

May 4, 1971

Dear Joe and Barry;

Enclosed is a report from the Times on developments in Bolivia. As soon as I came across it in the Times I bought several other papers but there was nothing—then this morning before the bureau meeting I picked up Le Monde (the previous issue was the combined Sunday-Monday issue) but there was nothing....they are still reporting Friday's news. I showed the clipping to Ernest. It was all news to him. He tended to dismiss the report with some comments to the effect that this would be something quite new--soviets from the top. Pierre said nothing. I brought it up again under the reports on May Day actions. Ernest made a crack about the students calling for arms for the people. I said yes that is exactly what is necessary--the people armed and not a little squad substituting for the people. Pierre said not to discount small armed groups. Then I raised the matter of contacting the Bolivians at once. Ernest reported that he wrote them over ten days ago and had heard nothing from them--something must be done about our connections, he murmured. What about the Latin American press, I said. Well we end up--Pierre is going to get one of the LA bureau comrades to immediately go through the LA press that comes into Paris airmail. When it comes to the agenda I suggested that we should put Bolivia on. Ernest agreed--for the next U.S.

I was all fired up that we should send someone over right away. But then what have we got here. Besides you often don't see what you're not looking for--particularly what you're looking not to see.

First item was April 24. Well as far as America not too much came off. Besides that we don't have a feed of information from the comrades--a systematic one. They know what happened in Copenhagen a week ago from the report in Le Monde. So you have the US Frisco and Washington, Canada--2,000 plus in Toronto (rained), 1,500 Vancouver, 1,500 in Montreal--this is the first in 5 years or so, the NRP convention coming out in Ottawa. Manon was in the Roma demo--it was a modest one--what struck her were the ultra left slogans--down with socialist imperialism. The French one I told you about. The question came up of our ~~maintaining~~ writing up a report. Ernest said we have been mailing out a great deal of material lately--besides the comrades have all the material in Intercontinental. Then he suggested that maybe I would like to pull together the material. Well I am not as there is really nothing to work on--the Copenhagen demo was quite large I see from Le Monde but the circumstances??

Nothing much was said--but even though there were only four of us I felt that it was necessary to say something about the significant contribution of the STP-YS in the building of this unprecedented anti-war movement. If the reception had been warmer I think I would have suggested that the bureau or secretariat in some way make known its relation to the comrades over there. You know the more I sit around over here the more I become convinced that the radicalization that is taking place on the North American continent is much more profound than anywhere ~~else in the world~~ in Europe barring possibly Britain and Spain--So I made a few comments about this tremendous ferment, the possibilities it has for us and your effective work in it--mentioned the black ~~movement~~ movement, women's liberation, the gay movement. This got some snickers and shoulder shrugs. It is, I think, really laughable when you see with what excitement they great something that takes place in Luxembourg. With our differences these comrades seem to have lost their sense of proportion--their judgement.

There was a short discussion at this point on the direction of the Vietnam war. It would seem to me that the pressure is building up for the Vietnamese to make a deal. Ernest and Pierre express an idealist, a desperate belief that the Vietnamese will not submit to Soviet and now Chinese pressures. I mentioned Vietnamese ~~independence~~ independence on Chinese

material. Pierre puffed with Ernest correcting him
We are getting some breaks over Bangla desh...of course so is Healy I see
in England. An important person has come out of the area to get aid.
Mariq is over to see him here.

Ceylon. They havent heard from you with regards to our making a
statement on the LSSP renegades. You will recall I and Pierre were for one
with Ernest hesitant and his tossing the ball to you. Pierre came with
a further idea—that one of us should go there to investigate the criminal
role of the govt and its LSSP supporters. I think this is a very good idea.
A very fine report came in from Bala. Pierre is going to go through it
and extract the material that we can publish. I think the statement by the
leadership of the CWU is very good...with Bala very much in the public eye.
The JVP struggle found very little response in the workers movement.
You will probably have this material by the time you get this note.
Fred Brode of Houston dropped in—I got up early this morning to get
this off before going to see him but he also got up early and called on
me so I won't be able to get this off until the 6th.

May Day. I gather the report is fairly accurate in Le Monde of
the French action. The Lambert group held a meeting in Paris attended by
about 1,500. I saw the CP demo here in Brussels. Hard to say—maybe about
3,000 to 3,000 right down into the centre square. It was predominantly
composed of Greek, Spanish and Moroccan workers. The Belgian comrades were
not even selling their paper to the considerable crowd that gathered along
the main drag ~~in the afternoon~~—the weather was pleasant. The Commune project
is going forward. So likewise the LC congress in Paris. Both Wisel and
I had it wrong so probably you have too. The congress spans over three
days May 29—30—31. I did not have it down in my book for the Saturday.
I havent received any of the documents despite Vergent's continual assur-
ances that they are sending them through to the address up here on
Deschanel. Did you get the new headquarters address

10 Impasse Guenese Paris IV phone 2726832 27228896
For some reason a little bit of a scandal came up. Maspero has recently
publish a pretty crude, rotten anti-Trotskyist book—hardly to be justified
by the argument that he is in the publishing business. Also in passing it
it seems that Grant in Britain is about to come out with a weekly. It was
strange to hear Ernest talk about the growth of the Trotskyist press in
England, the growth encompassing an estimation of the press run of
Healy, IS, Grant along with the Mole. I suppose one can say that any and
all the other papers are as much Trotskyist as the Mole is. But where as
I saw this as a condemnation of our weaknesses the failures of our movement
he saw it as a general increase of receptivity to "Trotskyism" and went on
to talk about the circulation of Trotsky's pre-Bolshevik paper in contrast
to Lenin's and the multiplicity of other Russian papers—Lenin couldn't
help that...we cant help this,. Strange to hear this—in the inner circle
isn't it.

Glad to see that you published my review of the book on Britain in
Vietnam. I have written to the author to see if he has come across other
material in his research on Ta Tu Thau. How come you published that piece
of crap on Britain in advance of it having even appeared in the Mole.
It seems to me to be an article that is quite out of place in ICP...very
specialized, tactical...furthermore while I would like to take it on—
could ICP publish me. The whole idea of action committees is sucked out of
Singh's thumb, unvalled for attack on the workers control movement etc etc
Incidentally for any of the comrades who might like to know a Maspero
book written by Lacheraf is in Pierre's opinion the most important general
book on Algeria. The rest of my books arrived from England. The David McL
Allan book—Marx's Grundrisse published by MACMILLAN is an important book.
Allan should send you a pile—but the paperback edition

It was a relaxed and somewhat casual meeting. E and G are taking their holiday in June--hope to be back for the U.S. meeting on the 26th. Did you know that Pablo, with his little printing adventure hoped to bring the French financial structure down in ruins. Laughable eh.

o there is nothing in June but the IMG

Ernest seen the document on Latin America yet

Ernest and I will be going over to England right after the JGC conference this weekend. Ernest was very concerned that I would miss the bureau meeting--I can't see ~~seeing~~ coming back for it on the 12th--and intend to go from England directly over to Paris. So there will be nobody here except Ernest who is speaking in Brussels on the 13th and then going onto Paris.

A real shake up in personell is taking place in the north over there. They are agreeable to my staying over for the IMG conference--but I must say I am somewhat uneasy.--because of the shakeup. Riddell will be gone to Montreal by the time you receive this. Steele will be organizer in Toronto--dumping executive secretary. Young wont be moving into the center until mid May. I posed the question of ICP as a reserve in case there is a feeling of uneasiness about the adjustments and low end behold I see it has been posed to Dick P who is really interested. As attractive as this Dick proposition may appear to you and us all--there is no question in my mind that it cannot be--at this time. With John gone, my not being there and Dick probably moving--there is just no paper operation. They are toying with the idea of two totally new comrades moving in there

~~_____~~

I was really pleased to hear how things had been working out but now the whole thing strikes me as a bit of a fantasy.

I just received the letter from John S on this this afternoon and will have to think this over--and let you know

comradely

Ross