the world."

Because it cannot be reached at one leap the Resolution notes: (page 11)

"No one--not even the workers themselves who are the motive force of history--know the time, place or form of the spontaneously arising mass movement that changes the course of history. But, while history dictates to us, not we to it, Marxists are an outgrowth, both objective and subjective, of the movement of history ever since, on the eve of the 1848 revolutions, Marxist ideas shaped themselves into an organizational form. Since then "the party" as the knowing of the proletariat--its class and intellectual consciousness, the repository of its history and reflection of its aspirations--HAS COME TO STAY, whether the party is 2, 200, 2,000, or millions."

Not when you have the millions but when you have only the dozens is when it is necessary to stand up and be counted.

It is true finances have been taken out of the report and will not be dealt with till the conclusion of the convention. But when your perspectives are set and your head is clear it's time to prove Hegel right and show that "Easy contentment in receiving or stinginess in giving does not suit the character of philosophy."

It is not too early to decide for yourself the meaning of this to you and begin devising the many ways in which you will assure, that NO MATTER WHAT, M&F will continue—and not as once-in-a-moon-adventure, but regularly, month in and month out.

It is true that you will not take up concretely how the educationalists in your local will change until after the convention, but now is the time to reveal how you see using the book as a weapon of analysis both of events in general and the material for the paper in particular and thus prove one way that M&F is not ended just because it is between covers; that it is a live and constantly developing methodology which you intend to apply, grappling to make explicit what is only implicit in the book.

It is true that you have no one with whom "to fight" at this convention for your basic ideas of Marxism. But you can detail the plans of how you intend to open ever new channels—in the press, in other organizations, on radio, in homes, with friends and enemies alike—for the ideas of Marxist Humanism, whether it be through sales of books, or attendance of other organizations, or talking with your shopmates.

One proof of how M&F is doing it "by itself" is this letter I have just received from a Scottish worker:

"I am now re-reading Marxism and Freedom very carefully I may add that my burning enthusiasm for the book increases hour by hour. I am thinking of writing a fairly short autobiographical account of my life as a working class kid, worker and later student for you to read for 2 reasons: (1) Because I think that you see some similarities between attitudes of the Scottish workers I have known and those of Mathew Ward's work-mates. (2) Because I think that you will see how and why I had independently groped my way towards some of your one "theoretical discoveries" (or rather how you re-discovered Marxism) before I read Marxism and Freedom. (Perhaps I should say that I was just beginning to give up hope of discovering any co-thinkers when I found your book.)"

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In this same manner, it is here and now that you must work out ways to break out of our isolation, gain new friends and members -- never resting until you have finally learned to transmit to others what we have to give and they have to contribute so that they ask you to join.

Those others must include youth and intellectuals as well as workers.

No other group anywhere in the world opens up perspectives for all who aspire to a new way of life as we do. So what is keeping us from battling for their minds -- in other organizations, as well as shops, schools and on the street?

One final word on intellectuals -- although they are asked to, and must in fact, accept the proletariat as the motive force of history -- for that is the simple truth as well as a governing principle of a Marxist organization -- the role of the intellectuals -- in contrast to the one under capitalism of being "leaders" who order and push workers around, which has only ended in the disintegration not of the workers' personality, but that of the intellectuals (as the green couches bear witness) --

In contrast to that, I say, there is a way to be a whole man, and to be CREATIVE -- but for that they need to join a workers' organization -- so that there again the need is a two-way one: they need the organization to be whole men; we need their talents and number for this unique combination of worker and intellectual which directly under capitalism REVERS the breakdown between mental and manual work.

History, you see, is not just the past. It is a movement, a movement of the future which dictates to the present living architects of a new society their role.

This cannot be served to anyone on a silver platter with a return-back guarantee. This has to be earned, and again, not we, but history is the judge.

As I said earlier, "Our organizational quality emanates no little from a sort of INTER-COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE AGES." IF and WHEN our organization will have found its way to the mass movement, the objective flow of a NEW MARXIST HUMANISM, our communication to the future will be worth recording. Not before. Let us go on with the job of growing, so that "when" becomes NOW.

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