

PHILOSOPHY and REVOLUTION
OR
ORGANIZATION BUILDER

includes

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NEWS & LETTERS

1900 E. Jefferson Detroit, Mich. 48207

4982

To be read to all locals--

February 12, 1973

In Lieu of N.Y. NEB Minutes: Philosophy and Revolution as
Organization Builder

Dear Friends,

I should like to discuss with you the process of arriving at a new formulation on P&R as organization builder as well as the concept itself. Because the needed copy-editing sent me back to my library and Mary in Detroit, thus cutting me off from my N.Y. stay directly after presenting the first chapter of the book, I had thought that the return to N.Y. would be strictly organizational, strictly local, strictly, tangibly concrete. Indeed, I had not even invited Kevin to come up for the N.Y. NEB although the invitation to the Connecticut WL had been tendered. The truth (in the Hegelian sense of the logical, the dialectical conclusion) of the tangibly concrete turned out to be a concretization, not of the tangible, but of P&R itself as organization builder. Theretofore, whenever the usual question about the Party came up, our answer, and an impatient one at that, always was that's the biggest noose around the Movement's neck. And that was my first reaction when contacts once again posed that question. But second negativity on the very last day in N.Y. led to a new type of answer and became the pivot of the NY NEB meeting and is here presented for the organization as a whole.

The weighted question of organization to spontaneity, not to mention philosophy to revolution, has a history that goes back to that new continent of thought that Marx discovered. From the very start, when there was no such thing as a "proletarian party", Marx insisted that "the Party" must not turn its back on philosophy. Rather it must "realize it". Lassalle who was supposed to have been as "good" a Hegelian as Marx also from the start was bent on building a mass party whose job it was to send him (and other leaders) to Parliament and they, the intellectuals, would fight "for" the masses. Though Marxists were all supposed to be "for" Marx and opposed to Lassalle, the truth is that long before the Second International betrayed; long before, in fact, there was a Second International, everyone (and I mean every SINGLE one, including Lenin and Luxemburg) acted on the Lassallian organizational ground. Repeat that to yourself--"Lenin was a Lassallian"--and see how absolutely fantastic it sounds because, while it is true we have exposed that Lenin's concept of the "party to lead" was rooted in Kautsky's and the whole Second International's concept of vanguardism, we did not roll the film all the way backward to Lassalle. This was not only because, as against Kautsky, Lenin had the very great distinction of disciplining the intellectuals by the proletarian organization. It was also because

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it was necessary to stress that Marx had no theory of the party, and to prove it, we often repeated the fact that Marx, in the bitter 1850's, referred to "the party" when all he had in mind was himself and Engels. While all this is true, even as it is true that the 1860's generated the great, mass First International which Marx headed and which was certainly more rooted in spontaneity and a philosophy of liberation than ever was Lassalle's party, what is not true is that this didn't add up to a "theory" of the party. It is true that it was never worked out "as theory" by Marx, and things went wrong only after Marx's and Engel's deaths. Nevertheless, we will either begin here or we will have no solid new beginnings in organization as we have in philosophy.

Let me return to "shocker" that Lenin (and Luxemburg, despite all her talk of spontaneity) were Lassallians, i.e., made a separation between philosophy and organization, had a "secret" feeling that, whereas Marx was right theoretically on all questions in the dispute between himself and Lassalle and was the founder of all of us, Lassalle was really the only organizer and "therefore" the organization as mediator between the masses and the new society must be learned from Lassalle. (Just take a look at what remains the standard biography of Marx by Mehring, Luxemburg's theoretical colleague, or for that matter some of the articles by Lenin on Lassalle.)

Now then, although we're all versed enough in dialectics and pointing out that Lenin was ambivalent in philosophy, none has dared to say he's ambivalent also in organization. The very opposite is the case since it is all too clear that Lenin did have a theory of the party, did practice that type of organizational dialectics, and we, we alone, spent a very elaborate and original chapter (11) of Marxism and Freedom which traced through the fundamental changes in his "party to lead" concept from 1903 to 1923, indeed every time he met an actual revolution and enthusiastically admitted that these spontaneous revolutionaries were far in advance of the party. So why can both anarchists and social democrats, from opposite sides but towards the same conclusion, maintain that Lenin's State and Revolution (where he develops so beautifully the new concrete universal, "to a man",) was "mere propoganda"? We don't have to bow either to their slander or stupidity. But we do have to see that, just as time did not allow Lenin to work into "a finished form" his Philosophic Notebooks, so he did not draw to a fine point his many changes in the pamphlet by which all vanguardists swear, What Is To Be Done?, but allowed that to undergo numberless editions without ever introducing into it the changes he himself practiced 1903-1923. In any case--and that's no incidental matter--we cannot go limping on the question. We must work out all the implications of Philosophy and Revolution and indeed prepare ourselves in the few months before publication and practice it after publication, that F&R be the organization builder.

Because we as N&L Committee members not only know well but have always practiced committee building we take for granted that N&L is known by its readers as an "organization expression". Our life as Marxist Humanists is in it. And yet the truth is that not only haven't we made the point manifest but, as all our

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conventions and plenums show, none of us has been satisfied with our organization weakness. On the other hand, take the "new" organizational manifestation in Russia as a State-Capitalist Society, when we were in another party and so easily spoke of the Fourth International as "it". Now it wasn't only a matter of "diplomacy" for a minority, an organizational opposition, to state that though we disagree with you theoretically, we are one with you organizationally. No, the greater truth is we hadn't worked out any other form of organization; we hadn't, in 1946 much less in 1942, rejected in toto the concept of the "party to lead"; we were behaving as a "faction", as a tendency, because that's what we really believed; that is to say, we did feel that if the Fourth International would only have a correct position, give up its fantastic view of Russia as a worker's state, "though degenerate", we could indeed live with them. Even in 1950-51, when for the first time we did add a section on philosophy right within our political document (State Capitalism and World Revolution) and were on the threshold of totally breaking with Trotskyism organizationally as well, we still had not, in throwing out the concept of the "party to lead", created anything to take its place.

That is the whole point. We haven't ^{fully,} yet, not an alternative. We have created committees and for the first time --and it still remains the only one by any tendency or group-- made integral to our constitution that we stand for unity of theory and practice, concretizing that as N&L and M&F. This constitution remains our ground and foundation. We must now expand that by making it a totality so that P&R is its organizational and not only philosophical manifestation, even as P&R in turn must become the organization builder ONCE we its individual exponents, do it.

Where 1955 (the year of birth of N&L Committees and its constitution) became on the one hand, a concretization of the 1953 breakthrough on the Absolute Idea, and on the other hand, was the actual objective eve of the 1956 revolution in Hungary, 1973 must become both the pre and the post year of philosophic and organization breakthrough. All the more imperative does the new practice which will also be the philosophic challenge. With this in mind we therefore went through, in very concrete terms, what each person on the NY NEB would do in new activities on the Black front in Harlem, in new activities among the youth especially with the openings on the "amnesty" front (with whom I spent a couple of hours talking in their office, and Chris will write up the youth discussion on the paper and on the column), and the new N&L WL committee in Connecticut is planning to do both in issuing a shop paper and in developing Marxist Humanists in NY as well as Conn. (Anne took extensive notes of the Conn.-NY discussion on WL and will write it up for the organization.) At the same time every new contact we met we approached with this new attitude of P&R as organization builder.

Yours,

RAYA

PS: I just this minute received a special delivery from one of these youths who, in addition to sending in an RV, has volunteered to come down for ten days to help in the proof-reading of P&R and to bring with him the galley proofs when the publisher will have them ready. Hope there are as quick results in membership growth.

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REB MEETING -- February 19, 1973

Present: All

Agenda: I Report on N.Y.-NEB; II Paper; III Old and New Business; IV G&W

I The REB had all had a chance to read Raya's letter in lieu of NEB Minutes on Philosophy and Revolution as Organization Builder. Raya said that she wished, however, to develop two points more fully. One was our uniqueness in being the only ones since Marx to do what Marx did -- that is, ground the organization in a philosophic foundation, so that there could be no separation between the totality of philosophy and organization. The other was the need to confront the reality of Lassallean conceptions in Lenin.

Chapter 11 of Marxism and Freedom is not only the most comprehensive, but actually the only analysis of the changes in Lenin's organizational conceptions from 1903 to 1923 -- and of course it proves that Lenin's Lassallean organizational conceptions did not persist after his 1914 return to Hegel's revolutionary dialectic; much less after the Irish revolution which gave the whole National Question a much more dialectical role than it had ever had before, and of course after the actual revolution itself, at which point Lenin threatened to "go to the sailors". What made the shocker "Lenin was a Lassallean" necessary to confront was a two-fold objective demand.

First is the fact that when you trace the statement about bringing socialism to the workers from the outside (in What is to be Done?) only to Kautsky, you skip the fact that Lassalle was treated as practically a Marxist co-founder of the German Party, and therefore the Second International. None -- including Lenin and Luxemburg, who supposedly had opposite views on the question of spontaneity -- had ever taken issue with this, much less brought it out in the open and called it by its rightful name (the name that Marx used when he called Lassalle a "workers' dictator" and a "state socialist").

Second, and more relevant to our present situation, is the fact that we have been asked often: What are you putting in place of the "party to lead"? Is the committee structure the "whole" answer? And why did we stay so long in the Trotskyist party after we had already worked out the state-capitalist position and had begun to pose questions of philosophy? Above all, what does it pose for us organizationally, now that we have worked out a totality in Philosophy and Revolution? It was this point which was being asked of us, by new youth who were sympathetic to us but who failed to understand how we could possibly do without "organization", which made us stop just "disregarding" people who asked such questions, and exercise some "second negation" on the question. That is what brought about the NY NEB presentation.

Where we had Lenin's Philosophic Notebooks to prove his break with Materialism and Empirio-Criticism, we have nothing like that to prove that the changes made by Lenin on organizational questions ever became a totality for himself. He never wrote it out. In fact he was literally on his death bed before he put dialectics as part of his organization. It was in his Will that, for the first time, he said the the "greatest theoretician, Bukharin" didn't "understand the dialectic", and confronted philosophy as the indispensable foundation, not only for politics, but for organization. By then it was too late to work out the question or draw conclusions, other than those very contradictory ones he had in the Will. The truth is that we are starting something totally new in making philosophy integral to organization. This is what we -- and we alone -- will do with Philosophy and Revolution. It must be part of our Constitution; and above all we must begin acting on it, beginning right now, so that when the work is finally published, we will have the dialectically correct "formulation" on Philosophy and Revolution as Organization Builder.

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In the discussion, Mike began by saying that calling it a "shocker" to call Lenin a Lassallean was no overstatement: When I read your letter of Feb. 12, it was just that to me, a real shock. I kept repeating it, as you said we should, and the more I repeated it, the more I didn't like it. It is clearer to me tonight than it was when I read the letter, but it will still take a lot of chewing to digest it. The reason it bothers me is because it is so important to understand it in order to know what we have to do today. And the reason it is so hard to accept it, is because before I ever heard of NSL, I was sympathetic to the ideas you would call anarchist or libertarian socialist, not as organizations, but just through reading. It was NSL that finally convinced me that Lenin was not responsible for Stalin, as both the Stalinists and the Anarchists for very different reasons, try to claim. All the people who attacked Marxism and Freedom, attacked primarily the Lenin chapter -- for whatever reasons. It was no accident that this was called the most "controversial chapter". I think the reason that chapter was attacked was because people couldn't accept that there were two Lenins. And that is the historically most dramatic point to me; just imagine the tremendous difference that fact made to world history. So when you read "Lenin was a Lassallean" you have to stop and ask first, which Lenin? It doesn't mean that none of Lenin's philosophic conclusions, after the transformation that came in 1914, were concretized. We can see the concretizations in his new universal "to a man", in the trade union debates, etc. None of what Lenin was doing in practice after 1914 sound Lassallean. So what we have to grapple with is that despite what he did in practice, he never wrote it down. I think I also have a hard time putting Lenin and Luxemburg together; but sometimes it is necessary to see things that go against the grain, in order to grasp the point. I think the reason I am having to chew on this so hard is because I have always been so infuriated by the detractors of Lenin. It is a very important new idea that we have to be sure we do understand, if we are to grasp how very new P&R really is.

Andy: I have been reading a lot about and by Lenin in preparing for the presentation on the Lenin chapter for our class last night. And what impressed me when I was reading all this background was the continuous reference Lenin kept making to Hegel as if he were "the enemy" in his early works. I suppose it was part of the same battle that Hegel had "fought" against Hume, and that Marx later "fought" against Hegel -- that is, the battle between idealism and materialism, which Hegel and Marx both won by uniting them dialectically. The point I am trying to make is that all of Lenin's life up to 1914 was based on fighting all idealists. In fact, I was amazed at how vulgar Materialism and Empirio-Criticism actually was; it was horrible. I was shocked to realize how Lenin considered Hegel an actual enemy. But what I am wondering is whether Lenin might have been laughed out of the party if he had published his Notebooks. They were a guide to him -- but would the party have accepted them? I know Raya has mentioned that he seemed to deliberately work at one thing at a time, but I am wondering if perhaps he just didn't dare to publish his philosophic transformation because he didn't believe anybody was ready to accept what he had discovered. But these are all "if" things, that nobody can prove or disprove -- the important thing to us today is that he didn't publish his Notebooks, and he didn't write down why and how he came to the correct concrete conclusions he kept doing in practice. And that is why the heritage he left is ambivalent. That is not an "if". That is a fact. And that is what we have to grapple with. The organizational ambivalence is part of the philosophic ambivalence; it flows out of it, in fact.

Olga: I think the clarification about Lenin being "Lassallean" before 1914 was important, because it is most important that the organization not be confused about precisely what the "failure" and the "ambivalence" was. It is so important to grasp that Lenin not only broke with own past philosophically, but that was the whole basis for all the changes he

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made in practice during the actual revolution. Not only could he not have changed in practice without the philosophic foundation for it, but the things he did in practice, it seems to me, are all we have to prove that it was a true break philosophically. So what becomes important to understand is what difference did it make that he never wrote it down? And I think the importance is not only in the heritage he left for the future generations, but even for his own comrades, his own party. That is, he never revealed the process by which he was able to come to all those correct decisions in practice. And that meant that when he was no longer there, what was left was the dual heritage, and the consequent confusion. The reason I feel it is so important to understand all this is that we could all learn to say the right things, and get just the right phrase or sentence or paragraph to include in the Constitution -- but unless we can also put it into practice, and know this "process" we won't really have grasped this unity of philosophy and organization we keep saying is urgent for our age. I believe it is very significant that new people are coming to us on our total philosophy; take, for example, the welfare mothers who asked at the WL meeting if there wasn't an organization that also had men and took up other questions too. And above all, I feel what has to motivate us in making P&R an organization builder is the body of ideas that is personified in Raya Dunayevskaya, and which we have pinpointed as Marxist-Humanism.

Denby: I must confess that I was shocked to see Lenin called a Lassallean. I think what shocked me the most was that I have been connected with this organization for so long and yet never thought for one moment that there was this separation between philosophy and organization for Lenin. This doesn't mean that we shouldn't make this clear. The exact opposite is true. And it is important that we have this opportunity with Philosophy and Revolution to do it now. It will take a lot of thinking about. And there is nothing more important for us to think about than how we can make P&R the real organization builder we are talking about.

II Paper: Raya was assigned to write the Lead for the next issue, which will focus on the meeting of the Big Powers on the Vietnam settlement to take place the week of Feb. 26. The deadline for all copy will be March 15, and other assignments will be made later.

III Old and New Business: 1-Olga reported on Finances, which had been subject of a recent letter to the locals. The quarterly report will be prepared the first week of March, by which time we expect all pledges will be in, and we can see how we stand for the half-way point of the year. 2-Denby reported on the plans for the trip to Chicago, and said that his lecture was prepared and that he felt confident the audience would hear about Class and Race as part of the discussion of philosophy and revolution. Six others will go with Denby to participate in other panels and sell lit. 3- Correspondence was reported by Olga, and letters from Kevin and the Black prisoner were read and discussed; others were available for reading in full after the meeting.

IV G&W

Meeting convened 7:30; adjourned 9:45

4988

FROM HARRY, GLASGOW, SCOTLAND

Dear Raya,

Yesterday, I received the report of the good discussion on Lenin and State-Capitalism. It is a good thing that we see fallibility in the ablest of men. It is not easy for a person to dispense with all he once believed to be true. Having lived during the pre-first world war period I recall two things. First of all, there was the widespread belief that having disposed of Bernstein, the victory over opportunism and revisionism was complete. The other was the faith in world social democracy. Lenin supported the main trend.

Kautsky was seen as the saviour of Marxist truth. Lenin supported Kautsky on most issues. In What Is To Be Done? he went further than Kautsky.

Recently, I looked over Kautsky's book on the Erfurt Programme and Vanderveldt's Socialism Versus the State. Both of them mention State-Capitalism. They warn against it while marching in that direction. They would "transform" the State and declare that the alternative was State-Capitalism. The lessons of the Paris Commune were forgotten by the world-famed leaders.

There is always the danger that one will continue to regret the passing of a period when hopes were high because of the growing strength of the movement. The steady development prevented one from giving thought to dialectics. Socialism was certain. Lenin lived in this period. It took a world war before the worship of the Second International came to an end. It looked as if all hopes were blasted. Lenin took a firm stand but he must have felt greatly disappointed.

Lenin knew the lessons of the Paris Commune, but he was part of the social-democratic movement. Let me ask, Raya, did Lenin have hopes that the Russian Social-Democrats would one day be able to operate in the same way as in Western Europe? The Bolshevik electoral programme issued in 1911, I think, would seem to indicate that.

It is important to remember that no writer has ever castigated the Kautskys, the Vanderveldts, and the Macdonalds the way Lenin did when the war broke out. I think you are right when attaching great importance to the Testament. He made some of his best statements from N.E.P. until he died. I must draw to a close as I have a meeting to attend. I hope I have not been too trivial.

Very Best Wishes,
Harry

P.S. I think that the attitude of social democracy to dialectics deserves more attention.

March 4, 1973

* * * * *

FROM RAYA TO HARRY

Dear Harry,

You have no idea how very excited I was to get your letter regarding Lenin and the whole concept of philosophy and organization. N&L Committees are so young that questions relating to Lenin's time appear abstract; I dare say that for most, history began in the 1960's.

You really hit the nail on the head (though your modesty made you put

it in the form of a question) when you asked whether Lenin's perspective had been to copy the structure, not to mention the mass following, of German SD. That is it in a nutshell. Everyone, from the Polish exponent of spontaneity (RL) to Lenin's overly-centralized party, had a single model before them: Kautsky's party. This is why Rosa did not break with the party even though she had gotten Kautsky's opportunist number long before Lenin had thought about it. That is why Lenin, who hungered for just such a mass party, could not understand why Kautsky and Rosa and the revisionists all opposed him when the truth was that it was Tsarism that foisted upon them such extremely illegal work that there was no other way to function and remain alive than to carry out so tight a discipline. (For that matter, Rosa had to do the exact same thing in her little group but she didn't make a theory of it, whereas Lenin did.) On the other hand, he was the only one in the whole International who did have in his program from the very outset the question of worker's power, conquest of it, and the question that there could be no revolution unless there was a revolutionary theory. The "only" trouble there was ~~was that~~ that same appreciation of theory regarding revolution did not carry through to organization, and by the time in 1914 when he first grasped the universality of the dialectic, including the dialectic of organizational development, it was never spelled out. You may recall that the first day of the February Revolution, his telegram was still on the level of combining legal with illegal work. It was only on the second day when he cabled, "Never again within the Second International. Never again like the Social Democracy."

In a word, there was a 2½ year lapse between the fall of the Second, a 2½ year lapse during which he went to town beautifully on the National Question, on the imperialist war being transformed into a civil war, on fighting "imperialist economism" among his own Bolsheviks who went "ultra-left" in trying to throw out, or at least blame as fully, the proletariat as the betraying leadership, and went even as far as to say: nothing like 2½ (Zimmerwald or Kienthal) will do. And yet, and yet, that dialectic, when it comes to organization, had no ramifications. It began in April upon his return to Russia and meeting all the antagonisms from his Bolsheviks on the question of putting the struggle for state power on the agenda. And he raised the slogan of all power to the Soviets and the most famous and greatest of all statements was to threaten to resign from the leadership and "go to the sailors", but he didn't give up the party and was altogether too forgiving when they did put the question on the agenda. So over and over again we are back to the fact that only in his Will does he state that the biggest theoretician didn't understand the dialectic and that if the factional fights really represent class differences, then nothing he said could possibly stop the collapse of the first worker's state.

This dichotomy between philosophy and organization, this over-appreciation of Lassalle who had built the first working class mass organization, even if it was mostly for electorate purposes, has kept us in a vise from which we better free ourselves with extending Philosophy and Revolution to its becoming the organization builder. I do hope you will write more on your experiences in organizations and its gaping lack of philosophy.

March 9, 1973

Yours,
Raya

4990

FROM PAT, CONNECTICUT

Dear Olga,

Several thoughts have come to me in response to the current discussion concerning P&R and the future of N&L with P&R as our organizational as well as philosophic base. Being such a new member and not too familiar with N&L history may render some of my thoughts somewhat naive; however, I felt compelled to respond.

In my mind, P&R has a dual organizational purpose. One, stated in the NEB discussion letter from Raya, to build the organization. The second is obvious, although not explicitly stated-- its explicit statement is unnecessary. That is as the foundation for further self-development, or, in Raya's words, self-internalization of the dialectic and its implications for the integration of theory and practice, the constant ongoing process of individuals and masses toward freedom, the overthrow of capitalism and creation of a new human world of human relationships. All of this is the basis for the fact that P&R is the ground and force of our age. We, as Marxist-Humanists, not only were the only ones who could first recognize and write this, but we must also serve to initiate its challenge.

The challenge of P&R to ourselves as individuals, to N&L as an organization, and to the world cannot be separated. Thus recognizing the necessity for self-development and self-internalization, we turn to the method of the organization, its direction and growth. The theory of P&R as the philosophical basis for N&L cannot be separated from our organizational practice and furtherance.

Now comes the hard part. I can tell you that one of the things that initially attracted me to N&L was the structure itself and all that is inherent in it, especially its opposition to and contradiction of vanguardism. It is this very structure that allows for self-development and self-activity of individuals and within locals. It is always difficult (or seems to be difficult) to bring across one's philosophy, and effectively and positively influence people, without propagandizing. Propagandization inherently prevents self-development and self-activity (as evidenced by vanguardist groups - CP, YSA, NCLC). The question in my mind is how does N&L improve its effectiveness and grow, how do we prepare for P&R. Obviously we will not resort to vanguardist tactics; such practices directly contradict our philosophy.

I think it comes down to two things. First, how does our structure further self-development more effectively, and second, how does it influence and further P&R throughout the world. Or, to state it more explicitly, how do we as Marxist-Humanists and as an organization integrate theory and practice more effectively. This is first a challenge to us as individuals - to accept the serious task of integration and development.

The second aspect of the challenge of P&R to N&L as an organization is that of projecting our philosophy and its practice, to bring across to people - workers, women, Blacks, and other minorities - the necessity and worth of P&R, and our seriousness in practice as well as philosophy. The need for Philosophy and Revolution cannot be at all denied (obviously);

it is our task to initiate its theory and practice among the forces of liberation, the forces which create its very existence and make it unique and necessary for our age.

The precise hows - the method of accomplishing this task - are something to which I have no answers, except to refer to Hegel and his statement that we must go through "the labor, the patience, the suffering, the seriousness of the negative." I wish I had something more concrete to offer, but I don't. I'll keep thinking, and maybe I'll come up with something a little more helpful.

In Struggle,

February 18, 1973

Patricia

FROM KEVIN, CONNECTICUT

In Hegelian-Marxian philosophy, as in revolution, "there is no other way to reach the goal, except through the mean's", as Raya wrote in P&R. In working out for today and the future N&L Committees as organization, the question has arose, and not from members alone, what are we and what do we advocate besides the vanguard party to lead? We all advocate the self-organization of the proletariat, as in Hungary '56 or W.Va. '49, combined with the new passions and new forces of Black, Brown, and Red, WL, and youth. But what is to be our role as N&L in this?

Mass organization must be left to spontaneity and self-organization of oppressed people in constantly new forms, from the Commune of 1871 to the Comites d'action of 1968. We, as N&L, could no more make a mass organization than we could "make" a revolution. Look at the Bolsheviks in 1917. A mere 5,000 or so, yet by 1918 they were a mass Party which took a vanguard role in the Russian revolution, Civil War and first years of Soviet government. The Bolsheviks were a hybrid between the old type sect of Russian revolutionaries whether led by Lenin, Martov or whoever, and the new mass proletarian organizations of the Soviets. Did the Bolsheviks take over the Soviets, or did the revolutionary proletariat in the Soviets take over the Bolshevik party, transforming it into the driving force of the revolution, meanwhile seizing all the new ideas they could, from State and Revolution or wherever? The truth is dialectical.

The Bolshevik Party of 1917-1923 was something quite new because Lenin's philosophic breakthroughs coincided with the awakening of the masses. The new was not made explicit which is the task for our age. The new could only be created by the joining together of worker and intellectual, which is why we must continue our Committees, continue to work in and listen to every struggle for freedom from below and with an overall revolutionary dialectic as embodied for our time in Philosophy and Revolution. We must not hesitate for fear of "going over the heads" of the masses. Look at the tremendous results in LA last year in philosophy, WL, and proletarianization.

April 1, 1973

Kevin

4992

FROM RICHARD, CONNECTICUT

Dear Raya,

I was fascinated by the manner in which you presented the organization question in your letter of Feb. 12, especially as I had just been trying answer students' questions on Lassalle vs. Marx in my M&F class at the university and had come very close to that idea that Lenin was a "Lassallean."

Yet in the end I am "all at sea," so let me ask some dumb questions:

1. In your last N.Y. lecture when some YWL types tried to put you on the spot on the organizational question you replied that people should form their own committees in WL, shop, or whatever but also grapple with philosophy. You didn't mention our committees at all there. (You seem at times to "forget" our organization. Yet you very much want to build it.)
2. I have, like you, always been an organizational builder. My reason is simple: we need more people in N&S to pay for printing, keep the paper alive, distribute it, and to struggle, learn, and think along with us. But this is merely practical - not a concept I fear.
3. We have never answered the questions of why Lenin allowed "What is to be Done," "Empirio-Criticism", etc. to be reprinted and kept both his new idea of philosophy and organization personal if not private. Moreover, the 1921 ban on factions - if I understand it completely - seems incompatible with a freer and more spontaneous idea. (Lenin was more ambivalent than we have ever dared say.)
4. You have made it more than clear what a high stage you mean by "mediation." This, I gather, was everyone's conception of the party - even those who did not harbor "secret" elitist notions about a parliamentary faction or a one-party-state that would do it "for" the masses. Yet you never point to N&L as "mediation", and I think I can guess the reasons. (If not "mediation" then what?)
5. So what I am left with is what is our role? I can see this practically and it doesn't bother me much personally, yet I do think it bothers us as a group. We appear at once nearly desperate for new members yet sublimely "above" factional hustles since what we are/is a new philosophy. I think people are often confused about why they should join us and about what their role or function would be if they did. I see Peter and others running to the Labor Committee because it tells them they will be an elite, a vanguard and then orders them to perform various tasks as if they were in the Army. In one sense I'm glad they are getting those elitists as I don't want people in my organization who are looking to be told what to do or to become "generals" in the revolution. On the other hand, I think we do miss out on chances to win people or keep them because we expect so much - to internalize all of our philosophy and to work out all the concrete themselves. It feels like too much all at once.
6. I raise these questions because I think we are moving towards some kind of new definition of organization, and this is the moment when it is being discussed. My feeling is that repeating "philosophy and organization", "philosophy and revolution," is making that little word "and" do too much work.

("Philosophy and organization" is not the same as "tea and crumpetts". How do we spell out the link, our task for today?) It is a relationship - perhaps a changing one - between masses and organization, spontaneity and party, philosophy and revolution always to be worked out anew.

Yes. But can we be more precise about us, P&R, N&L at this moment of rampant Nixonism so that the pull to join us will be a compelling one to all? Sorry if this is a bit confused. (Do we want to attempt definition on this question? Why did Marx not have a "position.")

February 18, 1973

Richard

FROM CHRIS, NEW YORK

Dear Olga,

About the NEB discussion and minutes about organization. I think it's a very necessary question to be raised at this time, and has made me think a lot about the organization's role to workers, vanguardists, and myself. Since I was anarchistic in my view of organizations up to I think last year, (I use the term not as being anti-organization and anti-philosophy, but as being totally against vanguard parties and anyone who thinks they can plan out a revolution or know what the workers must do), I have considered the organization as a meeting place for radicals who have a common philosophy, Marxist-Humanism, where they can develop that philosophy. In other words, the organization I considered as sort of apart from the philosophy, as being a vehicle for using the philosophy, but not as being the natural development of that philosophy, the expression and in turn builder of that philosophy. It seems as the two should be an integral part of each other, having P&R as the theoretic framework to stand on. What remains to do then, is to make our philosophy concrete, to bring it into our everyday activity, and to meet new contacts, especially workers, on the basis of our organization being the concrete expression of P&R and our philosophy being the dialectics of liberation. How to go about concretizing our philosophy in everything we do and to everyone we meet, remains to be worked out by each committee and each individual. I think this is what the gist of the discussion on organization is about, but I might be far off in left field (or right field, as the case might be), and I would like to see more discussion on it. I probably didn't add anything new to the discussion, but I just wanted to get it down on paper so I could get my own head together on what I was thinking. I'm sorry I can't come up with a concrete universal to fill Madison Square Garden with N&L members, but with time, the objective NY situation, and a little P&R, I'm sure we'll outdo the Rangers.

By the way, I'm coming to Detroit for a week in April or May, paid vacation, so save some envelope-licking for me. Write back,

February 18, 1973

Chris

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FROM WILL, DETROIT

Raya's letter of Feb. 12 and the REB minutes of Feb. 19 gave me a feeling of being "there" when new ground is being broken philosophically and organizationally. However, what I have gained so far has been a deeper appreciation of the philosophic ground Raya has already established from the 1940's through Marxism and Freedom and even more so with Philosophy and Revolution. In filling the theoretic void since Lenin's death, Raya has not only gone all the way back to the roots of Marxism and re-established the New Continent of Thought, but she has also not let the organization be satisfied with "results", but made us try to grapple with and understand Method—Hegel's, Marx's, Lenin's, and hers.

The question of Method is crucial to philosophy and organization. For example: we have already shown how Lenin used the dialectic method but did not show others his discovery. Furthermore, even Marx did not explain his method in so many words. Or, as Raya puts it, "Marx did not leave us a Logic, he left us the logic of Capital." Everything Raya has done—from MEF to PER to her lectures, presentations, and "Two Worlds"—center on Method and getting us to understand it to be able to practice it as she does.

So, when the REB discussion of "Lenin was a Lassallean" identified the question as "which Lenin—pre or post 1914?" and as "Method", it got me to thinking.

Probably the most important "discovery" Lenin made upon reading Hegel's Logic related to Subjectivity—that self-development and self-activity were the key to dialectics. And, that the self-development of the Subject, the proletariat, would be the cornerstone to the success or failure of the Russian revolution and more so to the success or failure of the future Soviet State. Clearly, his "discovery" of the dialectic method is what separates Lenin of "What Is To Be Done?" pre-1914 from Lenin of State and Revolution post-1914. But, I can't help but contrast Lenin's practice of method with Marx's.

Raya points out that Marx never wrote on the Party as such. But, I am thinking more of what Marx did do at each important historic junction when the proletariat was breaking new philosophic and organizational ground. Marx not only was able to "name" the new Subject, but he was able to name what it was philosophically that enabled the Subject to break new ground. And, it was this new ground that always became Marx's point of departure philosophically and organizationally. I am thinking of his famous statement that "Labor in the white skin can never be free, while in the Black it is branded." And, following this idea up, Marx told the American Marxists who said they were against "all slavery, both wago and chattel" that "If this is Marxism, I am not a Marxist." And, I am thinking of Marx telling the British trade unionists that until they organize the workers of the East End of London they will never get anywhere. And, I am thinking of Marx hailing the revolutionaries of the Paris Commune for establishing the new Universal of "Freely Associated Labor" and then telling the International that he would strike their names from membership and replace them with the names of Communards. And, then he

set about changing his greatest theoretical work, Capital, to reflect this new Universal.

I am not making a big case against Lenin. Yet, while he did write many pamphlets on the Party and these works did reflect his philosophic break on the question of dialectic method, Lenin's failure to let the world know about his philosophic break left us with a legacy of "applied" dialectics which Raya had to dig out. Surely, Lenin's philosophic break had world-shaking organizational conclusions—of all the Bolshheviks he alone was able to name the new Subject, the Soviets, and to have the correct position on the peasantry and the national minorities. And, his slogan of "All Power to the Soviets" and "To a Man" did, in a sense, "name" the new philosophy of freedom, the new Universal. Yet, not in the sense that Marx did when he made Freely Associated Labor his new ground both philosophically and organizationally.

So, what it seems we are looking for with Philosophy and Revolution as organization builder is an understanding of philosophic Method which will allow us not only to recognize the new Subject, but also to recognize the new philosophic expression, the new Universal, and make it our organizational ground. Like the Movement From Practice to Theory, and the Movement From Practice to Theory is a Form of Theory, and Marxist-Humanism as a New Continent of Thought. And, the new philosophic expression being only the implicit expression of new organizational forms of overthrowing capitalism which we must somehow make explicit through the daily practice of News & Letters Committees.

Let me quote from Marx: "Material force can only be overcome by material force. But, philosophy is a material force when it has seized the masses." And paraphrase him: the productive forces of capitalism have far outstripped the form of social organization... this seems to be more true of the philosophy of those struggling for freedom today: that it has far outstripped the ideology of capitalism. Let's hope so.

March 14, 1973

EXCERPTS FROM MINUTES OF JOINT NEW YORK-CONNECTICUT MEETING, MARCH 18, 1973, ON: "LENIN AS A LASSALLEAN" AND THE MOVE OF CONNECTICUT TO NEW YORK IN LIGHT OF PHILOSOPHY AND REVOLUTION AS ORGANIZATION BUILDER.

In his presentation JOHN said: We're here to discuss P&R as organization builder and the implication for us on the East Coast which we hope is going to mean consolidation of forces in NY. Our last NY local educational on the Tretsky chapter in P&R, given by a friend, brought home to me that many of us have a sketchy idea when we confront history. Raya said it in another way in her letter to Harry on Lenin—she was glad to hear from him because she felt that many of us in the States had a feel only back to 1960. When you think of Lenin in 1902 you have to project yourself back to 1902. For Lassalle, back to the 1850's-60's. Lassalle was a German who had a mass working class organization and was actually the first bureaucrat. He was an anti-Marxist who had quite a correspondence with Marx. Marx realized that he was a figure on the scene. He had a working class party going for him. Many of the socialists that lived in Marx's time stole from Marx. They plagiarized him-- Hyndman in England, Lassalle in Germany. Marxism as Marx presented was unacceptable to them. If they could rewrite it (not giving Marx credit) then it would be acceptable. Marx was angered by this not because he wanted credit but because in plagiarizing they distorted, disrupted, created something new which was no longer Marxism.

It made me see the importance of seeing that P&R is a book that can't be tampered with. When it exists between those two covers we can talk about all the implications this has and organizational consequences that flow from it but what has to be uppermost in our minds is that P&R sees the light of day. After reading the controversial disputes Marx had with so many within the International and how they thought they could do him one better we are lucky that we have gotten Marx unadulterated. Everyone is able to read Marx themselves even though organizational forms that come down became perverted. We see that what was represented as the Marxist party in Germany during and after Marx's time wasn't a Marxist party, that it was in fact a Lassallean party.

Consider this 1891 letter on Lassalle written by Engels to Kautsky (F. Lassalle by Footman, p.243). Footman explains: "The name of Lassalle, however, maintained its hold on the movement in Germany. In 1875 the General German Workers' Association united, in a congress at Gotha, with the younger and rival movement under Liebknecht and Bebel to form the German Social Democratic Party. In spite of all the pressure that Marx and Engels could exert the new party officially adopted a programme largely based on the theories and slogans of Lassalle; and only in 1891, eight years after Marx's death, was Engels able to secure its radical

modification. It was on this occasion that he wrote to Kautsky: 'If people do not know that Lassalle's whole greatness rests on this, that for years Marx allowed him to parade the results of Marx's research as his own and, owing to defective education in economics, to distort them into the bargain, then that is not my fault. But I am Marx's literary executor and as such I also have my duty to perform. Lassalle has belonged to history for 28 years. The legend that conceals and glorifies the true stature of Lassalle cannot become an article of faith of the party. However highly one may estimate Lassalle's services to the movement, his historical role in it remains an equivocal one. Lassalle, the socialist, is accompanied step by step by Lassalle, the demagogue. The Lassalle of the Hatzfeldt case appears everywhere, showing through Lassalle, the agitator and organizer; the same cynicism in the choice of methods, the same tendency to surround himself with noisy and corrupt people, demanding that the workers should take the part of the monarchy against the bourgeoisie, and intriguing with Bismarck, one of his own kind, in a way bound to lead to the betrayal of the movement, if unfortunately for him, he had not been shot in time. Should I be forced to it, I would have no choice; I should have to clear away the Lassalle legend once and for all.'

This was Engels trying to use the full thrust to push the German Social Democratic Party (SDP) on a Marxist path. "Kautsky's verdict, however, was: 'The standpoint of Marx towards Lassalle is not that of the German Social Democracy. How could we forget the man from whose writings all we old party comrades, and some of the younger ones too, derived our first knowledge and inspiration as socialists?' That was his answer to Engels. It made me realize how difficult it must have been for Raya to break with Trotsky when she did. Here was the man of October, with all the prestige that went with that. Instead of saying as Kautsky did, how could she forget the man who first inspired us, etc. etc., Raya made a real, a political break. That is a tremendous juncture and demands that we meet the challenge of that kind of intellectual "heroism".

In Marxism and Freedom, Raya presents Lassalle as the first introduction on the modern scene of the state socialist, who thought you could introduce socialism not through the proletariat, but over their heads and administer to them. We know that Lenin never got to see Marx's early essays and may wonder if it might have had a different impact. We don't know how conscious Lenin was of what was happening in the SPP between Engels and Kautsky. What we do know is that the Russian Marxists, as did Western Europeans if not all world socialists, looked to this mass social SDP as a party to copy, to emulate. Even as different say as the early Bolshevik party may have been, what Lenin was attempting to do in "What is to be Done" in 1903 was to take the organization of Germany and move it into Russia. Russia was facing different circumstances, but the attempt was to adopt it to an underground party and then see that specific needs would be answered.

I feel we're still catching up with M&F. I wasn't surprised that "Lenin was Lassallean in the organizational sense", because I felt that is what I read in M&F, in that Raya pointed out where the Bolshevik party was patterned after the concept of

"party-to-lead". Lenin had great confidence in Kautsky, but it is interesting that in trying to sum up Marxism not only for his age but to apply it specifically to the Russian situation, Lenin introduced a few other things, and one of those was that the party intellectuals had to be disciplined by the workers. He kept his fingers on the pulse of what Russian workers were doing even though he had this carry-over that the role of the party was to bring Marxism to the workers. This is what he thought in "What is to be Done", but he changed very quickly with the 1905 revolution. So there is this ambivalence in organization as well as in philosophy.

Lenin always remained conscious of the fact that the party, the intellectual, the theoretician had to follow the self-developing subject, to see what it was actually doing -- in contrast to something like the Permanent Revolution of Trotsky, also of 1905, which is an abstraction. Lenin said at the same time what was possible in Russia was a bourgeois revolution that could only be achieved by the proletariat; the bourgeoisie was too weak, too pliable in the hands of the monarchy to stand on its own feet. The German social democrat, Bernstein, got infatuated with the idea of the mass party. By this time the SPD in Germany officiated over weddings, funerals; it was a great big happy family. Some thought it was socialism already. That wasn't Lenin's concern. He was interested in the conquest of power.

Franz Mehring, who wrote the biography of Marx, was in the Second International and was given the right to do it by Marx's daughter. He had a non-Marxist background, a long history as a bourgeois democrat who moved at a late stage into the Marxist movement, was Lassallean and didn't hide the fact. He was an intellectually honest man and you get to feel that he felt the rifts between Lassalle and Marx need not have happened. He spent his time also in compiling the letters and memoirs of Lassalle. Many Social Democrats felt these people (Marx and Lassalle) were equal.

Mehring and Luxemburg were very close. Mehring had Luxemburg do the chapters on Capital in his biography of Marx, which was really not a presentation of Marx, but of Luxemburg.

Lenin was heavily influenced by this party, even when in political opposition to it. Nothing was expressly written about a new organizational form. This is something to hold in mind -- that frequently in history, there seems to be a political break, but not always an organizational consequence. I remember Chris asked this question in our discussion on the new pamphlet, "Russia as State Capitalist Society". He wanted to know, after Raya said all that how come she ended with "forward with the Fourth International"? It sounded to him as though her analysis was the ground to make the break. Raya takes that up too -- it was something we were confounded with -- that is, why didn't the JFT make the break until so much later.

What originally prompted this discussion on organization was that Raya was talking to a young man who was interested in her ideas and in P&R but said that even though what she said was right, he was joining another organization and would do in that organization what she had done for philosophy. In the REB minutes of Feb. 19, Raya said: "The truth is that we are starting something totally new in making philosophy integral to Organization." Everyone

can reread what she said for themselves. What it meant to me is that we keep running into these people who are trying to do what Lenin was doing in 1902 but they are trying to move the Russian Party, the vanguard concept, and really the Kautsky concept, the Lassallean party, to the American scene. They want to lift it in body and not even say what is on the American scene. The whole idea is that they are the vanguard. What they envisage is that the American working class, if not the world working class, will find the way into their organizational structure. It is ridiculous when you consider this is USA, 1973. Those REB minutes are saying that we have something very different to say and what we have to say is so new that we cannot really go back and pattern ourselves after other organizations. What the movement of workers and Blacks in this country throws forth, how we will conduct our own business so to speak, and keep our eyes open for what they are about to do, moves us today to recognize and reaffirm that this is the year of Philosophy and Revolution.

At the Convention we said that New York had to be strengthened as sub-center, that we are going to have to be prepared to move with P&R as soon as it is off the press. There is a precedent among Marxist-Humanists. When we first formed our organization we knew we had to have a proletarian center, because all the old radical organization had been infected by having their centers stay in New York. They became oriented to what the French might be doing, or some other country's parties. They had a vision that was everywhere else. Their heads were turned to Europe instead of to the Midwest. We wanted something that would be American Marxism. Many who lived in N.Y. moved to Detroit to get the new organization started. Another serious organizational move took place when M&F first came off the press. We had an important local in West Virginia. Andy had been a coal miner for ten years. We had quite a periphery in the coal fields. But W. Va. recognized the importance of M&F, and why they were needed in Detroit. They packed up and moved. There are other kinds of moves we make -- sometimes people are drawn to the center to develop them, or sometimes they ask to go because they feel they need that experience. Then they may move somewhere else. It's a very different concept than that of the old radicals. The Trotskyists had a term they used: "Colonizing". Nobody gave that word a second thought then. They would send some people out to work in the steel mills, or the auto shops... and it wasn't all bad. Young students would proletarianize themselves that way. But they also had the idea that they were sending a deputy into heathen land, and that they would bring revolutionary consciousness to the working class, never that they would learn from the working class. To recognize what a totally different thing it is we are doing, all we need do is reread the REB minutes of March 12. On page Raya is quoted as saying: "The truth is that N.Y. is too small a local for it to be able to be both sub-center and local. It needs greater forces and despite our recognition of this as the year of Philosophy and Revolution we never fully faced up to those needs... We were too conscious of the fact that Connecticut was young and had wonderful opportunities for growth. The local situation predominated over what should have predominated -- P&R as the center for all else."

IN THE DISCUSSION, ANNE began by saying she felt it was a new thing Raya was raising. When people for the last 20 years have asked why we are against a vanguard party, Raya has said it is because it is a noose around workers' necks. And it's true. Every time there has been a near-revolution, say France 1968, they have played a counter-revolutionary role and actually stifled people. The vanguard parties are off doing one thing while the masses are doing something else. It hasn't worked, if you want to be an empiricist about it. Now it's not enough for us to say that anymore. We have to explain the whole philosophical reason why it's not right. We have to show that we don't believe in the vanguard party because our philosophy is that masses have minds of their own, reason of their own. And the self-developing subject isn't only the masses in revolutionary activity; working out the next stage, what happens after the revolution, is inseparable from their activity. We believe we have a philosophy that is essential to creating a new society and not have the revolution turn to counter-revolution. It is easy to attract people on the basis of activity, or of a newspaper. But it's not the same thing as spreading a total philosophy. Talking about P&R as Organization Builder means we are talking about membership growth on a philosophical basis.

PAT said we have to consider the way of projecting our philosophy, not only in our conversations and discussions but also through our activity, since we do ground so much of what we say and what we do in the fact that we do not separate philosophy from revolution, or theory from practice. We have to be able to find a way to project our philosophy through our activities as well as through the coming of P&R as a book. Sometimes it is easier to talk to someone about philosophy than to project the philosophy in everything we do, day to day, not just as organization but as individuals, as revolutionaries.

BILL raised the question that he still has trouble answering people when they ask what is N&L. N&L believes in certain philosophy, that for any type of true revolution to come about Marxist-Humanism becomes a participant in the state of affairs. Then how do we explain we are different -- I feel we have to listen to the lowest level, keep on listening. Before I met the Connecticut local last year I had taken courses in Political Thought and a lot of things had been posed to me. I was interested in Amilcar Cabral and others. Before that I had gone through the new-education-typebooks. That's when I got to Humanism, then to the African revolution, and then I got to Socialism.

KEVIN felt it was significant that Raya had waited until P&R was about to come out before she raised the question about Lenin as Lassallean, because she didn't want the question separated in any way from P&R. He felt that in the last couple of years the New Left has been doing what N&L did 20 years ago -- that is, Radical America is moving to Detroit, and IS did it before them. But just the move is not the answer. The main task of the organization is to assimilate and understand the dialectic. That has to take place through contact with the proletariat, through participation with the various movements, the movements of those new passions and forces we talk about. That is paramount. Kevin told about a young white worker who had seen N&L and came to visit and asked, "What is this Marxism?" Kevin had answered, Working people taking over their own lives; the young worker said it would

never happen. "I showed him our literature," Kevin reported, "I figured he take WBA or a pamphlet on the Black struggle, but instead he went straight for M&F and said that was what he wanted to read. I think that is very significant."

INEZ: I feel that when Raya said she was shocked at the idea of "Lenin as Lassallean" it was the "shock of recognition" on her part. It isn't that Lenin was the same type as Lassalle. The main thrust and drive of his life was revolution. Lassalle had other things driving him. What is the relationship in saying that Lenin was a Lassallean pre-1914, to after 1914 (Second International, Hegel), to the theoretic void, to 1973? Why is it important for us to work it out now? It's not an academic question. The best way I can express it is that I haven't found the link from pre-1914 to us, N&L committees, or even to world revolution. I can't seem to break through for myself. Why did he write on other things, not on organization? (I know we can not answer, he died early, revolution in between, I note what Raya wrote on organizational breaks and John took up also, that it was 8-10 years between the break with Trotsky himself and the Johnson-Forest break with the party. Organizational breaks haven't been a quick process.) There are certain philosophic phrases that in a few words give a direction: "new beginnings" in the move of Connecticut to NY. It is a new stage that can push us forward as a local. One of the very first things P&R as organization builder means to me, because it is what P&R and the times demand since they are the ones in total opposition to what is going on, is gaining of Black and Puerto Rican members in NY. We have to overcome this not after P&R is out. We have to do it before so that when it comes out in book form we will be at a much higher stage. It doesn't mean more distributions but to concretize the work that has been done so as not to lose the moment where we do have new friends coming to us. It is a "passion for philosophy" as Raya called it, that has drawn these people to P&R.

In February we discussed the WL page in N&L with Raya and she made a point I think is very relevant to organization: "If P&R is not just the name of a book but characteristic of the age then it must mean that we are using this period (between now and publication) to prepare ourselves for each one being a walking representative of P&R and exposing the point of view and secondly to be able to illicit out of the actual objective movement that which is philosophy and revolution and make it explicit. The whole of philosophy has one aim in life. If it was great, if it was historic, if it made a movement, meant that it made explicit what is implicit. The greatness of Hegel was that he made a universal, a concrete universal, a method out of the movement of the sans coulottes as the "learning through doing" of a revolutionary action. Summation is a very, very important Hegelian thing because it means that if the summation is really total that the future imbedded in the present is seen, you see the roots sticking up. You see the direction. In Marxism, I don't have to tell you that new continent of thought had the entire movement that we hadn't yet realized. So to make explicit which is implicit in the Black women, the Chicano women and the women as a new force means to be able to unite theory and practice in such a way that she says 'this is what I've meant all the time'"

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RAY F. raised the question of the form of our organization, suggesting that if we are talking about the committee as not really the answer then what form is? I don't know if I'm stuck in a rut or stuck in a philosophic category. I don't see another form to counterpose being a party.

CHRIS felt it was not a question of deciding what could be a better organizational form. He said as I understood how this organization came about, our origins were not only committees of correspondence. While we were N&L, the Hungarian revolution broke out. Workers councils were formed. That is what we picked up on as being new in struggle in S-C countries. We can't effectively talk about the next step until it happens. We can't pick one off the top of our heads. I understood N&L as looking at freedom struggles throughout the world, the organization as the vehicle for moving the philosophy. Now I see it as the organization being integral to philosophy. Our organization sprung from our philosophy. We exist because of it. It is crucial with P&R coming out that we internalize the ideas in it.

JEANNIE said one of the things Raya is bringing out is that no longer can we turn our backs on people who bring up the question of vanguard party and want to know what we are. Recently I gave a presentation on WL; I was attacking Robin Morgan's new thing, "Radical Feminism." She has been talking about giving a critique against women's groups that were tied to male dominated political parties. I talked about N&L, WL and N&L, and how were not male dominated and how important it is for all to understand the significance of having a woman as theoretician, what Raya stands for in the movement of history. Also within our own organization we can really understand women as and reason because women are reason in the organization. Women are force within the context of the group. Blacks and workers are force and reason, and we see it in our own organization and we will see it make world revolution. We know what we are, but we haven't been able to put it into words.

In his summary JOHN said he sympathized with Bill's questions. Sometimes you feel in your bones something is right—you know you are not going to accept someone else's leadership unless they prove themselves—but there comes a moment when you have to have more than the idea that the masses in motion will do it. You have to meet that activity with philosophy. Unless that philosophy is there then we're into something else. I hark back to the Russian revolution because it was the biggest revolution in the century and was well documented. Lenin in 1902 is writing against spontaneity. He says all people are talking about spontaneity, the Narodniki felt you immerse into the peasantry, find out what they're doing, not projecting politics, or any kind of philosophy, hoping it will all be set right. Now does a peasant need one more student for, when there are so many peasants in Russia. Lenin says the party had a different function. The party, the organization, the revolutionary continuity, must show that there is something new that has to be said, there is a thread, there is history and someone has to sum up history at different junctures in its progress, so as not to repeat what has gone before. We did say, we weren't often heard, to many in the new left that you can't ignore politics. It won't ignore you. If you think that all women are your sisters,

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all Blacks are your brother, all left is one movement, this isn't a fact. This seems to be what an organization has to be about, it is for us to concretize what the organization expression of P&R means, and it means that in this kind of venture, since it is so new, that the newer ones, so to speak, certainly have as much to contribute as the older ones in the sense that they don't have as much to shake off, are not weighted down with ideas of the past.

We should take a moment of sympathy for the vanguard party—as difficult as it seems to tell someone you're not for the vanguard party imagine if you were, "Yes we are the vanguard party. What do you do? We lead workers! Where are the workers?" This false consciousness of the vanguard party member inspires him to go out as if he has the message. I think we need some of that too. To recognize what you are saying is it, to realize what we are doing is really breaking new ground. I don't feel that I've caught up to P&R.

Lenin knew the proletariat was in advance of the vanguard party. The revolution didn't have to fit within the party, but somehow the party had to find a role in the revolution because the masses were moving. If he made that sort of departure at that period, it behooves us certainly to build upon that. We have talked about the void in philosophy after Lenin and that if there is somekind of philosophic difference there must be some sort of organizational consequence of it. This is talking about the world outside, about mass movements, not how we maintain ourselves to move this philosophy forward, that will change in the fullness of time as new situations arise. We have a local here this year and there the next. This springs out of life itself. What we must know as Marxists is that we're always looking outside, don't have preconceived notions of the forms these will take. We think of Marx literally starving in London while Lassalle had a party of thousands behind him. Marx might have said "I must be wrong", but he didn't. He had a philosophy that carried him through, that won the day not for himself but for the proletariat. I think we see following in that tradition and have that heritage behind us. At this particular juncture, in America, we have decided what we have to do here, is to build a sub-center in NY, worthy of P&R. The move becomes an expression of our politics, at this particular place, at this particular time, for this particular task. Whether or not we can live up to that, that is for the future to say.