

In Lieu of REB Minutes of July 5, 1983

Dear Friends:

Because this was the first time the REB discussed the Constitution and it is before all the REB reports have been completed, it was decided that July 24 -- the final meeting to hear the pre-convention reports -- will be the meeting where the REB will work out the amendments to be submitted to the membership. We have, after all, a new form of the Who We Are and What We Stand For statement, which has included, for the first time, the reference to RLWLKM.

We know that, as usual, we always begin with what is new in any statement, both objective and subjective -- and the new in this statement puts the stress on the new moments in Marx's last decade as containing a "trail to the 1980s." And, again as always, no new amendment is as epochal as that which was the ground for the Constitution itself, which singled out Marxism and Freedom as disclosing Marx's "new Humanism", both internationally and in its American roots. This is spelled out "as American Civilization on Trial concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa." With the new expanded ACOT going to press shortly, this reference to it in the statement becomes more relevant than ever.

Olga, in her report to the REB, went further back into our history than that first convention, quoting both from the 1956 bulletin we called: "Johnsonism: a Political Appraisal" (written by Peter Mallory) and the 1958 bulletin "Draft Resolution on the Book, Marxism and Freedom: Method, Heritage and Principles". In one respect that resolution has a phrase even more relevant to our new book when it proposes "selling the book as founders." In singling out what is new for today, Olga said that the new paragraph we would add on RLWLKM would focus on Marx's "revolution in permanence" as ground for organization. Philosophy has always been our distinguishing mark, be it M&F, P&R, or RLWLKM -- indeed, Philosophy as action has been the focal point for our Committees since our birth, but it is only with RLWLKM and the significant chapter on the Critique of the Gotha Programme that we specified "revolution in permanence" as ground for our organization.

Everyone agreed with that formulation. Eugene, Mike and Lou felt that the new stress on the relationship of philosophy to organization began with the Expanded REB meeting -- that is to say, the minute we had the new book in hand. Lou liked best Raya's expression that the Constitution is both "open" and "binding." Leda, who had just returned from a Conference of Iranian women, stressed the international aspects of Marxist-Humanism, and Bob spoke on "timing" in relationship to the fact that this age is the first that has had all of Marx's works as well as the fact that we singled out women as revolutionary force before it became a movement.

In voting to send these "minutes" as a letter "in lieu of" actual minutes, the REB wished to ask that anyone who wishes to propose an amendment should have it in the mail in time to reach us by July 23, so that it can be considered by the REB at the July 24 meeting, when we will formulate the paragraph to be submitted to the convention, and send it out for discussion.

The report Neda gave to the REB on the Conference she had attended, as well as the correspondence Mike reported (which included exciting new material from the BCM) will be included in the letter to the locals which Mike will be sending out next week. Yours, RAYA

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