

1961

PERSPECTIVES: IDEAS, ORGANIZATION, AND WORLD DEVELOPMENT

I. The Berlin Crisis

Those two peace doves, Khrushchev and Kennedy, are so busy shrieking military commands that they have quite forgotten about that olive branch marked "negotiations." Not that the latter would change the world situation for long inasmuch as war as a way of life constitutes the very innards of capitalism, private and state. Since, however, nuclear war might spell out the end of civilization altogether, the olive branch is dangled by both sides between calculated fits of forgetfulness.

For the moment, the fit of forgetfulness, the brinkmanship, predominates. I might add that this was written three days before the atomic terror began. Were Dulles alive now he could learn some new lessons in brinkmanship from a real pro. Not that Dulles was a rank amateur, but he had not the advantages of a Khrushchev schooled in Marxist language that he used for enslavement instead of freedom. Even in its perverted form, the language can lay a smokescreen about "head hunters" that puts mere "democrats" to shame on a world arena where new nations have just freed themselves from imperialist rule that had not only subjugated their countries, but denuded them of manpower, so that all America and Europe were made rich and technically superior, while the African world was kept both poor and in ignorance of science.

Khrushchev has prepared painstakingly for this moment. Ever since three years ago, he custom-tailored this Berlin crisis. The time is especially propitious to forget the "negotiation" aspect and cry havoc at the brink: (1) On September 2nd the neutrals meet in Yugoslavia, and they must under no circumstances be allowed to set their own agenda, and think they can truly show an independent road. Instead they must be made to take sides "neutrally", of course.

(2) On September 17th, the Germans are having an election. While no one knows better than Khrushchev that it makes no difference who wins - policy is set not in West Berlin, or in Bonn, but in Washington, D.C. - to mudd up the waters and make it hard to see clearly what the real stakes are.

And (3) on October 22nd the RCP will convene to consider the new program promising paradise on earth IF there is no war, IF productivity of labor continues far above wages, and IF Communism dominates the world.

One runs the chance, of course, of falling off that brink before October 22nd, but then look at the objective compulsion to act now, at no matter what the risks.

First and foremost, as is characteristic of state capitalism in Russia, East Germany is faced with a shortage of labor. There is not alone a measure of revolt through slowdowns like the revolution of June 17, 1953. Even though the German workers cannot escape from

alienated labor in the West, they do escape to get at least a choice of labor.

To use a phrase of Lenin's, they vote with their feet. In thousands upon thousands upon thousands. East Germany has lost no less than 15% of its working population. The state exploiters are faced with the necessity of forcing labor into the factory and can do so only if there is no window to the West at all. The so-called sovereignty of East Germany is nothing but one vast prison.

Khrushchev should know that no prison walls can quite contain all measure of revolt - as witness the three decades of State Plans with the vast expense of Russia one immense forced labor camp and still his greatest problem too is shortage of labor.

But science and spuzniks and spacehips have quite turned his head and all he can see, in place of human beings, is machines, ever more perfect machines: Automation machines, ICEMS, H-bombs - ever bigger ones, space ships that can be used also to rain atomic havoc around the world. The evil genius to destroy has reached the "ultimate" - or can reach it any time Khrushchev decides to press the button. The cynical disregard of humanity in the bone and marrow of today's rulers turns Nero (who fiddled while Rome burned) into a small-time operator.

On the surface - both because Khrushchev was the instigator in the present Russian-tailored crisis in Berlin, and because shortage of labor is surely not a worry of Kennedy's - it would appear that Kennedy is "lonely", or so he characterizes the "hard, long struggle for peace."

No need to be too concerned about his "loneliness". He has with him the whole military - and the warmongering press who egg him on, not to speak about his allies who embarrass him with adamant stand of freedom - for themselves, not for others.

Take DeGaulle. He not only has not brought peace to Algeria. He has brought war to Tunisia. He says he is so preoccupied with the "German problem" he cannot even sit down to negotiate his evacuation of Bizerte, long overdue. His dictatorial actions extend to his attitude to friends like Kennedy.

DeGaulle is showing Kennedy that Europe is indeed the key to the world situation, but that he, DeGaulle has the key, and he has no intention whatever to use it to unlock doors to freedom - in Germany or in Asia.

No, Kennedy is not a lonely man. His allies may be cautious ones, but he has them and he himself is all too eager to take this opportunity to heat up the cold war to fever proportions. In all important respects he is made of the same imperialistic clay as Khrushchev.

He may not have a shortage of labor, but he certainly has one of surplus - and that, for capitalists, is the same type of headache when

it comes to production. And the "solution", too, is the same - build up the military. Again, like his Russian imperialistic twin, he has, ever since the invasion of Cuba, been concerned with thought control which he has euphemistically dubbed "the deeper struggle."

The Supreme Court has followed his lead. The reactionary decisions they have handed down on the Smith and McCarran Acts have put us in the race for "thought control".

And so while he lets the Freedom Riders languish in jail, he proceeds to help Khrushchev bring us to the brink of war. He has his embarrassing moments, not only with DeGaulle, but with Nehru.

For one full day the Voice of America kept blaring forth the message of Nehru, bemoaning the fate of the West Germans wanting to escape, when, lo and behold, the august persons of the Hungarian butchers of their own homeland and its revolutionaries arrive in India, dangling some new offer of a loan, - and by the following day when Nehru addresses parliament (8/24/61) he finds that the 1949 allied agreement "diluted" (whatever that means) the 1944 agreement of the conquerors for joint occupation of Berlin, so that the Russians have the right to deny "the West" access to West Berlin and seal off East Berlin. And then, with a cynicism befitting the big powers, he adds: "Whether it is justifiable or not is another matter."

Where, in all this talk of "dilution" or non-dilution of the rights of two sets of conquerors is there any concern for human beings fighting for their freedom, and even their very lives?

The creative drama of human liberation which has shaped the course of world history will need totally different minds to preserve itself and to add a new dimension to the development of civilization, freeing it from the class narrowness in which it has been imprisoned. In this, and only this way, can the pre-history of man end and true human history begin.

II. Historic Roots and Contemporary Departures

(1) The Historic Link. The more we consider the immediate world crisis, the more it is obvious that our attitude stems from an entirely different source, both as to class nature and historic roots.

As you no doubt have noticed, I have been shifting from the world scene to the U.S. and v.v. Both because of our working class outlook and national roots, the dual vantage point of the world and the U.S. is, in reality, one.

Seventeen years before, Marx proclaimed, "Workingmen of the world, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains. You have a world to gain". The great American abolitionist, William Lloyd Garrison, founded the LIBERATOR, and put as its masthead, "The world is my country." The year was 1831.

Now no man had his feet more on his native soil and his eyes more fixed to the problem that disfigured the nation born of revolution - slavery - than William Lloyd Garrison. Indeed, even on this question he would have nothing to do with those anti-slavery societies that wished to move the problem of freedom from the US to some place outside it by transporting the slaves to another country. His position was firm and clear-cut: there is one way, and only one way, to prove we stand for freedom, and that is to free the slaves here and now and let them enrich our land as free men, thus and only thus making America free. The reason behind that slogan "The world is my country" was not that of an ex-patriate - that may do for individual artists but not for serious makers of history. No, the reason was that the principle of Freedom has no boundaries.

Much in the past sheds a brighter light on the present than the latest treatise hot off the press. Take the question of the Freedom Rides, and the break of Frederick Douglass from the founder of Abolitionism, William Lloyd Garrison. Recently we received a letter from an old radical saying our special Freedom Riders issue was good, but why did we have to claim that we alone let the Freedom Riders speak for themselves when it was the CORE etc. that started them. Here was my reply:

"We know, of course, of the work of CORE and the other organizations participating in the Freedom Rides, as well as the writeups of it all the way from the NY Post in the Core-Lator. Our claim to be the only ones who are planning a pamphlet along the lines of our special issue of "The Freedom Riders Speak For Themselves" is not due to the fact that we alone have a "democratic press." Others have a democratic press and Jim Pack's article in the CORE-Lator was the most interesting, and closest to our conception of having the Freedom Riders Speak For Themselves.

However, we alone consider "speaking for themselves" the principle, the source from which all theory flows. Two principles are here involved. One is the speaking for yourself instead of having others than the doers do the speaking "for" one. The Abolitionists in America were ones who lived by this principle, bringing the runaway slaves, free Negroes, white intellectuals standing for the abolition of slavery together, and providing the platform for them to speak their mind. Nevertheless, Frederick Douglass - who was certainly given the run of the platform - felt the need to begin a paper of his own and not abide by the founder of the movement's paper, William Lloyd Garrison's Liberator. Why? It is because he felt that he was given the platform to tell of his experiences, but not to draw conclusions from them, at least none that differed from Garrison's. With all due honor to Garrison for being the founder of this unity of black and white, intellectual and worker, Douglass nevertheless felt that his politics differed from Garrison's and that those politics flowed directly from his own experiences and he did not wish to separate experience from philosophy.

Of course, Garrison was head and shoulders above the present-day radicals who don't even know how to listen to the stories of the freedom fighters and keep spinning their own "analyses". Nevertheless,

Douglass felt that his politics differed from Garrison's and flowed directly from his own experiences, and he did not wish to separate experience from philosophy.

Of course, Garrison was head and shoulders above the present day radicals who don't even know how to listen to the stories of the freedom fighters and keep spinning their own "analyses." Nevertheless, to be the whole man, not to divide philosophy from experience, was the goal of Douglass as freedom fighter, and is the aspiration of today's freedom fighters. Therefore, our letter of the 3rd stressed the fact that ever since 1952, when we published People of Kenya Speak for Themselves, and through the 1960 publication of Workers Battle Automation that principle has guided us in theory and in practice. We stressed also that it was a continuous action, and the pamphlet, Freedom Fighters Speak for Themselves, while centering on the Riders, would start with the 1956 Montgomery Bus Boycott and go through the Sit-Ins, Wade-Ins, Rides, etc. I know of no other who is projecting such a pamphlet, and I still hope that you will favor this project and help us put it out.

"The other principle that I referred to is the question of the non-separation of the theoretic and comprehensive outlook from the immediate problem. As Marxist-Humanists that is of the essence for us. For example, I know of no other organization who did not separate the civil rights of Negroes from those concerning radicals, etc., whereas our "Freedom Riders Speak for Themselves" issue contained also the editorial, "Civil Rights, USA, 1961," in which we showed the one-ness of the fight against segregation with that of the fight against the Smith and McCarroll Acts. Our Freedom Riders certainly worked as one with all others, for the sponsor was CORE, but the extra dimension they brought to it by relying solely on the self-activity of the masses, North and South, resulted, we believe, in the positive aspects of the whole struggle, as against much of the pessimism that permeated some of the best writing, including that of Jim Peck.

"Far from distorting the truth, NEWS & LETTERS presents it, and presents it not in isolated instances, but as the whole — the whole which is true internationally as well as nationally."

Our historic roots are not, of course, exhausted with the Abolitionists. We are Marxist-Humanists. The young Marx raised the same twin problems of freedom and the one-worldedness of the planet inhabited by humans, and he added three new principles of liberation:

(1) He named the class that would make this freedom real — the working class — making it total, not only from chattel slavery, but from capitalist exploitation.

(2) He defined the humanist foundations of his dialectical materialist outlook: "The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism — that of Feuerbach included — is that the object, reality, sensuousness is conceived only in the form of object, contemplation, but not as human sensuous activity, practice, not subjectively...The standpoint of the old

materialism is 'civil society.' The standpoint of the new is human society or socialized humanity."

(3) He pointed to the self-organization of the proletariat which develops both through spontaneous actions and organization. The same objective movement which produced this self-organization of the proletariat produced a new type of organization, a unique combination of worker and intellectual bound by a philosophy which made it part of self-emancipation of the proletariat, and kept it separately only to the point (a) of fighting not only for immediate aims, but historic ones, so that freedom becomes total, undermining not only class society but what underlies class society — the division between mental and manual labor; and (b) once freedom is won in any country, the battle is not over until this freedom is secured on a world scale.

As we know, William Lloyd Garrison, and most other Abolitionists, did not continue after the Civil War abolished chattel slavery; whereas the organization that arose on "foreign" soil to help the anti-slavery fighters in the U.S. — England was the home of the First Workingmen's International headed by Marx — continued until a truly new society was born — the Paris Commune.

In a word, the Marxist organization came to an end only when the self-organization of the proletariat produced the new society itself. It was short-lived and so we will continue to meet up with the twin problems of spontaneity and organization through to the present day.

* * * *

2. The Historic Departure

The other side of historic continuity is historic points of departure. It is to this I wish to turn now: our point of departure, especially on the philosophic front — our point of departure from Lenin in the very field in which we were rooted in becoming an independent Marxist-Humanist tendency.

Heretofore we have always stressed the similarity of our views to Lenin's. Our original contribution became a sort of footnote to that. Now all this must be reversed.

WHY? Why, when we do not go in for newness just for newness' sake, like the annual changeover in auto models? We are what we are through history. No generation can make a truly original contribution without having absorbed the past, without standing on the shoulders of history.

Let's retrace our step a bit in order to contrast humanity's development in the historic period when Lenin died — the 1920's — and in that of our own age, the decade of the 1950's.

The thesis, "Ideas and Organizations", (p.6.) states that Lenin died believing the factional struggles would straighten themselves out, without answering why.

Why, when he warned against a "return backwards to capitalism"; why, when he saw so clearly the new "passion for blessing"; when his own universal, "TO A MAN" showed there never would be a new society under any other circumstances, did Lenin, in 1923, not do what he had threatened to do in 1917: resign and "go to the sailors", BUT INSTEAD ASKED HIS MEMBERSHIP NOT TO HOLD THE MISTAKES OF THE LEADERSHIP AGAINST IT, AND HIMSELF RELY ON HIS LEADERSHIP TO STRAIGHTEN ITSELF OUT?

What were the compelling objective causes that led Lenin to retreat to the fear that, without the thin layer of the Bolshevik Party leadership, the dictatorship of the proletariat itself would fall? The answer is not hard to find since Lenin himself designated the historic confines of the isolated Russian Revolution: (1) The backwardness of Russia, (2) "the painfully slow maturing of the European Revolution" and (3) the failure to extend the revolution helped world capitalism to regain its breath.

No one, no one on earth or in outer space, can escape his historic confines, not even a genius like Lenin who, for the future, never gave up the highest point reached by the Russian Revolution with its new universal "TO A MAN", but for the present, the present of Russia, 1923-4. Lenin was compelled to fall back on the division between party and non-party masses, with the inevitable corollary of the division between leadership and ranks.

Once that party had an objective base - state power, the state power which controlled the productive process - it is this - THIS DIVISION BETWEEN LEADERSHIP AND RANKS, AND PARTY AND MASSES, - which permitted the heritage of "the vanguard party to lead" of the 1903 vintage to predominate over the 1917 concept of the revolutionary spirit far outdistancing the party.

IT IS THIS CONCEPT OF DIVISION OF PARTY AND MASS which allowed Lenin, who, in his PHILOSOPHIC NOTEBOOKS, had broken with Plekhanov's non-dialectical materialism, to make speeches to the youth asking them to study philosophy via Plekhanov. Nothing indeed so stresses the backwardness of Russia and thus the reappearance of the Social-Democratic conception of learning "by stages." It is as if we told people: though the Communists are totalitarians, you cannot join us unless you have first joined the Communists. Don't laugh. For years, this is precisely what the Trotskyists did, and the sad end is that not only have these scoundrels not returned to Trotskyism, the Trotskyists themselves have since become little more than whitewashers of Communism.

IT IS THIS CONCEPT OF DIVISION OF THEORY AND PRACTICE WHICH WAS BEHIND Lenin's not merely withholding the publication of his Philosophic Notebooks because of the urgency of the times, but never OPENLY breaking from his "Materialism & Empirio-Criticism", which had given the green light to vulgar materialism and which was, after his death, to become a sort of bible for vulgar Communism. It is this which our age is reversing.

The harsh realities of 1923-4 - which compelled Lenin to leave a Will, which (despite all its profundities and its masterly political

analysis of his co-leaders) is governed by the negative factors of that reality — hence the warnings of the possible downfall of the workers' state. This negative factor far outweighs the positive which permeates his articles and statements of the need of the party work to be checked by the non-party masses; the need to fight the incipient bureaucracy by trusting entirely the rank and file, even to the point of having them fight the workers' state. That new remained for our age to concretize and bring from a footnote to the center of the historic stage.

The truth is always concrete. A "universal" achieved by one age cannot just be "applied" by the next generation as if putting a second coat of paint on a wall.

If it is truly "universal," it must be created ~~away~~ out of the living present. The recognition of this has been one of the great discoveries of the dialectic, and has given it its impulse of self-transcendence. Only after the laborious work of the new does "the shock of recognition" (Melville's phrase) emanate from us as we view past history and history-in-the-making.

In our case, the new post-World War II reality, especially of the period 1950-53-6 (from Automation strikes through the East German and Hungarian Revolutions) is that which made us read "right" Lenin's "Philosophic Notebook," which we were the first and only ones to publish and translate into English.

The period of Automation and its battles in America, and the East European Revolutions, was followed by the totally new epoch of African Revolutions and independence which, in turn, gave a new quality to the philosophy of Marxist Humanism.

The new quality arises from the fact that in our age philosophic questions were posed from below, from practice, as well as by us from theory. A new "subject" had appeared on the historic stage.

There is nothing academic about the role of philosophy when the masses embrace it — and it begins to show itself at once in the movement in varied organizational forms, in the "contact" between philosophy and people, in the inter-relationship of leaders and ranks. In a word, the maturity of our age has put its historic imprint on our philosophic contribution. The two together are not just a footnote to Lenin's philosophic reorganization. Far from being a mere footnote, they open an entirely new stage in humanity's development in thought and in organization. Nor is it an accident that our return to Lenin was via the Humanist essays of Marx, which had not been published in Lenin's time, and this brought us back to Hegel a stage further than Lenin — for the maturity of our age allows us to concretize the "subjectivity" which has absorbed "objectivity," that is to say, the population "to a man" having become whole men—reuniting mental and manual, theory and practice, philosophy and politics — can now make the leap to freedom without bureaucracy, without elitism, and, as the Hungarian Revolution showed, with Workers' "councils" becoming the predominant form of organization not alone for workers and peasants but for youth and intellectuals.

In summing up both the link of continuity and point of departure

we can see that: Despite the new universal, which remains ours to this day, that to a man the population must run the state and manage production. Philosophically Lenin continued the division between ranks and leaders to the point where philosophy was left for the leadership to master and bring to the ranks and masses outside in stages of Plekhanov first and materialistic Friend of Hegel next, and then the Party leadership and finally the ranks.

With us the reverse is true. Because of the transformation into opposite of the workers' state into a state capitalist society, the theoretical void in the Marxist movement was total, while, in actual life, the masses throughout America, Europe, Asia and Africa were uprooting the old and creating the new in fact and in thought. Even we had thought that the re-establishment of the Humanism of Marxism was "our" theoretic discovery - only to find that all the way from Hungary to Guinea the masses were raising philosophic questions of the most profound significance, acting out humanist philosophy.

Thus the maturity of our age underlines the distinction between Lenin's times and ours, imparting a new quality to its organization. To sum up the difference, a new "subject" demanding a total philosophy has arisen and we must all become practicing Marxist-Humanists. This demands a new formulation of the relativity between theory and practice, this practice to extend to organizational building and organizational growth. Otherwise, practice means nothing more than talk. Because the need for a reformulation of the relationship of theory and practice is not only an academic need, the academic need has come about because actual life has changed and the compulsion to theory comes for the mass need of a total outlook. Because the need for a philosophy is a mass, that is precisely why we cannot rest with the unfurling of a Marxist-Humanist banner, but must practice Marxist-Humanism.

If you ask: "Haven't we always?" you only show that you are still in the "theoretical" stage. If we had actually practiced it, it would have meant that "subjectivity" absorbing "objectivity" - that is the masses who make the revolution are also capable of reconstructing society with its technology, science and all - would be left as a task not only for the masses; the intellectuals too have a task - mainly to get rid of their "intellectualism" and grasp the mass need for organization, while the workers in the organization must practice Marxist-Humanism as a way of life. At this stage, organizational growth is the proof, the only proof of practicing Marxist-Humanism, and that is exactly the proof that is missing.

Oh, I know we have had our best year. No other organization so small has done so much, both nationally and internationally, both in thought and in action, including the Freedom Rides, which you will consider in the next session.

Nevertheless, the measuring rod has been too narrow because we are too small. So let's take a good long hard look at ourselves. Only after that can we grasp the new point of departure philosophically in organizational terms. Only after that can the "subjectivity" absorbing "objectivity" concretize itself into perspectives for the next year for the serious growth of the organization.

It is a much more complex question than the six concrete points listed in the Bulletin as perspectives, though it must begin there, and extend to making the Freedom Riders pamphlet what the "Workers Battle Automation" should have, but has not become - a recruiting agent - a recruiting agent for the organization practicing Marxist-Humanism.

III. PRACTICING MARXIST-HUMANISM

Historic origins of a century and more notwithstanding, we were not born as an independent political-philosophic tendency until 1955.

The break from Trotskyism - for those who came from there - was so total that we had not even bothered to establish ourselves as any sort of organization other than the publication of NEWS & LETTERS as a workers paper and the decision to write MARXISM & FREEDOM to re-establish Marxist-Humanism for our age.

Now, no one knows better than I the need for the clearing of heads, the eliciting from workers what they want instead of constantly telling them what to do. But did it really have to take two years to come around to the drawing up of a simple Constitution for the News & Letters Committees and show thereby that we do have some organizational consciousness?

If you mark down all the other stages on the way before we ever got to writing last year's "From Organizational Consciousness to Organizational Building" - that of Self-Development, "Transmission to Others" - looking outward instead of inward, and "Building a Cadre" - you will see at once that we were certainly behind the masses who made no distinction between Spontaneity of Revolution and Organization - whether you take the country to be Hungary or the whole continent of Africa - or just rank and file committees in unions in America.

Time does not stand still, and while we are ahead of all others in reflecting this in theoretical treatises, be that Marxism & Freedom, Afro-Asian, or Workers Battle Automation, we have not kept pace with practicing what we wrote in any substantial organizational growth.

It is not that there is a "technicity" to recruitment that we have not practiced, nor that we are wrong in making no distinction between members and non-members either in News and Letters or in News & Letters Committee meetings. In this case, it is they who miss something by not joining. Though all the windows and doors are open - and ours always are - one cannot really know the inside of an organization except by being in it; one remains a bystander instead of a participant with all the limitations to one's own self-development entailed in remaining outside. Naturally I'm not talking of anyone here - I'm sure those who are not members will join before this plenum has ended. I'm talking about "others", those not here.

We have had too much bitter experience with "elitism" of all sorts ever to let ourselves become such, and if your universal is "to a man" - and ours is - you cannot retreat from the principle of considering the masses outside and those who have united in a historic organization with intellectuals both subject to the objective situation and equal participants in the forward movement of history. But the organization must take itself seriously not only as a philosophy, but as an organization, before others feel compelled to join and not lose out, so to speak, in becoming of pivotal importance at critical junctures in history.

Take Workers Battle Automation. Many workers helped in writing that pamphlet, authored by Charles Denby - and yet there is no organizational proof that our factory workers had succeeded in uniting our philosophy with their "stories" and even "program" in a way that the organizational conclusion could not escape them.

A totally new concept of the practice of Marxist-Humanism must, therefore, govern the writing of the Freedom Riders pamphlet - not that I have in any way given up in making the Workers Battle Automation a recruiting agent still - no doubt Charles Dency will deal with that when he reports on the paper. But let's concentrate on the New, the role of Philosophy in Building Organizations

Trotskyists, along with Communists, reject the Early Essays of Marx, thinking they represent "Hegelian idealistic left-overs", that action alone (as if thinking wasn't an activity!) would "get" them. Other radicals proclaim "The End of Philosophy".

What they all fail to realize is this: it is not a question of theory any longer, but a life-and-death question for the African Revolution at the crossroads; for the American Negroes and whites riding the Freedom Buses to Mississippi jail as well as for the British workers facing extended automated production in order for British capital to compete with their allies.

If anyone thinks, "Yes, this applies to Africa", because they have participated in the ultimate - a revolution - but not for just a Freedom Ride, then he would only be falling victim to yet one more form of that old, strangling concept of the "backwardness of the masses."

(1) Once Again Berlin

If I may, I would like to approach what I call the practice of Marxist-Humanism from yet two other directions (1) Another look to the Berlin crisis, and (2) A return once again to Hegel. Heretofore, we talked about Berlin as the possible point of war explosion. But war is not the only alternative. The Big Powers are jockeying for positions at the bargaining table, and these types of negotiations can undermine movements as effectively as any war. What kind of "peace" is Russia or America looking for?

The post-war world was charged with revolution in Europe, but the last thing in the world Stalin wanted was a successful proletarian revolution, and so he kept all CP's in Western Europe in tow. What he didn't want by revolution - uprooting of the old society - he did want to take over by coup, as in Czechoslovakia, and tried by blockade in Germany. The "Allies" won more than the breaking of the blockage - they won the time to reorganize capitalistic Europe with the Marshall Plan.

What Stalin lost - and Khrushchev inherited - were the "miracles" of West German production, and automated capitalism in DeGaulle France, and even "backward" Italy is back in the running of "peaceful competition", which Marx more correctly called "warfare by competition."

It is this which Khrushchev wanted ended in November, 1958, when he first began to create the Berlin crisis with threats of war. It had indeed become a necessity for state capitalism's lifeline which had been seriously threatened throughout Eastern Europe, especially Hungary, and not by "competition" but actual revolution. It is the revolutions, born and unborn, which he is out to crush before ever they appear in the open, full of hope that the "West" somehow would not let it be crushed again.

Khrushchev has yet another "short-term perspective" in sealing off Berlin - and that is to create a loss of confidence in Western Europe. I am not referring only to capitalistic Western Europe which had only forged ahead in capitalistic grandeur on home grounds, but had learned a few lessons in how to lose empires without losing stranglehold over them economically. And this was strong enough to keep Khrushchev from gaining a foothold in Africa, as the Congo debacle showed in no uncertain terms.

I am referring to proletarian Europe, which had seen a new path open with the Hungarian Revolution and must now be told: "no such way out." This putting the lid on revolutions inside his empire and undermining the Western one is what Khrushchev calls the "new realities" which he demanded both Kennedy and the UN recognize. In old-fashioned parlance, it is called "the balance of power".

Don't think he didn't win adherents among bourgeois intellectuals from the Lord Russells, whose philosophy is "I'd rather be Red than dead" - and even as high as the Senate of the US - where for one single hour, no one less than the Democratic leader, Senator Mansfield, said, "Perhaps we should give up Berlin and make it a 'free city'."

Now, if the fear of the mighty-missiled Khrushchev reaches in these high circles, what do you suppose happens in the Afro-Asian-Latin American worlds with their constant conferences - this week alone, there is the "Casablanca" conference on August 28th, the Neutralists on September 2nd, and who knows how many "popular fronts" Khrushchev is readying to catch in also the radicals, socialists, pacifists, etc., etc.

Negotiations will solve nothing, of course, any more than Munich delayed the war for long. But by now who has confidence in a third, truly independent working class way out of the rulers' rush to war? The pages opened in history by those who dared - whether that was in Hungary or in Africa - remain unread not only by those in power, but by radicals out of power and calling themselves socialists.

Without a Marxist-Humanist philosophy, ingrained intellectualistic pessimism takes over and even socialists dare speak of "an almost total absence of proletarian participation" in the political movement. That's one way of assuring oneself being swept, not into the historic stage, but into the dustbin of history.

(2) Philosophy, Politics and Organization

Now the inter-relationship of philosophy and politics which gave birth to Marxism, both as theory and as practice, had, as its foundation Hegelian dialectics, which matured after the French Revolution and the actual proletarian movement of Marx's day.

Freedom was the point of departure and the point of return for both Hegel and Marx. To the Hegelian philosophic heritage of Freedom and Reason, I now wish to add Organization.

Naturally, I don't mean Hegel's opportunism and the organization of the Prussian state to which he capitulated; I am concerned with this dialectical philosophy, and not his

personal opportunism. The point is that, though to Hegel the philosopher, organization meant only Organization of Thought, the sense of history is so overpowering, that through the history of thought we get the actual development of humanity. Listen: "The mind of a people in its richness is an organization and like a Cathedral is divided into numerous vaults and passages, like pillars and vestibules, all of which have proceeded out of one whole and are directed to one end (freedom) - and one and all have the same common root, the spirit of the time."

The "spirit of the time" Marx concretized as the proletarian movement, the pull of the future - the new society on the old. But I want to remain with Hegel for a while longer and his concept of freedom. He is the only "God-fearing man" I have ever met in history whose concept of freedom leads him to interpret this freedom to begin with Adam. Man always wanted to be free - free even from God's paradise, which paradise, however, was linked with lack of knowledge. When Adam ate the apple, it was not only sex he learned about - and Hegel brings God back in this interpretation, pointing out that he said, "Now he is like one of us, knowing good from evil." In a word, man had knowledge and would thus become a maker of history, and the freedom to do so was worth God's punishment of now laboring by the sweat of the brow and women bringing forth new generations in pain.

Now call it what you will - the point is man did not have a preconceived plan as allegedly God had - man learned through necessity, and necessity remains the threshold to total freedom. So that when Hegel speaks of the Absolute Idea as being a unity of theory and practice, he means both Organization of Thought - philosophy is a science of thought, its history - and by organization Hegel means history as an organic whole since we are what we are through history and man learned to achieve freedom through slavery.

Now, where Hegel saw some abstract "Spirit" realizing itself, Marx traced the development of labor, which Hegel had begun with, but dropped as he retreated to the ivory tower. I have often quoted to you what the young Hegel had said of labor which was so reminiscent of Marx, and now listen to the young Hegel on the question of that Prussian state he was later to defend: "Only that which is an object of freedom may be called an idea. We must, therefore, transcend the State. For every State is bound to treat free men as cogs in a machine. And this is precisely what it ought not to do; hence the State must perish." (Quoted by Lichtheim's Marxism, p. 36)

No matter how Hegel changed, the concept of Freedom and Reason never changed, and the philosopher of all the stages of consciousness knew as well as any of his multitudinous detractors, including radicals that the road from mere "consciousness" of freedom to its actual attainment is a long hard road.

Here Marx enters with the long road of emancipation of the proletariat which is the road of self-development and of collective development, of spontaneity and of organization. In a word, between consciousness of freedom and attainment, there is action and more action, and yet more action. With this action never separated from the activity of thought which is part of its very organism.

Now that creative drama of human liberation in terms of ideas and organization as it has come down in world history and as it confronts us today will either reflect itself in organizational growth or our ideas will become more abstract than were those of Hegel. And it is not a question of the few of us - it is a question of the humanity that is struggling to unite theory and practice in practice and is searching for a total philosophy which all but us deny them.

We cannot on the one hand say the maturity of our age is proven by the fact that "Subjectivity" has absorbed "Objectivity", that is to say, that the allegedly backward masses have not only made the revolutions and won freedom from centuries-old imperialist domination, but can also reorganize that society on totally new foundations as they have absorbed all the science, and the techniques, and the philosophy, and are making greater strides than the advanced countries.

They are not backward. They will win total freedom. They can industrialize their countries, handle modern techniques without capitalism provided we of the technologically advanced lands do not let them down, even as the Negro in the South can win the struggle if the North becomes one with them in this resolve to once and for all end discrimination and thereby end the system that breeds it. We cannot say all that and yet act as if the rank and file workers or the Negroes or the youth are not ready for Marxist-Humanism, that we cannot create an organizational form for it which would be part of this forward movement of humanity. It would only prove that we, not they, have been found wanting.

Let's take a brief look at the heritage of Marxist organizations in order to see what was alike in this inter-relationship of philosophy and politics in all ages - and what each contributed that was new in order to see the problems of today: the relationship of spontaneity and other organizations to the specifically Marxist-Humanist one. We have already dealt with the Humanism of Marxism in the 1844 period which culminated in the Communist League of 1848, the year of the European Revolutions, and how in the Manifesto he stressed that the only difference between that organization and others as well as the spontaneity is that it has no interests apart from the proletariat, its only two distinguishing features being that they follow through the proletarian interests on a world-scale and fight not only for the immediate, but for the historic interests; i.e., a working-class society.

- 16 -

1865-73 is the period of the First International, which culminated in the Paris Commune, and when that was defeated and varied tendencies from trade unionist to anarchist tore at the International, Marx sent the First to die a quiet death in America, stressing that the activity of the proletariat did not depend on the existence of the organization, but on the contrary, that activity would produce a new form of organization to answer the demands of the new period.

Post-Marxian organizations began internationally, in 1889 with the establishment of the Second International, which in Marxism and Freedom I called "The Organizational Interlude" since it had not made a creative analysis of the present, the new monopoly stage of capitalism, but merely "popularized" Marx, had not found a "new subject" - the lower and deeper strata of the population, and dialectics to it remained a polemical instrument, not a living philosophy. We need not go through its collapse at the outbreak of World War I, since we are stressing only the relationship of spontaneity to organization and the new that gave birth to was the Third International based on the successful Russian Revolution and the Humanist concept of "to a man", which collapsed with Lenin's death and the beheading of the German Revolution of 1923. The stillbirth that was Trotskyism followed and, while it exists in name, is nothing but a whitewash of Communism; its actual downfall was 1947 when out of the revolutionary waves sweeping Europe, Trotskyism was incapable of forming a movement truly independent of Stalinism by its analysis of the class nature of Stalinism, the new stage of capitalism - state capitalism - and any search of new stage of philosophy, the humanism of Marxism for our age. We could call 1946-56 the lost decade for, though Trotsky did not build, the many tendencies within it to return to a Marxism worthy of the name either remained inside, or splintered without unfolding a new banner. But it is out of all the ideas, singly and as a totality; the new political tendency of state capitalism born within it and then split from it, finally did find the philosophic roots, and is now trying to find an organizational form that would reunite the spontaneously formed organizations and the philosophic-political-tendencies.

No other organization has so solid a theoretical foundation. No other organization has so few and yet is so active in every form of class struggle and inter-racial movement. No other organization has such wide international connections in Europe and in Africa. None has had so short a time of independent existence to prove itself. But since not we, but the objective movement sets the time, we must make an all-out effort to realize in organizational growth what we have already realized in theoretical and political development.

In the Weekly Political Letter (6/21/61) which commemorated the 20th anniversary of the birth of the state-capitalist tendency, I mentioned that, when the post-war strikes

and political demonstrations in post-war Europe and America, gave every indication that it would rid itself of capitalism, it seemed sufficient to leave the tendency be without a comprehensive restatement of philosophic foundations, but that the decade of the 1950's where the workers were beginning to raise philosophic questions, it no longer sufficed - and the tendency itself split - (p.2) one part "escaping to 'Face Reality' with- out Marxist continuity, the other (ourselves) moving to a re-statement both the Humanism and the American roots in MARXISM AND FREEDOM." That was 1955.

Though we are six years old as News & Letters, we are less than four years old as Marxism and Freedom and, therefore, as a Committee which unites theory and practice. Now I know how young that is - not only in history, but even in my life, as I have been in the movement for a good quarter of a century before then.

Once, philosophy and politics were pulled apart, remaining in the same house, but in different mansions. It could not assume any lasting organizational structure that answered the needs of the masses and therefore could expand.

If any further proof were needed of this, the attitude to the Cuban Revolution surely showed it since it sucked in even a part of the state capitalist tendency - that part from which we broke, it is true.

But in relating spontaneity to organization, as we are doing for the period since Marxism itself was born, we must bring together all the threads of the stillbirth called Trotskyism which, in its main groupings, split between those becoming whitewashers for Communism, and those for the other pole of capital - America - through the Social Democrats, and in its splinters is seen to be still without philosophic backbone so that, whether as in France, they speak forever of "spontaneity" and yet attribute lack of organizational growth not to themselves to the "almost total lack of political participation on the part of the proletariat", or as in the United States, they hang on to Castro's rhetoric as if that were a road separate from Communism.

The new for our epoch which would re-establish Marxism for our day was the rediscovery of Humanism because it, and it alone, answered the questions posed by the masses of "What Happens After" and which, philosophically is known as the Second Negation. For the miracle of history is that it turns the most abstract theories into the everyday needs of the masses. Just have in mind the monstrosity of present day Communism as you sum up the Humanism of the young Marx: He called his philosophy Humanist in order to stress that no change in property - from private to state - and not even abolition of capitalism would create a truly human society.

It was only the first step, the necessary but transitional communist form. It was the first negation of the old society. Then must first come the second negation, or what Marx called "positive Humanism, beginning from itself."

What I am saying is that unless there is an underlying philosophy which unites spontaneity and organization in the tradition of Marx, all their shout about "newness" only brings them to the old whirlpools.

Now it is true that when the Paris Commune was defeated and all sorts of tendencies wanted to get hold of the First International, Marx preferred to send it to die in peace in America. It is true that, in dissolving the International, he stressed that revolutionary activity the working-class does not depend on the party. It is not true that these revolutionary activities, once begun, do not recreate also that unique organization which rediscovers its link with Marxism. Thus the Second and the Third arose, and if the Fourth never got its bearing, it was not because there is no room for a Fourth -- but because it had no philosophy which fundamentally distinguished it from the State Planners.

From 1844, when he first stated this philosophically, and through three decades of prodigious activity which witnessed the 1848 revolutions, the 1861-65 Civil War in the U.S., the Paris Commune, both the theory became ever more concrete, whole, and profound, and the organizations varied, but even in the periods when none existed he would speak of "the Party" and all he meant was himself and his collaborator, Engels. That was not from conceit: it was to stress that they were not individuals and did not see themselves apart from the proletariat and did not see the proletariat apart for its self-organization, whenever that arose to assume formal organization, as it did during 1868 in the First International.

Now the Bolshevik party that Lenin headed, and that was part of the Russian Revolution, the part that saw it succeed, did not perish as Marx sent the First International to perish, but instead became the State Party of the Rulers.

That put a stop neither to the self-organization of the proletariat nor to the organization that would once again regain Marx's original vision of a world made new by a unique force which fused thought and action, theory and practice, philosophy and revolution into the creative drama of human liberation. On that threshold, we now stand.

September 2, 1961

RAYA

3183