

13818

Nov. 29, 1960

Dear Bessie:

This is a cross between a personal and a political letter. Not that both aspects aren't political, but that the informality of "report" makes it "personal." The point is that I have decided that, though in a limited form, I must return to organizational work within the next two weeks. Already I dictated a statement to Olga which she's to read to REB and which concerns that with the new year I will give a series of 4 lectures, as a class but as one that takes place on regular Sunday nights where business, as soon as fund campaign is over 1st week of January, will be cut to 1/2 hour. I suspected I would take such a decision for some time, but it has been made certain by fact that friends here have had no "expansionist" thoughts when it comes to organizational growth. Perhaps it would be more correct to say no activity rather than no thought, but to the extent that Inez too hasn't somehow grown in this period--the only one who has is Olga--it makes it impossible to separate activity and thought. For example, there is no class here such as you have in LA, and it isn't that it isn't needed, but only because there being no new members, it isn't thought of as necessary.

I do not regret taking this step; although it will delay the book, it will also help the latter; I cannot be 200 steps ahead, but must bring it down to where at least 20 of those 200 needed steps ahead will be taken with some for alone they lack effectiveness. There is of course also the objectively bad unemployment situation here, affecting all, but especially Johnny and until he does get a job I wouldn't want Inez to quit hers. It may also be better if she quits not after a period of my being away, but after a period of my being here. I need her instincts on book, and she needs book to enable her to jump out of subjectivity.

As you saw from letters sent to you, it does look like the Italian edition will come off sometime, and in general the international situation looks more alive at this moment than the national one. For example this new group in Britain actually does have close position to ours both on state capitalism and on self-activity. Of course the ~~big~~ lack of experience on part of Frank may startle the group a bit when compared to N&L here, but we just have to wait and see. I have decided not however merely to wait & see, that is, not to leave it up to London Comm., but to make sure that they have a "direct line" to USA. If you get anything there--FW feels so much more at home with you than me that you get more material than we do here, and it makes no impression when I stress the center is here, so just don't mention it to him--forward immediately to us. Thus both the Morse split and the fact that Cadogan in Cambridge reviewed M&F have yet to be sent here by FW; also I had to send him money to make sure I get the books as he wrote Inez shamefacedly that he had spent the more than 3 still owed me which he cannot repay till after Christmas and could she loan him some to carry him through this embarrassment. I hit the ceiling, but not to him, although it was hard to control myself, but what can you do when he still is best there.

Will write Ed and enclose copy to you; he is the best that has happened to us in ages.

Why is it that Eugene does not even write for youth or answer Johnny? I do hope this week will find him WRITING

*John Cal*