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ORGANIZATION, THE PAPER
AND FINANCES

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Draft Resolution

ORGANIZATION, THE PAPER AND FINANCES

Introduction

Three principles have molded our existence from our start in April, 1955:

(1) The working class nature of the paper and of the committees. Proletarianization in thought and in organizational behavior has always governed our way of life.

(2) Theoretical clarification, the clarifying of workers' politics. Long before MARXISM AND FREEDOM was published, Marxist Humanism as a theory of liberation that took shape in the working class struggles in the 1840's was the illumination of the class struggles of our own day.

(3) Financial responsibility to bring these principles to life through a workers' paper, issued regularly, as well as through a comprehensive study which traced the American roots and the world concepts of Marxist Humanism.

It is time to let a fourth principle called ORGANIZATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS permeate our every thought, activity, and perspective.

It is true that in the period between our first conference, in the spring of 1955, and our first convention, in the summer of 1956, we did a lot of talking about needing a sense of organization. This led to the formal adoption of a Constitution and By-laws which recognized the two poles of our life--paper and book--being unified into a single form of existence called NEWS & LETTERS COMMITTEES. These Committees operated, and will continue to base themselves, on the open admission that we do not pretend to be a party; the open rejection of any goal "to lead" as well as the deliberate, continuous refusal to create a halo about ourselves as any sort of elite. The elaboration, in book form, of the recognition that there was both a movement from practice to theory as well as one from theory to practice has laid the foundation for a new movement and, hence, a heightened sense of organization.

The need to found a new Marxist Humanist movement requires new, untapped energies; a heightened organizational consciousness, a living, walking proof of ideas as people. The proof is already here. We need only become conscious of it. It lies in the unifying principle of those who joined us yesterday, or will join tomorrow, with those who founded NEWS & LETTERS as that altogether new working class expression which so firmly united theory with practice that you did not know where the one began and the other ended.

It was the result of two stages of development of Marxism: (1) the elaboration of the theory of state capitalism and (2) the actual practice of publishing a workers' paper, through which we arrived at a totally new concept of theory.

State capitalism as a theory was more than just a break with Communism (or Stalinism, as we called it then). It was a break also with Trotskyism, which had opposed Stalinism and laid claim to being the rightful inheritor of Marxism-Leninism. It was the beginning of a new divide in Marxism, but it was only a beginning. Just as Lenin's theory of imperialism would have been "economist" without his philosophic reorganization, so our theory of state capitalism had to find its own philosophic moorings. Something closer at home than "the Russian Question" was needed to separate us from the old radical organizations. So long as we did not have to meet the challenge of the world "outside", that is to say, the objective world which put our theories to the test of publication of a regular bi-weekly organ, the duality in our own political tendency lay hidden. The experience of publication just when Automation produced the recession of 1953-4 and the war clouds over Formosa compelled us to confront American perspectives.

Because this--the American heritage and perspectives-- is the decisive question, we begin, not with our development as a separate political tendency, born in 1941, but with that of the Abolitionists, born in 1831, which is one of the twin poles of our heritage as Marxist Humanists. That history will illuminate the organizational notions that are of the essence for our own development today. It is time we stopped being organizational innocents.

I--The Abolitionist Movement As a Totally New Type of Organization

The most outstanding example of what Marxist history knows as Bolshevism was born in America 73 years before its birth in Russia. Being American, it was no accident that it centered around white and Negro relations. It was the question of slavery which brooked no compromises either on the part of the slaveholders who established a hateful totalitarian society, or among the Abolitionists who sought to establish entirely new human relations.

In the critical period when our country was torn between slavery and freedom, cotton culture and industry, a united nation or a divided nation, there arose this most remarkable group of men and women anywhere in the world.

The foundations of our ideas are those of Marx because they spoke in terms of class solidarity and consciousness on a world scale. But we have our own traditions in the United States. It is only under those circumstances that our own history and strivings will be fully understood, for each country must solve its own problems.

One hundred and twenty years ago, the Negro slave was the laboring class in the South. American prosperity depended on Southern cotton. Southern cotton depended on the slave labor. The slave lived under the whip. When fleeing he was pursued by dogs. When caught he would lose an ear or a nose to mark him as a runaway.

Abolitionist organization as a serious movement began when men like Garrison, Phillips and other talented white intellectuals -- speakers, writers and propagandists -- surrounded themselves with the uncompromisingly militant ex-slaves. It was they who decided the difference between one organization and the next.

The first issue was whether the Negro was an American. The Colonizationist Society said, No. The free Negro was an African and should be returned there. Others said, the Negro slave was a Southerner and should be kept hard at work there. Garrison destroyed the colonizationists for all time.

The second issue was whether there ought to be immediate freedom for all slaves. Some said time will take care of it. Garrison said men will take care of it. The gradualists said the slaveholders ought to be reformed. "It is the reformers who have to be reformed," was Garrison's reply. His strength was that he always brought the question home, while everyone else put it out of sight -- in Africa, the Southland, or the millenium.

Some began to insist that anti-slavery was the business of a specialized group of people: the churchmen, the charity-givers, the social workers. Garrison drew together the different fragments of the anti-slavery movement on the central principle that the whole nation was involved in anti-slavery, however unaware of it. This was not only in his head. He proceeded to publish a paper which became famous all over the United States. For the ex-slaves, the Liberator was the means by which they spoke to each other and to the whole country. The slave-masters recognized, in the Liberator, the spirit of the slaves all around them who were not allowed to read or write.

Everyone recognized that abolition had finally come home from England, from Liberia, from missionary and Bible tract societies. It was the beginning of an American movement.

Garrison began the Liberator with these fateful words: "I will be as harsh as truth — as uncompromising as justice — I will not equivocate — I will not excuse — I will not retreat a single inch — I will be heard!" Those who thought they were listening to one man's boasting were mistaken. It was the particular stamp of the movement towards the American Civil War. One man speaking and everyone recognizing through him the nature of their times and their own true nature.

The future of the country was no riddle and no uncertainty. The passions and energies needed for a new society could be found inside the anti-slavery movement. Nowhere else. That was Abolitionism. The Abolitionists added a new dimension to the American character not because they were powerful politicians who could mold the government. To them there was no lower word to call anyone than to call him a politician, and that included everyone from the President down.

Having dedicated themselves to the cause of freedom, the relations within their own group — between black and white, men and women, men and men — were so totally new that no one could ever mistake an Abolitionist, whether he was a non-violent resister like Garrison, or John Brown attacking Harper's Ferry. The uncompromising attitude towards slavery, the unflinching behavior that could withstand any attack, the principled character of his ideas determined the principled character of his behavior. Indeed, no one could distinguish an Abolitionist's private behavior from his public behavior. The firm convictions he held and was willing to die for determined all else.

The Abolitionists added a new dimension to the word, "intellectual," not because they stood out as great in any professional field, but because they rejected all professions for this one of carrying the medium of precise social forces — the illiterate slaves desiring freedom.

This unusual movement had no trade union posts, no government patronage, no party favors to offer anybody. People grew in this movement at a time when growth was the greatest hunger of the country as a whole. Independently of Marx, Wendell Phillips defined the relationship of ideas to organization in this profound manner:

"No matter where you meet a dozen earnest men pledged to a new idea — wherever you have met them, you have met the beginning of a revolution. Revolutions are not made; they come. A revolution is as natural a growth as an oak. It comes out of the past. Its foundations are laid far back."

In a society falling to pieces from slavery on one side, and industry on the other, the voice of John Brown rang out the form or reorganization of the new American and his world:

"I wish to say, furthermore, that you had better, all you people at the South, prepare yourselves for a settlement of that question, that must come up for settlement sooner than you are prepared for it. The sooner you are prepared for it the better. You may dispose of me very easily...but this question is still to be settled — the end of that is not yet." This was 1859 and everyone was listening now.

When Marx wrote that Wendell Phillips' speeches during the Civil War were more important than battle bulletins, he was referring to the need of the Civil War to be conducted along revolutionary lines. That the paths of the Abolitionists and Marx's crossed, not accidentally, during the Civil War is seen also in this: Marx felt impelled to separate himself from those Marxists in America who tried to evade the concrete issue of the Civil War. It was only after the Civil War that Abolitionism collapsed for the lack of Marxist theory, but the self-styled American Marxists collapsed before the Civil War, with the pat generalization that they opposed "all slavery, chattel or wage."

Organization of thought determines organizational life. The specific organization of thought — the theory of Abolitionism — that determined the organizational life of the Abolitionists collapsed with the abolition of slavery achieved by the Civil War. For an organization there is no revolutionary practice where there is no revolutionary theory. Under the circumstances, even a Wendell Phillips (who saw that unless the Negro became the basis of reconstruction of the South, the Civil War might as well not have been fought) could not keep the Abolitionist organization together.

On the other hand, Marx's theory of emancipation of labor developed to its fullest and CAPITAL was finally completed. At the same time, the First International was organized and lived on till after the establishment of the Paris Commune, the first workers' state in history. But it was not those Marxists who did not take sides in the Civil War who made either the organization or the theory grow, while it was the Abolitionist movement which left us the priceless heritage of that totally new type of organization where ideas determined your way of life in and out of the movement, and sense of organization held all together until the day of liberation of the slaves.

II -- Our Theoretical Beginnings and Practical Conclusion
To Publish NEWS & LETTERS, 1941-1955

State capitalism is a world-wide phenomenon. Stalinism was the Russian name for this world phenomenon because, after the defeat of the German Revolution of 1923, it was in Russia where state capitalism took shape. Each stage of capitalist production has posed only two alternatives: either the self-activity of the workers or the Plan over the workers. Stalin rose to power because he was ruthless enough to establish capitalist relations in the factory. He chose the Plan with which to do so.

Clearly, something new had arrived in the world with the First Five Year Plan. The next country to follow was Hitler Germany. Bureaucratism, ending in the One-Party State, is rooted in the need to discipline workers in capitalist production at this, its final phase, when it can no longer do so without a bureaucracy out of labor itself.

World War II tested Trotsky's opposition to Stalinism and found it wanting. Trotsky would not fight Stalinism as the class enemy because he did not have the theory of state capitalism. And precisely because he did not fight Stalinism as that class enemy of the proletariat, as Lenin had fought the Social Democracy, as agents of capitalism in the labor movement, all his policies were completely ineffectual, and his fighting came to naught. That was our beginning as a new theoretical tendency.

1) We re-established production relations as the decisive determinant of the class nature of any society, in Russia as elsewhere, thus removing the production relations in Russia from being a "Russian Question" to being a question of the relations between capital and labor anywhere in the world. The capitalist relations in the Russian factory showed one new feature -- the role of the State as the direct ruler over production. Politics could no longer be separated from economic control and, the State, far from being a mere "executive committee" for the capitalist exploiters, became the total exploiter through ownership and control over all means of production.

2) We found the continuity of Marxism by finding the philosophic method which was seen to show the duality in our own tendency.

It takes a couple of paragraphs to summarize the theory of state capitalism. But it took us many years to develop, only to find that -- not having anchored ourselves securely to any new philosophy -- the one practical conclusion, to publish a workers' paper, was not meant seriously! The worker who edited Correspondence no sooner disagreed with "The International Leader," in the tense atmosphere of war

clouds over Formosa, than he was unceremoniously dropped and the whole organization broken in two. The fact that these state capitalist Marxists do not presently even make a pretense to worker editorship does not, however, mean the victory of "theory" but its class bankruptcy.

On the other hand, where the "compulsion to thought" came from the 1950 miners' strike against Automation, and the June 17, 1953 East German Revolution against Russian totalitarianism, the result was a leap to a new stage of philosophic cognition.

The new philosophic stage meant two things simultaneously:
1) A materialistic reading of the final chapter of Hegel's Logic, which deals with the Absolute Idea, or the unity of theory and practice. "In general" this has, of course, always characterized Marxism. But, in particular, this means something new for each epoch. The maturity of our age made us conscious of movement from practice to theory in an altogether new way.

2) Spelled out as a practical conclusion, "the movement from practice to theory" meant the publication of a totally new paper, a paper that the worker feels is his own because it is. It is edited by him. It is written by him. His writings are recognized not just as "instinct," the raw material, so to speak, for others to fashion, twist, mutilate, transform into opposite. His writings express thoughts, working class thoughts that are more than just "source" for thinking.

It makes no sense, theoretically or otherwise, to have broken with the old radicals if it did not mean we were going to the workers to learn from them their thoughts of struggle against the labor bureaucracy, their aspirations for a totally new way of life. No doubt we all meant it when we first embarked upon it, but the fact that there could be a split within less than two years of facing that test shows that we were not governed by the movement from practice to theory, and that means also not governed by theory.

It sounds like a simple idea to have a journal where workers can express themselves fully. No doubt many have thought about it — but no one did anything about it. For only where the simple conclusion flows from a profound idea does the energy and sacrifice and money and organizational action flow to meet it.

It sounds like a simple statement of fact all Marxists would accept, to say that there is a movement from practice to theory. There was certainly "general agreement" among the theoreticians of state capitalist theory — but no one acted on that principle or they wouldn't have collapsed at the first whiff of pressure from the bourgeoisie, from war clouds, from workers' demands for a total philosophy.

Without the confidence that the ranks can do what the leadership had decided was its task alone -- that of editing -- your principle of worker as editor is given back to "theoreticians." The worker can do many things hertofore ascribed to leadership. That is the key that will unlock new doors both to practice and theory.

Where Correspondence makes no pretense to worker-editorship, NEWS & LETTERS has deepened its working class character. A worker is editor. The managing editor is likewise a worker -- never before even proposed, much less carried out. The paper is at its best when it deals with workers' struggles at the point of production.

This does not mean that intellectuals have nothing to contribute or do not contribute. There is no place except NEWS & LETTERS where, for example, analyses of Russia as fundamental as ours are published. Proletarianization, far from lessening the role of the intellectuals, makes it more responsible. The intellectual must dig deep once the worker has spoken to give it form, find the link in history, clarify what is new in it. If, if the form matches the working class content, the worker recognizes it as the new quality of his own thoughts and theory is born anew. Out of no other milieu could MARXISM AND FREEDOM have been molded.

III. The Experiences of NEWS & LETTERS

Despite the smallness of our numbers, NEWS & LETTERS, once it cleared itself of those who had been with us only because they found themselves in an impasse in the old radical organizations, had experiences which are unmatched anywhere.

1) The editor will expand in a separate report our role in the rank and file revolt in Local 212 at Chrysler. Here we limit ourselves only to state that NEWS & LETTERS was so good a weapon in the class struggle against the labor bureaucracy, that it delivered a genuine blow to the labor bureaucracy. On the local factory level the Reuther slate was beaten. None felt this more keenly than Reuther at the Atlantic City Convention; he demanded to know who had brought "that."

2) Even where, as in L.A., our people played no direct role, we were a sufficient force just through distributions at factory gates to call forth a public response in the local union paper.

3) It was clear from the UAW special convention in Detroit that the paper was correctly expressing the auto workers' struggles against the labor bureaucracy. The speeches of the oppositionists to

Reuther sounded like NEWS & LETTERS articles and they later appeared as such. We were the only paper which printed these expressions of rank and file revolt.

4) In West Virginia the paper is a force both in the struggle against the labor bureaucracy and in the working class community as a whole, extending for a radius far beyond that of the living quarters of the committee members.

5) In the deep South, where none of our friends live, the papers dealing with reports in the South played a deep enough role to get us recognized by many Negroes fighting against segregation as a true representative of their aspirations. In Pittsburgh, steel workers read it eagerly.

6) In Pittsburgh, in Philadelphia, and in New York, intellectuals who read, contribute financially, often as if they were members.

7) Internationally -- from England to Africa, from Italy to Israel, from France to the Middle East, we are known as the second, the working class America. In turn, they have sent us letters, articles, clippings, that have made us an international organ. This was made an especially live issue when the French crisis produced sufficient material for nearly a separate issue.

Finally, and in a very great sense, above all else -- because all else would not have been possible if the following hadn't been true: intellectuals and workers alike grew. To grow, to develop your natural and mental faculties, to become a whole human being when the weight of the whole capitalist system is in the opposite direction is no small achievement.

We will see this if we take a single example -- there are dozens and dozens others -- and compare one of Ethel Dunbar's early columns with the one on the Civil War chapter of MARXISM AND FREEDOM. This was no simple retelling of the chapter -- any more than Barbara's was that of her chapter. Dunbar made explicit what was only implicit in the book: 1) where the chapter deals with the relationship of the First International to the actual mass movement, she adds that this made clear to her how the Second and Third Internationals rose. 2) Where the chapter speaks only "in general" of Abolitionists, and runaway slaves, she went into a characterization of the Nat Turners, Sojourner Truths, etc., none of them mentioned in the book. 3) Where she, as a writer, is almost exclusively preoccupied with the Negro question, she grasped its connections both to labor and to international struggles in such a way that it illuminated why groups like ours are thrown together; the principles by which an organization unifies workers and intellectuals, white and Negro; gives them a drive and force that they could not have on their

own -- a drive that helps mold history, for men do make their own history even though "not out of the whole cloth."

On the other hand are the weaknesses of NEWS & LETTERS, outstanding of which is that its base is not wide enough. It does not have the circulation it deserves, nor could that be if even we worked 24 hours a day; we are too small to reach out that far; we must have the finances "to advertise." Everyone knows the two or three places we advertised nationally and internationally established a wider periphery. Were we to let this lapse, we would not be worth our salt -- that is, measure up to our ideas or our class struggle participation. A Marxist Humanist cannot certainly be less serious than a bourgeois philosopher like Hegel was about his science. "This easy contentment in receiving, or stinginess in giving does not suit the character of science."

You will get a separate, full report of the last quarter. We all know finances are not coming forth sufficiently to practice our ideas. Of course there is the objective situation and unemployment but that is just it. When we get blows from capitalism we do not disappear, but become more creative in the ways to get money. The organization as an organization always has. It is time each individual as an individual measured his contributions alongside his ideas.

The REB proposes a \$5,000 fund, above regular contributions, to assure the existence of paper and organization:

- 1) \$1000 of this is to be raised by the center; and
- 2) \$4000 by the locals.
- 3) Because of the unemployment situation, we give four full months for the locals to reach their goals.
- 4) That we begin with the obligation of each to raise a minimum of \$100. We feel enough would raise it before deadline so that we could wait for the period, September through December 31st, for the completion of the fund.

There is no substitute for a newspaper. A book will not take its place. The daily education one gets from the class struggle, the monthly summations one gets from a workers' paper such as ours, the practice of the book as a weapon of analysis both in the class struggle and in the matter of international and national events is the only way to clarify workers politics. It gains for workers the dimension that the capitalists and labor bureaucrats are busy spending incredible energy, a never-ending sum of millions to see that the workers do not get. But if our enemy be all-powerful in material means, our vision is greater.

It has ever been the workers' pennies that have built the workers' papers, organizations, and has won them their battles, no matter what the powers arrayed against them. It will be no less, in this age of absolutes when the counter-revolution is so inter-penetrated with the revolution that when the void is not filled by Marxists it gets filled by fascists, as witness France!

The question mark put over our civilization has not been placed there only by the H-bomb, but by the struggle for the minds of men. Take the abstract conception of Hegel's idea and fill it out with the idea of a new society, and the daily blows needed to be delivered to capitalists, labor bureaucrats and all that stands in the way of the workers becoming the masters of their own lives, and you will see why we, and we alone, must make ourselves responsible for seeing that, no matter what, NEWS & LETTERS does not go under.

Here is the sentence in Hegel I am referring to which illuminates the why of NEWS & LETTERS:

"The self determination in which alone the idea is, is to hear itself speak." In other words, the idea is not only in the head, the idea is implicitly so much in practice, in the activity of the common man, that all you have to do is to listen to him and when you listen to him it is not only that his experiences talk, but that you hear the idea itself. That is socialism itself. The new society itself. That's precisely what makes us so wise -- the elements of the new society which have begun to hear themselves speak from the platform NEWS & LETTERS has created for them.

The question what that is worth to us cannot be fully answered in terms of finances unless it has first been answered in terms of organizational consciousness. This is the missing link we must grasp and hold on to. This is the transition point to founding a new Marxist Humanist movement.

IV -- Transition Point--Laying Foundation of a New Marxist Humanist Movement.

No one--not even the workers themselves who are the motive force of history--know the time, place, or form of the spontaneously arising mass movement that changes the course of history. But, while history dictates to us, not we to it, Marxists are an outgrowth, both objective and subjective, of the movement of history ever since, on the eve of the 1848 revolutions, Marxist ideas shaped themselves into an organizational form. Since then "the party" as the knowing of the proletariat--its class and international consciousness, the repository of its history and reflection of its aspirations--has come to stay. whether "the party" is 2 -- 200 -- 2,000, or millions.

Ironically, that concept died a certain type of death just when the Marxist grouping consciously set themselves the task of building a Marxist party after the death of Marx. The theoretician of the German Social Democracy, Karl Kautsky, gave the concept a petty bourgeois twist in defining the task of the intellectual as being the one to bring Marxist ideas to workers. This was further generalized by Lenin in 1903 into the idea that workers, by themselves, could never get further than "trade union consciousness," that socialism, Marxism, could come only "from the outside," i.e., "the vanguard party." Nothing, absolutely nothing that Lenin did after to stress how his own ideas of "vanguard" changed on the basis of the actual development of the mass movement had the force of the achievement of a successful proletarian revolution--November 1917--under the guidance of his Bolshevik Party. Thus, when in 1905, Lenin said that the workers, the Russian "backward" proletariat, was socialist, or, when in 1917, he said the workers were more revolutionary than the party did anyone's concept of "the party to lead" change seriously. On the contrary. 1917 having been the only proletarian revolution that successfully established a workers' state which was here to stay, transformed the concept of "vanguardism" into a fetish that has plagued the movement ever since. That has been so in face of the monstrous reality of Stalin's transformation of the single party state, that was to "wither away," into the state capitalist totalitarianism that is out for conquest of the world. Trotsky's opposition to Stalinism, never having had a class basis in theory, had none in organizational form.

For a long time after the founders of the state capitalist theory had elaborated that theory, there was no quarrelling with the concept of the vanguard party. In 1950, when we traced the relationship of the class nature of the party to the stages of capitalism itself, there suddenly appeared out of nowhere the statement that the world crisis was "a crisis in the self-mobilization of the proletariat." It contradicted everything else we ever said on the self-mobilization of the proletariat being the only way out of crises, but no explanation was made even to the co-founder, much less to the ranks or the SWP which was quick to grasp onto the statement to show a duality in our tendency. To the tendency, itself, however, the duality still remained hidden because we seemed all to have agreed on the essential point of going to the workers and learning from them ways to battle the labor bureaucracy, ways to deepen our theory. We would learn from them how to write theory so that the average worker understood it as that new quality of his own thoughts. Meanwhile Johnson gave us sedatives to keep us from getting any "recruitment mentality."

It is not only that the collapse of Correspondence gave the lie to the principle of "full fountain pens" since the full fountain pens the intellectuals were to have "to record what workers said" were used only to record what "the Leader" said. Because the tune

changed all the time, no tape recorder could play at the speed that either workers or the objective situation demanded. If we would not once and for all confront that dual nature of state capitalist theory, we were going to be left far behind by the rapidly developing world outside, and reveal a lack not alone of any Marxist integrity, but also of "simple" class solidarity.

In a word, the bourgeois attack compelled a confrontation of the relationship of the whole part of the working class movement -- Marxism -- to the present task of publishing a workers paper. Without new philosophic moorings, we could not meet the challenge. Without organizational integrity, and with the sedatives Johnson had given for years to keep us from "any recruiting mentality" which would gain us new members who would test us, half of the group just collapsed. Where Johnson had previously carried on his struggle against gaining our philosophic and independent class wings in a cliquist way, by personal messengers armed with immunity from inspection by the rank and file, he now had them run with seven league boots into the underground.

It was clear that, far from "representing" the masses -- the sedative most used to keep us from the natural desire "to recruit" new forces -- these people represented not even themselves. They could not possibly found a new movement -- they were too busy breaking up what had taken 14 years to build up. While we never for a moment gave up our working class principle and proceeded on with the paper in its new form, News & Letters, it was only with MARXISM AND FREEDOM -- and the return to Abolitionism and Marxist traditions on the ground of our own age had we gained clarity on the question both of theory and organization, the relationship between the two:

1) We reject "the party to lead". The maturity of our age, the movement from practice to theory at a time when the theoretic movement has been at a near standstill, the monstrosity of the single party state certainly demands that rejection.

2) We reject equally that we are here only "to record." This was a lie not merely in the life of our little organization. It is a greater lie and evasion of responsibility to the proletariat as a whole that on its own is moving toward theory as we are moving toward practice. The Unity of the two -- and only the unity -- will make Marxism in our age.

3) We know what to put in the place of the "party to lead." There

is no crisis in the self-mobilization of the proletariat. There is a crisis in the Marxist "parties" being unable to find the new foundations our epoch demands. It is difficult enough for a small group to maintain its sense of organization without the extra befuddlement involved in fighting such straw men as "recruitment mentality." Far from blunting your sense of organization, what is needed is the heightened organizational consciousness which comes with knowing your historic role and specific contributions and WANTING to tell it to "others." There is no other way to grow. There is also no other way to learn. Organizational consciousness does not isolate you from the mass movement, but brings ever new layers from it to you.

Whether it is "specifically" American, like Abolitionism, or the "pure" Marxism of Marx's times, we certainly cannot tie our hands behind our backs and wait for the movement to come to us. We must go to meet it, go to meet it without any halo about ourselves as an "elite," with a recognition that those who will hear later may be greater than we who have heard first. But, whether greater than us or not, they are not here yet and we have an obligation to find them, not they us.

To lay the foundations for a New Marxist Humanist movement is no small feat. For one thing the tasks of both workers and intellectuals become greater. The task of the worker has changed when he too is moving to theory and must in fact realize it. The task of the intellectual has changed, and become harder. For he must dig deep into the workers' thoughts for clarification, he must develop theory not by learning principles by rote, but their fresh analysis. He certainly cannot leave all tasks to the worker just because that is the class that will transform history. The intellectual has some transforming to do, beginning with himself. But, when Marx "completed transforming himself," and "joined" the workers to form an organization, his task didn't end. Neither can ours. It has in fact just begun with the clearing away the debris of the old duality, in grasping the historic link, and thus gaining our philosophic wings. It is first now we can lose our organizational innocence and thus seriously forge ahead.

The concrete conclusions become self-evident:

1) First and foremost we must break out of our isolation. We must do so by spreading our ideas, by expanding the base of News & Letters, by gaining members. Laying the foundation for a new Marxist Humanist movement means having the people. There are no ideas "as such" but only people who have such ideas.

2) News & Letters cannot remain a once-in-the-moon kind of weapon, but must become a daily weapon in the class struggle. That means talking on the line and not just at strike time. Nor can it be limited to union or caucus meetings. It must be at their homes and at yours. News & Letters is always ready to tell their struggles but it is not limited to actions. It tells their thoughts before they become actions. You must always be with them to know what they are thinking.

3) We must expand and even change our activities in relationship to the book. We must begin to fight for our ideas in person. Whether that is through attendance of other groups' meetings, or with those who bought the book, or with News & Letters subscribers, or just people who drop into the house, we must recognize that "entering the competition of ideas" means competing with people who have other ideas and winning them over to Marxism. At the same time we must continue to sell as founders, write letters to friends and enemies alike, always from the vantage point of: I'm giving you a serious contribution. If you do not wish that as the focal point for Marxist regroupment, say what, but say it as seriously as I do, and not just the first offhand remark that comes from your mouth.

4) Educationals must change. Editing remains our main point of business always. But editing cannot be limited either to reading articles, or talking what you will write. It must relate itself to ideas in the book. Or, better still, the book as a weapon of analysis must permeate the editing sessions as the paper, every issue of it, the form it gives to the stories of the class struggle as well as the articles by intellectuals.

But editing does not complete our educationals. We must analyze events as they occur. To do that on France we had to have a "special issue." We must learn to do so as second nature and fashion our local educationals on that. As soon as the book becomes that weapon of analysis, educationals will be no problem.

Finally, we cannot live two lives -- one restricted to Friday or Sunday evenings, like church going, the other for the daily and "real" life. No movement can be built that way, much less a Marxist Humanist one. This is not what molded the Garrisons or John Browns. Note the use of the plural for "Browns" refers not to one man, nor does the plural refer just to the "leaders." No, every single Abolitionist -- from the runaway slave who only heard about Abolitionism after he followed the North Star to freedom, to the housewife who saw to it

that the runaway slave reached "an underground stop" before nightfall to rest his weary body and proceed on, to the intellectual who went soliciting for a subscription to make possible the next issue of the Liberator or Douglass' paper, to those who held bazaars to raise money to send delegates abroad and make Abolitionism an international cause -- everyone was in it "for keeps." Douglass complained once of "the very long list of non-paying and the very short list of paying subscribers" and the "amazing disparity between the disposition to read and the disposition to pay," but he was referring to those on the "outside" not to Abolitionist members. Membership in an Abolitionist society was more than mere money. It was their way of life and their way of death.

The same is true of the Marxist movement always. The being in there "for keeps" characterized everyone from the newest member to the oldest leader. We certainly do not show equal seriousness when we do not even allow for a single paid functionary, nor find out what would happen to the office if the Chairman who is working full time would not have the help of the present associate editor who is likewise able to work full time without pay so long as she collects unemployment insurance. While the budget that you will get will still not ask for any fund for a paid functionary, it is necessary to begin to be conscious that you cannot forever run the organization on so thin a shoestring as we are running it now.

The indispensable remains the paper. Even without a single paid functionary, we cannot publish on the basis of regular contribution which barely pays rent, minimum office expense, and some (only some) of the debts accumulated for the printing. Therefore, as a beginning, we set ourselves a goal of \$5,000 above regular contributions, to be collected between September through December 31, 1958, to assure our existence for a year.

No matter what ingenious new things to do and ways to do them come out of the convention, the main thing is not just to talk, but to do. Greater forces will join us when we have proven our responsibilities to the ideas of Marxist Humanism by doing.