

July 26, 1957

Dear Saul:

I will combine the last of the preliminary meetings on the philosophical approach with the first of the concrete ones on the problems actually facing the organization: 1) continuation of paper, 2) selling of book, 3) finances. In the last of the preliminary ones I dealt with the 22 "Firsts" Marxism and Freedom establishes in that organization of thought which determines a truly new proletarian organization and thus acts as the polarizing force which replaces "the party to lead" with a binding and yet flexible a relationship of party to the spontaneous organization of the workers. To have anything short of that means to be ruled by cliques and factions--whether you are the ridiculous Tom-Viv-Joanne "org." or the sublime MI. To be ruled by the new, on the other hand, means to make explicit what VIL made only implicit in his Philosophic Notebooks and its recognition that Man's cognition not only reflects the world; it creates it."

Now that we understand ~~what~~ how an organization of thought determines organizational life, and know that M & F is that organization of thought, I summarized at the first of the concrete meetings, we must face the concrete problems, and must face them on a national scale, and must face them with a view to suggesting to the forthcoming NEB meeting how to face these overwhelming problems with something more than a long face and an empty pocket. The NEB was as well as anybody that the organization had given and given plenty in establishing the paper, and then in assuring the book; it knows, I added, that we cannot just say let's have another \$5000 campaign and each give, etc. etc. But neither are we getting ready to give up. No, we believe that in having reached this high stage of concrete publication of book, we have first created a ground for a totally new and fundamental organization, that the expansion and growth of organization and paper are inevitable, but the point is what to do now? And we think we have the answer in the book PROVIDED everyone goes out as a founder and not as a salesman and a MINIMUM OF 1500 copies of the book could be sold by us in the first 6 months of publication and ALL money turned back to the org.

The discussion was more lively than before, and even the newcomers who were not there but got a report afterward by me, said, "We're 3 main locals, aren't we? That means 500 each; on the basis of 10 in LA it means 50 books each. It is difficult but not impossible. I'd like to think how to make it real." So each one is to come in this Sunday with a written "thesis" and from now on this is the concrete level of meeting the tasks and not separating any of the three from the other.

Meanwhile there have been many meetings individually and with contacts, including that ACLU emritus who will be most helpful to us here, and of course including youth. And of course there will be the climax of trying out the public with a printed leaflet. I'm quite tired but I believe we will have accomplished a clearing of the decks as well as heads.

Yours,  
Rag

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& FREEDOM BEING THAT ORGANIZATION OF THOUGHT WHICH WILL DETERMINE OUR FUTURE ORGANIZATIONAL LIFE.

August 5, 1956. 7

Dear Saul:

Very briefly, because I'm literally running for the train, but I couldn't leave without reporting on the fine meeting we had. 30 people attended, 5 advance orders of book and one sub for paper, and much of the audience remained after to go to a restaurant for coffee with us tho it was far from the hall and meant for us alone as I presented the type-script of MARXISM & FREEDOM to the youth for a present for them to study before the appearance of the book. At the coffee good-bye there were 20; 8 of whom were local, 3 youth, and 9 outsiders.

The most important point was that the audience was new. For the first time there were 3 Negroes, 2 students who came as result of distribution on campus (one of whom is a real find!) and 3 workers from the distribution at GM. Even the SWPers-3 or 4 I believe were present-- were new--that is, instead of those that hang around and go to every meeting, it was their trade union faction, the head who is in Local 312. Everyone came sufficiently ahead of the actual call of the meeting that it was possible to circulate with the new and make friends and invite to future meetings and, as I said, they stuck around after. Many more who didn't come--and some like Tom & Ivy we certainly didn't miss--heard about it in an entirely new way--that is printed leaflet, etc. and I noted groups reading the sign below who didn't come up but meanwhile heard of the book, etc. Because of the break-out our own friends felt it to be a real climactic ending and it left everyone with a founder type of feeling.

Of the two last internal meetings--with the local and then with the NEB; on the youth I believe I already reported--the feeling, again, was that the founder approach has added a new dimension to each and that living philosophy instead of either merely talking it or leaving it up to "spets" has shown each how to look for the positive, not the negative. On the other hand, each also agreed that the proof of the pudding is in the eating and that nothing can be drawn conclusively until we are in action, that it is being put through. There is no doubt that the negative features of LA will be put to a real test after my departure, but I have full confidence that Iggy has grown by a head in confidence (and that is the one thing he lacked) and that therefore the direction is set. The working half in a vacuum for a Bessthen are over. Adelle, Eugene and Luise as the youth are really the stuff of the future that makes "new society" appear not as shadow and phrase, but as substance and soul.

Now one thing on last REB minutes and that is that I want myself very strongly recorded not merely against the contended housewife as article--that certainly is not her fault if she thinks that our line--but but against your playing it up, which is the the point of contention. I was sorry to see that you did not record my attitude on that and, I trust by now, your own.

See you Thursday and I assume we'll have REB then.  
Yrs., Rae

Note to Olga: I was very glad to get your letter which, as always, show that on your own you were thinking on exactly the same channels. I was able to use it both to local and NEB--and the 1500 books and finance question was approved. I still feel it must be all book and that the pledges must be in book s that are given for others to read. I want no one giving me a \$100 to satisfy his conscience unless he buys with it book that he gives to both workers and intellectuals who may not wish to buy but he wants them to read because he has decided the book will build the organization, MARXISM

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