

March 3, 1971

Toronto

Dear John

I am addressing this and other letters to you for immediate attention. They could as well go to John Steele but then he is there only half the time and I don't want them waiting around. You will recall last experience--Long after I had sent material such as the Passos book review I returned to find them still sitting around in Coral's file. As you know she is overwhelmed with work. I think I told you that one day in discussing with that former American comrade who is working with her that last month we were still processing changed from last October on our most urgent of all efforts Labor Challenge. Experience tells us that Coral will never complain

And so I am leaving space between some of the items so that you could if you thought necessary separate them and hand them to various persons to act upon.

Czech trials. I am a little late on this. Ernest handed me the enclosed letter a couple of days ago. But I misunderstood him. I thought that he had sent it to you and this was a copy for me. I agree we need an action on this. I am enclosing the latest from the London Times. Really important development. Unfortunately I do not have Rouge here. But a few days ago they carried an excellent action. They moved in and with about 25 comrades occupied the Czech embassy in Paris, for about 25 minutes. They held a press conference in there. I suppose they informed the press as they were already in the embassy. They had signs prepared which they hung outside announcing their occupation....an appeal for the release of our comrades on Czech territory. As you can see our comrades are only being accused of having ideas. Ernest's letter doesn't suggest any particular action. The English

had a picket line--very limited. But in my opinion the occupation idea is not at all a bad one--in fact a good action. I doubt that we could get any outside of our forces for any action so this is quite sensational. What could the police do..Only escort you out. We could announce at the very beginning that the occupation is for only 20 minutes. This cautions the Czech staff. We have a prepared statement. The place of course is Ottawa. I do not see why we could not carry it off with say a carload of comrades going up to Toronto--including such leading comrades as you, Jackie or Joe. At any rate I think we should move on some project right away. I am all in favor of the Ottawa occupation speaking from across the ocean. This would have to be organized on the QT--contacting Ottawa on private telephone booths both ways--with the closest security.

Send the clipping right away after copying to Intercontinental. I am sure they have nothing as late or as detailed as this.

I spent last weekend with the Pongs. They are having trouble getting their Chinese translated into English. The only comrade in Hong Kong who is capable is apparently ill. There is another comrade--in Toronto. You know him as Jerry Liang. I think his real name is Chow. ~~He~~ We used to send him material to a box at Bloor and Young PO. We have a new address. It is on a card among the other address cards that John S has. Just marked Jerry L. It is possible he is in the phone book under Chow. At any rate it would be very good--it is even necessary that he translate some material for us. --for Pi-lan.

2-2-2

She will be sending over a copy. And there will be another article ready in a month from Peng--his contribution to the discussion on LS. As things now stand there is no way of their contributing in the discussion without Jerry's aid. Pat M knows him well. At anyrate I leave it to you to get someone on this to whom Jerry will respond in a positive way. You don't need to tell him about the Peng article--just the Pi-lan one now. You should send me the post office box address so that when he agrees I could have Pi-lan write direct to him. But if I am not mistaken she agreed to send the copy of the article right away to 334 so you would have it in hand. If it does not come within a week we should proceed to make the connection without the article.

It would be good if you would send me the name and address of the German comrade who we recruited in Kitchener-Waterloo and who returned to Germany last year. He was a tall blond steelworker if you recall. I cannot remember either his first or last name. When I was here last he gave me a new address and I am sure that you will find it among the subscribers of LC.

I would appreciate it if you would also obtain me Lois Bedard's address. They have moved to a street called Emmett I think. This should at long last be on our contact list. Incidentally when I last spoke to her she told me she was not ~~making~~ getting anything. I think we fixed the contact list--but what about LC sub list.

A passing thought. I think that it was a mistake not to run one of the photos of the Red Europe conference with my article on the United States of Europe. It would tend to be interpreted here in Europe that we thought little of an action which they thought a great deal of. I think that it is important that in the next issue we carry Tabata's press release on the arrest of Unity movement people along with one of the photos we have of him--we took some when he spoke at our internal at 1 Cumberland. But perhaps there are others around.

I see Tony made the Black conference in Toronto. I never saw him although I probably got the brochure that I put on his desk in NY. I do not see that need to do anything as the YS or League but it would be very good if this Black movement sent a letter of protest against the arrests of the Unity Movement people, and even took some action at the SA trade commission. The Church is being taken over the coals too I see. It would be good if this new group took a SA solidarity action as soon as possible. What is Jose's status in this movement. If they cannot or will not do it what about Jose's university group. Of course Jose will agree but it will have to be followed through. The ~~press~~ British press has picked up the attacks on the Unity movement. It would be desirable that something come off and of course desirable that it get some publicity--if only in our press.

Now that we have switched from that \$100 that the center took it upon itself to ~~cancel~~ dues to the statutory basis of 1/6 of our dues I think we should consider what we actually can pay into the center. I think that the next PC meeting should find our way clear to pay in say \$25 a month with the suggestion that we intend to find our way clear to paying more when it is possible. I think that we are hard put not to pay at least that amount.--which I think we can handle. Let me know your decision. I think we should

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act on this matter right away.

I assume that Coral is now sending the dues to Gisela on a regular monthly basis. Yes, Gisela told me she had made a mistake in saying that I had turned over only 300 and not what I said--\$400. She has probably told you this. I was in to see Peng last weekend and I gave them \$50 on our behalf. I think that I can handle that amount out of my pay so it is only a matter of noting that we have given them another 50 on the account. I would like to know how their account stands now. I take it that you have it recorded that I gave them \$100 when I was over here last October out of the money that the south loaned us.

How do we intend to handle the international appeal for funds for the Bengal affair? This is ~~immediately~~ Joe Hansen's idea of how to handle money for international work. I think that I pointed out to you that the \$400 that we gave Gisela last fall in the belief that it was a general once a year project turned out on her books as a special campaign for Eastern Europe workers states work. Absurd. However I think we should make modest efforts to meet what apparently are going to be appeals from time to time. We can do this in I think relatively harmless effortless ways. Why wouldn't we say for instance in this case have forums across the country on the Indian situation. It is now much in the news and we would get a good attendance. At these forums we could have a chairman or secondary speaker say a few words about the work of our Bengali comrades (there is a good view with one of the comrades in a recent Militant. --and take up a collection --not a big appeal. If only 20 or 30 dollars was raised it would be a good gesture. I think that this is the way we should handle this. Letter--send a letter to all branches to hold ~~one~~ one of their regular forums on India this month and take up a collection for the Bengali comrades. ~~It~~ ~~is~~ If we agree on this we should get the letter out rightaway and get the money in and sent over here. I have got Gisela's agreement that we will handle this on a progress reporting basis so everyone can see who is in the International. If the Italian don't pay up shortly they are not going to be a qualified section...so the whole thing can have some benefit for the movement. And this is an effortless way for us to respond. Other campaigns depending on their significance we could handle by spreading specific people who we know and who might be interested and thereby taking the heat off the movement as such. Let me know what you think of this

I haven't read the last issue of the paper yet nor the minutes and correspondence that you have sent--but if I close off now I think I will still make the mail

comradely

Ross

missed the mail so I came home, had supper, read the latest issue of Labor Challenge and all the PC correspondence. And here goes;

A very good issue. The Laxer interview is a real scoop. Sometime you should tell me how we got it--how John did. How we opened Laxer up to it in the light of past experiences our NDP comrades have been having in the Waffle both in Toronto and Edmonton. He answers well. A little bull-shit around the matter of union influence but other wise very good. What did he have to say about our press and our movement--I would be interested in knowing--and what repercussions did the publication have in Waffle circles. The front page is also excellent--I feel embarrassed about objecting to Quebec Left "Recovers" Liz Angus' article on the abortion action is positively ~~xxxx~~ rhapsodic. One more thing on the Laxer interview. Now that we have broken some ice why not take a try at some other interviews. Say that fellow who is heading the Johnson, Mathey allory strike--I see he didn't speak at the forum though==but perhaps Sloan would be as good. We could try to think of some others we could interview. Healy's press has been having interviews with some of England's top trade union brass.

There is really only one article that I question. And incidently why didn't we present it as a guest contribution in order to protect his job his NDP status etc. I think we should have had a discussion on the PC about the Acadian question. Not so much that I question Terry's line and I do, but primarily because I know little or nothing about this question. In what sense is ~~there~~ a feeling of national identity--noting that the past secretary of the National Society of Acadians (I do not know the significance of this organization) and Robichaud are designated as sell-outs in the article. Do they have any identity as a peoples with the Quebec struggle or have they been stimulated by it? What substantial evidence do we have of a sense of national identity in recent times. I know in a rough way the ~~history~~ history of their treatment by the British. Terry goes pretty strong in the paragraph at the top of the third column--but weak on evidence. When I first read it I was somewhat stopped by a section in the second column--second sentence under the subhead. "The weakness is that it cannot lead to much higher wages since the profits..." I put a circle around profits and scrubbed "since the decision to locate there ~~xxxx~~ somewhat removed from the main market areas is based to some considerable degree that it will be more profitable because of its being a lower wage area." A better formulation because otherwise you have Terry enunciating some iron rule of wages--you just cant get decent ones cause the bosses wont and cant pay them --just what he ridicules in the next column when reporting on the St John building trades no strike pledge. There are several others small points--I dont think that this is the first time that the NDP elected an MLA in NS--at least NDP-CCF--cant ignore the CCF--after all there has only been perhaps two elections since the NDP took over from the CCF. I think that it is necessary to open up a bit of a discussion in the movement on the Acadians--before some comrades consider Terry's position to be our position...which I question. Dont know anything but what I read in LC but question that the Kitchener article should be so hard on the union officials--perhaps it was necessary to take the workers back in such a situation on the basis of no reprisals. --from here it looks to me that it may well have been the union that took recourse to wildcat--even lead it to stop a union busting assault. But I dont know--only question and I think you should to Kitchener. It was good to see that the Militant improved on our report on the dropping of the charges against Mahon and others--they had us protesting the military occupation of Quebec--LC had us flaunting an outdated electoral law. How did this happen. I see on page three bottom article Dick is carrying that line--war measures act to block upsurge--slightly modified

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to read "development of any organized movement in support of the FLO demands." I think that it was bolster Bourassa and his gang who saw that what happening to Laporte could happen to us--Trudeau moved in to stop this. Of course Dick's new formulation is better and perhaps almost correct but I do not know of any substantial evidence that an organized movement was developing. Good to see he writes--"a second more fundamental purpose----" I would question the adjective ;"the development of Massive political opposition to the trials..." the opposition is developing but I would like to hear now that they have been released what kind of response they have had with mass meetings. I would think we should discuss Dick's other statement "The bourgeoisie's unanimity suggests a highly developed consensus that the repression of Quebec is the price of continued capitalist rule in Canada." I think in my last letter I mentioned some comments on this question I made at the McGill meeting. We should discuss this sometime. I think that Trudeau and Marchand reaction is not the considered opinion of the Canadian bourgeoisie or consensus. They don't want to give anything but can I think give plenty--the dynamics of the process is their worry. Should we on your page 6 article on the 9 cities call the refusing hospitals "French language" Wouldn't it better be Catholic church dominated? Good to see the Quebec NDP convention note--could be added that the mood behind giving way to the PQ is one of profound defeat in the old NDP circles. The 10 votes are a bit of a disappointment--so it is an exhausted almost completely exhausted operation. Hope you get the contact box the next issue Did Art or Montreal generally say anything about the last article on the Quebec NDP raffle etc etc. Disappointing to see Jose not on the temporary steering committee of the National Black Action Committee. I would be interested in hearing what the comrades in the future holds for this movement. And how was the Malcolm X meeting that evening. What does Jose have to say. I see everything is clearing for 24 April to be the day. Incidentally I hope we can give some attention to Jose. You know the paper has never come out--even the quarterly basis as we had agreed. He can be very important to us but you have to hold onto him. Have you thought to phone Art to have a bit of a talk with him--about the personal problems we know of. A valuable man and feels isolated in the movement.

I see from all that correspondence going out to the branches that we have not yet fixed that typewriter which puts up the quotation marks. I gather from that that Coral hasn't had our new typewriter fixed--the one and some other letter. Can we help her solve this--lots of repair guys in the phone book I would think. Worth having a visit with three on the hummer Re-Feb 14 PC enlarged minutes. Colleen has the Quebec defence decision wrong. Dick has it right in last Paragraph page one of his letter--it should be corrected. We should also send out the final oked version of the national committee constitution. I would like a copy to show Ernest. Only one thing wrong. I don't like the letter on the Commission of Inquiry. What has happened to Pierre Berton, to the Law Union and what Leo Johnson was going to do for us. Did it all peter out--or has Helmut tossed the whole thing on the League. If that was so--all petered out I would have rethought the whole idea. The last paragraph page 2 "It is not proposed here that KW will remain the center of the commission." But that is just what I would have proposed. There has to be a center and a central commission to carry a thing like this. The Toronto sponsor standing out in isolation Gus---is absurd. We have to treat Gus better. I hope that it is just a lack of information on my party. I hope that we can center it in on KW and a strong commission composed of the Law Union, Berton and others like him. I am somewhat sceptical otherwise. I hope we can have a real re-think of this if I read this letter send out over the address of KW LSA for some strange reason correctly. And now it is midnight and I have several others matters--will write again shortly at length.

Ross