

POST-CONVENTION DISCUSSION # 2

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Report on the Paper to
N&L Convention, Sept., 1982
by Eugene Walker

NEWS & LETTERS NEWSPAPER AS REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZER

- I. of our philosophy
- II. of our activities and our literature (or how the paper can participate in "Have Thumb, Will Travel")
- III. of our organizational growth-to-be, especially in the Black dimension, but as well in Labor, Women's Liberation, youth and Latino--and let us not forget intellectual

I. OF OUR PHILOSOPHY

"Prometheus Bound" in Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution discusses Marx before he fully broke with bourgeois society, concentrating on his Doctoral Thesis and Notes for the Thesis. Raya sums up this period as follows: "Marx himself had not yet discovered 'another element,' a new beginning, a Subject; but that is what he was searching for--and Freedom was the ground."

These years in which Marx was opening the door of his revolutionary journey, were ones in which he grappled with philosophy in and for itself--in the doctoral thesis on Democritus and Epicurus--and were ones in which he first chose how he would make philosophy concrete or, as he termed it, "worldly"--as revolutionary journalist first as writer and then as editor of Rheinische Zeitung.

Perhaps we can be so bold as to call this his first "methodology and politicalization," as we look at our own revolutionary Marxist-Humanist journalism in the light of this period of Marx's journalism.

The foremost topic of Marx's newspaper writing in 1842-43 was the question of freedom of the press. Marx's first article was a Critique of the Prussian Censorship instruction. But Marx's critique could not be published in Germany when written in 1842. Because of censorship it was not published until 1843 and then only in Switzerland.

His first articles for Rheinische Zeitung found him commenting on the Debates on Freedom of the Press that were occurring in the Rhine Province Assembly. And immediately he wanted to make the connection between the people of a nation, its press, and revolution: "The Revolution of a people is total; that is, each sphere carries it out in its own way; why not also the press as the press? ...the press is the ruthless language and manifest image of the historical spirit of the people..."

Marx's writings continue to take up government control of the press. He attacks the failure of other newspapers to fight this censorship. He provides devastating critiques of the bills being debated and passed, ranging from divorce and so-called theft of wood, to elections to the assembly, and so forth.

While Marx's search for a revolutionary subject will not come to full fruition until the Silesian weavers uprising and his year in proletarian Paris, there is no doubt from his articles on "The Debates on Thefts of Wood," and from his brilliant defense of the Correspondent from the Mosel under attack by the Oberpräsident of the Rhine Province, that his heart and soul were with the poor who gathered wood and with the Mosel wine-growing peasants who could not make a living.

However, what is most central to us and our revolutionary journalism today is to see how Marx chose to bring philosophy directly into his revolutionary journalism, as newspaper questions of the time. In response to the leading article in Kölnische Zeitung, which stated, "To spread philosophical and religious views by means of the newspapers, or to combat them in the newspapers, we consider equally impermissible," Marx answered in the Rheinische Zeitung:

Since every true philosophy is the intellectual quintessence of its time, the time must come when philosophy not only internally by its content, but externally through its form, comes into contact and interaction with the real world of its day. Philosophy then ceases to be a particular system in relation to other particular systems; it becomes philosophy in general in relation to the world, it becomes the philosophy of the contemporary world. The external forms which confirm that philosophy has attained this significance, that it is the living soul of culture, that philosophy has become worldly and the world has become philosophical, have been the same in all ages... Philosophy comes into the world amid the loud cries of its enemies, who betray their inner infection by wild shouts for help against the fiery ardour of ideas. This cry of its enemies has the same significance for philosophy as the first cry of the new-born babe has for the anxiously listening ear of the mother: it is the cry testifying to the life of its ideas, which have burst the orderly-hieroglyphic husk of the system and become citizens of the world... The question whether philosophical and religious matters ought to be discussed in the newspapers dissolves in its own lack of ideas.

When such questions become to interest the public as questions for newspapers, they become questions of the time.

Think of it: Marx had philosophy present, not concretized, not fully worked out, but nevertheless present before he had the revolutionary subject, the proletariat emerging. He thus could anticipate a revolutionary birth, and indeed could only recognize it fully because of that world outlook he was already in the process of formulating. When such a philosophic opening becomes fused with the birth of a subject of revolution--a new continent of thought is discovered, a forty-year long journey of revolutionary praxis is begun.

When we speak in the 1980s of "a passion for philosophy," is that not a further manifestation of how philosophy, revolutionary philosophy, has become contemporary? How the world has become philosophical? Are we not long overdue to finally fully burst asunder the orderly-hieroglyphic husk of this class-ridden, racist, sexist system, and is not philosophy, when concretized, as in revolutionary journalism, an indispensable weapon to be used in this task? With this in mind, let us turn to philosophy in our own revolutionary journalism.

We too had philosophy right from our start. Otherwise we could not have begun N&L newspaper as it was. To have a Black worker as editor meant not simply that we were glorifying the movement from practice, or even alone showing that we were listening to it. No, it was that we were spelling out very specifically, very concretely, what we meant by a movement from practice as a form of theory. That is the beginning of our unique contribution. Others too have recognized that there is a movement from practice. But only we have spelled out what that means for our age--its link to a world-historic philosophic view--as a form of theory. Our shaping as a Marxist-Humanist tendency, as a Marxist-Humanist newspaper, began with these first issues of News & Letters.

Philosophy was there from the beginning, but as in Marx's first journalism, the journey was just beginning and the challenge was to work out its concretizations as the new subjects of revolution came to the fore in the 1950s and 1960s. In my report to the Resident Editorial Board this past June, in a section I called "The shaping of N&L by the three books," I developed the following: "A real dividing line for the paper comes with the publication of M&F. It was only with the appearance of M&F that the content of the articles from the shops, the freedom activities of the Black movement and elsewhere began to more fully catch what it meant by saying there was a movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. It was at that stage that I believe we began to have an appreciation of the fact that indeed you needed a certain philosophic preparation in order to be able to discern such a movement from practice. It was no automatic full change. When Marxism and Freedom was first published there was no review of it within the pages of N&L. Only with the paperback edition of 1964 did we first fully review it. However, by the 1960s a change really had appeared under M&F's impact. Not only did the activity articles have a very different character of worker as reason, but we were writing under the impact of the growing Black movement, and the opening up of the 3rd World with lots of articles from the African Revolutions. Where before

many of the early leads did not deal with the objective situation worldwide, the leads now in the 1960s did undertake a world analysis, did take up those topics which were the headlines in the world. We were rooting ourselves within the movement from practice.

"And yet, what of the other dimension of the absolute idea--the movement from theory towards practice, and theory's grounding in philosophy. Here in the 1960s, Dunayevskaya was that philosophic enclave which the organization was not matching. There is naturally no way to here trace all the specifics which stamp the character of the mid-1960s N&L as compared to the 1950s N&L. And while the changes between the '50s, '60s, and '70s of N&L do become very great, it is not a question of absolute, abrupt changes, but it is also true that you can trace these changes very much to the philosophic development that was ongoing within the organization at the time."

It was at that point where I proceeded to take up examples of the various Who We Are statements and Financial Appeals as a way of seeing how we chose to present ourselves in the paper as organization, as a Marxist-Humanist body of ideas. I then continued:

"It is with the coming and actual publication of Philosophy and Revolution that the idea of the movement from practice as a form of theory becomes joined in the paper with the discussion of theoretical and philosophical questions in parts of the paper other than Raya's writings. That philosophy becomes a subject which other writers are willing to take up. The columnists for N&L by the mid-1970s are willing to try and tackle theoretical questions in some of their writings. It is this period which finds us in 1975 publishing the Draft Perspectives in the August-September issue and creating a very new type of Who We Are box which situates our founding within what we now publicly designate as new movements from practice which are themselves forms of theory, and talk about M&F and P&R spelling out the philosophic ground of Marxist-Humanism for our age. I think that it was only at this stage that the movement from theory began to be fully articulated as part of who we were."

With the new book being worked out in the most recent period, a tremendous new step is made in the history of Marxist thought. This comes with the publication of no less than three draft chapters of the new book in the pages of our paper. Where, in the history of the Marxist movement, have such chapters of a Marxist revolutionary work been published not as a review in a radical intellectual journal, but in an internationalist, Black, women's liberation, youth, proletarian newspaper? It is as epochal for our age as the fact that Marx published Wage Labor and Capital in Neue Rheinische Zeitung in 1849.

But now, with the impending full publication of the new book, and with two years of publishing a 12-page N&L, we want to ask

what the new book will bring forth. One of the most immediate areas of our activity with the new book is "Have Thumb, Will Travel." What will be its effect on our paper? This leads to the second section of my report.

II. NEWS & LETTERS AS REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZER OF OUR ACTIVITIES AND OUR LITERATURE

Here I want to restrict myself to two subjects--1) "Have Thumb, Will Travel" around the three books, and 2) the paper as foundation for N&L pamphlets.

As I said, how will "have thumb will travel" around the new book and a quarter century of Marxist-Humanism affect the newspaper? You may think that this is totally new ground which we will have to work out in the process of doing. And in one way this is certainly true. But in another sense N&L has been a part of "have thumb will travel" for quite awhile. Every major trip abroad to Europe, to Africa, to Latin America, to Asia, has in turn been reported within the paper of our organization. Raya's 1959 trip to Europe led to the creation of a British labor page beginning in Jan. 1960 (1) as well as important articles on the rise of DeGaulle in France. Her trip to Africa in 1962 led to first-hand reports from African revolutionaries. Her trip to Japan and Hong Kong in 1965 led to a very organizational report in the Feb. 1966 N&L (2) and to the Two Worlds on "Alienation and Revolution, a Hong Kong interview" which would become a section within the Mao chapter of P&R. More recent trips such as Kevin's and Olga's trips to Europe and Ann's to Peru, Nicaragua, and Mexico this past year have led to important leads and other articles. Ann's trip has led to a continuation of stories from Latin America that have helped to anchor the Latino section within our paper. At home Denby's trips to the South have frequently been the subject of leads and columns. No doubt his and Mike's most recent trip will be reflected in the October issue as well.

I have mentioned how we have had "have thumb will travel" in the paper at an earlier period. However, I want to point out the very new way that we are hoping "have thumb will travel" will be used to connect book, organization, and newspaper. The paper occasionally had an article entitled "With the Committees" which reported on some of the organization's activities. It was not particularly successful. But we do want to reflect our organizing for Marxist-Humanism within the pages of the paper over the next year. We are going to be looking at the type of reports our travelers from around the country send in. We want to see the very specific ways that they create for projecting the book in different locals. Sometimes the history of where you will be going is one way of speaking to the audience there. Isn't St. Louis the home of the first General Strike in America and might that not enter into how the book could be projected by a traveler there?

What is happening in Seattle, home of the 2nd General Strike in the U.S.? I hope that our West Coast "have thumb will travel" travelers will be able to tell us as they project the three books in the Northwest this coming year. If, in turn, these travels are reported to the center in terms both of sales and placements of the book, and of conversations and dialogues, and ways of presenting Marxist-Humanism, then I believe we in the center can in turn work to create a type of "On The Road With Marxist-Humanism" report which will share with our N&L readers the organizational projection of Marxist-Humanist ideas. We look forward to such reports from all of you.

I want to briefly take up this most extraordinary brochure and one way it can be used in relation to our newspaper. First it should be thought of, of course, for lecture possibilities. But, as well, as a magnificent concretization of two of the books' themes and a review of some of the writings and activities of our national chairwoman. Thus I would like to suggest that we reproduce almost the entire brochure in the two center pages of News & Letters with a short editor's note to our readers telling them that Raya Dunayevskaya will be undertaking a national tour in conjunction with the new book and, if they are interested in having Raya in their area, they could write us for further information.

What I am speaking of here is how the paper is ground for so much of our organizational work, and how it can become so in new ways during the year ahead. Let me speak about paper as ground in one other area--our pamphlets. The paper is the monthly expression of the ideas which are expressed in their most comprehensive form in our theoretical works. Between these two forms has come our pamphlets. A pamphlet like Marx's Capital and Today's Global Crisis actually contained four chapters from Marxism and Freedom on Capital. From early on in our committees, quite a number of our pamphlets were first expressed, and sometimes fully printed, within the pages of News & Letters. This has included both theoretical works such as Marx's Humanism and State Capitalism, written in response to a Japanese comrade's contribution on state capitalism (3) as well as voices from below like Freedom Riders Speak for Themselves.

In one remarkable six-year period of pamphleteering, commencing inside the pages of N&L, we wrote and produced the following pamphlets and an actual chapter to Marxism and Freedom:

- June/July 1959 - Afro-Asian Revolutions (4)
- Aug/Sept. 1960 - Workers Battle Automation (5)
- Aug/Sept. 1961 - Freedom Riders Speak for Themselves (6)
- January 1962 - "The Challenge of Mao tse-Tung" chapter which would be added to M&F (7)
- Jan. & Feb. 1963 - American Civilization on Trial (8)
- Jan. & Feb. 1965 - Raya's two editorial articles that would form the basis of the Free Speech Movement and Negro Revolution pamphlet (9).

When Prague Spring '68 happened and then later the Russian invasion, we had a number of articles which became transformed into our pamphlet Czechoslovakia: Revolution and Counter Revolution. More recently the pamphlet on Latin America's Revolutions drew two of its contributions from essay articles appearing in the paper. And, of course, 25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S. was presented in the pages of N&L as a way to launch the regular 12-pager two years ago.

Look at the integrality of philosophy, of newspaper, of organization. The books could not have been written if they were not informed by the practice of this Marxist-Humanist organization and its newspaper, just as the books in turn have and are continuing to shape our organizational and journalistic form. But the key now becomes not alone to "know" of the integrality of form and content, book and paper, organization and philosophy, but the actual practicing of it inside and especially to the outside. Here too the paper can be seen as revolutionary organizer.

III. N&L AS REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZER OF OUR ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH-TO-BE, ESPECIALLY IN THE BLACK DIMENSION, BUT AS WELL IN LABOR, WOMEN'S LIBERATION, YOUTH AND LATINO--AND LET US NOT FORGET INTELLECTUAL

In thinking about the paper as revolutionary organizer of our growth-to-be, I want to begin with the Black dimension and how we have projected that Black dimension through the pages of N&L in the past year and over the past quarter century. I am doing so not as review but as anticipation of the Black dimension as a focal point of our organizational perspectives in the year ahead.

Look at the triangular trade of freedom ideas this past year which saw the Haitian refugee stories in Workers Journal and in Black/Red View, saw an essay by Ugokwe on "Nigeria: Oil Boom, Oil Doom, Crisis" and saw the in-person reports from Alabama on the Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March. Or take the development of the Black South as a category as present in the "Land and Freedom in Loundes County" dialogue. These latter two articles laid the basis for Denby's and Mike's trip to the South. Or Lou Turner's report on the rallies occurring around Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday; or the dimension of Black women in the dialogue on This Bridge Called My Back which has resulted in an exciting exchange of letters between a Black woman's studies teacher and Diane Lee. And Bobbie's report of the Black women who protested the police shooting of a Black woman in Los Angeles, and the Black women of Medgar Evers College who wrote in our last issue. Or the in-person reports and special interviews conducted by Ray McKay from the Pilgrimage to Washington through the Willie Turks protest in New York. Or the meeting the Los Angeles local had with Eddie Carthan of the Tchula Seven. Or the reports from the streets, whether it be the unemployment offices here in Detroit or the demonstrations in LA. Or the latest editorial based on John Alan's writings on the government report of the Miami Rebellion and the ongoing Black revolt.

While this is a tremendous sweep of the Black Dimension over the past year, it is not an exception in our pages. Go back over 25 years of N&L from its founding with a Black production worker as editor, with the section on Negro News each issue of our early years, the serialization of the first edition of Indignant Heart in our paper. Take the category of N&L pamphlets which I mentioned earlier and look at how the Black dimension was within our pages with Afro-Asian Revolutions '59, Freedom Riders '61, ACOT '63, FSM and Negro Revolution 1965. Or how we turned over the pages of N&L to reports from the outside such as Charles Butts, Editor of Mississippi Free Press, Oct. 1962 (10), an in-person report of the 2-million strong Nigerian Workers' General Strike in 1964 (11), or the eyewitness accounts of the Watts Revolt in 1965 (12).

Or what about the tremendous range of columnists through the years who have written alongside Charles Denby: Ethyl Dunbar's "Way of the World," John Allison's "On the Line," John Alan's "Black/Red View." Or the other continuing special features such as South Africa's Black Consciousness Movement with Steven Biko's ideas on our front page, 1977, or Lou Turner's "Black Reality/Black Thought" essay of 1980.

And yet and yet and yet--with all of this creativity within the Black dimension that we have presented in our pages--we have not yet had the organizational growth we should, and that indeed we must, have in this coming period. I am searching for the concept or the word that would capture What To Do in this area: How do we take into ourselves all these 25 and more years of experience on the Black Dimension which I am only touching the surface of here--and then express and share it with others; Black women and men, in such a way that they see the organization and its monthly newspaper as an expression of their own aspirations and strivings for full freedom? That growth in the Black dimension remains a most crucial focal point in the year ahead. Tomorrow when Denby and Mike Connolly speak on their trip, you will hear of new openings of Marxist-Humanism in the Black South. I know that all the locals do have a focal point on the Black Dimension which we see reflected in the articles that do come into N&L each month. The key now is how to make that leap between the magnificent work we have done on the Black Question, so often expressed within the pages of our paper, and the fact that we are not an abstract body of ideas, nor are we alone the concretization of revolutionary ideas within a newspaper; but that we a Marxist-Humanist organization where the challenge is now to present all these ideas and activities to those we meet who are active in the Black struggle in a manner so that they will recognize their own history, their own present activities, their own thoughts and ideas for a future--indeed so that they recognize this organization as their organization.

While the Black Dimension remains a focal point of our needed growth, we cannot in any sense forget other crucial dimensions for that American Revolution. Take labor and anti-nuke youth, and look at the very special bridge between them than an article like

Ned's in the Youth Bulletin can create. Naturally we want to print excerpts of it in an issue of N&L soon. But the key will be that a living Marxist-Humanist will take that article and begin a dialogue in the anti-nuke movement and with workers so that such an article can become a Marxist-Humanist living relationship with others.

Or take women's liberation and don't wait for the next issue; use the Aug/Sept. one. Begin with Suzanne's article on Margaret Fuller's revolutionary life, women's liberation page 2. Combine it with today's struggles--the women at the Farm Labor Organizing Convention, Latin page 5, the women at Medgar Evers College, Youth page 11, the Mothers of the Plaza Del Mayo, OLAT page 12, Janet's article on Life at U.S. Auto Radiator, labor page 3--and create a way of speaking about that totality of how we take up WL as an idea whose time has come comprehensively and concretely. But it needs to be done in person, in one-to-one, on the road as part of "have thumb will travel."

Or look at the new developments we have made internationally on Latino, especially with women in Peru, including the translation of RD's writings on women into Spanish. This past few months has seen a regularization of our Spanish supplement to N&L. I think it is an exciting beginning. But our work with Latinos certainly needs to be extended and concretized, especially here in the U.S. I am anxious to hear from all the locals as to how they have been working with the Spanish supplement and, even more, how they plan on working with it in the new year.

In this year of publishing three books there is a need to win serious radical intellectuals to our committees. Both on the campus and off, we need to make an appeal. Again this specific Aug/Sept. issue with Raya's Theory/Practice on Hobsbawm and Rubel becomes a magnificent take-off point for such dialogues with intellectuals if we are conscious of N&L newspaper as a revolutionary organizer of our growth-to-be.

I have indicated some points of departure within the pages of N&L. But I am sure that each of us would come up with our own way of presenting Marxist-Humanism to others through the pages of N&L. The point becomes to undertake that task as only each individual can.

Report on Organization to N&L Convention, Sept. 1982
by MIKE CONNOLLY

Meeting the Challenge from Practice--and from
the Self-Determination of the Idea

In this most unique Convention, and in the 90 days of discussion which preceded it, everything has revolved around methodology and politicalization, around the process by which a philosophy of revolution gets concretized. It is a task that is never "finished," that must constantly be renewed. Thus, this year, when, with the publication of all three fundamental works of Marxist-Humanism, we stand at a summation of a 30-year movement--from Raya's 1953 breakthrough in her letters on Absolute Idea and Absolute Mind, through M&F and P&R to the current work, RSWLM PR--the title of the Perspectives still begins: "What to Do?"

In one sense, the need to begin again, as we consider organizational perspectives for next year, emerges out of the new political-economic crises and the new mass freedom movements worldwide. They are testing all revolutionaries, ourselves included. But in considering organization--our organization--this year, the need to begin again comes also out of the challenge from a 140-year journey in the self-determination of an Idea--Marx's concept of revolution in permanence. With the publication of RLWIMPR, a challenge is thrown out to all post-Marx Marxists to rethink what Marx had posed in the last decade of his life: new paths for development, new revolutionary forces, new relations between so-called "backward" lands and "advanced" ones. It is within that last decade that we now see permanent revolution posed as the foundation for organization as well, in his 1875 Critique of the Gotha Program. In critiquing those who called themselves Marxists, but who wished to subordinate theory to what they saw as the dictates of activity with other groups, what Marx showed is that either philosophy is the basis for revolutionary organization, or you don't have any truly revolutionary ground. Instead of theoretic preparation for a new society, you help provide room for yet another face of capitalism.

Today we can see that Marx's CGP lay unrecognized as relevant to organization for nearly 100 years, even by the best of Marxist revolutionaries, and even when they had to confront the problem of separation between spontaneity and organization the day after the revolution. It was only in our age, with the 1953 breakthrough on

Hegel's Absolutes, at the same time that new movements from practice were arising--from the USA to East Europe to Africa--that the possibility was opened for a new relationship between the creativity of the spontaneous mass movements and revolutionary organization. All organizational questions thus had become philosophic questions as well, if only we were fully conscious of what new ground had been established.

Unfortunately, that full consciousness has never come easily or quickly, not even when a theoretic leap anticipates a whole new historic stage, as P&R did. Exactly ten years ago, at the 1972 News and Letters Convention, we saw for the first time the full Table of Contents of that soon-to-be published work, much as we are now engaged in preparing for the appearance of RLWLMPR. Today, with the new edition of P&R in hand, the 1982 introduction suggests how incompletely we grasped what was new then, especially in its Chap. 1, "Absolute Negativity as New Beginning."

The new Introduction urges us to restudy Chap. 1, singling out the final pages of that chapter as crucial. There Raya takes up the three final syllogisms of Hegel's Philosophy of Mind, including the last (#577), where Hegel sums up everything in the "Self-Thinking Idea," the "self-bringing-forth of liberty." You would think that there is nothing further removed from organization. Yet it is precisely there, as we get to those final syllogisms, that the form of concentrating solely on Hegel and leaving today for Chap. 9 is suddenly broken. And it is here that Raya introduces not only the 1953 East German uprising, but a footnote directly on ourselves. Referring to her 1953 Letters on the Absolute Idea, we read: "as it turned out, this proved to be a new divide within Marxism between those who stopped at the economic analysis of Russia as state-capitalist and those who proceeded to develop the Humanism of Marxism for the state-capitalist age."

Again and again, in the years immediately following P&R's publication, RD turns to "our original contribution" with the three little words--"as new beginning," stressing that it demands a new form of organizational functioning as well. With the advantage of the intervening years, we can ask whether we really believed and practiced in our activity the idea that it was philosophy, and precisely our original contribution to philosophy, that was the basis for organizational growth.

P&R was published in Nov. 1973, scarcely a year before a new economic crisis was to burst upon the world, with ramifications far different from any of the post-war recessions. New kinds of revolutions burst out, from Portugal to Africa, from Lebanon to Nicaragua, from Iran to Poland. Post-Marx Marxism did attack the

question of the economic crisis. But it did so without any re-thinking of its stunted view of Marx's greatest work, Capital. Thus Marx was presented by the Mandels and Cliffs as if his theory were as bereft of Subjects of revolution and dialectics of revolution as their own. The relationship of Marx to Hegel, and of "revolution in permanence" to "Absolute Negativity" remained unexamined by them.

It was the revolutions of the 1970s that raised in a new way the relationship of spontaneity to organization, of "what happens after" the revolution to forms of organization created in the struggle. And new forces of revolution arose to challenge the old concepts of how total an uprooting was needed, including an uprooting of the old ways of thought. The Portuguese Revolution raised the banner of apartidarismo (non-partyism) and as well became the signal that henceforth no new revolution could emerge without being tested by the new worldwide Women's Liberation Movement. In South Africa a new consciousness--the Black Consciousness Movement--demanded an end to all the old cliches on the relationship between national consciousness and internationalism. Everywhere the new questions emerging from practice found the old truncated Marxism wanting, and searched for new beginnings in philosophy and in organization.

Yet, for ourselves, active as we were in every freedom movement from the shops to women's liberation, and from Black freedom to anti-war, organizational growth remained difficult. Too often there was a tendency to think that wider and more intensive activity in the movement was the path to winning new members. In contrast, it was in that period that the Political-Philosophic Letters were written, letters such as the one on Lebanon which in 1982--six years later--is such a revelation to many who study it now, because it is so totally rooted in the problematic of what happens when philosophy and organization do get separated, as they did in the Lebanese Civil War of 1975-76.

What the years following the publication of P&R ask us today is whether we drew the correct organizational-political conclusions about "Who We Are," not only in the statement we put in each issue of N&L, but in all our work. That is why, in posing organizational perspectives for Marxist-Humanism this year, we have insisted that as we widen our activities with all the freedom movements, and focus on Black America's struggles, we place at the center of all our work the unique contributions of Marxist-Humanism over 30 years--and with all three books.

It is not a question of a "dictate" to follow; rather it is a connecting with the underlying reality of our age, a reality which more and more is coming to express its appearance in the 1980s.

With the Iranian Revolution of 1979, we did first attract revolutionaries on the basis of a total view of Marx--and of Marxist-Humanism. That view has been profoundly presented in their paper, E&A, and in the many Farsi publications of Marxist-Humanist works, as well as in the exciting dimensions of woman and youth from which News and Letters Committees has benefited. This summer Marxist-Humanist literature has also appeared for the first time in Arabic, in the translation of the PPL on Begin's Israel, a work written last winter, when Begin was annexing the Golan Heights, but which seemed even more timely when his armies launched their genocidal war in Lebanon.

For ourselves here in the USA, it could be said that it has only been with the developments around the new book, beginning with the 1980 Convention, that we began to draw the organizational conclusions of P&R, viewing our original philosophic contribution as the basis for organizational ongoing activity. In the past year that work has resulted in significant new membership growth. We have only scratched the surface both on the quantity of new members needed for the tasks facing American revolutionaries today, and on the historic problem of philosophy and organization as Marx posed it in CGP. But what we are beginning to see in our work with each of the forces of revolution, is how presenting Marxist-Humanism as a total view emphasizes not abstractions, but the practicality of philosophy.

Take labor--the dimension of rank-and-file workers in the USA 1982. There are plenty of new "facts" being used to describe that dimension. We could list the contract concessions and the closed plants, the runaway shops and the decertifications. (The percentage of unionized workers is the lowest since the early years of the CIO.) The union bureaucracy, which has already forgotten the 500,000 who marched on Solidarity Day in Washington, D.C., thinks that significant facts are the number of Democrats elected on Nov. 2. The radicals are busy running their own candidates for union offices to bring in a slate that will be more militant, (or so they say). Both have ignored the way the ceaseless economic crisis has created a whole new underclass of workers--in non-union or "might as well be" non-union sweat shops one day, on the unemployment lines the next. But when we do single out that very different "fact," it is crucial to see that it is not an economic question alone.

In our work this year what first combined the new emerging from RLWLMPR, with workers facing these conditions, was Raya's Lead in the April N&L on the global recession and the military build-up. It was under the impact of that politicalization of the supposedly rarefied air of Capital, Vol. 3, that several workers at Felix

Martin's closed GM South Gate plant decided to turn their discussions into a study group.

In Detroit, we joined striking workers at U.S. Auto Radiator on their picket lines, along with many other radicals, each with their "programs" for the strike and opposition to the UAW leaders. But at both GM South Gate and US Auto Radiator, the workers who became close to Marxist-Humanism and finally decided to join us, Janet and Ned, were looking for much more than a new union caucus. Read Ned's appeal to the anti-nuke youth to recognize the war going on in production; listen to Janet's excitement when she presents Sojourner Truth's challenge to Frederick Douglass from RLWEMPR and relates it to the WLM today; and you will have an entirely different view of the "nature of mind," and think of many new ways to present M-Hism in labor struggles, next year, beginning with the exchange of letters with Japanese auto workers.

This past year has also been the one that saw Reagan help put the Latin American revolutions before the US public, especially with El Salvador. And surely the whole Left has joined in opposing Reagan's adventures there. But what we have seen, as we worked with CISPES or with Guatemala support groups--both from Latinos and from young Anglos in solidarity with Latin America--is a hunger for discussion of the ideas of freedom, for a working out of how to see that Latin American revolutions do not remain in those "half-way houses" Raya spoke about, as unfinished revolutions. Nowhere was this more true than in Sergio's activity at Cal State-LA and in Anne's trip to Peru. For Sergio, giving classes in Marxist-Humanism at Cal State was at the same time a quest for a philosophy for the Chicano liberation struggle. And for Anne's Peruvian hosts--the socialist-feminists of ALIMUPER--the excitement they felt in learning about the new book was indicated not only by their initial request for a meeting centered around getting to know RL; but a second meeting on getting to know Marxist-Humanism. Again and again they commented, both during and after the trip, on how Marxist-Humanism was bringing together what the Left (both in Latin America and the USA) had separated--women's liberation and the Latin American revolutions.

Indeed, as you will see in Suzanne's report on women's liberation, what brought us national and international recognition this year, whether from Anne's trip or from the essays by Urszula on Poland or Neda on the Middle East, was the concept of Woman as Revolutionary Reason as it was first fully developed in Part II of RLWEMPR. The excitement felt by WLists as far distant as Manushi in India for that concept was clearly connected to the new illumination they felt it shed on their concrete struggles.

Jim will shortly be reporting on the work of the IMHYC, and the results of their national meeting on Friday. But you have already met their newest member, Laurie, through her article on "Challenges to the Anti-Nuclear Movement" in the Youth DB. All the locals have been working in that movement this year, with our participation in the June 12 mass mobilizations in NY and the Bay Area as highpoints. Yet for Laurie, and for many we are talking to within anti-nuke organizations, the outpouring of June 12, with all its new dimensions of opposition to the totality of Reaganism, revealed also deep contradictions within, whether on attitude to the Black struggle, to women's liberation or to form of organization. What is at stake for many of the youth active in the anti-nuke organizations is the question of a "vision" for the movement, a hunger to be able to express not only the need to "survive," but the need to so transform this society that each can fully develop his or her talents and ideas. It is this which can make philosophy urgent for those we meet.

The widened activities, the focus on the Black dimension that the Draft Perspectives underlined for the year to come, find their roots in both the historic contributions of Marxist-Humanism over the years since 1955--when the modern civil rights movement and News and Letters Committees were born--and in the new relationships between the Black mass movement and ourselves in the past year. Our work has stretched over the whole length of the freedom struggle, from Africa through the West Indies to the USA, both North and South. The essay by Ugokwe on Nigeria has already brought a wide response from both American and African readers, and offers many new points for discussion on how such an essay came to be--one so fundamentally different from what passes for discussion on the African revolutions in both the Left and Nationalist press. The solidarity work with Haitian exiles against both Duvalier and Reagan's racism has included work to free the Krome Camp inmates, a speech by Raya in NY sponsored by an exile leader, and the wide impact of Denby's column on Haitian refugees, a column reprinted by papers in the US, Canada, and the West Indies.

In the cities of the North we have this summer joined with marchers against white mob violence and police murders in NY, Chicago, and LA, while the audiences for talks by both Lou and Anne in NY included classes of Black women hospital workers. Many of the most exciting experiences this year have come from the work with new friends in the South. Denby and Mike, Lou, Bobbie and Ray, have all made trips to join the voting rights marches and talk with activists in land struggles in Mississippi, Alabama and Virginia. Denby will be giving a full report on the work in the South in a few minutes.

We have made some important gains in membership--both in the development of those already members, and in the acceptance of organizational responsibility by others, especially with the work of Lou and Gene, Bobbie and Karl in LA. And we have in the 30-years development of Marxist-Humanism, a richness of history, activity and philosophy in the Black freedom movement that needs to be studied by all. It is because we are determined to widen our activity in the Black dimension here in Detroit--in the Center--that we have asked Lou Turner to move here this year.

No matter what activity with the forces of revolution one turns to--and that includes such "international" forces inside the USA as support for Polish Solidarity--what stands out is both the interest from the "outside" in the totality of Marxist-Humanism, and the way in which our greatest points of success have been those most closely tied to our politicalization of the new moments in Marxist-Humanism.

In the year to come, therefore, the basis of all our work will become the task of spreading far and wide, studying, selling and discussing, the three new works of Marxist-Humanism. As we have seen, there is no activity we participate in which is not illuminated by those works. That is what puts the expression "Have Thumb, Will Travel" at the heart of the organizational perspectives, at the same time that the "travel" is immediately seen as an entirely different kind from all the trips we have taken in the past, this year included.

Next year's travels are first and above all--travels with the books. You can get something of a feel for the meaning of the slogan if you remember that Raya first posed it on her trip to NY last winter as she presented the summation of the classes in RLWLMPR. The whole idea of travel was tied to the fact that with the category of "Post-Marx Marxists", we would be presenting something unprecedented in the 100 years since Marx's death, something so controversial that we would need to be prepared for the battle of ideas on all fronts--not only from Stalinists and Trotskyists, social democrats and anarchists, but from "independent Marxists" and all sorts of academics as well.

Naturally, each trip will mean an experience with a very different audience, and demand a preparation that is the highest kind of politicalization. It means asking oneself: what do I know about this audience, this movement, its history, its contradictions? And then what do I know about these three books, this 30 years of the development of M-Hism that will enable me to single out those moments with which we can begin a dialogue? Consider these two "audiences" from the first two orders we received in the office. The first order for the new book (even before we knew the price) came from a

subscriber in Australia, a man who had written on Trotskyism and had already done some work with our Archives. Through our correspondence what developed was his request for an article from Raya on the world economic crisis for the Australian journal Thesis 11, and his offer to review the new book in it. The first order for the new editions of M&F and P&R came from the Black feminist author Gloria Joseph, in response to the letter Diane had written her. She was ordering the books and asking for assistance in developing a course this semester on "Female Leadership Roles in Rebellion and Revolution in the USA and selected Third World countries."

Such are the dialectics of a "sale." Far from stopping at the moment money is collected, as in capitalist commodity exchange, a "sale" for us is the beginning of a new revolutionary dialogue, one that can include along its path the arranging of a lecture for Raya on her national tour next Spring; the writing of a review of the new book; or direct work with the Committees that has as its object the consideration of membership.

Many of the trips this Fall will be focusing on arranging the full national lecture tour Raya will take for the centenary of Marx in 1983. One of our newest members, Dave in Chicago, has already proposed trips for himself to both U. of Iowa and U. of Wisconsin, with the twin objectives of selling the Marxist-Hist Archives to their libraries, and arranging for sponsorship to bring Raya to those campuses. Ron will be going down to UI-Urbana. NY is now making plans to be sure to cover New England, Philadelphia and Baltimore/Washington; while the West Coast has projected trips to Portland and Seattle, San Diego and Santa Barbara. Internationally, Kevin is making plans to return to Germany both to try to find a publisher for the new book, and to see that the "old" one--AderR-- finally gets some serious discussion.

What will help us greatly in the preparations for Raya's tour is the kind of politicalization that has already gone into the magnificent brochure that Andy reported on yesterday. Can we consider a mailing of the brochure to a selected list of friends in places where we have no local, asking them what suggestions they would have for bringing Raya's tour there? The fact is that the individual trips this year--the most numerous ever--were often sparked by our subscribers. John will no doubt tell you this afternoon of the tremendous response to this year's financial Appeal from our readers, but do you also know that several of those readers were the sponsors of trips such as that of Kevin and Ray to Baltimore/Wash. DC, or the latest one by Russell to Boston?

There is no reason to limit the perspectives of "Have Thumb, Will Travel" to the cities and campuses close to where we have locals. On the contrary, we need to consider the whole breadth of the country, and--what is more important--the whole history of Marxist-Humanism, in thinking about where to go. How about such places as Denver, where our work with the Black dimension forced even the SWP to invite Raya as a speaker there in the 1960s? Or South Carolina, where the Hegel Society of America is giving its convention nearly immediately--in October? Or St. Louis, where we have both the pamphlet on the 1877 general strike and Raya's work there as a visiting scholar? As part of the imperative not to be limited to any one region, Mike will be taking a trip to Chicago after the new book is off the press--and remaining for a full month, for follow-up.

In all the locals, and in those places where we are not yet represented, the work to assure a "presence on the campuses" will be continued and expanded. In the past year our work at Hunter College in NY and Cal State in LA resulted in the establishment of M-Hist student papers and ongoing study groups that posed the alternative of a genuine Marxism to the truncated views of both academics and campus Left groups. Next year, however, not only will presence on the campuses be a feature of the work in every local, but everything from class schedules to conferences takes on a new urgency. Thus we will want to know what courses are being given-- and by whom--in which we could find a way to present Marx's last decade, or Luxemburg's feminist dimension, or the divergence of all post-Marx Marxists, beginning with Engels, from Marx's philosophy of revolution. Conferences of all types will not only become events at which to set up lit tables (we will surely do that too), but as well places where we wish to present papers or take the floor in discussion. In the past year we did open new doors with talks by Kevin and by Anne at the Eastern Sociological Assn. and at URPE--on new moments in Marx's Capital and on Feminism in Latin America. And for the NALHC, Jim designed one of the most creative politicalizations of all--the display of our Archives that showed the whole of Marxist-Humanism while never departing from the specific interest of those at the conference--Labor History. See how the display begins with the 1941 essay on "Labor and Society" and moves through the 1949-50 miners' general strike to the dimensions of Black, women and philosophy within the workers' movement. Can we consider such a display, this time emphasizing the three new books, for the ASA conference in San Francisco next week, or the upcoming National Women's Studies conference?

The point here is that "Have Thumb, Will Travel" is unseparated from the individual politicalization required for projection. That is true even if one is "travelling" without leaving town, as in the

writing of reviews of the new book for movement and scholarly publications, and in correspondence. We have already shown this year that we are beginning to learn how to get our articles published in the WL, Black and anti-nuke press. The reviews of the new book many of us will soon be writing will no longer be "practice" reviews. What can help us in thinking about how to bring together "audience" and the new book is to see the way we travelled without leaving town very successfully this year with the special mailing lists for Raya's two essays on Poland and the East European revolt; on the Middle East; on the economic crisis; on the anti-nuclear movement. Some of the most exciting new relationships established this year had their origins in these mailings, including the latest letters from the French Solidarnosc group and the Israeli feminists against the war. In all of our "travelling" and reviews the task will be one of knowing those three books--that 30 years of Marxist-Humanism--so well, and being so seriously involved in the ongoing freedom movements as well as the battle of ideas, that the particular pathways are opened up for each "audience" that will lead to a view of the totality of our philosophy of revolution.

We have made some important beginnings in that direction this year. Nevertheless, our weakest point remains follow-up. Put that way it sounds almost "technical," as in whether we visit people after a meeting or after we have a good conversation at a demonstration. But suppose instead of saying "follow-up," we say "follow-through." The truth is that "follow-through" is such a central category in RLWLMPR that it leads right to the heart of the Marxist-Humanist concept of "revolution in permanence."

We saw in Trotsky the exciting ideas on revolution in Russia 1905, and how nothing of them was followed through theoretically or practically in the 12 years to 1917. And we saw how Luxemburg's "flash of genius" on imperialism at the turn of the century was only followed through on the level of phenomena, so that her Accumulation of Capital ended up missing the new revolutionary Subject that arose to oppose imperialism.

The constant digging, the "permanent revolution" in thought that prevents a breakthrough from being re-absorbed by the old is what Marx demonstrated as he worked out his philosophy of revolution over and over again, from 1841 to 1883. Indeed the whole question of seeing Marx's last decade as trail to the 1930s points directly to the way Marxist-Humanism has been re-thought and deepened again and again since that first breakthrough on Hegel's Absolutes in 1953.

That point was never so clear to me as when Denby and I were asked to speak to a group of community organizers in Montgomery called FOCAL. We explained what the Montgomery Bus Boycott had meant to us in the year of our founding 1955, how we alone among revolutionaries said in M&F that it was on the same world historic level as the Hungarian revolution. And history has proved us right--from that new form of struggle arose a Black Revolution in Africa as well as America, and the birth of a whole new generation of revolutionaries, white as well as Black and including women's liberation. But it isn't alone a question of anticipation. It is what did you do with that anticipation? And for Marxist-Humanism "follow-through" meant we were able to show them ACOT, P&R, and FFSABT, and to tell them about Raya's new book to come. Within the simple question of "follow-through" you can speak volumes about how Marxist-Humanism has been the first since Marx to meet the challenge not only from great mass movements like the Montgomery Bus Boycott, but as well from the idea of revolution in permanence.

On the eve of the centenary of Marx, the publication of all three foundation works of Marxist-Humanism offers us the opportunity to present the original contribution of News and Letters Committees in philosophy and its politicalization to everyone we meet in the freedom movements. We want to begin with those who are not yet members right here in this room, and ask you to join with us in the thought and action necessary to truly make this age "a birth-time and a period of transition" to the free development of humanity.