

May 23, 1984

Dear Kevin:

I'm rushing this note to you before we even do the REB minutes (which really was not lengthy on the question of a possible Middle East lead) in order to give you some view of the way we felt it should be handled. Olga already told you the framework we discussed as the multiple flame points as it was taken up in the Perspectives. Another way of expressing this -- and it is this that makes us want to deal with it not in any definitive way -- is that these multiple points ~~REB~~ highlight the following:

1. Not only is it the Iran-Iraq war that occupies all the headlines now, but

2. Lebanon, which may very well not only occupy the headlines by the time the paper comes out but remains the unresolved and impossible to resolve conflict ever since the uncompleted civil war in 74. And

3. It's not only Israel which is showing both in its new stepped-up campaign in Lebanon and what is worse yet, Sharon getting a new lease on life in Israel itself, but above all

4. It's becoming a continued expression of U.S. imperial designs in the Middle East, so that not only is Lebanon a complete fiasco for it, and not only is Syria the only victor and main occupier, but a "friend" of U.S. imperialism Sheik Yamani expressed openly on TV that they cannot "invite" U.S. into the Middle East because that would bring in Russia and would touch off what all the world fears -- nuclear war. That indeed is the whole point. Will the Middle East be the break-out of that unthinkable war that becomes real? Or will West Germany remain the key to the world situation because the two super-powers do not want the Middle East to be the point of confrontation? Or will they all first be dragged into Latin America? And how many points do the powers not consider central -- like Grenada -- which could nevertheless become the point of conflagration?

Your ~~REB~~ direction would therefore be, starting as always with the new, that the present headlines on Iran-Iraq actually point to the impotence of U.S. imperialism which has been threatening to "defend" the Gulf region, and keeping their planes, etc. in striking distance, but which has now been turned down by so reactionary and friendly a state as Saudi Arabia. The why this is so is that, in truth, both the "allies" and Russia do not want either Iran or Iraq to win. They really hope that both exhaust themselves and that the stalemate would allow the other powers to come to decisions on oil without either Iran or Iraq.

One reason which is not acknowledged for the non-invitation to the U.S. is Lebanon. It is true everyone talks of the

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flasco for the U.S. And it is true that everyone is pointing to the fact that Syria is the real victor, but what they are quiet about is that not only is Syria not beyond making deals with the U.S. but it knows better than anyone that ~~the~~ "victory" over the original civil war and victory over Arafat now has only left everything in greater pieces than ever. That is to say, the PLO is not only Lebanon. The PLO is the force that gained so much international recognition and is the key to the real Middle East -- the West Bank and Gaza -- and it is Israel that Syria fears.

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As for revolutionaries, the ~~fact~~ fact that in the 1974 Civil War it was the true test of the Left which the left did not meet has meant and continues to mean that without a unity of philosophy and revolution, reality will continue ~~its~~ its degradation. It is this which both superpowers really fear. ~~Because~~ Because the crisis is so total now and so many new questions are raised, be it over the PLO, over Iran, over ~~those~~ those genocidal wars of Israel in Lebanon and ~~yet~~ yet we see the continued rule of that neo-fascist Gemayel approved both by the U.S. and Syria, ~~with~~ with even Jumblatt accepting a role in the government -- it's impossible to resolve the crises other than through social revolution.

Kevin, choose enough of the latest facts, including the miserable role of the left of the left like Jumblatt, who certainly knows Gemayel's role and Syria's to whom ~~he~~ nevertheless bows, in a way that will not only present what is needed for a serious article for N&L but could actually help in the Perspectives presentation in the following sense: The essence ~~and~~ and uniqueness of this year's Perspectives is not just RR as World Outlaw which is all too obvious, but that Part IV on 2 kinds of subjectivity. Far from Mao being the only one who represented the ruler with ~~the~~ super revolutionary rhetoric as the absolutely wrong subjectivity but all the statist lefts from PLO to CP and from Trotskyists to Jumblatt. Therefore you are choosing Lebanon as the example of both a new sense of objectivity and the very, very needed subjectivity of Marxist-Humanism.

Yours,

It is that specter of a possible unity of Philosophy and revolution that haunts the super powers.