

FEB. 9, 1984 WORKER AND INTELLECTUAL AT A  
TURNING POINT IN HISTORY

MAR 20 1984

II  
Raya:

I want to limit myself to just the title of the section, "Worker and Intellectual at a Turning Point in History," and the only word you have to add is "today". We're considering history not just as the period in which Marx is talking, 1848-1861, but the history of today. When you break down "worker"—everybody knows what he is. But actually they don't, in the sense that it assumed a new name of not only the proletariat, the worker, but the peasantry. It assumed by a new force the question of what else happened? And "turning point" is the "birthtime of history and a period of transition". What Hegel was trying to tell you dialectics means in all points of human development was the movement. What happens suddenly, that there is not only a new period in history but a new period in cognition, a new period in your own self-development, a new period in everything.

The point is that it's not always easy, but nevertheless you can mention what it is Marx did, and what it is we learn from it. Yet that is not the point. Or, I would not say that is not the point, but that is only the background for what you are supposed to do for your period. So the whole point is dialectics, development, and if you can do it for your period, you will see what you learn and what you have to first figure out for yourself.

The todayness is the latest thing I said, Grenada revolution and counter-revolution. It brought in a totally different question in that we use "intellectual" in the sense of bourgeois intellectual, or at least petty bourgeois, one who hadn't transcended. But Marx meant it also on the question of theory, in the question of thinking, in the question of what to do when you reach a certain point: what is called for?

Nowadays everybody thinks of leadership. The whole Grenadian revolution was destroyed from within, and just because they were considering, not theory—intellectual and thinking as theory—but thinking of leadership. Now let me show you what awful things it means if you leave out theory, and think of it either as leadership or as something that is simply to be repeated.

Let me take up Khrushchev because I think he will explain everything for us, in the sense that you know what counter-revolution means the minute you look at him. He takes an absolutely magnificent phrase of Marx. He doesn't tell you it's Marx, and he gives it such a twist that you couldn't possibly think it was Marx's, and yet it is. The phrase was "cult of leadership." And all of Stalinism, all that transformation into opposite, is supposed to be due only to the fact that Stalin was a conceited man and he made such a cult of the leader—certainly nobody liked that, even his colleagues—that that is what is wrong.

Here is the way Marx used it. Marx was the head of the First International and the theoretic, the principled documents, were all written by him. He did not sign them. It was all done in the name of the First International. Some smart Alec from the media is trying to hint that he is hiding, and that's why he had not signed them; people would then know it isn't 'really' the First International, it really is that 'awful man' Marx.

16199



And in a certain sense we contributed to it by skipping over some of the forces of revolution, and we better dig deep into that. We can't merely repeat the fact that now we know there is also the peasantry, or now we know we don't want the bourgeoisie. What, theoretically, were we able to transform from the workers' form of theory to where it was a philosophy of revolution? ~~He~~ *Marx concluded* ~~said: the next one--~~ "revolution in permanence."

Even the Marxists were, so to speak, laughing at him, the 'eternal optimist'. Here they lost ~~the~~ *the* revolution, but what was he telling them? The Revolution in Permanence. ~~He was trying to say that the continuous revolution,~~ *He was trying to say that the continuous revolution,* whether it's in yourself, your self-development, the continuous revolution in the objective situation, the continuous revolution in a single country or in the whole world--~~all of this continuity means that even when you're through with revolution, that isn't it.~~ *and this continuity means that even when you're through with revolution, that isn't it.* You constantly have to go checking yourself, critiquing yourself, and also seeing where you're really going, so that you can anticipate and not only say, now that we've seen this revolution we will draw lessons. No sir. Discover and develop and concretize that new stage of cognition that makes it possible for you to anticipate the next ~~one~~ *revolution.*

You don't ~~know~~ *that* how much Grenada made me cry. Here's a people who made a revolution, ~~and~~ lasted for 3-4 years. That's great, and they achieved a lot of things. They get so involved in both Cuba, and the fight for power between Coard and Austin and Bishop, that they forget that there's imperialism at their back looking for an excuse to come in. So all they say on the radio is, this is just a struggle for power; he's a one-man leader and we want collective leadership. That's a lot of baloney. It has nothing to do with that.

You have to understand that the word "intellectual", in that "Worker and Intellectual at a Turning Point in History", really broke up the concept of intellectual. It became both revolutionary intellectual, and that revolutionary intellectual as the one who summarizes, in the philosophy of revolution that will move forward.

Feb. 16, 1984 HISTORY AND UNITY OF THEORY AND PRACTICE

MAR 22 1984

Raya:

There are three sentences on p.120, on the accumulation of capital. That's all I'm going to talk about but you're going to learn a lot from it. Those three sentences are, 1st, that there are two movements in Capital, the historical and the logical, and that they are not to be separated. They are the same, which of course sounds strange, because they're not the same. They are the same because the dialectic--that's your 2nd sentence--contains them both, so we have to find out what is this dialectic we're always talking about that contains both the logical and the historical.

The 3rd sentence is even stranger than these two. The 3rd sentence is, history doesn't discharge theory from its obligation to transcend society. What seems strange, if you learned only in academia, is history is talked about as a person. We all know history is supposed to be something very abstract and not a person, and we're saying that history is not only a person, but it's not going to let the theoreticians off easily. It isn't going to let the theoreticians off easily, because it's necessary to transcend what is--the society, capitalism--that you are opposed to.

Now, the word transcend--again, if you're only in academia--would make you think of spirituality, and that God is going to do it. How can you transcend something? But to Marx it's historic transcendence. There is one more opposition. You have history which is great, but temporary; it disappears and you have another historic stage. And yet, transcendence is so much above everything. It's those 3 sentences I want to develop further so that we do see what is the dialectic, and how the Black dimension was the real point of difference instead of all Eugene correctly took up on the economics.

The point is that there is a movement. Everybody knows what history is. It's not in the past only. But a certain stage has ended, and Capital shows you you have moved not only from slavery to capitalism, but very specifically, if you just limit yourself to capitalist society, from the market--the commodities and sales and buying, etc.--to production. At that point you see market is only appearance, because the real essence is how you're exploited once you went into that factory. It is true and not true at the same time. What he's saying is, yes, it is not the market. It is production that is fundamental and moves. But you combine the two, because even though it's only phenomena, it tells you a lot especially if you also know essence. Because you then say, how does the worker appear in there?

The point is to combine the two, appearance and essence. What you do when you combine the two is to reach the point of the Notion. You're not just contrasting what is appearance, what is phenomena, to what is essence, and you now know the central thing is essence, not appearance. But that doesn't end it, because you want to transcend all that. You want to transcend both the market and the exploitation and therefore, to transcend it, that's where we come in on history does not discharge theory from its obligation to overcome. It was Marx's basic underlying assumption that history doesn't discharge theory, because what he had in mind was dialectical development. On the one hand, you have market production before we

16202

come to accumulation--that's where you'll have the explosions. Then you have thoughts about it. You say, I hate the boss, or, this damn market is inflated, etc. When you see what was the essence, it was how did your mind change after you entered the factory. You said, I was so happy to get my wages, then I come in and I see I have no voice, I have nothing. I'm just an appendage to the machine.

At that point what do you do? What flows from the theory and practice, or from the phenomena and the reality, that makes you do certain things? How you combine the theory and the essence is that, first of all, you have to ask yourself, what is theory? First of all, it's a generalization. It isn't just that one single thing happened, but so many things happened in this particular historic period in your thought, in the actual production, in the actual relations and fights that--at that point--because it all happened, you come to the other little strange word, Notion. It's that which is the transcendence. How do you unite two absolute opposites in such a way that they should explode? They should not be what capitalism teaches you and the church teaches you: reconciliation. That's not what you mean by the unity in this particular case.

Let's have another example of how Marx absorbed this, and suddenly saw this dialectic was both in history, in logic, in the human being, and then come to the human being as the transcendence. In a certain sense, it's a different form of saying the same thing that Hegel said, but he said it very abstractly: Truth is the only thing that separates his philosophy from other philosophers. If he had to put it in one sentence, he would say that Truth in all the other philosophers was just substance. You had a totality. You did consider both phenomena and essence. But the totality simply meant the unification of all things, and you as a philosopher were going to sit back and wait until it ends before you can say anything. Marx says no, I'm not waiting until it ends. I'm going to end it very much sooner.

We have often said, and were very proud when the new Grundrisse came out, that so much was in it that wasn't in Capital. Marx didn't get to develop it. One of the great things was the primitive accumulation of capital--the pre-capitalist societies. The other one was the Black dimension. (I'll come to the Black dimension first.) What we always emphasized, however, because we were influenced by all the other people who we were trying to answer was this business of constantly contrasting what is real and what is only a phenomenon, instead of going to the transcendence.

The point was that when Marx reread Hegel's Logic, at that point he'd already finished the Grundrisse with the "absolute movement of becoming" and all the economic laws--profit and market--and it is very, very great, but it's a real mess. Marx was saying, I don't want to present it that way. Then nobody will understand. He was rereading Logic which said no, you can only say Essence. Forget phenomena until you have explained what Essence is and what production is. (Of course, Hegel didn't mean production except on thought.) At that point we were emphasizing, isn't that great? In the Grundrisse, you kept saying market and money, etc. You said something about labor but really, it was all messed up. What was great about after that is

that Marx is going to forget about phenomena except for the market in the first sentence. You sell your labor power, and then you learn everything. The only sale that occurs in Capital, Vol.I, is your labor power is sold. When your labor power is sold and you go into that factory, you know you don't mean a thing and it's not really equality. We kept emphasizing how great it is that that made Marx describe value and surplus value, and say to hell with everything else. You better wait for Vol.III before I describe all the shennanigans of the market. And of course, it was great.

Now I'm bringing in something entirely new, which was only implicit in Marxism and Freedom, but it was no longer implicit by the time of Philosophy and Revolution, and this is what is new in relationship to the new understanding of Logic:

Marx not only by that time was separating Essence from Appearance, but he broke with the bourgeois concept of theory and went to labor and went to history, in the Civil War in the U.S. and the Paris Commune. What was the impact of the Civil War in the U.S.? Marx said, these wonderful Black slaves. They were smarter than everybody: their whole movement of following the North Star to freedom before the Civil War, and then in the Civil War what they did, and what they did after. What we do repeat is, Labor in the white skin will never be free so long as labor in the Black skin is branded. But we say that—not exactly as if you were doing a favor to the Blacks, but not recognizing what it meant to be the Subject.

Suddenly Marx was confronted with the fact that it is not only the proletariat, it is the slave. It is not only the market, the metropolis, it is the oppressed nationality. The Irish will have to come in. There's so much bureaucratization—he called it bourgeoisification—of the English proletariat, that if we're going to overthrow the British empire, we better bring in the Irish to do it. The same thing was true on whomever they oppressed. So the Black dimension was to be taken in as the dialectic, as part of the totality, as the way to express the historic impact of rewriting not only Grundrisse into Capital as phenomena and Essence, but to finally begin to understand what the heck is accumulation of capital.

It is mainly on the workers. Luxemburg was absolutely wrong, and the proof is that she didn't want to give up the proletariat, so she said, Long before the non-capitalist lands oppose it, the proletariat will rise up and do it. We know of course that it didn't, but that's not the point at this stage in order to find out what is dialectics. This stage means that you have to see that this doesn't hang as a "tail end", that is, that you've now discovered the Black dimension, or the Irish dimension, or the Chinese dimension. Because without recognizing, you do not see that capitalism was not only imperialism—didn't only oppress and carve up Africa and Asia and Latin America at the beginning, what was called primitive accumulation—but it is continuing with monopoly capital. It's always with it. The word imperialism wasn't around, but that is exactly what Marx meant which Luxemburg didn't see.

Luxemburg was magnificent when she described it. There is no way for

you ever to forget the Black women in the Kalahari and the horrible German general shooting them down and trying to see that nobody should live. Yet after the description she can't come to this little thing, about the Subject, that this new force is there. The whole point on this question of transcendence comes to the fact of spelling out who are the subjective forces, the revolutionary forces who will do the overthrowing, and how it is that you unite that unity with them for transcendence. Therefore it isn't just essence and appearance. It is showing you that reality contains both appearance and essence, and what you have to do as a revolutionary--and what Marx was doing when he was breaking with Hegel, even though he was taking the methodology--was to see that the dialectic means you never consider anything--nothing whatsoever--without immediately looking at what is its absolute opposite. That is your basis. If you have that basis you'll be able to write any great thesis or explain a current event.

For example, the section in Marxism and Freedom is "Accumulation of Capital, and the New Forces and New Passions". How can such opposites be united? First of all, it's not that they're united, but that you see the absolute opposite of accumulation of capital. With that, you're always considering the absolute opposite of what is. When you say history doesn't discharge theory from its task of transcending what it--not only being against but showing what you're for, where is the new society you're going toward--that is the point where totality doesn't mean what it means to Hegel, a summation of everything. That's where totality means not just a summation, but seeing first of all that it isn't just essence as against appearance. That is the most important, but that is not all. It's the transcendence and therefore which new passions and which new forces are you going to unite to transcend something?

In one respect I was very happy with the presentation because our comrades are so good at Marxist-Humanism, that to get them to discuss the laws of capitalism is awful...But if you let go of the dialectic--you don't let go, you want it, but it's an abstraction to you--then you wait for the end--you wait for RLWLKM--before you bring it in. The reason I suggested Eugene's essay when he was in Paris, May 1968, is that it's absolutely perfect in exactly showing that yes, we were all revolutionaries and we all wanted capitalism down. But they really paved the way for the counter-revolution by not following the dialectic, and by following Cohn-Bendit on, You can just pick up theory en route.

Theory is a very hard task, and it's not en route. You have to work it out on the basis of what is actually happening and you have to work it out on the basis of never forgetting that history is both past, present, and the future is embodied in that present. That's what you have to single out and be able to make the future as the present.

Feb. 23, 1984 THE GREAT DIVIDE AND WHAT HAPPENS AFTER

TV  
Raya:

This is going to be a paean of praise of splits, divides, break-ups—everything opposite of what we're talking about, the unity of theory and practice. But you can't really have a new unity of theory and practice unless you have this break-up with the old. Therefore I want to show what it is in a philosophic category, what it is in a political movement, what it is in the fact that theory is such a hard taskmaster that you have to reinterpret practice itself.

You know a category. The easiest one for workers to understand—at least workers who believe in Marxism—is, of course, the class struggle. What Marx did—and it took him a long time to do it—is before, he used to say, 'labor as an activity, labor as a commodity,' in order to show that it isn't really an activity under capitalism. But he didn't have a category for it. He had to repeat the words, 'labor as an activity, labor as a commodity.' Then one day as he was getting toward Capital—it took all that long time; he had already written Critique of Political Economy, he was working from the Grundrisse, which again still had to say, 'labor as an activity, labor as a commodity'—he found the word "labor power". And thereby, now that he had an entirely different category, he could develop it.

First of all, how did Marx come to that little word "power" with the word "labor"? On the one hand, he was talking about an activity. You do certain work, that's an activity; you do certain opposition, that's an activity. The thing that inspired him to be able to break up the category of labor—not just labor, but labor and labor power—was the fact that when he looked at the factory, whereas before he was always saying just how horrible it is—he was so much on how horrible labor is under capitalism that actually his first slogan was the "abolition of labor", and he meant alienated labor—is that he found that now there wasn't just one worker who was exploited, or 20,000 for that matter, but separate—but all in one factory. Each one found that he didn't want to go into the factory but he had to go in. And since there were now 100 that had to go in, in order to earn a living, they had the collectivity of the workers in one place and they could strike—a power.

When he got to break up the category of labor into labor and labor power, the very fact that he made it into a commodity did not mean he did not see the opposite of being a commodity, a living worker, and that he was opposed. It was actually that he gained a power, and it was that power that the worker gained from seeing that there are thousands like him that made it possible to have a unity that would just absolutely have to break. It's impossible to be both a commodity and a living worker. It would come to a complete break down.

What did Lenin do when he found a great crisis? It's political but it's also in labor. The great crisis was not just capitalism reaching the stage of imperialism. That was bad enough. But what was worse, so far as he as a revolutionary was concerned, was the workers were shooting each other on the opposite side of the lines. He got a new category: the aristocracy of labor. He shows that it isn't true and we can't talk about labor as one single, wonderful, solitary collective force that's going to break it up. Part of the working class had gained from this imperialist venture and they would destroy us; they would be the counter-revolutionary. He blamed Kautsky on the new stage of imperialism, not simply betrayal, like some of them did completely betray, but in the fact

16206

that they now had the material base, in the aristocracy of labor, to do that.

The Great Divide, however, that occurred in 1914--when Lenin found this simultaneity between capitalism being transformed into its opposite, from competitive to monopoly to imperialism, but also the proletariat--was, 'something is wrong with my thinking. How could I have been mistaken by Kautsky, and thought that he was my teacher, and accepted what other people called doctrinaire Marxism, but it actually wasn't?' He had to turn against himself and his own vulgar materialism, Materialism and Empirio-Criticism. He quotes Engels, who had quoted Hegel on the fact that you only mature as a political movement, as a state, if you can overcome splits. Hegel was talking about Protestantism and Lutheranism against Catholicism. If you can overcome splits, you will be great. But you didn't overcome it. Protestantism was there. What did overcome?

When Marx gets on the scene he says what really happened was, yes, Luther hung up that sign that says I challenge; you can't buy absolution with money, and this is corruption of the Church. But the ones who were with him for that--the peasantry--he went and betrayed them. He stopped the minute he got a different material base, the petty bourgeoisie, or the people who just wanted to remain in religion. Marx said, once you forget the new force of revolution that arose, that you yourself might have actually inspired--forget yourself. You didn't just forget them, you didn't only betray the peasantry, you betrayed civilization. Germany was gone as an important great society and didn't reappear on the scene until the French Revolution.

What Lenin did in 1914 in the break up was: we can't just reform. We can't simply say, this organization betrayed. No, we have to explain ourselves, therefore we have to have an entirely new ground. (I'll come back to Marx didn't have a theory of organization, because he didn't. He had a great philosophy of revolution and we didn't work it out to be the ground until a certain time.)

I liked the fact that Lou singled out that I don't even give a chapter heading to the "Organizational Interlude." I wanted to really put it down. I'll make a confession: it wasn't going to be there at all. I so much hated the Second International's betrayal that I didn't have it. So in my Parts--"The Movement From Practice," "Worker and Intellectual at a Turning Point in History," etc.--I went directly to the revolution in my outline.

I have Marcuse to thank for this. He said, what happened between 1889 and 1914? I said, you don't expect me to say anything about the Second International? He said, I'm sorry, but it was history; I'm not saying you shouldn't be against it, but you have to explain it. What happened that was great on this "Organizational Interlude" was precisely that I hated it so much, but I was forced to confront it. You can't skip a historic period. You have to explain it. It was something he (HM) didn't expect. I said, actually we shouldn't have had to wait until 1914 to see the betrayal. 1907 was that magnificent Congress, where every single tendency--from anarchism to Luxemburg to Trotsky to Social Democracy--was there. Even though some were revolutionaries and were in it like Luxemburg and Lenin and Trotsky, nobody put it on the agenda. So far as I'm concerned, anyone who has a Congress after a revolution and doesn't put that on the agenda in order to have a false unity--'we're all really together'. That's why it took you until 1914--you had to see the actual break up.

The two words that I love from that quotation from Luxemburg are "whips

and kicks". Why? Because it meant that Luxemburg did see what was new. The next paragraphs in that speech said, no, we are not the repetition of 1848. Yes, you have to look at Marx and what he did. But 1905 begins a whole new series of 20th century revolutions. We are just the first. There are going to be many more. The new was that she recognized there was something so mature, when even a backward country like Russia can get there and do so many things, that she said the greatest statement, and that comes after the critiques in the debate. She recognized that since you (Marx) had to do that to your own comrades—they were bourgeois but Marx was with them in the revolution against feudalism, that means you better look anew.

The importance of a split is the fact that your old category no longer explains the new reality that has arisen. If you are able at that split, as you are rejecting the old, to see the new revolutionary forces, then that's when you are able to build a different kind of unity. Unity will be built on the new masses, the new forces of revolution, and you'll have to have an entirely different theory. Theory is a very hard taskmaster. People who say you can catch it en route are crazy...

The point is what is in our age and why is it so miserable and so absolute, that both counter-revolution is absolute and the revolution better be permanent and continue thereafter? What is it that has made that? The totality of Humanism means that even the new unity is based on these new forces that have arisen, and on this fact that our age has the movement from practice that is itself a form of theory. What does that mean, 'that is itself a form of theory'? They're not theoreticians. If you then give it up to them, you're wrong too. You have to be the unity; it has to be the worker and the intellectual. What had really happened on this new unity that is so necessary, is to find out what positions did they raise.

In our case--these 30 years, these 3 decades of the movement from practice--take the question of the miners' general strike, 1949-50. They raised the question, 'what kind of labor should man do? Why is there this division between thinkers and doers?' They gave a new concept to "no contract, no work". It began meaning something else: we're not just waiting for a contract but we're asking you to answer certain things.

The East Germans, who began the new revolts in 1953 against Russia, were asking for not just economic questions, like the miners, but political questions: can we have freedom from under totalitarianism? Is that possible? Well, we better try it--and they were breaking down the statue of Stalin. They raised two questions. One, was decentralization. They wanted the committee form right at the factory gate and inside the factory at the point of the production process. And they raised the question of political freedom. So now we have economics and politics.

How did it happen that Kolakowski [he's a horrible person now that he's in the West, but it was Poland that inspired him, and he was in Poland] was the first one to bring out the Humanist Essays in Poland? He was trying to raise it in relationship to, we can't not only not have the elitist party and a decentralized form. It has to be something more. Whether he was degrading it to just sensuousness, to just feelings--or maybe it was just because he was in Poland and he had to use Marxist terms--I don't know. He's certainly nothing like that now. But the point is that the question was raised. By

that time, what did Poland have that, so to speak, East Germany didn't have as a question? They were very, very internationally conscious. They didn't want to be nationalists against internationalism, so they were raising the question of Humanism in trying to bring out that there are other things than just politics. It's your self-development and my nationalism; my feeling for Poland that strongly isn't bad. Don't think that I'm going backward when I say I'm against what is. I'm going forward, but on a new particular level.

The whole question when it comes to the point of organization is that no one had seen such a close connection between philosophy and organization. What was I doing when I said Marx didn't have a theory of organization? First of all, it's a simple thing: he didn't write a pamphlet on organization. But what he wrote and developed was the philosophy. That's what Lenin didn't catch. Lenin maintained his elitist party. All those different break ups of the forms of organization he saw--yes, spontaneity is more important--but he retained the organizational form, even when he was for the soviet form. What we are dealing with now is that anyone who still makes a difference between philosophy and organization, between philosophy and economics, between philosophy and doing, instead of seeing the totality and the unification on the basis of this new development and these new forces of revolution, is actually going to capitulate and bring the counter-revolution in. That was the worse thing for us and that no one else had, because the betrayal in 1914 was, yes, by Marxists, but it didn't come in a revolution; it came in the imperialist war.

What killed Lenin altogether was when he saw what was happening to his revolution. He said, if we keep this up we're going to go back to capitalism. It wasn't right back, it was state-capitalism. But the point is he didn't give the answers. In his Will, he criticized every single leader: Stalin and Trotsky, not just Stalin; Bukharin and the others. He said such an absolutely fantastic thing against Bukharin, whom everyone loved, who was the favorite of everyone, who was left wing: he doesn't understand dialectics. And he never understood it. That's a fantastic thing to say. At the same time, it's so mystical. What does it mean? You yourself would have to had to work through, both on the basis of your age and on the basis of philosophy, what happens to the actual development of thought--the self-determination is not just of nations; it is self-development of thought itself--before you could answer the question of where do we go from here?

Lenin would have had to say, the class division. But it wasn't yet a class division, and he didn't anticipate. He warned that it would become a class division, but it seemed like it was personal--not in the sense of overly subjective--but nevertheless not counter-revolution. He couldn't call Stalin that yet. So he said, Stalin has too much power. Trotsky is too administrative. Bukharin doesn't understand the dialectic. He was hoping that if you get all that together, the collectivity would solve it. No sir. Collectivity doesn't solve it, as against individual. Only an entirely different philosophy will solve it.

March 11, 1988

III. PROBLEMS OF OUR AGE: FREEDOM VS. STATE-CAPITALISM

Kaya:

Beware of the ides of March. Ever since Caesar's day, when he was told to beware and didn't and got himself killed; and ever since Stalin's day, when he finally did die--are two such different periods, that I believe you immediately get into the dialectics of Marxist-Humanism...

This happens to be a very happy week for me. In March Stalin died, an incubus was lifted from my head, and everything opened up beautifully with the masses as with myself. Death is pretty final and people cry. They try to attribute to this that it was a mass phenomenon and everyone was so sad at Stalin's death, that they never stopped crying, especially the Russian workers. The opposite was true. But what is important about dialectics, why the opposite is so important, is always--when you're a revolutionary, when you're a dialectician, when you're a Marxist-Humanist, when you want to change society--to see if you are opposed to the society that is [what is the opposite?] We are opposed not only to Reaganomics but all of what capitalism stands for. American civilization is not only on trial, but it is long since found wanting and is no good.

When Stalin died on the ides of March, what happened? What happens to the masses, to all the people who had been opposed, whether it was to his regime, whether it was to American capitalism, etc.? What was the opposite of that? There are 4 different stages. First, you're opposed, you're against. How do you come to what you are for? When you're against, it's first negation. You say no. When you are for, supposedly you have gone through the second negation. You've now seen the positive in the negative. Let us concentrate on 4 months in 1953, where we get both what happened in those 4 months objectively, and then what happened in those 4 months subjectively.

In March Stalin dies, and a great stirring occurs. When you say an incubus is lifted from your head, from your mind, from your actual work, it means the new openings that have started. How did you develop? From what stages did you develop? In March Stalin dies, and first is the political analysis of what does the death mean in history, in philosophy, in what is happening in the world. What are you going to say it signifies? If you only say he died and Russia will remain as always, you don't get anywhere. You have no opening. What was it he represented from such and such a period to such and such a period when he died?

In the political analysis, you analyze therefore the totalitarian regime and its opposite in the revolt. The expectations come with being happy he died, but saying, how are we going to get from that, to freedom? A political analysis will tell you the opposite in relationship to the forces that are happy this happened, or the forces that intend to do something, not to see that it's simply the same and now we'll have Khrushchev instead of Stalin.

What was the difference between all those people who were opposed to Stalin and who were happy that he died, from what they said and we said? It was clearly the fact that we did not stop with the political analysis of what we were against, but were trying to figure out what do you expect?

16210

I didn't think that just because I was happy, that means anything. It was what I expected the masses to do. It was inconceivable that after they had suffered through all the 3 five-year plans, and World War II, and all after that, that they wouldn't greet this in such a way that revolt would be not just a slowing down in production that it was when they couldn't strike, but some new openings.

The specific thing that happens with Marxist-Humanism was that in the month of April occurred the political analysis which said: that's ridiculous they say the workers are crying. They're first absolutely going to be sure to find new forms of revolt. All we have to do is to have our eyes open ourselves. And we take up an entirely different period in Russian Revolution history, when even Stalin was also still a revolutionary, and they debated a question--Lenin and Trotsky; Stalin was on the sidelines--on the trade unions. So we come always to labor.

What do you do know that you have power, but the workers have now said--at that time it was Trotsky who was involved--we gave you all the power to put the railroads back in order, but we're through. We gave you a year, and we think you did a good job. But we don't want any more. We want power to return to our hands, to see what it is we did that was new. There was a question about the role of labor at the point of production on the day after the revolution and on the day when things were pretty chaotic. In 1920-21, therefore, the trade union position that was in question had to do with what would be the relationship of the trade union--your own workers' organization--to the relationship of the state. You just gave all power to one man to put these things in order. What would it be to the state?

It was not as history and as past that the question was posed now. Our Black production worker had called me just as happy as I was the minute the shift was over. He said, you know, there was so much excitement in the factory today as soon as the radio blared forth Stalin's death. Everybody said, I know just the person to go and take his place--my foreman! They immediately identified the boss-worker relationship to this man, no matter what he called himself, who had died. The fact that we didn't separate the past from the present--1920-21 in this case to 1953--in two different countries, America and Russia, and very, very different classes, was to see what was the American worker's attitude, what was the Black worker's attitude, and what did you expect the attitude of the Russian workers as soon as they worked out a form of revolt?

The question of labor had one other thing and this is where Humanism comes in. I was working on the theory of state-capitalism. I had been working for quite some time, as soon as the Hitler-Stalin pact occurred. The question on labor then was, what did it mean to Marx? Originally he called for the abolition of labor, because he was so opposed to the alienated form of labor that was under capitalism, that he thought labor can never be connected again with freedom. What taught him differently? Two things. First, it was the workers of his own age, who were revolutionaries. Yes, they didn't like the work, but the alienation was the very thing that made them see completely differently. The stage of the early Marx--and at that time I didn't even know there were Humanist Essays--that I took out was one of the phrases that was in my very first article on alienated labor.

The question was that Marx got a very new idea on primitive communism, when labor was still a creative activity, in fact, he suddenly got the artistic creation for both primitive communism, and even artisans against artists. He said artisans are really greater because they're both artistic and are also themselves doing the manual labor. Do you know what other phrase he used in those early works? He used, 'when it belonged to you'. Man felt that that was his. Property was not property in the form which we know it, as something outside of you. Property was what you did in your self-development, in your creativity, in your own absolute movement of becoming, the constant revolutions in your own personal life, that have to do with how you react to the objective situation.

The idea, therefore, in April was that you had raised it not only politically, but in relationship to labor; had opened the question of a new philosophy--in this case Humanism, that which Marx originally called his philosophy: a new Humanism.

What happens in May? In March we have the death of Stalin, in April we have the political analysis and the analysis of the trade unions. In May I'm still not satisfied, and I run to Ann Arbor... On May 12 and May 20, the letters on the Absolute Idea. We want to divert with this on what I mentioned--first negativity--to see it now as contradiction, when you recognize the contradiction in your society, the class struggles, etc. between Man and Woman, the race struggles, sex struggles, etc. What happened at the point when you say, that's good but not good enough? That is, the fact that you recognize there is a contradiction, the fact that you recognize there is transformation into opposite--how are you going to say what you are for? How are you going to concretize this Humanism where it won't sound like a lot of abstractions?

The question in relationship to the dialectic now comes in on Hegel--from whom everybody comes in relationship to revolutionaries--and what was a revolution in philosophy and how Marx transformed it into a philosophy of revolution. You have to contrast even prepositions. When it was in philosophy, it was only in thought that you saw a revolution. Your thought changed and self-developed. But when it was something different, when it was in life, then it's masses in motion that transformed that society.

The idea came that the contradiction, when we first saw the 1844 Essays in the first period--a historical period has everything to do with how you read the very same thing you read 16 times before--suddenly means something entirely different. Originally everybody was concentrating--and nobody more than Lukacs--on the alienation. The trouble with alienation is that you say what is, very, very profoundly, and analyze it as something you don't want to have anything to do with; it doesn't self-develop you, it oppresses you, it gives you sex discrimination, etc. What is it, however, when you get to second negativity? These same Essays, in 1844, in 1947, and 1920 too when Lukacs wrote about it, meant alienation. What did it mean when Stalin died?

It was the Humanism. One of the things I bring out is here was somebody as profound as Marcuse or Lukacs, who gave the most magnificent analysis of the 1844 Essays there was, yet completely left out--it didn't mean a thing to him--that Marx had said that the Man/Woman relationship is a very fundamental relationship. If you forget the class struggle for a moment, you would still say you haven't gotten rid of all the alienations in this society. Whereas Simone de Beauvoir, who wasn't anywhere as profound and wasn't a Marxist, was an Existentialist, saw that particular phrase right off the bat...

What did it mean in 1953 when you had already done the political analysis, you've already done the analysis of labor, you have already seen contradiction, you have already seen alienation--you still haven't worked out what will take its place. What do you really mean by a new human society?

The breakdown of the final [syllogism] is, it wasn't only form and essence, or essence and appearance. Now it's the totality, not just a summation of all that was but a totality as a new beginning. Absolute, instead of being scared to death because you think it's God or because you think it's something abstract and mystical, was broken down by the fact that you suddenly felt this revolt will give a new form, and in this revolt, you would see that the relationship of theory to practice is not just an ordinary unity and an ordinary absolute (mystical), but a unity that is based on so new a relationship--the word relationship is the essence of the thing--that now you have something entirely different. What is that new relationship of practice and theory?

It was, if the movement from practice is itself a form of theory, then that means that the workers not only threw down the statue of Stalin, but were raising new questions. The new questions were all over again on the norms of work. Instead of labor being an activity that develops you and not only produces products, it was suddenly the speed-up and the norms of work. The fact that you could break through dialectically on the Absolute Idea meaning a new relationship of theory and practice, a new unity that was rooted in this new movement, meant that you were ready to see it when it appears, because you were anticipating it. Just like Marx had changed the revolution in philosophy into a philosophy of revolution, so now the question became, what is it that will result from this new relationship?

It happened to be that in June--here is your fourth month--the workers did arise. I said it's impossible that only I was that way. The workers are sure to be that way, and to actually move forward. March, April, May, June--on June 17, 1953, when those workers arise, we see all sorts of new forms, whether it's of organization, whether it's spontaneity, whether it's the youth suddenly appearing, whether it's the women. What are these new forms in human form? The new forms in human form is that you see new forces of revolution. You see now women, youth, Black.

Why am I saying Black? Because the very same year in which the question of Humanism was raised (I had raised it before that), in 1955, there was a new attack on the Humanist Essays of Marx, by Karpushin, a theoretician in Russia, who said Marx was still a young man. He still didn't shake off the mysticism of Hegel. Who knows what "negation of the negation" is? We should throw that out, etc. I said, this is very funny. Negation of the negation may mean mysticism to you, but we young people always knew that it meant revolution. It meant you're going to overthrow the society that is, you're going to have a new society. That's negation of the negation; you have two negations.

When it was attacked, when Humanist ideas were attacked and the Humanist Essays were thrown out, I said, no, it means that even though you won over the 1953 revolt in East Germany, there must be a lot of

revolutions that are coming at the same time in other societies. Otherwise, you wouldn't be spending one-sixth of the world's resources on attacking negation of the negation. You say it doesn't mean a damn thing? So why are you wasting all your time in attacking it? It was the same period of the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

The end in 1957 in Marxism and Freedom, the new pages of revolution-- who except us called the Montgomery Bus Boycott the beginnings of the Black Revolution? The earliest year anybody even thought of using it was 1960, when the youth sat down, but not 1955. In each case, you had new forces of revolution in that period, whether it was the 4 months of April through June or whether it was the 4 years of 1953-1957, when people already began to recognize it. And it was the same thing in relationship to philosophy.

That was the period when you broke down the Absolute Idea as meaning a new relationship of theory and practice. You cannot separate any of the things. When you still haven't worked out the word Humanism--and we hadn't at the time of 1941, when I wrote Russia is a State-Capitalist Society but I hadn't worked out the proof, which I did in 1942 after I went through all the 3 five-year plans--it was that I never, never would say only what are you against. You point to what else you are. It was always state-capitalism, and it was always workers' revolt against it. By watching what the masses do against it, you will find out what they are for and what you are for.

\* \* \* \* \*

Paya, in response to a question on the division of mental and manual labor and the "origins" of women's oppression:

Marx said that the most fundamental opposition of all societies is the division between mental and manual labor. He traces when it was not a full division. When he uses the words, when labor still 'belonged to you', when labor was your artistic creation, he's talking about even under feudalism. The question of woman was that from the beginning, however, there were certain elements that definitely were different in matrilineal society--there never was a matriarchal society (but go ahead and believe it if you want to)--the idea that someone was thinking and that was different than from someone that was doing.

At the beginning there was no such thing. You were doing everything. From slavery to feudalism, etc., you had a division between when suddenly some people were just working. Marx said the family has all these things in it including slavery. He said, what are you doing with the children? Don't you want to have a lot of children so they can help you in the field? You're the first one that put them to work. It is true that because you love them, you're trying to teach them at the same time other things. It isn't just as a slave who belongs to someone else, but nevertheless that is the germ of it. What he was always seeing was duality. That's the most important thing. There is no unit; every unit has the opposite within itself...

I don't think anyone has the final word at which point it [division of mental and manual labor on Man/Woman] began because it wasn't true at all points at all, whether you take the Amazon society or whether you take

the current--they were both warriors and thinkers and doers. I think that the physical element, the fact that you were out of commission, the month before, the week before, the day before, the day of--I think they used to have their children right in the field when they were still working--gave someone an idea, 'I think I can put those 2 months or 2 weeks to work.' The idea is always that that [division of mental and manual labor] is the greatest. You have to always begin with what is the absolute point and what is the absolute opposite of that absolute point.

Marx first, 1844, had 2 very opposite ideas, one on love and one on marriage. For love, and opposed to marriage. He's for love for a very different reason than anyone else ever gave the interpretation. He claims that the question of Other as the enemy was gotten rid of through love. You weren't scared of knowing someone; you didn't always want to kill him, or that he was the stranger and you have to get rid of him or he'll take your little bit of land. Suddenly you loved someone who was Other--it wasn't you, you loved somebody else, very often of the opposite sex. Love made you feel that Other isn't always enemy. They can be a comrade. He gives love credit for having taught man not to fear everything by just realizing how many alienations this terrible world has given you, or life has given you.

Each one has a different interpretation of when it first happens. Hegel says that instead of you being expelled from Paradise because of sex, look at what God is saying on why they should be expelled. They now know right from wrong. They have knowledge. What this woman brought him in eating the apple was knowledge, and that's why they were expelled. If they're going to be as good as I [God] and have both mental and manual, let's expel them from Paradise and make them work. So each one has a different interpretation of the moment, but the idea is how you're trying to reunite human being, not as Man and Woman, but as human being...

So far as Marx is concerned, he was talking about 2 things. One was that you shouldn't have any myths or other kinds of fetishes, whether it's the menstrual period...For example, he looks very seriously at superstition, not as completely wrong, but what has created that particular thing...For example, he's opposed to science--and he was for "scientific socialism"--but why he's opposed is, "to have one basis for life and another for science is a priori a lie." Long before the atom was split, he said you can't ever be right if you're going to have one thing that's material. Don't forget, he wasn't a vulgar materialist. It was always historical materialism, as to which period, what was the form of labor, how did you relate the labor to man, to woman, to children? He was very, very concerned to show you that when it comes to children, the reason we're always leaving it to children and the next generation, and the future, is correct, so to speak, because they don't divide play from thinking. Marx says, you may think it's a very destructive child that's breaking up a watch, but the child wants to know what makes it run. He was even bringing in the fact that children in playing were actually finding out both science, and the relationship of mental to manual, or what makes something run, and that that was very, very great.

That's why Marx thought that labor as self-activity, as self-creation, as artistic creation, is the thing that is really your own self-development, when there is no difference between what it is for the individual. But I

March 8, 1984

Class 5

-7-

think if we look for why did it turn, at which point was it, we'll just be asking very abstract questions. Marx's point was: it is so here, let's get rid of it!!...He wanted to know why, too, but my idea is that if you do not make a distinction between concrete and universal, that then when you insist that they should be one, the concrete universal, that that is going to be the thing that will be constantly getting you to a deeper and deeper sense of that. Marx would also include literature, fetishism, what people did, for example myths. He considered that that's really your history at a certain point when you didn't understand what we call recorded history. Why are there so many beautiful goddesses when these people are so opposed to women and put them into such a secondary place? He said there must have been such a life at some time or another that was very, very different...

The Promethean vision is very, very important. Marx never separated historical materialism from the Promethean vision of what the future is. One of the differences between philosophies and philosophers was the fact that Hegel's position was that the owl of Minerva comes at dark. That arises from a superstition, right? Why did they give all the wisdom to the owl? Just because it sees in the dark. It first awakes when we all go to sleep; darkness is when they can see. Since no one else could see, you went and gave the owl all kinds of things. At any rate, philosophers are not supposed to be able to make a conclusion until after it has already happened. It is made at dusk. Marx says, no revolutionary is going to abide by that! We want to make the revolution, therefore, ours has to include anticipation of, as well as analysis after.

16216

Mar. 15, 1984

THE MOVEMENT FROM PRACTICE

Raya:

I want to show you when is an accident not an accident, not just a category. This particular lecture is called "The Movement From Practice." I don't think I thought of it then, but I certainly thought of it when I saw the actual people sitting here. There is only one thing missing from the magnificent presentation that we heard, and that is--why did you depersonalize yourselves? Here I want to introduce you in a new way.

First of all, they're all new generation. The movement from practice--why did you all start with labor? Because you know labor is so significant to us and to revolutions. But the truth of the matter is that youth, which you are and which brings that out, you haven't brought out. You, Jim, are young and worker. Why does a student suddenly want to be a worker very badly, and went in, even though you were fired very soon--and that's a different story. But that's male, youth, and worker.

Here is Diane--she is Black, she is woman, she is young. She connects both with the American Blacks, and she chose the African chapter. I was sorry on only one thing in relationship to Miriam. I was sure she was going to support me, because as I was looking at her I said, this is not only white and woman, this is Latina--but she didn't say a word of it. Do you realize we had thought that we had lost her, so to speak, because she was so in to the movement--both the Latino movement and the specific movement of Mexican agricultural workers here and in California. We thought, it's OK to choose for some activity, but is she going to come back? The point is when you do so identify with the movement from practice that you forget altogether your own birth and roots. That's what she forgot. It's good in a certain sense, but in another sense I wanted you to prove it by saying something.

Here is what I mean when activity and youth are so important. Here is another thing that not many of you know about the youth in the 1950s, and that's literature. For the first time, we began getting people from the English department. Do you remember when Morgan first joined us? We thought, whatever brought that? The whole idea of literature and revolution, and as a matter of fact, the whole lecture series I gave on women and literature and revolution here, was: what had brought each particular stage? I was pointing to the fact that in the '30s we got labor and unemployed, then in the '30s-'40s we especially got Blacks, although that is all the time. Suddenly in the early 1950s we began getting people from the English department and from literature in general, both from Connecticut and people here who came from WSU. They're supposed to all be "beat generation"--they had so resented the idea that they are called beat because they don't fit into your ridiculous conception of what a human being is and all his many talents. To them it was always the idea that when you tell a story in a personal way, it's not as ego but in a personal way, in the sense of seeing how many talents you really are and how capitalism just kills you. You never have a chance to develop all your particular talents. That's the way they felt particularly in English: you're really interested only in the construction of sentences or whether you have a beautiful phrase, but in fact it was the relationship of how do you change this world in such a way that it would mean something to every human being without exception, and that includes the English department. In fact, Morgan had written a poem to us at that time. None of us understood what he was saying in relationship to automation, but that's what

16217

it was supposed to be on. He was so anxious to identify with the proletariat. I told him Melville is very important to us, and specific things like the quotation in relation to "thought divers". I was developing the idea of what Melville was developing as "original characters"...The Confidence Man and all the others.

The idea was that through these characters, whether it was in that particular story where the question of original character comes in, or whether it was his greatest book, Moby Dick, you had the crisis of the U.S. on the eve of the Civil War. The whole Pequod, the whole ship going down--that's white civilization going down. I don't mean that Melville said it even though he felt it. Incidentally, Lawrence's analysis of that was very terrific because he did recognize that it was white civilization going down. All these 'little nobodies' so to speak--Queequeg, and the little Black boy--the last thing you see is not the main character, Ishmael, the only one who lives and tells you the story, but Queequeg's hand reaching out as the ship is sinking: in other words, the coming of a new world, the feeling that this better go to its death, that we have to rise as entirely new human beings, whether it's through the fact that it's going to be a new color, whether it's through the fact that it's going to be a new society.

What I loved most about the 15-year-olds in the Gambia is before they ever asked me the questions, before I knew of them. When I came to the Gambia, it was the only country that still did not have its freedom. They were first voting to have freedom, therefore it was a colony. You weren't permitted any rights, and the highest school was high school. There was only one library--the British--but nobody would go into it. They didn't want to go into the imperialists that were oppressing them. They had absolutely no books. One of the questions I asked them was, how do you know all these things you're asking me? You have nothing. There is no daily paper, there is no weekly paper, there is no library, the most you get is...[tape turned over]

...They bring back tremendous loads of literature and everybody gets a piece, and each one is read quite often. But how did they know of me? Here is how it all happened. The friend who brought me there, is the African I met when I was in England way back in 1947. He turned out to be my chairman. (I wanted to meet Blacks, and the British were saying, that's an American, as if they didn't have any racism. This one happened to be from the Gambia--Dixon Colley.) In the Gambia he's walking on the street. The greatness about Africa is it's so hot that your high schools are mostly open windows. As he's walking--he happened to be passing a high school at that particular moment--a hand comes out of a window, and puts a piece of paper into his hand. Colley says, well he's obviously trying to tell me something he isn't supposed to be telling. He pretends it didn't mean anything. He passes two blocks down and opens it. It says, we understand there is a European here who is a Marxist and that you would know how to reach her. We would like for her to speak if she is not afraid to meet us in the bush, because we have no hall. I was so thrilled I would have gone to the bush that second!

You have to be aware of what it means to have a voice when you're not permitted a voice, and to know how to travel in these countries. For example, I knew that all the airports would be watched for somebody like me.

I came in what they called a transport. The one time and the one place they don't watch is Sunday--the one day you go on your vacation and all the big bureaucrats don't bother to work--and in one single car--they don't have busses either. You pile in as many people as you can, and it's only Africans that come. You're not going to see Europeans or Americans on this thing. I knew that once I was out of the country I wouldn't be permitted back, and I didn't bother to go back to where they were all waiting--the airport. Meanwhile, however, when I'm out in the bush talking with the youth, they think I'm still in Senegal. When we were through I said, let's all go to the hotel and invade the bar. When we all invade the bar, the head of police is not only shocked we are all there, but he comes over and says: you're in Senegal. How did you get here? I said, don't you know you have transport? He said, you went on transport? I said, yes...The idea was that young fellow heard from another person--because Colley had once travelled to England--that I was there and I was a Marxist-Humanist, and they wanted to hear that. And they turn out with quite some terrific questions.

The other thing I want you to talk about, Latina...In Mexico, I was at first looked down on, as coming from the technologically-advanced countries. I thought, why are they having singing and dancing on the Cinco de Mayo holiday? I asked Diego Rivera--mind you, somebody who's supposed to be a Marxist; are they chauvinists! He said, the masses aren't going to listen to an hour speech, and the women are certainly not going to. They know how to sing and dance, so we intervene and somebody speaks for 20 minutes. That really got me! You have no idea on how many things I fought with him--that was back in 1937--on what is feminism.

Then I come to Africa 20+ years later, and the most magnificent thing is that when they have a meeting, they not only have singing and dancing, but every song and every dance is very, very specific, like the Trinidadians taking right up of the current events. When we have the meeting I'm describing in the letter that the Nigerian youth had made, it was right in back of the government house. By that time they didn't think Zik was their man; he was the governor-general. The idea was that it's only when you have an entire chorus singing songs--believe me, Zik heard it. It was only a block away. You get an entirely different relationship even to the way they deal with culture which isn't at all the way we think of culture--as if you're really advanced when you talk about Shakespeare or something. Instead, they think of it as the way to express. You take the person off his guard because he thinks they're singing something good, and then they stick in this little extra against Zik, or against being governor, or against sell-out, or demanding a certain type of freedom.

There was one other thing in relationship to you 3 youth: Japan. Here we were so impressed with the snake dances and the Zengakuren stopping Eisenhower from coming. But what happens when I come to Japan? The first one who died was a woman--a student--because they shot right into the crowd. It isn't that the Japanese women wanted Eisenhower. But there isn't a single woman who opens her mouth at any one of the meetings. I had to insist that I simply will not speak at any other meeting unless I speak with the women alone. I don't want any men around either because I want them to tell me why they haven't taken the floor when their men were around. They're not going to say it if their men are around.

Every single time it takes an actual concrete human form, that history has a very different meaning and everybody can understand very well. It isn't that they don't have reason. I would like to ask everyone who's not a Marxist-Humanist to please read Ch. 2 of P&R that was for this class, for the next class--the next 2 meetings are very, very important with the concentration on organization--to find out what you think and what that Ch. 2 seems to say in the little phrase, "A new continent of thought." Here are the 2 things I want to choose out of it, to open the discussion as to what you will think.

First of all, no one used that--not in all the Marxists, never. How does it happen that we call Marx not just Marxism, or not just a philosophy of revolution as great as that is, or not anything that anyone would connect with philosophy, or with activity. What does a continent of thought mean? First of all, why was that particular expression born and what did it mean? The new continent of thought was: if you take his very first Humanist Essays of 1844 and you read them, you can say he's like a liberal, or some kind of utopian revolutionary, or whatever you want to say about it--that's what has been said. I take out what it was in 1844; what it was throughout his life up to 1883; what it meant to Marx and what, when you get to the very last decade which I call a trail to the 1980s, it was. It doesn't mean it hadn't grown completely and very differently, because it certainly had, from 1844-1883. It was long before he knew the laws of capitalism. It was his very, very first impulse, so to speak. You practically know more on impulse, if you even give him that credit.

It was then published the first time it was discovered, after the Russian Revolution when they were finally able to pry it out from the vaults of the Second International. It was the early 1920s, so now there was an entirely different revolution--1917, the Russian Revolution--which is our age. In addition to that, there were new forces in relation to ours. They didn't so much see Humanism as alienation. One of the Essays is on "Alienated Labor", and everybody went around being very, very alienated...

Then there was the 1950s, where you had an entirely new generation throughout the world, the first post-World War II generation. I see that here, even though it took that long, and even though they're very wise--I took up Marcuse's essays and Simone deBeauvoir's--even though I took up Man/Woman, each one saw something else in the very same thing. At most, Simone de Beauvoir saw woman and the others hadn't (hurrah for her, at least she saw something, but made a very wrong conclusion from it--Existentialism). I take up what we see.

What I decided is that there isn't a thought as great and as new as every thought that was throughout Marx's 40 years of his mature life, that isn't right in those Essays, if you knew how to read them, if you knew history. It wasn't just a new philosophy. It was an entirely new continent, and entirely new world, where (1) he first got class; (2) that didn't stop him from getting Man/Woman relationship; (3) it didn't stop him from seeing alienation of labor, so that he could call for the abolition of labor; and (4) most important of all, that he saw all these because dialectics was not only the development from appearance to essence to whether it was in thought

on y, but that it was a movement and self-movement of people in motion, masses in motion, and also of Self-Thinking Idea.

Strange as that sounds it is true. It isn't because Marx thought that there are ideas that travel all by themselves and develop all by themselves. I don't think that even Hegel thought that. You realize that it has a movement of itself, a certain logic, and that logic and that movement arises because this is your reality. You actually develop and see different things than others. The continent of thought, therefore, meant that, no, if you read the 1844 Essays as a very brilliant essay by a young man who was destined to be a revolutionary, you'll never really realize he was opening an entirely new continent of thought and of revolution. The proletarian revolutions he was talking about was the end of all classes. The other words, in addition to a new continent of thought, is the expression, "history and its process."

Why is Marx constantly using the expression, "history and its process," whenever he gets stuck on anything and can't work it out? It's because he was already investing history with, first of all, people making and shaping history. That was the most important thing. 2) it changed with every particular period. Therefore the reshaping meant, what do you interpret your own reality to be and where is the direction in which you're going? 3) and the most important for seeing how he wrote the greatest work, Capital, all 3 volumes, is when he was first referring to history, he was thinking of the history of very specific thought--political economy. In the beginning he took for granted, who could possibly be a philosopher who wasn't a dialectician? But political economy--that is something new to that middle-class person who was a student and is going to bring it all down. (He wanted to be a poet, but it never worked, thank the lord--it's very ordinary poetry, but that's what he began to write and of all things, love poetry.)

The question of history and its process was when he thought of materialism, he did not mean vulgar materialism. Economics did not mean that. The materialist conception of history: the particular thing he put in the expression, and the reason he uses history there too--historical materialism--is to always see that the economic conditions are a determinant which is modified by the specific revolutionary force, and where they're going. History and its process meant that, I am analyzing it for what I see--1841 or 1871--but you have to analyze it for your age. I will make it an abstraction--history and its process. But people do not understand.

When Marx thought of only thought, he wrote his first chapter, commodities, and then followed something like 500-800 pages. In fact, there are 4 separate volumes. Only after he got through that nonsense--and it's very brilliant nonsense--he said, I'm just like any damned intellectual. I have to get rid of all the other people and what differences they have on law of value--what this one said and what that one said. Now that I'm through with 4 volumes of this--to heck with it. I'm really not interested. I really want to see what the workers were saying, and how they changed their lives from the first time I had said it, in 1844, to this particular time when I'm writing my analysis of capital. He put that into Vol. 4. To this day, they keep talking about history, that that's what Marx meant. But he never had the working day. He had it only after he broke with the concept that history means history of the theories of political economy, to the concept of history means history of class struggle. It always means the breaking up of what is, and going to where you wanted to be and where it actually is movement.

March 22, 1984

MARX'S PHILOSOPHY OF "REVOLUTION IN PERMANENCE"  
AS GROUND FOR ORGANIZATION AND SELF-DEVELOPMENT  
OF EACH INDIVIDUAL AS UNIVERSAL FREEDOM

#7

VII

Raya:

First I want to make 3 motions...2 are for Detroit, and 1 is for WL...

1) To publish Mike's presentation along with the Call for the Convention when that comes out, April 4.

2) Then republish it. Do not say N&L Committees, but Detroit N&L Committees, as your very first pamphlet when you're on your own. It's for 2 reasons. Not only was it the first time when we had what we're hoping for all the time when we set these classes and thought we wouldn't reach it until the very last--a body of ideas in the trilogy of revolution--but that body of ideas in the trilogy of revolution you had unseparated from the Archives, before we actually were a Marxist-Humanist group, before we were born, and after. The importance of that is that you then give the announcement of the Marxist-Humanist Archives, and give it an entirely different way. You have one page or so where you call attention to the fact that you are the International Archives for Marxist-Humanism, and you put on an entirely different cover so there is a division where you say Detroit News & Letters Committees and where you have this introductory sentence from Detroit. Everything's Detroit...I think it would be a really wonderful way both to begin your independent existence and in order to have it as a permanent status. It's really much easier to read him than to read me, it's just that simple.

3) To publish Susie's presentation at the time after the draft perspectives. Issue that as your first bulletin for the meeting that happens one day before we open the Convention. That should have the introduction by you [Suzanne] as the editor of the N&L WL page, and chairwoman [Diane] saying "good-bye" to Detroit, etc. Nevertheless, it should have that sort of a focus, and I really think that something very good will happen. I really believe that between Ann Arbor--especially when we leave--and Detroit, it will be so very important to start something immediately.

Susie also brought in the Archives, and I think that that is the first time you have bothered to do that. The women's part of it is long before we were not only Marxist-Humanist but when we were still together with the JFT. The very first was 1951, in "Our Organization"--which never happened--the first theses on women where I singled out the new stage. I think that that's what you should call attention to. Before there was a movement or even Marxist-Humanism, the women were singled out as not just one of the 4 forces of revolution, but what was new about that specific force. It was placed in the context of "Our Organization"--which as I said, "wasn't". We were considering, but we had to break from CLR James and Johnsonism before that.

\* \* \* \*

I want to talk about only one single word, in order to stress how different the word is, and how it can be demeaned even in its difference when it's used in ordinary conversation, and when it's used as a philosophic category. Everybody knows the word "new", right? Unfortunately,

16222

March 22, 1984

Class /

-2-

in these primaries, you have Hart saying, 'I'm the new'. Everybody knows there's nothing new in him but the point is that what Mondale thinks is the opposite is, it's not a question of new or old, it's a question of good or bad.

It is not the absolute opposite of new or old at all. It can be good or bad, whether it's old, whether it's new. It is not the opposite because if you know the philosophic term, you will know why it's not the opposite. New is not the kind of word we use, like "new soap"... because everybody knows what they don't know about philosophy, that you're looking for something that's different, that's new. The hunger and passion for something new, where you as an individual would really be discovering something new... is that they don't know that, because philosophically it means so much that has touched the deepest feelings. I want to go through "new" in relationship to philosophy.

Hegel started the new interpretation of new, by putting it together with "new beginnings". He was always saying, where do we start, how do I begin. He goes through 3 single paragraphs--Being, Nothing, Becoming; that's all that first chapter is. Then there are 20 pages or more on every philosopher that ever lived--this is what Aristotle said, this is what Schelling said, this is what I say--before he ever comes down to what is truly new in his age which, even though he's a philosopher and even though he comes from both Aristotle and Kant, he has brought something new.

He gave an entirely new meaning to the word "beginning". We ourselves in our own organization, when we were young--I proposed to Eugene when he was in high school and was going to start a column, that he call it "New Beginnings". Beginning to him as a high school kid was, 'I'm not going back to the ABCs!' That's what he thought beginning means, and he didn't recognize that the little word "new" before it has an entirely different meaning. It hasn't got ABCs--it's what is new for the age, what is new in philosophy, why has something really begun. How do you start a new age? Do you answer your particular age's problems as just, 'I'm living today and the other person died', or do you really start it where it opens up a new continent of thought?

You don't get that until you get to Hegel. His revolution in philosophy meant not that you throw out the old, or that the old is bad and you're going to start something really good, but that you recognize what has changed in the world--in the whole wide world, what is objective and what is subjective--that suddenly you have a new beginning. Therefore, it isn't a rejection of the old, it isn't an acceptance of the old. It just says, this is how it came to be until it reached this particular stage.

Let's take new in relationship to ourselves. What is the new the minute you open Marxism and Freedom? Incidentally, I had a big fight [with Marcuse on the title]. If you remember at that time the Goldwaterites were starting, and Marcuse was trying to convince me that since they dare to call themselves Young Americans for Freedom, that I can't use the word Freedom. I said, I'm not giving up the word Freedom to the fascists; they can have 1984. The very first part is "The Movement From Practice". It

16223

March 22, 1984

Class 7

3-

is true that we contributed that. That is absolutely new. That is what broke the whole question of how are you not scared of Absolute. "The Movement From Practice" was very new to our age. Yet what did we put down on the "Movement From Practice"? What is the first part?-- 1776 to 1848, right? (That's another thing [HM] was totally opposed to...) Why was I anxious to establish that even though what I'm doing is very new, it isn't new because it applies only to our age. We just didn't see it, when Marx discovered a new continent of thought and even before.

I begin in the Introduction, even before going into Philosophy and Revolution. I say, Marx was 11 years old when Nat Turner died. Nat Turner certainly didn't know anything about Hegel either, even though he died in 1831. Nevertheless, how do you identify the fact that all 3 were absolutely the same new? Nat Turner said, I know you don't believe me and that there was no conspiracy, because I don't know all these other slave revolts that happened. But, if I am willing to give up my life for the little word Freedom, don't you think there are others throughout? He raised the whole question of what is new in Freedom for which you're able to lay down your life, and for which you're absolutely certain that you are not alone. There are thousands, and hundreds of thousands who are doing the very same thing if they're in your position--you're a slave and you want to be free.

Hegel--who certainly didn't know and wouldn't have cared less about poor Nat Turner--was stressing that Freedom was meaning a new stage in the world of thought, even though he was constantly on intellectual thought and the development of thought throughout the ages--what it meant in Greece and what it meant in his age, etc. The word Freedom began to be both in thought, and the fact of the reality, the objective situation, that you had reached. You happened to live in a certain age which is at one and the same time a period of transition to another age. You're on the threshold of something new, so there is the relationship between transition and new.

In turn, there are certain things I didn't know I was saying. For example, the very first footnote we have been calling attention to, in Ch. 1 in Marxism and Freedom, on the question of "40 acres and a mule", which we began developing as what the Civil War means, and how new it was; how even if you fought it and won it, it doesn't mean a thing if you don't connect it with the material which would give you freedom. If he didn't get 40 acres and a mule which he was asking for, what was the good? He just became a sharecropper instead of a slave.

Lenin used the same point about freedom. He said, what do you mean the bourgeoisie has freedom of speech? Can you go into a hall, can you write in the NY Times? If you do not have the freedom that what you are expressing is going to be read by as many people as the people who own the machines and the media, then you don't have it. Only we who are building a new society that have the halls open to the proletariat, the paper is open, etc.--that is freedom. The other is not freedom of the press. It's freedom of the press for the bourgeoisie, for the rulers to express themselves. You have the right to speak in your own home where nobody will hear you. The question of 40 acres and a mule is an indication that the Black movement has something new to say on freedom, that connects the thought

16224

and the willingness and the great passion for freedom with something very concrete and material. I've got to have 40 acres and a mule or I'm not going to be free, even though I'm no longer a slave, technically speaking.

The new in M&F is also from the point of view of little "p.s.'s": As it's going to press, Mao was to give the speech about contradiction, this time "contradiction among the people." He has lived on that all the time but nobody's singled it out. I say, this horse that he has been riding all the time--the reason it is wrong is not because it's wrong if you connect theory and reality, but because he is giving it an entirely opposite meaning from what it meant to him, too, as a revolutionary. Now he is saying there are contradictions within the organization, within the movement. That may have sounded very, very terrific, because you are recognizing, you are self-criticizing. But he doesn't mean that, because he's going to be the one to decide what is really new, or where the contradictions are. He had fought Chiang Kai-Chek and very correctly, and overthrew him, and therefore it meant a class distinction. He was going to bring a new society, he was going to bring national liberation, socialism, etc. Now he's saying "new", because he's going to start using actual murder, not to the class enemy, but to his own comrades, and that's the way you'll decide. You see it now in Grenada, how horrible we've all become. That's the way we decide a debate.

New, in relationship to woman: There was something happening in the '30s and especially by the time war broke out--1939--and the women were going into the factories. These women who were literally illiterate--not figuratively--were coming up from the south and they were working in this factory in which we were active. The women were very militant and involved in all the strikes, and hadn't given a comrade money for the Militant. She was very insulted. She said, 'Raya, I can't seem to get to that woman, and she was the best in this strike at Ford Instrument Co.' I said, 'Did you ever think that maybe she doesn't know how to read and she doesn't want to admit it to you? Don't you dare tell her she's illiterate. I will know how to present it, and you will see what I'm saying.'

People are so dumb and so elitist that when an adult person is illiterate, they think she has no intelligence. But it isn't true. This comes from your experience and what you want to do. You'll never sit with first-graders and say "see the cat" [to learn to read]. But if they would tell you your particular experience in the factory, or your particular experience on the farm before you went into the factory, you'll be very interested in that: 'I would like to read you some articles, to see whether you wouldn't want to express yourself on that.' It was easy and in a few months they knew how to read. The point is that you have to know and be very concrete on what is new relationship to not thinking the person is backward, just because she doesn't know what you know in relationship to what is important to you, but what couldn't have been to her because she had no way of learning.

In relationship therefore to the women: The following year, when Simone de Beauvoir's Second Sex came out, I said, 'I want to read you something and ask your opinion. This is very new and very big.' Here this woman was saying the greatest thing of all the people who had re-

March 22, 1964

viewed Simone de Beauvoir. She said, 'she's saying that because the man oppressed us, therefore it's their fault and we must make them, so to speak, give us our freedom. That's exactly what the white man has always said, and it seems to me that we're back again to where it's someone else. Nobody gives you your freedom. You have to fight for it. If we're not going to fight for it, we're not going to get it.' All these people are with you, and it's going to be on a very different level.

She caught it right there. Now here is Simone de Beauvoir saying that that late. She's already an existentialist, she's already a big-shot reporter and also an actress, and yet she's coming to that conclusion. When a movement really arises and is so big that you can't possibly forget it, she says: I shouldn't have said that. All the women are accepting her, not this poor Black woman who said it when she had written it and when there was no movement, but accepting her and saying she is really the first one that opened it. What did she open? She is a big intellectual and wrote an expose, which to the women who were always oppressed in the first place, was no expose. They knew it all the time. But they already had a conclusion, that you have to fight for freedom and she did not. That is the difference. The new philosophically did not mean that you have existentialism instead of Marxism or whatever it was that they had wanted it in their various stages of development, but what it meant when it's objective and subjective at the same time.

In P&R, the new was entirely different. I was saying, before I just translated Lenin's Philosophic Notebooks. That was great. They were untranslated before and I was the first one. But it was an Appendix, and it was what Lenin did. It certainly helped us to be able to jump. But that's not our age. He didn't live through Stalinism--we're the ones that had the horrors of Stalinism. The point was you can't really find the totally new when you accept just what the other Marxists, or whomever you follow, has accepted. That's how I had gone over after Stalin's death to going back to Hegel. I said, I know everyone's saying, why don't I start with Ch. 9, which is the New Passions and New Forces. I said, they'll be in the movement, you can't stop them from that. But they won't know anything until their movement dies and they have to. Either they're going to take Ch. 1 or they're going to skip it. We better know what is totally new in our generation that we have to do, whether we're Marxists or Hegelians or not the least bit interested in that and only in the movement, in order to know how to jump.

It's true in every single one of the books. If you will see, it isn't that it was new in the sense of a break. It was new in the sense that we waited until there was such a unity of the objective and subjective, that we suddenly with a burst could see what it is that we must do for our age... What is important in relationship to that little word new, is the minute with these candidates, Hart and all, it was wrong--because we know there's nothing new in Hart. New or old, or good or bad, was not the totally opposite answer at all, and that therefore you couldn't connect with that.

I had a whole series on each of the books, but I don't want to go into that now. I think the important thing is to learn how especially an ordinary word can mean entirely different things, if you immediately look at it not in order to expose the other one only, but in order to really bring out what is new, and what you are trying to do which is entirely different. You are on 2 different planets.

16226

WIL  
April 1, 1984

Class #8

If you think you're through with Hegel, you're wrong. I want to speak on Ch. 1 of P&R on Hegel, and I want each one here to buy it, study it, and learn it. That's how you'll not only become a revolutionary and a Marxist-Humanist committee member, but a lot more importantly--nothing is more important than becoming a member--but a lot more important in the sense that you will have a methodology for judging anything and everything that happens. So pardon me: Instead of speaking about either organization or activity, I think even though the 2 reports were excellent, they were so anxious for activity that activity and politics were always used to prove our point of philosophy, and the point of philosophy unfortunately was taken for granted. So now we'll go back to Hegel.

First of all, take the strange sentence: Self-Thinking Idea. Don't think that I've forgotten that I'm a member and an activist, but that's going to be the most important point, because it's not separated from Self-Bringing Forth of Freedom, and I'm going to connect those 2 with these things. The very first idea of how we use a phrase now--and if we don't know the philosophy of the phrase, then we really get stuck, even though it's absolutely correctly the way we use it for explaining a certain event that happened. I'm talking about 'What Happens After'. One of our great contributions had been to show the transformation into opposite from what was a workers' state, what had achieved the greatest revolution, into the state-capitalist society it now is. But now I'm going to show you 'what happens after', which instead of being a transformation into opposite as a counter-revolution--unfortunately we have too many counter-revolutions--is 'what happens after' when there is a real revolution, and what you're doing there, and what we want therefore to do now.

With the 3 major works of Hegel--the Phenomenology of Mind, his 1st and greatest; the Science of Logic; the Philosophy of Mind--I begin on the question of the Phenomenology of Mind. I say something that all the philosophers thought I was crazy, and I'm sure they still think so: that even if you take all the many divisions and transformations and developments of the various stages of consciousness in Phenomenology of Mind--Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason, Spirit--there are 65 million different Spirits: Spirit in Alienation, Spirit in Freedom, Spirit in Morality, etc.--Religion, and Absolute Knowledge, and you divided it in only 2, 'what happens up to the day of revolution'--don't forget there was a revolution, and what made dialectics so great is the French Revolution, and that was Hegel's period--and 'what happens after' once the revolution comes--that great revolution, the French Revolution, and it was a real revolution--that even that, much as it would sound like a vulgarization to scholars who have nothing else to do but scholarship and don't want to do anything with it, it would not be a violation of Hegel, because it would show movement, and everything of Hegel is self-movement, self-development. It doesn't mean Ego, even though it does mean personal self-development, as well as local self-development, as well as international self-development, as well as universal self-development, etc. Here is why:

Take consciousness. You're conscious of this object, the world. It's not you; that's your enemy. Then you grow up enough to know that you're self-con-

16227

scious. There's also you and the world. Then finally something happens between this consciousness and self-consciousness, where development goes through and you achieve a mind of your own. That's his greatest phrase. That was all the greatness that came from Marx, by having seen that in gaining a mind of your own--the difference between bondage and freedom--it was not the end of the question. What are you going to do with a mind of your own you gained?

The question therefore became, now that you've gained a mind of your own and you're through with feudalism, slavery, or whatever was your particular bondage, that's up to the day of revolution. Hegel had gone through by that time slavery, feudalism and commercial capitalism, but he had not yet the French Revolution, not yet the social revolution. What happens after?--and all the great things happen after. There is the revolution, now you've gained a mind of your own, not only for your own self-development and that you're free, but you're becoming free as a whole nation. The idea was that it's not 'pie in the sky'. There is the great French Revolution, and there are 60 million other tendencies, and yes, you're through with alienated labor but you're not through with Alienated Spirit. Hegel's idea is, even when he comes to Absolute Knowledge which other people have interpreted as God, and maybe he interpreted as God at one time, the truth of the matter is by the time you come to Absolute Knowledge which is supposed to be God, what does he have? The Golgotha of the Spirit. He's just been crucified. That's your God.

The idea was that a transformation into opposite, that stage, was not negative. It was negation of the negation. It was positive. It was the revolution. It was what was opening of a totally new great stage. You can therefore still not overcome everything, but it will be on a very, very different level. The whole chapter is called "Absolute Idea as New Beginning" and the subheading to the chapter is "the ceaseless movement of ideas and of history". I put them together, and see what a different idea you get. (I was waiting for someone to get it, but nobody did.)

Absolute Idea is the expression of this ceaseless movement of ideas and history.

Yes, Hegel's talking only about Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason and Spirit. There is no person, as if all of this could just go on outside of the human being. But it can't. The hidden one--what Marx says he's putting a 'mystical veil' over, and he does--is that after all, it's a man and a woman who thinks; men and women who act, and children. As the expression of the ceaseless movement of history, what becomes next, before the result of new beginning? The trouble with result is that 'if you're good, and now you follow me, you'll have the same result.' Not knowing the process doesn't do you any good, because the next crisis will be totally different from the last and the one after that. Unless you find the methodology...the process and methodology is self-movement of ideas, of people, of history, and of all that concept of reconstructing and restructuring history, and not just ideas.

When you get through, therefore, what is the ceaseless movement of history

before you get to the new beginning? That ceaseless movement of history is "revolution in permanence". What do you think Absolute Negativity is? Hegel is saying there is absolutely nothing that happens, what is has to be negated, and when it's negated, you're just reacting to something. You're finally good, but what are you going to bring out? It's the negation of the negation, the Absolute Negativity, that means you have to carry on this revolution in permanence; it will always be on a higher stage. There will be greater development; there will be the arts, there will be sciences, and there will be you.

Why should people think, especially the scholars and the philosophers who, after all, have shown... (?) and still say so, that the Science of Logic shows you that he has calmed down. He's not any more the young man who's gone and celebrated the French Revolution, all the youth saying 'Hurrah, how great France is and we Germans don't do anything but talk about what they do.' He's now the settled man, and he's written, and everybody says, 'It has no form.' Yes, it has no form. They old form--they didn't want Absolute Negativity. I don't care whether or not he calmed down and became the Prussian philosopher that he did. Why do you think that the way he's now transformed and traced ideas, not as Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason, Spirit etc.--not as stages of consciousness, because man was absent anyway--but as categories that were only abstract? Or so you think. Each one has a category, and supposedly it's going to follow that on... It isn't true.

Just yesterday I read somewhere a very big philosopher--it may have been Pöggler from Germany, the head of the Hegel Archives--who said, one trouble with Hegel was he never knew where to begin. Now that's a fact... Hegel said, 'I'll begin with what's new: Being, Nothing, Becoming.' He's got only 3 paragraphs, and follows it up with 25 pages of commentary. Isn't that fantastic? He says, 'Schiller said that, and Aristotle said this, etc.' He goes through the entire history of philosophy. He's trying to find out why is it he thinks he's new, and if he is new, what is it he thinks he's saying? It's neither Being, nor Nothing, but he's saying Becoming, and I hope you're always going to become someone else; everyday you'll grow. But actuality, even though it's more sober and where you can pin him down--you have some techniques you think you've learned--You've learned nothing.

You have Being, the 1st stage; Essence, that's your 2nd stage; then there is Notion. It isn't true that Being is just the thing, or the 1st stage, or the commodity, or whatever it is you want to call it. He is never considering that 1st stage of Being as not undergoing the very same thing. In fact, in the last stage, the last page of the Phenomenology of Mind, you will find that he's actually used 'top' categories: the Doctrine of Notion--Universal, Particular, and Individual. He says, 'you may think I'm just returning to the old, but this little business about saying your prayers when you're a child and you're just repeating what your mother told you, and saying your prayers when you're facing death--there's a world of difference in what you put in that prayer.' I'm going to tell you that Being will undergo all these same differences as you come to know it.'

Moreover, it's not just phenomenon. He's got 2 different things for Being. Show, mere Show, you can throw it away, it's tinsel. But real Being, no, you

can't throw it away. The idea is that you have movement and self-movement right there as well, when you finally come to the Essence. Yes, the Essence is more important than Being, but it isn't a substitute, or you have forgotten the other. It has been absorbed by the Essence so that you realize that certain of the Appearances are actually the Essence. You have to first begin finding out which Appearance is only Being and which Appearance is Essence. He said, 'the Essence must appear.'

Here is a man who is absolutely not supposed to think at all about history and reality. Now if it really appears, including whether we're thinking about Stalinism--the truth is, don't disregard it. It's here, the counter-revolution, and you better learn how to fight that. The Doctrine of Notion is the objective and subjective ways to gain that freedom on a new and higher stage. So you have the Absolute Idea, what was first only Absolute Knowledge.

Now organization comes in even with Phenomenology, because when Hegel reaches that conclusion of Absolute Knowledge, how does he distinguish the 1st movement of just phenomena and Essence, and this great new stage where you have subjective and objective? He says, 'one, is the way it appears "accidentally".' That's what he thinks history is; it's just the passing by. It's transitory. Marx made very great things of transit--we'll get rid of capitalism some day. The question now is, if it's transitory, how did you reach Absolute Knowledge? How did you reach the Absolute Idea? He says, 'the actual historical appearance of this and the organization, the intellectual comprehension and organization of thought.' You see, he also knew about that. In fact, he's the one who said that unless you know how to split...

The philosophers have never allowed me to speak on religion, on account of how everyone knows I'm an atheist. But I think I have the greatest thing to say about Hegel's philosophy of religion. You know why? The Church is the Party to Lead. That's what he's attacking. He's a good Lutheran, so he thinks he's attacking only the Catholic Church. He's saying when it's so corrupt that you can buy your way out of sin, and now that he is for Luther hanging up his (declaration). But it isn't true, because what he's actually attacking is that anybody...the Self-Thinking Idea. This Self-Bringing Forth of Liberty, this self-development, this self-transcendence, it is saying this cannot be reform. That's what he is saying to the Catholic Church. If he want to stop at Lutheranism, that's his business. I don't have to stop with him.

What does he finally say when he comes to the Philosophy of Mind? Right now we have reached this, and he says in the last half paragraph on the Absolute Idea, 'don't come to any conclusions yet, because I haven't figured out a Philosophy of Nature yet, and the Philosophy of Mind, so wait another day.' He finishes the Philosophy of Mind and he's on his death bed...It ends with para. 574 in the Philosophy of Mind. He sums up everything, even this new beginning. What bothers him? He's already summed up. The first one was 1807. He's dying now (1831) and so 1830 he is trying to sum up. You see, he is thinking of the future in the present: 'I did it for my age. What is the next stage?' People think he's ended there. No, he hadn't ended. He added 3 paragraphs.

Here is what Marx does with that Ch. 1, and why to this day nobody can

figure it out, or they figure it out and it's always wrong. Engels began the wrongness by telling you, 'I'm so sorry we (meaning Marx and he) had not said as much as we should have said about intellectuals, because we were so damn anxious to get the revolution, etc. Actually we thought and did a lot. If you really want to study (I think it's Schotte(?) he says that to), Capital and understand it and do it in relation to Hegel's Science of Logic here it is: Being-that's the same thing as commodity, that's the thing. Essence-that's the same thing as production. You have the class struggle, you have the capital-labor relationship. Notion-' he doesn't go far to Notion.

It's ridiculous to think that Marx was following it that mechanically. 1st of all, he had already transformed the revolution in philosophy that Hegel made, into a philosophy of revolution. So how could the revolution in philosophy be the same thing as the philosophy of revolution which is all these millions of human beings trying to solve their own lives, and they're not bothering with ideas? 2ndly, and more importantly, Marx takes everything in that Ch.1 as Being, Essence, Notion. It has all the Universal, the Particular, the Individual. It has the future in the present, and here is how it has it:

1st of all, you have to know all the forms to be able to understand that Ch.1. That's why beginnings are so difficult. It is true his 1st sentence is, commodity has value and exchange value. It's a thing. We exchange it to get some other thing. But right away, what does he say? 'You couldn't understand one single word of what is political science and what I am', Marx, 'contributing to it, if I just went on all the way to money, the crisis, etc. I'll tell you what's wrong. The reason that a commodity has exchange value and use value is because of that little thing, that it's congealed--the living labor.' He goes right off to the 2 categories of labor. You already have essence. You're only on Sec.2 of Ch.1. By the time you get to Sec.4, which is the fetishism of commodities, you not only have the Notion in the sense that you have the objective and subjective way of fighting all this, but you have the future in the present. By what? By rolling back to the past.

Marx goes back all the way to the time of pre-capitalism, primitive societies, and he says, 'In primitive societies maybe they didn't have a lot of things--they certainly didn't--that we have and that we know. We have science etc. But here's one thing they knew about. It was simple. They knew what were the human relationships. It's I-and-you, I-and-he, I-and-it, etc.--whoever was oppressing.' He says, 'How stupid are these ideologues of the capitalists when all they can always think of when they want to describe primitive society is not another human being as a society, but they want to describe the society as Robinson Crusoe. You're not a single one, you're not on an island, you're not rebuilding. That's not how society came to be. Therefore what did primitive society do? How did they relate, how did they think, how did they get rid of it? Since the human relations, you at least know it's me and the boss, me and God, me and something else. Therefore what would it be in a future society?'

He asked that all the way until 1867. Yes, he had a political answer, but

he didn't have the category: Who would strip that fetishism off the commodities? 'I know that it's not exchange value and use value, but labor dead and living, and constantly the dead is the capital oppressing me, etc.' The point when he raises that question is, 'I better add something to it.' What did he want to add between 1867, when he already told you all the Essence, and all the Notion, and how to get revolution, but still couldn't rip off the fetishism except to tell you it's a fetish, don't believe it, it's not true. The Paris Commune. People working out their own decisions; men, women and children; education--everything. 'Freely associated labor.' Mandel just leaves out the word 'freely'. He wanted 'associated labor' so you'll have your state power...

Marx puts in, in the 1872-75 edition, 'freely associated labor' is the only way to strip the fetishism off commodities and that's not an abstraction. He says, 'Look what the Commune was every day that they worked and every day that they fought against the aristocracy. Every day they met, they decided, they took up, what did I make, what did I get, how should I relate, etc.' Here is that first magnificent chapter. Naturally it's difficult. To this day they keep writing: either he's gone back to 1760...just read my article (T/P) on the latest on this question.

Marx comes back and adds 'freely associated labor'. What does Hegel come back on his death bed and add? He adds 595, 596, 597--3 little paragraphs. And in those he says, 'Yes, it's a movement and a unification of objective and subjective, and there is one single dialectic. It is actually the negativity of self-development.' But, the Self-Thinking Idea--we had all these developments of consciousness and of ideas--that Self-Thinking Idea and that Self-Bringing Forth of Liberty...he doesn't say Self-Bringing Forth of Liberty, but I say it because it's obvious. Then he really gets stuck because he can't say Self-Bringing Forth of Liberty. He finally says, the Absolute Mind enjoys himself or contemplates... Forgive the poor old man 2 sentences. That's all he uses for that, for the Absolute.

The idea is that when you get the Absolute Negativity as the expression of the ceaseless movement of ideas and of history, then you and your self-development will go on regardless--but that's when you're going to beg to join us: