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THE NEEDED AMERICAN REVOLUTION

by

Raya Dunayevskaya

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Raya Dunayevskaya

THE NEEDED
AMERICAN REVOLUTION

I. ATTITUDES TO OBJECTIVITY, TO SCIENCE,
AND TO PHILOSOPHY

Spectacular as was the walk on the moon, and hard as Nixon tried to anoint himself with moonlight for his trip to Asia (not to mention Rumania—will he next go to Albania?), the achievements in outer space could not divert from the problems on earth on either continent. So total was the crisis at home that Nixon himself, upon his return, could no longer escape it. His first speech, therefore, dealt not with his quickie trip abroad, but with the deep down dissatisfaction, at the ghetto level, with "welfare" at home.

Unfortunately, his rhetoric here only went to prove that the distance between the White House, on the one hand, and the slums surrounding it, on the other hand, is greater than the distance between the moon and the planet earth. The meeting of "welfare" recipients that just concluded in Detroit tried to tell him so, but he is incapable of understanding their philosophy.

Nixon no sooner finished his novel pronouncement than the National Council on Hunger and Malnutrition charged him with proposing a streamlining of the existing welfare agencies that, by eliminating Federal food stamps, worsened conditions for the poor in forty-four states. What neither the President nor the National Council on Hunger concerned themselves with were the opposing forces—be they unemployed or employed, school dropouts or university students, black revolutionaries or labor militants—who would accept no minimal "reforms" that leave the existing rulers in command. Fannie Lou Hamer put it succinctly enough when she said Nixon is trying to bring all fifty states down to the miserable level of Mississippi—\$1600 a year for a family of four.

Nor was it only a question of opposing the military, newly armed with the mad AEM system for the destruction of mankind. This will certainly create greater opposition than even the anti-Vietnam war front. Many new layers in the population will, are demanding an end to Military Monolithism. The GIs who marched against the Vietnam war; the GIs who accepted jail rather than condoning this imperialist war; the GIs are showing the real measure of man - and it isn't war.

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There are also many, led by Black caucuses in the factories, who oppose as strongly capitalists armed with time-clocks which extract from them all those unpaid hours of labor to pay management's bloated profits and carry on the Government's imperialist adventures from the Bay of Pigs to the Congo, from Vietnam to reaching for the new global struggle for power via setting foot on the moon and reaching for Mars.

How can runaway inflation be combatted with all those wasted destructive and unproductive billions being spent on unspeakable, barbaric types of armaments without questioning their cost, much less the possible annihilation of mankind itself?

This is not to say that the masses are "backward", do not understand the totally new scientific era opened, and fail to comprehend the "neutrality" of science. Quite the contrary, they alone can penetrate through the great illusion.

First, because as workers they saw science's application via Automation. Indeed, ever since the split of the atom resulted not in the discovery of the greatest productive force on earth, but in the most destructive weapon of all, Americans have felt kinship with any who lived through the holocaust of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

By the 1960's, they surely feel totally alienated, not from foreigners, but from their rulers—governors of the ilk of Ronald Reagan who ordered the helicopters to gas the youth at Berkeley who fought for so simple a matter as a People's Park.

Without taking a single step outside of national boundaries, much less into outer space, the truth that stands out is this: there are two worlds in this imperialist land, in every existing society. The youth revolts will grow, the black struggles will deepen, the women's liberation movement will develop still newer forms of revolt.

In a word, the other America, the second world, the ceaseless struggles continue, not because masses are indifferent to scientific "miracles", but because they know that science within U.S. national boundaries cannot solve any fundamental problems.

The movement will not stop its ceaseless struggles for freedom under any illusion that science can do for people what it cannot do for itself, i.e. it cannot stop the application of science for the destruction of mankind.

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If only the "New Left's" attitude to state-capitalist communism, to the Sino-Soviet conflict as well as to the ramifications of philosophic thought, were as clear as is the Movement's attitude to U.S. imperialism and to science!

To see the philosophic ramifications in their deepest objectivity, it is imperative that we look at the bankruptcy of petty-bourgeois thought not only in the U.S.--but in Europe, especially in West Germany, all of it measured against objective reality.

(1) Bankruptcy of Petty-Bourgeois Thought

Nowhere is there greater need of the "labor, seriousness, patience and suffering of the negative" than in the land of Hegel. What confronts one in the birthplace of Hegel and Marx is very nearly unspeakable. Mini-Maoism in France is not serious because they did have a near-revolution, and the masses in motion were the very opposite of intellectuals playing with dialectic language. In Germany this is not so.

The present stage of the Sino-Soviet conflict; the change in world strategy on the part of both Communist giants; the possibility that West Germany might once again become the key to the international situation; in a word, the life-and-death need of independence from all three major, global state powers, and of truly revolutionary mass action, inseparable from a philosophy of total freedom, compels us to look at mini-Maoism, not from the vantage point of France where it was sheer rhetoric, but from where it would carry in its wake the greatest danger for the revolutionary movement. It is necessary, therefore, to examine Maoism itself, neither as apologists present it, nor merely to dismiss it as unspeakable barbarism, much less to take it at face value.

What we must deal with is why Maoism has such a pull on the revolutionary petty-bourgeois intellectuals.

After all, West Berlin is where they came running to from Communist totalitarianism in East Berlin.

From 1954, when East Germany played an outright counter-revolutionary role in crushing the very first proletarian revolt against Communist Totalitarianism and state capitalist work norms, all the way to the 1960's when the Berlin Wall was built to hem in the East Germans, totalitarianism had stood starkly naked, ugly, the very epitome of unfreedom. Moreover, the personal experience of many of the leaders of SDS was precisely the escape from Stalinism, not

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because West Germany was free, but you could function, function as a revolutionary and breathe again the heritage of Marxism, at least as theory.

The unspeakable must be questioned: how could mini-Maoism possibly arise here? The answer, I fear, lies in the nature of the Twentieth Century intellectual.

Let's begin, first, with asking how could the German intellectual liberal become a Nazi? As far distant as that appears from today's problems, Rauschnigg's confessional will throw an illumination on the crises of our epoch as well. He begins his description as to how Catholic Humanism (sic!) was non-political, compelled by the crisis to become politically-minded, and suddenly facing "the masses" from whom they had been isolated in their ivory towers:

There were the disturbing signs of a new time—the masses, the growing collectivism, the growing primitiveness, the decline in spiritual standards, the sequelae of the more and more radical technical revolution, the change in men, the mechanization of life, the growth of gigantic industrial organizations. There were also the material changes, the efficacy of the new instruments of power, the senselessness of small territorial systems, the dwindling of space and time. There were the new means of amusement and edification, permitting an undreamed-of influencing of the subconscious mind of the masses. These means of amusement—wireless, cinema, sport and so on,—turned into means of domination for those who could manipulate them.

So they, "the liberals", were challenged "by necessity" to be "leaders." "A body of leaders," he explains, "who would throw down the frontiers of past party formations"—"a new political and intellectual elite."

In the post-World War II holocaust, he questions the Western parliamentarians:

Can you place yourself in that situation? What would have been your feelings, in such circumstances, in regard to the Nazi movement? You have certainly heard all sorts of objectionable things about it. You let them pass; you say to yourself: "They are young men; we will teach them. Not everything is as hot in the eating as in the cooking. Young birds of this sort learn to moult—to turn over a new leaf." You will add: "A very unsavory set of leaders, rowdies on

masse among the old party comrades, and that appalling program, with its stupid paragraphs. But there is energy at the back of it, rhythm and new life. There are hundreds of thousands full of good will, of passion to devotion. That is political capital; it must not be squandered."

Any who are too ready to laugh at "rhythm and new life," and dismiss it all as mere apologia for Nazism—just turn to genuine left revolutionaries today in the U.S.A. as well as in Europe and ask yourself why we suddenly hear about "biological solidarity," "intuitively instinctual creative force that the young radicals see in...the Chinese Cultural Revolution"? The stress on intuition never fails when you have rejected the old subject—the proletariat—and then refuse also to subject your newly-minted "subject" to the dialectics of revolution.

Thus as academic Marxists forget their theory to embrace uncritically the "practice" of the "Cultural Revolution," fellow-travellers of Maoism in supposedly native American dress speak about the SDS as if it were synonymous with the Movement, how it "seems intuitively to recognize a variety of insurgency," and especially how its "existential agony" has freed it of what is supposed to characterize "the old," called "labor metaphysics." This is the coward's way of rejecting the proletariat as a revolutionary force by pretending you're healthily, earthily rejecting "labor metaphysics."

Whether it is the Existentialists or the Malraux-Rauschniggs who start from their own doubts, anguish, subjectivity, there can be no forward movement since there is no objectivity, no social being, no historic relations. The Individual is always Individual, never Universal, and the contradiction is with himself, lacking the objectivity of contradictory labor process, always bringing intellectual to "No Exit" instead of the contradiction in the Hegelian or Marxian sense of a higher ground emerging from the opposition, the class struggle, then hewing out the path to revolution.

The intellectual doubting himself, and looking for a mass movement to cling to and lead, brings us to the Maoist type of intellectual today. Russian Communism also offers mindless "activism" (the latest in the U.S.A. is the United Front Against Facism) where energy, violence, etc. is presented as if these were revolution and would answer all questions, provided the "intuition" is right.

I repeat, the intellectual who begins to doubt his

ability to lead isolated from the mass base, looks for a mass movement to which to cling. This is precisely what Communism of either variety offers and this, precisely this, is the danger.

The "attractiveness" of the Chinese form, where the Party bureaucracy is supposedly disciplined, not by the Army, not by Stalinist terror, but by the "Cultural Revolution" and its young "Red Guards" offers unification of worker and intellectual from above, externally, through "the new" Party. No thought is needed—Mao's Thought has all the answers—but there is plenty of activity, and youthful energy, a veritable new "life-process."

It all started with throwing away the Subject, which they dared arrogantly to label "the labor metaphysic." The show of "revolution" sees the proletariat enhance the intellectual's role, which is naturally much more to the lazy intellectual's liking than the responsibility for working out a new relationship of theory to practice which is fully dependent on the movement from practice which, in turn, is inseparable from the movement from theory, the two indivisible poles of the Absolute Idea.

Thus does the bankruptcy of thought which marks the bankruptcy of bourgeois civilization in its death agony suck in the revolutionary petty-bourgeois intellectual tossed about by endless crises and wars in isolation from the masses!

(2) 1969 Is Not 1968 Either in France or China;
Either in Russia or Czechoslovakia, or the U.S.A.

All in all, 1969 is a bleak year as compared to the new pages for freedom opened in 1968. The counter-revolutionary rollback began in mid-1968, it is true, but so heady were the events till then that even the rollback appeared but a transition point to battle on higher ground, and not to the real retrogression and Quislings a la Husak of Czechoslovakia.

1968 had opened up with Vietcong's Tet offensive which compelled a change in the direction of U.S. imperialism, helped considerably by the Movement in the U.S. forcing LBJ out of the running for the presidency as well as extending the anti-Vietnam war forces from youth and black to embracing the majority of Americans.

By Spring, 1968, the anti-Stalinist forces in Czechoslovakia had not only won a change in rulers, but the

mass media, the solidarity of workers and students, the appearance of new revolutionary forces from the philosophy halls to actual new groupings fighting against the Communist Party had all developed to a point where it looked as if independence from Russia and new relationships within Czechoslovakia could be achieved.

Above all, 1968 will be known in history by the events in France where, for the first time in a quarter of a century, in a technologically developed country, thousands upon thousands of student rebels and 10 million workers marched together and so shook the regime as almost to topple DeGaulle. None will forget this NEW page of freedom in an industrialized "affluent" land.

As against all these new doors to freedom opened in 1968, what do we face in 1969? In the "West" is the victory of Nixon, or the Republican Party's pursuit of LBJ's Vietnam War: the victory of Pompidou, i.e., Gaullism without DeGaulle. What we face in the East is not only splintered Communism, to which we have all been inured, but so total a shift in world strategy as to pose the possibility of war between Russia and China. Once each declares the other as Enemy No. 1, in place of U.S. imperialism, the inherent double crosses are endless. This is not just the polycentrism in Albania or Rumania the bourgeois ideologists babble about. These are 3 giants -- a qualitative, not a quantitative development.

Not as spectacular as the walk on the moon, but, in its immediate consequences as well as through debilitation in thought, a great deal more alarming, is the stage reached by the Sino-Soviet conflict. Its effects on the New Left are yet to be grasped in full.

Let us first grasp what happened objectively. Compulsions there are in the objective world for facing the reality of state-capitalism calling itself Communism now that the conflict between Russia and China has reached such extreme intensity as to pose the possibility of war between them.

Moreover, it is not "others" who do the posing. It is they themselves who do so, and not only on ideological grounds or varying nationalisms, but as a total shift in their world strategy which will call for new allies that may very well pale both the Mao-Chiang alliance in 1936 and the infamous Hitler-Stalin Pact in 1939.

It is impossible to see all the ramifications of so drastic a shift in world outlook, that the attacks on US imperialism as "Enemy No. 1" are reduced to mere ritual, while the real stress is put on the new development, that Russia and China consider each other as Enemy No. 1.

Thus, in January nothing short of a New Constitution was drawn up in China which first placed US imperialism and Russian "revisionism" on equal footing, and then worked itself up to calling the latter "social fascism."

By April, the "new" CP — or at least the "newly-minted delegates" (Snow's phrase) convened to approve the new Constitution. Beyond the peradventure of any doubt, it then became crystal clear that Lin's Army predominated both over the "old" Party and the new, young guard, or, more precisely put, the true, tried, old representative of the much-touted Cultural Revolution. Border incidents flared. All listened to General Lin's diatribe against "the new Tsars."

Following the April Congress, and further border incidents on the eve of the Moscow Conference of "world" CPs scheduled for June, came a propaganda film entitled "The Crimes of the New Tsars Against the Chinese People."

Not to be outdone in great power chauvinism, or in actual military buildup along the Ussuri border, came Russia's equally chauvinistic, equally patriotic version of the border incidents. Notwithstanding Brezhnev's promise not to place on the agenda of the "world" Congress the Sino-Soviet dispute — the Kremlin had decided to make the 75 CPs assembled in Moscow swallow a pill of very precise strength: that China be unmistakably declared as "Enemy No. 1."

Of necessity, everyone, everywhere will be touched by such a titanic life-and-death battle. From now on, not only will everyone in either Communist orbit be made to bear that cross, but so will everyone in the "New Left" who imagined that the Great Divide was "ideological." Moreover, the bear hug, with velvet gloves, will be so all-embracing as to cover everything, from a possible new role for the capitalist colossus of Europe — West Germany — to the mini-Maoist Black Panther Party in Oakland, California.

It is doubtful that a single person, in the SDS leadership or ranks (including the Black Panthers who came to help the SDS "originals" win a Pyrrhic victory over the Progressive Labor caucus) drew any connection between the April and June Garantuan meetings in China and Russia, and their picayune convention in Chicago.

If any at the chaotic, root-less convention bothered to look at the world outside their dingy hall, reality appeared as pure accident. Their preoccupation was presumably with "native roots."

Yet it is this pure American pragmatism, plus "Left" elitism, freed from all philosophic "jive", which led directly into the Great Divide in world communism — and not along "principled" mini-Maoist lines, but pure, unadulterated Russian "revisionism" laid out by that old Stalinist hack, Aptheker, who managed, at one and the same time, to usurp the time allotted the typical apolitical SDS new voice — Women's Liberation — and see that political battles ended in indiscriminate beatings-up of ISCers (who had been the first white radicals to associate with Black Panthers) and FLers.

It is such "pure accidents" that make up the course of history. It is not "native" but objective, class — bourgeois and petty-bourgeois — roots that laid the foundation for the entrapment of the "New Left" by the old Communist state-capitalism.

Whatever was new in the New Left's attitude to objectivity when first it came on the world historic scene with its distaste for "old" debates — which it, itself, now calls "mindless objections to ideology" — the truth is that this distaste not only covered up its lack of ideology, but it buried altogether the actual world. Insofar as the New Left was concerned, its attitude to objectivity, to the objective world, never encompassed the state-capitalist world calling itself Communist.

In a word, while it concerned itself, and rightly so, with the struggle against US capitalism, its racism, its imperialist wars, its failure to grapple with the reality of the rest of the world has, of necessity, and not by accident, led to its present entrapment by Communism.

Black Communism? Ah, there is the rub! The Black Panther present play notwithstanding, there is no such creature. Let me explain on 2 levels — AFRICA and USA.

II. BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL AND REVOLUTIONARY

Black was the color which made the 1960's so exciting an age to live in. The African Revolutions both shaped the course of history of a continent in the briefest period of any revolutions, and helped open up a whole new, Third World of Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. The African Revolutions broke out by their own force, overthrowing Western imperialism without any aid from the other pole of world capital: the Sino-Soviet orbit. It was one orbit then, and it called all its satellites "the Socialist camp."

Indeed, it was Africa's independent life and philosophy which helped produce a schism in the Communist orbit which began

to fight about leadership over this new third world. By calling these countries "the storm centers of world revolution," Mao's China seemed to have a propaganda edge. But this by no means meant that the Africans were accepting Mao's leadership over them.

Now then, black in the US helped create a whole new generation of revolutionaries, whites included. The youth in Greensboro, North Carolina in 1960, who were the first detonators of the new historic stage may have been as conscious about breaking from their quiescent elders as from white supremacy, but the truth is they stood on the shoulders of what black revolutionary adults had achieved. And one of the great heritages was the break from Communism during World War II when the American Communists had told blacks to forget about their battles for democracy "until after" they defeated fascism in Germany. It is always "until after" when it comes to white "civilization's" advice to black revolutionaries.

Furthermore, the vanguard role of the black masses in the US has both a past and a future. In its past, in being the touchstone of American civilization, it also had its own sense and type of internationalism. As Carter Woodson had put it in speaking of the Negro's heritage; "The race has a past and it didn't begin on the cotton and sugar plantations in America."

Nor was it the type of heritage one passes on as a family "heirloom." It was a living, breathing, continuous development. Thus, where the white rulers denuded a continent via the infamous triangular trade in slaves, rum and molasses, the blacks were exchanging ideas — the ideas of freedom especially —, experiences of black masses in action, and the aspirations for a new world.

There is not a single fundamental idea today, from Nationalism and Negritude (or Black Is Beautiful) to labor strikes and armed rebellion that wasn't born in the exchange of ideas, experiences, aspirations, in the human relationships between US Negroes, West Indians, and Africans. In a word, Black was Beautiful and Revolutionary.

This doesn't mean that the Africans didn't make their own revolutions and on broader bases, both in spontaneity of actions and depth of ideas. Nor does it mean that the West Indians, for example, didn't make their contribution to the development of American Negroes. To this day we haven't had a black leader with as great a mass following — in millions — as was Marcus Garvey in the early 1920's.

What I am saying is that, in the two-way road from Africa to America and back again — the American Negroes do have the advantages of living and struggling in a technologically advanced

land to which industrial labor is paramount, and, therefore, white labor, to win industrial unionism, had to unite with black labor. Together they changed the industrial face of America. No matter what has happened in the bureaucratization of labor since then, the early CIO is an experience that can be a stimulus to an altogether new stage of greatest significance to the American revolution.

Like their white counterparts, the Negro intellectuals do not understand the primary role of labor, and have an elitist attitude. DuBois called it "the talented tenth," and kept away not only from labor, but the black masses as a whole. Thus, despite his very great contributions here, and the relations to Africa, he nevertheless opposed Garvey; he was not to accept the concept of that Nationalism until very late in his life when, on the one hand, Africans had achieved state power, from Ghana on, and on the other hand, he had become a Communist.

This separation from the masses characterizes even today's black revolutionary leaders who speak of armed struggle and masses, but have opened no organization they belong to so that the masses can join. And the masses, especially youth, certainly wanted to associate with Stokely Carmichael and H. Rap Brown. But SNCC continued to be just a "staff organization."

The underlying philosophy of such attitudes to masses must now be broken down. Let's begin with the slogan that made Stokely Carmichael a household word: Black Power.

The year is 1964. The march is in the South and being led by Rev. King, but is actually the movement away from his influence. He did have a mass following, he did lead both labor and youth, and it had begun in 1955 with the Montgomery Bus Boycott. His highpoint was Birmingham, 1963, as he also began to approach the working out of a Humanist philosophy. But, by 1964, the developments from practice, and the aspirations for more than "civil rights" was loudly enough expressed, by the shiftover of the entire strategy around BLACK POWER.

Yet it was neither Carmichael, nor the one who followed him as head of SNCC, H. Rap Brown, who were in the leadership of the totally new, spontaneous outbursts from Harlem through Watts to Detroit, and which has not stopped yet.

When Carmichael wasn't travelling -- to Cuba, to Africa, or to "conferences" -- not with the masses but with other leaders and at others' congresses -- and H. Rap Brown wasn't making an individual headline like carrying a gun on a plane -- they were credited with -- and they certainly enjoyed being credited with -- these tremendous mass outbursts that were spontaneous, unled, revolutionary in their opposition to white society and in aspiration for a different world. While they went beyond Rev.

King, no leader has arisen since his tragic assassination to command such a mass following, or to be capable of unfurling any new philosophic banners.

On the contrary, Black Power was so vague in content, that it has since been taken over by all, including black capitalists, and this is where Nixon works his corruption. And don't think he isn't corrupting some blacks!

Or, take another excellent slogan by Carmichael, "Hell, No, We Won't Go," to express opposition to the Vietnam war. Instead of having it be either the jumping off for a movement, or be subjected to "the labor, patience, seriousness, suffering of the negative" which is required for working out a theory that would match the grandeur of the movement from below, Carmichael, in the one anti-Vietnam war demonstration in which he participated, insisted on marching separately from the white revolutionaries.

Carmichael and H. Rap Brown and the other black militants who acted as leaders did transmit a consciousness of black culture -- Black is Beautiful -- and did break up the dependence upon white liberals. But there they stopped. And if the movement is not at a stalemate -- it isn't their fault. It is because, objectively, the black mass revolt cannot be stopped. But it is also sans a philosophy which is needed to make revolution succeed.

The Black Panthers, for a period, looked like they were the answer. At least they did work in the communities. They did have a Party (instead of a mere staff) you could join. By being the major victims of police brutality, they learned that allies are needed, and white revolutionary youth were not only helpful for protection but could be worked with politically, as in the Peace and Freedom Party.

But soon it was obvious there was a Maoist twist to their propaganda, and this plus the elitism were self-paralyzing in attempts to develop either a mass movement or an independent theory, for the source of any serious theory is as dependent on the masses as a movement is impossible without them.

Now take the latest confrontation with Carmichael who had left SNCC to join the Black Panthers and now announced his break with the Black Panthers. Enter Gobbledygook.

Carmichael accuses the Black Panthers of "going white." Cleaver hits back with the accusation that "Carmichael has forgotten he is a black man." Then both appear at the Pan-African Cultural Festival in Algiers -- and what is being attacked there? Not "white-ism!" No, what is being attacked is "Negritude!" And both of them say, "Man, it's beautiful!" The Festival, of course; of the political speeches they say nothing, except as Doumediemno, the North African Arab who wants to lead Black Africa as well as

the Arab Middle East, sprinkles his speech with anti-Semitism; both Carmichael and Cleaver announce they are with the Arabs against Israel. But not a word about why Black Africa should no longer consider itself as beautiful and revolutionary as Arab North Africa or the Arab Middle East.

Perhaps Carmichael knew of UFAF's real sponsors but that is hardly the reason for his turning to Arabs, who most assuredly are not black Africans.

I have news for both, insofar as black Africa is concerned. This isn't the first time that the Arabs (who happened to have preceded even the white man in enslaving Africa south of the Sahara) were played up by black African leaders as revolutionists. Khrushchev was expert at that, and it is Nasser who was played up as the great leader, next, of course, to Osagyefo, the Messiah!

He was to find out that the black masses felt no such kinship with the Arab Africans -- and not because of the white color and Moslem religion, but because they as MASS wanted proof that, with political independence, they have achieved also a change in their daily lives, in the conditions of labor, in a philosophy not based on the "African Personality" which limits itself to the Leader.

The "Cult of Personality" ISN'T a black invention. It is white. It is Stalinist. It is Maoist. It is petty bourgeois. It is "Intellectual." It is elitist. As the Gambian high school youth said, in criticizing Pan-Africanism as too wide an umbrella hiding rising class divisions: "Can't we, just because we are the last to get our freedom, learn from these errors of the leaders of African socialism, and work out different, true Human relations?"

It isn't only the arrogance of an American -- though he be black, Stokely is an American -- telling the Africans, the Ghanaians in particular, that they must accept Osagyefo when they did not rise to his defense when he was toppled from power. It isn't, above all, that the new umbrella of "Unity" is a fraud, the sheepest hypocrisy since it, in fact, (1) hides many schisms, (2) is a cover-up for a departure from Negritude, and (3) attempts to hide the greatest of all African tragedies -- the near-genocide of Biafrans.

By now, Africans are looking for a total philosophy and not just black culture, exhilarating as that was. A philosophy of revolution demands what Hegel called "second negativity," that is to say, a theory and act that would not stop at the first negativity, of throwing off the yoke of imperialism, but would continue uninterruptedly, which Marx called the Permanent Revolution.

New human relations on native grounds means new relations also between leaders and ranks, and an internationalism that doesn't "neutrally" side with one or the other pole of world capital, but is truly independent both by moving from political to economic freedom, and from relations based only on government-to-government, but extends, instead, people to people.

It is here where the American black can play the biggest role, not through escapism a la Carmichael or Cleaver, but by preparing for his revolution in the US.

First and foremost stands what we do at the point of production. Black caucuses in factories are a great deal more decisive than junkets abroad. We do not here go into the actual pamphlet we are planning — you will discuss that in the Organization session. You all know its outline since it will have Charles Denby's article in New Politics as its basis.

Secondly, and again this is for concrete discussion elsewhere, we originally proposed before the Plenum was thought of, but not until after the Black/Red Conference, a pamphlet on Black as Vanguard, not as "The Leader," but as masses in revolt.

This is what "American Civilization On Trial," in 1963, laid the basis for, and indeed became a framework as well for the Youth's Resolution to the SDS convention on Race and Class.

This is what, beginning as early as 1943, was the foundation, not only for our unique position on the "Negro Question" and for labor in general, but also for our first encounter with Marx's Humanist Essays. (See Archives, re: unpublished part of the analysis of the Russian economy, entitled "Labor and Society.")

This is what, after the 1962 trip to Africa, became the reason for Philosophy and Revolution (the book was then entitled "Dialectics of Liberation"). And, in turn, this became the foundation for the Black/Red Conferences this year.

Thirdly, then, of our tasks is to finish Philosophy and Revolution. In a word, as the Resolution puts it, philosophy cannot be separated from revolution, nor revolution from philosophy, and, in unity, never was there a greater need for the encounter; as we put it in our draft thesis:

Never was the task of philosophy more urgent. Never was the dialectics of liberation in reality so in need of a dialectical philosophy. Never was the break between theory and practice more ominous, and the need for a unity of philosophy and revolution more indispensable to the freedom struggles the world over. The needed American Revolution is the one force that can unlock

world revolution and not only because USA is the mightiest imperialism and its disintegration frees the forward movement of humanity, but because the revolutionary forces here are not merely subordinate to the Third World. Rather, they are facing a developing revolutionary situation and philosophic release.

"Why Hegel?" (that is, why dialectics?) "Why Now?" (that is, why is it presently impermissible to separate philosophy and revolution) reveals the need for philosophy if we are to achieve a revolution that will not sour, as every revolution, from the Russian through the Chinese to the African, has soured. Philosophy and Revolution discloses the obstacles that lie on the path to revolution, not only the dominance and militarization of American imperialism, but also empiric thought that satisfies itself by naming a single imperialism as "Enemy No. 1," refuses to look at the totality of the world crises, insists on seeing only the external enemies, thereby failing to discern the internal revolutionary forces in each country.

The best way to concretize this is to see what a genuine revolutionary opposition within China is appealing to, daring to question, unfurling a banner even when it is circumscribed by the deification of Mao. Naturally, I'm not referring to so-called revisionists, or Liu Shao-chi who is of the very same ilk as Mao, except the former lost out and the latter won the inner Party struggle. No, I'm referring to those who are now being attacked as "Ultra-Leftists," "anarchists," who have forgotten that the "Cultural Revolution" had "completely" won out in 1967 and should not have continued it into 1968, much less 1969.

III. DIALECTICS OF LIBERATION

(1) Sheng-wu-lien

Sheng-wu-lien, or the Hunan Provisional Proletarian Revolutionary Great Alliance, consisting of 20 organizations, had, to get published at all, to start with "acceptance" of Mao's Thought, but, in actuality, it is clear that when they attack "the bourgeois state machine" they are, in fact, attacking Mao's state machine, as well as Lin's Army as "reformists," contrasting it to the revolution of 1949, and re-examining that too. Let them speak for themselves:

Intoxicated by his victory of February-March, Chou En-lai — at present the general representative of China's Red capitalist class — hurriedly tried to set up revolutionary committees in all parts of the country. If this bourgeois plan had been fulfilled, the proletariat would have retreated to its grave....

There are two essential points in the writings about the Army: (1) It is now seen that the Army now is different from the people's army before the liberation. Before the liberation, the Army and the people fought together to overthrow imperialism, bureaucratic capitalism, and feudalism. ... After the liberation, as the target of the revolution changed... to capitalist roaders (who) have become tools of suppressing revolution. ... In the same year, after Chairman Mao issued the orders for the Armed Forces to live in their barracks, (they are) separated from the masses.

(2) It is now seen that a revolutionary war in the country is necessary if the revolutionary people today want to overcome the armed Red capitalist class.

The 9th National Congress of the Party about to be convened... will necessarily be a Party of bourgeois reformism that serves the bourgeois usurpers in the Revolutionary Committees. ... the 9th Congress will not be able to thoroughly settle the question of where China is going and where the Chinese PLA is going.

To really overthrow the rule of the new aristocracy and thoroughly smash the old State machinery, it will be necessary to go into the question of assessment of the past 17 years ... the real revolution, the revolution to negate the past 17 years has basically not yet begun...

The basic social contradictions that gave rise to the great proletarian cultural revolution are contradictions between the rule of the new bureaucratic bourgeoisie and the mass of the people... establishment of a new society — "People's Commune of China!..

We publicly declare that our object of establishing the 'People's Commune of China' can be attained only by overthrowing the bourgeois dictatorship and revisionist system of the revolutionary committee with brute force. Let the new bureaucratic bourgeoisie tremble before the true socialist revolution that shakes the world! What the proletariat can lose in this revolution is only their chains, what they gain will be the whole world!

(Survey of China, Mainland Press #4190, Hong Kong)

(2) Logic as Stages of Freedom, Stages of Freedom as Logic, or The Need of American Revolution

Each generation must reinterpret Marxism for itself. Facing us immediately is the continuous black revolt, which is why it is so central to the American Revolution. The very fact that we needed to say Needed instead of "Coming American Revolution" shows that we are not in a revolutionary situation. But it is not as distant as either philistines or Euro-centered Leftists make it appear. It is not in the millenia, as the anti-Vietnam war movement's achievements show, and that involves not only black but white, and not only youth but adult and specific new forces like Women's Liberation. Indeed, this movement is greater than it, itself, is conscious of being, that is to say, it has not yet worked out a theory, but it is so objectively grounded in opposition to the existing society, that it everywhere stands out, as it did at the UFAA.

Even white labor -- without which we surely could not win as it is the majority -- is not as quiescent as it appears and, again, despite a goodly amount of racism, it has been acting with Black Labor, both on conditions of labor in the shop and in elections of blacks to Union posts. (Re-read also the article from Pittsburgh in N&L this Issue.)

As the Archives in their way show, the first post-war decade, 1945-55, white labor was in the forefront and conducted everything from a general strike to wildcats, and from opposition to automation, to raising philosophic questions on the kind of labor man should do.

By the time a new movement from practice arose -- in the mid-1950's -- when the Blacks moved into the vanguard position, white labor was first disoriented and then, by the 1960's, had come practically to a standstill. The vanguard role of the blacks can be seen not only in relationship to "its own" activity but in denoting the activities of whites. The coming recession, no matter how mild, will help that. And it is for this reason we are planning two mimeographed pamphlets on Blacks -- but with white labor in mind.

We are not sowing illusions on that score, but it is up to Marxist-Humanists not to be quiescent. With activity and without, the theoretic preparation for revolution never stops, for the very good reason that our age is full of soured revolutions — and the Third World is likewise at a transition point, if not at an impasse. As I expressed it both in the draft book and in "The Newness of our Philosophic-Historic Contribution," we here plunge deep into philosophic categories. While Lenin prepared himself, and the masses plunged themselves into revolution, Lenin did not philosophically prepare his Party. Whatever the reasons — and, in part, they were inescapable — the task has been left to us, and not with a so-called vanguard party, but with N&L Committees that refuse to throw onto the proletariat alone both spontaneity and philosophic preparation.

As you know, this is the year we are to finish Philosophy And Revolution, which will mark 1970, the year of the 100th anniversary of Lenin's birth, as a turning point in American Marxism. As a little anticipation of the new book, I would, therefore, like to end with showing the Logic, neither as only philosophic categories, nor even as Marxian economic categories, but as stages of revolution.

Since absolute negativity, or second negation, has the positive in it, the continuous revolution, and since this is a movement from abstract to concrete — from Universal to Individual, through Particular — all stages of revolution can be seen at nodal points where "I" overcomes "P", or, as we know it more precisely, the fixed particular of Totalitarianism or nationalized property = workers state.

Now then, let's take a stage from each of the 3 parts of Logic and see whether we can catch the mass movement in its dialectical development. How do we get to see the movement of thought, and the movement in revolution?

Science of Logic, as you know, has three books, the first of which is the Doctrine of Being. We don't get the categories — Universal, Particular and Individual — until the last book, but they dominate everything — the movement from abstract, universal, to concrete, the individual. In the Doctrine of Being, you have three sections: Quality, Quantity, Measure.

U = Quality -- a someone, a something. The Emperor, the King.
The One.

P = The quality gets transformed into its opposite, Quantity — many ones. People sometimes think that quantity is below quality. No, it's above it, because before you had only one, and now you have many. You have some democracy. Don't forget, Hegel's theory always starts at 500 B.C.

I = Now comes Measure, the highest form of being. You're on the threshold, you're going into essence. What is he talking about, the "Measure of Man"? Greek Democracy, the Polis; they had slave labor, but it was the foreigners who were slaves. The Greeks were free. So what we have is the stages of freedom: from Kingdom

to limited democracy, to the democratic state. You can take any section and begin saying what is the Universal, what is the Particular, what is the Individual, and you will discover that it's a stage of freedom. Hegel wasn't joking when he said all of history is the history of the consciousness of freedom.

Book I - Doctrine of Being

U - Quality = Emperor = One
 P - Quantity = Many = some = Democracy
 I - Measure = Greek democracy = Polis

Please note that P is the historic period, a particular, determinant mediation, not a description of particulars as used in the common terminology of brown hair or blue eyes or cuddly creatures to children, but the type of Particular which contains self-movement if it is to move to the "I", and not retrogress into a fixed particular like nationalized property.

Remember also, the "equivalent" to Being in Marx's Capital -- "Commodities and Money", or the market place. Marx said, as he was departing from the market place (i.e., the sphere of "Liberty, Equality, Property, and Bentham") that now, as he enters the factory, the worker looks as he expects nothing but a hiding, and that's exactly what he gets.

Lenin's profound grasp of the universal, and the individual in Hegel made him realize, however, that all the contradictions of capitalism are included in the simple exchange of commodities. Which is why he insisted that none of the Marxists had understood Capital, because it is impossible to understand Chapter I. for anyone who has not plodded through the whole of the Logic.

Now take the Doctrine of Essence and see the Movement there through Identity, Difference and Contradiction, or take the higher stage of Ground as classical political economy saw it -- labor as source of value -- through Essential Relation -- an actual production relationship -- in a hell of a battle with capitalism and you reach Actuality -- the class struggle itself, the crises -- Hegel's first statement of Absolute and Marx's general Absolute Law of Capitalism.

This leads us to our age of Absolutes or Book III, the doctrine of the Notion, that is to say the objective and subjective ways of how a new society is born.

In the case of Hegel, he was talking about the French Revolution. You had overthrown the king, you had a new society, you had freedom, and then you wound up with Napoleon, and not with a new society. So Hegel moved back to Mind. Notice that the movement from practice is in theory itself. When he goes over to Nature, he returns to Mind. You have a unity of what he had seen in Mind, checked against Practice, and now he will unite the two.

It didn't make any difference whether it was Being or Essence and now is Notion, it is Universal, Particular and Individual. Hegel says if you want to be bored to death, start with the Syllogism, the way metaphysics presents it. They tell you "all men are mortal," "Gaius is a man," therefore, "Gaius is mortal." What's new about that? It doesn't explain anything. It's been made into a cliché, it doesn't prove anything. As against boring metaphysics, let us see live rational dialectics.

Let's come to our age. What was Lenin's Universal? The new for Lenin was not Imperialism, but State and Revolution, and the Universal was "To a Man" — production had to be organized and run "to a man." It was a great universal but it was general. What was the Particular that put it into effect, so to speak? You had a Russian Revolution and it nationalized all property — so that was your particular. It was very good to begin with, but was it the concretization of all that "to a man" meant? Trotsky got stuck in this fixed particular. The Individual, the concretization, was Workers' Councils and Intellectuals' Councils. But to make "to a man" be all that Lenin meant it to be — the abolition of any division between mental and manual labor, is no easy task. Yet that is our aim, and that is our new universal — the concrete that "to a man" should have been. And is this dialectics of liberation that Philosophy and Revolution tries to answer.

Boring Metaphysics	U - "TO A MAN"
vs.	P - Nationalized Property
Live rational dialectics	I - Not only Workers' Control of Production
"All Men are Mortal"	But all, an absolute end to the Division Between Mental And Manual labor.
vs.	
Dialectics of Liberation	

The root of all totalitarianism is the reduction of the "I" to Ego as petty bourgeois self-expression, or Kantianism, away from "I" as concrete in the Hegelian sense of total; in a word, seeing in "I" a limitation instead of a RELEASE of mass creativity.

Now, how can we make it even more concrete on the very specific paragraph in the Absolute Idea regarding second negativity? Hegel says (III II. P. 47) that second negativity: "Is the turning point of the movement of the Notion.. for the transcendence of the opposition between Notion and Reality, and that unity which is the truth, rests upon this subjectivity alone."

In the second edition of Marrism and Freedom, in the Mac chapter, we speak of two kinds of subjectivity. It is true, but not concrete enough. So let's turn to Hegel (p. 485): "Insofar as the pure idea of Cognition is enclosed in Subjectivity, and therefore is an impulse to transcend the latter...(it) becomes the beginning of another sphere of science."

Marx, in the last part of Capital -- the Accumulation of Capital -- said something similar when he comes to the "Absolute General Law of Capitalist Accumulation" -- the unemployed army. He notes there that he will only indicate that which will be developed in Volumes II and III. The "indication" -- the "negation of the negation," "the new passions and new forces" is what it not only took two volumes to expand, but he again did not get to finish the final chapter, "Classes."

Neither did Lenin get to develop cognition as a "creative force," except in the rather hieroglyphic manner in which he referred to Bukharin as not having fully understood "the dialectic." Our heritage is thus dual. We must make it single, concrete, totally philosophic and totally revolutionary.

This is what we have to work out. This is our task. This is where Philosophy and Revolution will end, and the concrete revolution begin.

This is why we held the Black/Red Conferences.

This is why we carried through Philosophic Conferences, (in both instances, it should be added, non-members made their contributions; indeed, in some cases, objectively more valid ones than those "on the inside.")

This is why we posed the integrality of philosophy and revolution, not only for ourselves but for 100's on the outside. Actually, if you count the thousands whom I addressed on campuses, I spoke this year to some 2-3,000 youth -- black and white, women and men -- and to about 100 workers. It is also where we encountered Women's Liberation as well as the Chinese refugee who has consented to be the reader and researcher in Chinese original works for the Mao chapter.

This integrality of philosophy and revolution is paramount to every field of our activity for 1969-70, be that our concentration on proletarianization of membership, or the continued youth activities; be that the proposed black pamphlets both on caucuses in factories or black as vanguard which will relate both to ACOF and to Philosophy and Revolution. Or be that related to the most primary of all our tasks -- the financial responsibility of the minimal amount needed to assure the continued, regular appearance of NEWS & LETTERS.

In a word, the theoretic preparation for Revolution, begins and ends on two levels simultaneously -- in philosophy and revolution and in the practice of the needed American Revolution. Marx, in his day, called it "Development of Human Power which is its own end." (Capital, Vol. III, P. 955).

This is as good an ending as any for our Perspectives, and the hardest of all beginnings for the actual, the needed American Revolution.