

June 6, 1955

Dear Olga:

Saul is in town now and although this week will be around the clock for both of us, especially him, getting the paper to press, and that means of course that all the center's responsibility will remain on the intellectuals if we want that 6 pp (They are coming out a week in advance of us with 4 pp 9x12 so I dare say their great profundities will have to be told in telegraphic if not sign language)--nevertheless I can take 2 minutes off to write on another matter.

It dawned upon me that rather than start in Det. in fall with the lectures on the book, I would like to start in W.Va. The fact that Det. is in a narrow (if not trade unionist) frame of mind is the least reason for that consideration. The truth is that objectively as far back as 1947 when we established ourselves in W.Va. we said it was the key place to the most revolutionary and basic proletariat as well as to the students on the hill. We fought the SWP who wanted to merge it into P'gh. just because steel is supposed to be more basic and P'gh. an urban territory while Scott's Run was "rural". We tried keeping contact both with students and professors and through 1950 did. Then somehow Frank lost the students and professors altogether and his work among the miners was of such an elite (if not dictatorial) top that you know what there was when there came.

Well, here it is 1955. We are finally trying to regain the continuity with Marxism we lost in 1951. In that we are not just regaining something lost, we are leaping ahead in 1) first and foremost reinterpreting Marxism for our generation, for our age, for our country, and for the world, 2) from a level--Absolute Idea--it never had except in the most general terms and that solely in the hands of Marx himself and Lenin himself, and 3) doing something that not even these founders could for they did not live in our age, and that is taking up the book with the public before the author ever lays hands to it which of course means that when she does it will be a collective work in the highest sense and ready to be rechecked by what masses we have contact with before publisher. Now for such a high journey of discovery someone who has a grasp of what is involved and does not take it as "an extra meeting" is the one who should lay the groundwork. That someone or someones is you and Andy.

If you two gave yourself a few weeks to look around and talk around--and did so by not making a separation between worker and intellectual--do you suppose you could write in a concrete report to REB saying you wish it started in W.Va. for these concrete reasons, that is to say, these concrete people who wish to spend two week-ends in this serious way. It may be that you will be losing out on the university because they may have already ended their season and the fall does not begin till too late to wait for us to influence a decision. But you may have some contacts you can reach regardless of semesters. In any case let me know. Pick your own date, say, Sept. 15 or Oct. 1 for starting, a month before then for working it out fully, but 3 weeks now for this preliminary report. I would like to have that for example the middle of July so as to consider it in August when I will have my one week to make up these 4 lectures.

Let's get your immediate reactions too.

Yours,
Rae

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