

Minutes of REB Meeting of July 1, 1986

Present: All but Terry and Suzanne, both excused; Jane present as sitter-in.

Agenda: I. G&V; II. Report on "Philosophy of the Black Dimension" by Lou Turner; III Ongoing Activities and Correspondence, Past and Present; IV. Announcement on Aug-Sept. N&L by Eugene; V. G&V

... Raya said we would have to go on to the rest of the agenda, and come back to finish the discussion at another REB during this period because time was running so short. What is important in any of the facts that are brought into a report like this is to show how important philosophy is. I didn't know "philosophy" was involved in any of this development. In 1940 I just knew I was a rank and filer and CLRJ was a big leader -- it wasn't even that he "excluded" me from his thesis although I was the one who was doing all the work on the Negro Question -- he just didn't recognize me, I was a "nobody." I did know that when LT read Black Jacobins and liked it I said yes, it was good on Toussaint Louverture, but what about Haiti today (1938)? I knew that when he came to the SWP he was given the NI to edit on the Negro Question and I wondered what in the world he knew about the question in the U.S. -- but he didn't even know anything about me. When 1941 came I wrote my piece of the nature of Russia because I didn't believe any of the leaders was going to challenge Trotsky; and when a leader like CLRJ came up with a piece that was "bigger and better" I just withdrew mine. But I didn't know then that "philosophy" was involved in any of this development. We know that now. Lou will be developing a lot of the material he presented tonight for a discussion bulletin -- he found some very exciting things. But for the report all that is needed of this kind of material is what will flow from taking up the ftm. in FFSABT. It is very important to include Lou's columns and the work today, especially with So. Af. It is important to stick to the present, and to develop in that what Dave was talking about in the U.S. Everything will be in the context of the Perspectives Report which focuses on the organizational responsibility for M-Hism and our concrete proposal for the bi-weekly...

11185

REB Minutes of Meeting of July 28, 1986

Present: All; Jane as sitter-in

Agenda: I. Report on Philosophy of Finances and Organization -- Olga;
II. Discussion; III. Continuation of Discussion on Philosophy of the Black Dimension; IV Ongoing Activities; V. G&W

Raya said she wanted to talk about the American Revolution and begin with how much she did not like America when she arrived here. The ones who taught her to like America were the Blacks. She said she was not referring only to what she had written very early about seeing an identity between the lynchings of Blacks and the pogroms against the Jews. She meant the feeling that a revolution was needed, and that only the Blacks understood that and were ready to do it. Any attraction to nationalism was uncharacteristic of RD, she said, but she was among the first to join the ANLC -- it was the revolution that impelled that. Look at Marxism and Freedom -- it isn't that she was for the 1776 American Revolution or Adam Smith. But because the American character became something new when the Abolitionists grew 10 feet tall by standing on the shoulders of the Blacks, they made it possible to have a "second America." : Even if this report can only have 2 paras. or 2 sentences on it, it is important to show that to understand the 1980s you have to see it as a continuity with American history which gives whites today the opportunity to be part of that important second America. (Raya also developed the importance of the Black who is a true Marxist, and neither a Communist nor a nationalist) The key is always revolution, whether it is America or anywhere else, and that carries through the Black dimension from the beginning to today..

11186