

Rd

June 14, 1985

Dear Andy:

PPS (handwritten) I liked your lead this issue and even got a compliment for you from Bess who reported that it went over great in L.A.

Don't know whether you know of the critical situation B<sup>I</sup> has just experienced in his trade union activity, for which he was fired by management -- and in which we believe the union was involved in the conspiracy against B for some time. There are times in union work when the "general", and correct, principle that the unions these days are so bureuacratized that there is practically no distinction between union and company. Nevertheless, experienced comrades would know that there is a way to express this on the union floor and to the rank-and-file who agree with us that still would not give the impression that we make no distinction between the two; we certainly do fight for union recognition, and, as the rank and file has to know, being in a ~~non-union~~ sweat shop is worse than being in a union shop.

Denby was perfect when it came to knowing how to stay on that thin line without falling off. I sure miss him now. I felt that, expecially this year, when you have no REB report to give, you should not only be prepared to participate actively in all discussions, but take time out under the Org. report to talk on the complexities of activities in the shop, both as they concern wildcats and as they concern just daily activity in the shop. You certainly have had plenty of experience. I don't remember when we last had any sort of trade-union report. Certainly not since Denby's death.

I have been looking forward to the trip that I understand has now been planned for you for August in West Virginia. We can talk about that more if you come to the Aug. 3 REB -- and it would definitely be the sort of experience that could become part of your ~~discussion~~ discussion ~~at the Plenum itself.~~ at the Plenum itself.

Yours,

P.S. Do you remember how often I used to haul out Trotsky's advice as to how to make an anti-war speech, when war was already declared by your country and you opposed it in a way, nevertheless, that would get you sent to jail "only" -- but not have your head-out off? I think I'll haul it out again this Plenum.

17215

PD  
May 7, 1985

Dear Andy:

The N&L staff is sending you what material it gathered via Express Mail, and probably you have already talked, by the time you get this, with Mike who is also sending you some material. The only thing I want to add (or subtract?) was the words "so totally" which you used in your May 1 letter to me, in the last half of your last sentence, where you spoke of the U.S. labor leadership having "capitulated so totally to the offensive of the Corporate/Administration coalition." Naturally, we consider capitalism as indistinguishable whether in the form of the Republican or Democratic parties. Nevertheless, it is a fact that Labor did not go for Reagan in its leadership; and, in fact, they were about the only ones who spent money and time to try to elect Mondale. Therefore, such words as "totally" are wrong, because we want to take advantage of any difference within the ruling class, so we can turn to and end with pointing to any forms of rank and file revolt we can find. I'm sure there is no difference between you and me on this question; I simply want you to be sensitive to the formulations you will be making.

Time is short, and you have a lot of work to do. Thanks for the clipping on Dr. Mason. You're right -- all his statements have helped us. I'm enclosing for you a xerox of a surprising letter I got from Robert Hill, which I've already sent to Dr. Mason, because such a letter could be of use to him. (I suspect ulterior motives on Hill's part, but I said nothing about that to Mason, of course.) You can share this with Jim, if you wish.

Yours,

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