

REB Minutes of May 22, 1984

Agenda: I. Organization Report for Convention -- Mike (30 minutes)
II. Subreport to Perspectives for Conv. -- Olga (20 minutes);
III. Discussion on both (1 hour); IV. N&L deadline and
assignments for Lead and Editorial; V. Eugene's Report of
Chicago and Mike's on Ongoing Activities and Corr.; VI G&W.

Raya said she agreed with Eugene's critique of both reports. In the case of Mike, even though the form and content were magnificent, it was too positive and there weren't enough negative features. In the case of Olga's report, the expanse and totality was a bit too diffuse. I would like to expand on both these points. One simply cannot skip over the very, very small organizational growth by simply passing on after noting it. Just as he expanded very well on our failure to get subs for N&L, especially in the face of the absolutely magnificent response to our Appeal from subscribers we do have, and ended with calling for a N&L sub drive, so it is necessary to state that the lack of organizational growth points to the fact that we have not concretized our pride and uniqueness of organization as the only one grounded in revolution in permanence, and therefore, it shows that we really do still maintain a division between philosophy which is supposedly just for us and organization. That is the task for this year. As for Olga's report, while she is completely right in taking the whole expanse of ten years, especially as the relationship of objective to subjective and the relationship of the various revolutions to our analysis, the sweep is narrowed by the very expanse of ten full years as if each one was equal. A much narrower focus is needed in order to single out two or three which become the illustration for the entire ten. And that decade was is 1974 to 1984. That is to say, even though they may not run sequentially, and even though it's correct to return to the beginning, it is wrong to make it appear as if our original "Theoretical and Practical Perspectives" already expressed what we first worked out in M&F, P&R and RLWLKM. The reason I say the decade must be 74 to 84 is to stress the fact that it's only after P&R, only with the revolutions of the 1970s, only with finally getting to see Marx's Marxism as a totality, that we could see ourselves as a totality and Marxist-Humanism as a "Body of Ideas." What this does convince me is that instead of having only four weeks of classes, we could expand it to six weeks, with every single class having a "What" as its title: What is Marxist-Humanism? What is Dialectics? What is News and Letters Committees? What is the Uniqueness of N&L as it responds to the objective situation monthly, rooted in that methodology? I think the six weeks would therefore permit us to have a whole lecture on the organizational expression of "revolution in permanence", and N&L as that unity of worker and intellectual that is able to practice theory as well as activity and not alone from what we do but from what all revolutionary forces do globally.