

The National Chairman's Perspectives Speech at the Convention,
September 1, 1962

THE TIME IS NOW: ORGANIZATIONAL PERSPECTIVES IN LIGHT OF THE WORLD
SITUATION AND OUR UNIQUE THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Part I: The Objective World

- 1) In Space and on Earth: War Threats
- 2) All Western Roads Lead to Berlin, or
The Crisis is in Production
- 3) All "Eastern" Roads Lead to Africa, or
Our Underdeveloped Intellectuals
- 4) The Theoretical Void, The Anti-War Movement,
and Our Original Contributions

Part II: The Question Of Full Time Organizers: What It Is and What

It Is Not

- A) What It Is Not
- B) The Transition Point, or
The African Experience
- C) The New Stage, or
The Organization As Holder of History

Conclusion

THE TIME IS NOW: ORGANIZATIONAL PERSPECTIVES IN LIGHT OF THE WORLD
SITUATION AND OUR UNIQUE THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Part I: The Objective World

This exchange of ideas and perspectives for our organization, beginning with war threats and ending with full-time organizers for Marxist-Humanism, will I trust, have meaning for our co-thinkers abroad as well as here.

1) In Space and On Earth: War Threats

When we met last year in plenary session it was the period of the 22nd Congress of the Russian Communist Party. Its program was lavish with promise of pie in the sky for the Russian workers.

Today we meet shortly after Vostok II and III orbited in space while on earth food-shortages-caused-demonstrations (Pravda tells us) led to the firing of the Communist chief in Rostov-on-Don.

Nevertheless it is doubtful that many Americans were busy contrasting Russian promise to Russian reality, and dismissing the whole feat as a 20th century variation of Roman bread and circus.

The precision and magnitude of the job of orbiting the two cosmonauts alongside each other and returning them to earth 6 minutes apart was followed by the following thunderous statement by the Soviet Defense Minister: "Let our enemies know what techniques and what soldiers our Soviet power disposes of."

It remains an amazing phenomenon, therefore, that, while Americans marvelled at the feat of the cosmonauts, they took the military threats in stride. Contrast this to the fear that had gripped the United States when Sputnik No. 1 was shot into the sky back in October 1957, although then peaceful statements were issued by both nuclear titans--USA and USSR--and a laughing Khrushchev took time out to make a pun on words, saying Russia would welcome American fellow-travelers (the Russian meaning of Sputnik).

This time, along with the rocket rattling on the part of the Russians, a Western source--the British space expert, Sir Bernard Lovell,--affirmed, before the Russian Defense Minister's bellicose declaration, that Russia's space exploits signified that it would not be long before Russia mastered a satellite-killing technique and thus be able to shoot down American satellites.

Despite all this, the fact remains that the public was not gripped by fear such as pervaded it when Sputnik No. 1 went up "peacefully."

WHY?

Surely it isn't that Americans do not take Russia's rocket rattling seriously. There was concern enough just last month when Khrushchev chose the so-called Peace and Disarmament Conference to boast that Russian space science had advanced so far that it could, "Kill a fly in the sky."

Why then, the calm, almost indifference, with which the Malinovsky statement was greeted at the very moment when Nikolayev and Popovich demonstrated they could indeed shoot down a fly in the sky?

2) All Western Roads Lead to Berlin, or the Crisis Is In Production

The space feat occurred on the day of the 1st anniversary of the Berlin Wall. No matter how true it is that such a complex job as orbiting two cosmonauts requires a great deal of time, (look how many postponements and failures the US goes through before a single shot of lesser magnitude succeeds). Nevertheless a good solid proletarian instinct led the American working people to concentrate on these matters on this earth.

1) The daily problems in this prosperous land that is yet wrecked by crises, unemployment, and the automated killing pace of work.

2) The race situation, specifically Albany, Georgia.

3) The give-away programs by Congress, the same Congress that just defeated unemployment extension.

4) It was the anniversary of the Berlin Wall.

THESE problems are not taken aloft into outer space, but plague us here on earth where they must be resolved by other methods than those used by the Administration.

The simple truth is:

It is not the science fiction come to life that is decisive.

It is the role of labor. The struggle over the domination over world labor.

At issue is who will have "the right" to extract ever-increasing unpaid hours of labor so that dead labor, or things that are the products of living labor, suck dry living labor and degrade it to a cog in the machine—just in order to keep expanding that insane capitalistic system of ever bigger profits and ever bigger machines.

When East Berlin police shoot an 18 year old youth trying to escape to the West—and then let him bleed to death—this barbarism stems from this capitalistic need to control labor. The point is to see it in the concrete, the comprehensive concrete, for all roads lead, not to outer space, but to Berlin. Let's take it as the symbol it is of the WW III that was inherent in the fact the WW II had solved no fundamental problems.

1) V-E day, 1945. Berlin is a shambles. The Allies meet, shake hands, glory over the rubble—and promptly begin to fight each other over who will control it. Since they settle nothing, a marker is put dividing East and West.

Germans hungered for reunification of their land. The Communists are the first to take up the slogan and use it to build their "popular front" on.

2) The Cold War begins. The Russian blockade of Berlin is broken by the American air lift. The West takes over the slogan of reunification of Germany—but neither side moves to any such reality.

3) 1953. The East German Revolt. First ever in a totalitarian regime. The myth of the monolith is broken when workers thus take matters in their own hands less than 4 months after Stalin's death.

4) 1955. The "new" Russian regime moves to grant East Germany the pretense of sovereignty— and begins the propaganda for the same from the Western end.

5) The East German masses, by the thousands upon thousands, flock West and help build that labor force up under the same type of capitalistic exploitation. East Germany thus loses no less than 15% of its labor force. It is this precisely which make Khrushchev, in 1958, begin the new series of crises over Berlin.

6) Still it takes another four full years before he dares order the building of the Berlin Wall.

After the Vostok celebrations, Khrushchev returned to create further earthly crises in Berlin.

Indeed Berlin, as the center of the European industrial complex, has remained the key to the world situation in two World Wars and bids fair to become the starting point for the nuclear holocaust as well.

3) All "Eastern" Roads Lead to Africa, or Our Underdeveloped Intellectuals

There may have been, as the US Ambassador to Yugoslavia--George F. Kennan--states, "a depolarization" of the East-West struggle with the birth of the "neutral" nations.

But this does not mean East and West have found a miraculous path to "peaceful co-existence." It only means that, where all West European roads lead to Berlin, the global struggle can, as the Congo crisis showed beyond a peradventure of a doubt, take off from Africa. Or from Asia. Or the Middle East. Or Latin America.

The sudden Big Power concern with aid for underdeveloped countries says only: today I give so that tomorrow I can grab.

What is true is that the totality of the crisis, the new global points of tension have given birth to theories that match space conquests for being "out of this world," way out.

Having buried Marx anew every single year this past 100 years, only to find him more alive than ever in this new, third world, the bourgeois intellectual has now embarked on some strange detours. As we tackle these, we should bear in mind that the intellectual compulsion to do so follows the failure of their capitalist masters to force an identity between Marxism and Communism. Hence their new need for a division between the two at least on a par with acceptance of the word, neutrality, as being other than "a dirty word."

Bourgeois theoreticians are presently admitting that Marxism does indeed have an appeal for Africa.* Its pathos, they explain, applies to underdeveloped countries facing industrialization.

*Political Change in Underdeveloped Countries: Nationalism and Communism, edited by John H. Kautsky, (John Wiley & Sons, Inc.) contains most of the articles referred to in this section. But The Unfinished Revolution, by Adam B. Ulam should also be consulted.

Furthermore, the argument now goes, the Russian Revolution was really no more than "a nationalist revolution in an underdeveloped country." The United States evidently could not exert the same attraction for Africans because of a "time lag."

There certainly was a "time lag" if 1917 is compared to the presentday. The near half-century separating our epoch from that of the Russian Revolution is of a totally different class mold and international appeal. But that holds true only if you see it with true historic sight as the greatest proletarian revolution of our times. If, however, as those intellectuals claim, 1917 was but one other "national revolution", then it was far behind America which had gained its independence in 1776. The only true monopoly we seem to have nowadays is that of underdeveloped intellectuals who are masters in doubling up their tongues. When they wish to degrade 1917, it becomes a "national revolution", but when they wish to appear running hard to catch up with some one who "accidentally" had a head start, then suddenly the subject of comparison has undergone a total transformation, the comparison not being between two national revolutions appealing to the minds of men now in the process of shaking off imperialism, but rather between Truman's Point 4 program in post World War II and Lenin's appeal to the colonial world in 1920. They thereby have rewritten Russian history both to denude the Russian Revolution of its class content and given state-capitalist presentday Russia credit for Lenin's achievements.

The confusion is very deliberate. The post-war epoch in which Stalin and Truman faced each other as opponents aiming for mastery of the world has nothing in common with the world as it issued from the Russian Revolution of 1917. Each was a beacon for all freedom struggles in the advanced world as in the economically underdeveloped world. Even a Khrushchev found that, to regain some of that revolutionary aura, he had to claim a return to the Leninist period through a de-Stalinization which would attempt to erase the horrors of Stalinism, again both for the technologically advanced and technologically underdeveloped worlds. American bourgeois intellectuals, however, hope for a miracle of forced identity between Marxism-Leninism and present-day Communism without even a pretense of de-Stalinization.

In their desperation, they have only succeeded in placing the mark of Cain on their own allegedly class-less profession of being intellectuals. They themselves speak of "the totalitarianism of the intellectual." Obviously, anything, anything at all will do in the fight against the enemy, Russia. If that means assigning "totalitarianism" to the intellectual rather than to the new state-capitalist stage of world development, even this seems preferable, evidently, for it allows them one contrast -- American "way of life" to that of Russia.

One grain of truth from writing history "in retrospect" gives the story away. Totalitarianism, they admit, comes out of the industrial compulsion to discipline labor. The natural opponents of this discipline is the working class. Rather than cross over the class line, these intellectuals prefers to cohabit with the devil himself, in this case totalitarianism.

Lord Russell must be given credit for one thing, that of knowing the mentality of the capitalist intellectual. When he came up with the slogan, "Better Red Than Dead," he covered also these defenders of the "West" who can come up with nothing better than the "comradeship" with totalitarianism, provided only that they are not Russians. Faintly is heard a pathetic cry in the wilderness.

Perhaps, says one, Automation will do away with mass labor and thus totalitarian control over it, and thus they will regain their democracy.

It would have been better if the intellectuals had asked for the return of their heads!

These headless intellectuals wouldn't have occupied a minute of our time if it weren't for the fact that they are characteristic also of the radical, both in the peace movement and in the national liberation movement, who fail to meet the challenge of the age.

Since theory, even like nature, cannot tolerate a vacuum, the Communist state-capitalists are trying to fill it. There is no use denying the pull they exercise on those who have rejected private capitalism but failed to replace it with a new human totality.

4) The Theoretical Void, The Anti-War Movement, and Our Original Contributions

Take the anti-war movement first. In Britain they are so preoccupied with its surface manifestations that they do not see either its economic roots or the need for totally new, human foundations. I asked, when I came there from Africa, what has the movement done about the Berlin Wall, and the answer was: "We weren't moved by it."

Then came the Moscow-convoled misnamed Disarmament and Peace Conference which did move them--so much so that they saw neither the whitewash their presence would offer to one of the two nuclear titans in the world. There they became the captive audience of a Khrushchev who both rattled rockets and expanded himself on subjects far and wide, ranging from the Common Market to the Berlin crisis. Naturally the Wall figured, but not as the death that it means for all those who would escape to freedom. Instead it was used as a chance to corrupt the European movement with the poison of anti-German chauvinism.

It is this poison that has been fed Europe ever since the end of WW II. It is this Communist poison which has corrupted the British labor movement and anti-war movements.

It is this poison and not the seeming preoccupation with more vital problems like war and peace, which is at the base of their not having been "moved" by the wall.

The only anti-nuclear disarmament movement which does not feel the pull of Russia is Japan.

Precisely because the Japanese have been the only victims of real A-bombs, and seen, in peace, as well, that the totality of the crisis has not been diminished, that there are schisms in the radical movement with a considerable segment moving toward genuine Marxism.

On the other hand, the very same bourgeois intellectuals who bemoaned the appeal of Communism in Africa, weep even more bitter tears at the movement away from Communism in Japan.

Just as they showed their class color when it came to the attitude to control over labor, so now they show it is not Communism, but Marxism, that is their main enemy. They write openly and fearfully, "The emergence of a truly independent Marxist movement shorn of international control, might enhance its appeal and abet its creativity."

Unfortunately this also characterizes those radical intellectuals who were not moved by the Wall because of their "preoccupation" with the anti-war struggle. They too were deaf, if not afraid of, the Japanese move toward a total outlook, a comprehensive analysis of our age: state capitalism and its opposite, that total opposite that alone can overcome it; Marxist-Humanism.

As for the sudden concern to attribute the originality of the African interpretation of Marxism to the African alone, although it is attracted also to Russian state-capitalism. Much as I love Africa, and know that she has a great deal to teach us, the truth is that the rediscovery of the humanism of Marxism for our epoch did not begin with Africa, but in the most technologically advanced country--the US.

The year of its first appearance was not the birth of the new nations in Africa, but was West Virginia, 1949-1950.

And the natural orators were not the intellectuals, but the miners.

It is true that the whole post WW II age was brimming with this so that during the mid-'40's in Europe (not exactly an underdeveloped country) both Existentialist and Catholic were issuing books on Marxist-Humanism as if they were mere headlines.

-8-

But to existentialists, it was only a way formouthing Communist slogans without carrying a Communist Party card. They were willing to do all its dirty work for the CP, including using its prestige from the Resistance Movement to put a brake upon the independent development of the French proletariat away from the Communists.

In the case of the Catholics (and later of the Protestants also,) it was to expose that the Communists weren't Marxists, not in order to return to Marxism, but to transform the whole question of the alienation of labor to the alienation of the "soul."

In any case, it got nowhere outside of journals not read by the masses.

But when Marxist-Humanism found proletarian roots, first in the US by workers confronting Automation, then in the actual revolutions in Hungary--and very nearly simultaneously in far-removed Africa--then and only then did the bourgeois intellectuals discover it. Naturally only to emasculate it of its American roots while pretending to transfer its applicability to Africa.

Africa has much to teach us, especially on the role of the party, with which we'll deal later. But, although we have co-thinkers in Africa, as in Britain, in Latin America, in Japan, none take precedence over our truly unique contributions to Marxism. It is high time we made these explicit. Let me enumerate four outstanding ones:

from (1) In 1941 we analyzed Russia as a state-capitalist society, the study of original Russian data and the most rigorous application of Marxist theory. This contribution, moreover, was achieved in a world context which at no time separated the economic analysis from the living revolutionary opposition to this new stage of world capitalism, that is to say, the form of workers' revolt. It is time we called this analysis by its right name--an extension of Marxism to the problems of our epoch, one that was a great deal more difficult to elaborate, it is necessary to add, than was Lenin's analysis of monopoly capitalism, Imperialism. This may sound contradictory since we had Lenin to build on, while Lenin had to break from the established theoretical leadership of the Second International. The fuller truth, however, is that, insofar as the economic analysis is concerned Lenin's Imperialism had prior studies to base himself on, both bourgeois and Marxist alike, and of course he openly admits his debt to Hobbes as well as to Hilferding's works on imperialism and finance capital. Naturally his conclusions differ not only from the bourgeois study but the Marxist one. Nevertheless, where he had a foundation to build on, we had no such aid in our epoch. Not only that. We had to undertake the study in face of the opposition from the greatest remaining living link with Lenin, his co-leader of the Russian Revolution, Leon Trotsky. Despite Trotsky's fight against the Stalinist bureaucracy, Trotsky fought all attempts to define its class nature. Surely it is time not to underestimate such formidable opposition. Trotskyism may not, at the present point in history when it has proved to be nothing more than a left-wing for Russian Communism. But 21 years back, when he had just died--and the break from him occurred when he was still alive--any Marxist

who opposed him had to face road blocks that did not confront Lenin.

(2) We, and we alone, rediscovered the Humanism of Marxism and did so not only for the American movement. On the contrary, because it was done concretely rather than as an abstraction, it became the foundation for all Marxists of our epoch. That is to say, because the discovery of the American roots of Marxism was not limited to the Marxism of Marx's day and his relations to the Abolitionists but was for our age; because we were as attuned to the class struggles of the American miners who were the first to face Automation as we were to Marxist theory, our restatement of the Humanism of Marxism, extended itself internationally. It is no accident that it coincided with the banner raised by the Hungarian Freedom Fighters fighting Communist imperialism, and the African Freedom Fighters fighting Western imperialism. MARXISM & FREEDOM is its theoretic embodiment as NEWS & LETTERS is its monthly reaffirmation.

(3) We were also the only ones who extended the theory of the National and Colonial Question first propounded by Lenin in 1920 to the Afro-Asian world with the Afro-Asian pamphlet and the NEWS & LETTERS supplement on Mao-Tse-Tung.

(4) Finally, of all the Marxist groupings in America, from Marx's day through the present, we and we alone have a comprehensive theory of the Negro Question. Though the proof of this is in the future--when for the 100th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation we come out, in Jan. 1963, with a special issue of NEWS & LETTERS fully devoted to it, (to be followed by its publication in pamphlet form in the name of the NCB of News & Letters Committees) here is what makes me so sure of the uniqueness of our contributions-to-be:

(a) At the outbreak of World War II, I had completed a study of "Marxism and the Negro Question," which related the Negro's role in the economic development of America to the views of the socialist movement. The history of the latter does not shine brightly, but the vanguard role of the Negro in the reshaping of this country from sharecropping, and Populist Movement, through heavy industry and the CIO remains indisputable, though constantly changed.

(b) 1943-4. The 1943 Resolution, which traced the Negro in American History from slave revolts to the 1943 demonstrations, and my essay on Negro Intellectuals In a Dilemma (reproduced after 17 years in N&L, Feb. '61) laid the basis for the innumerable articles in N&L since its founding in 1955.

(c) The climax to this period comes with the publication of the Freedom Rider pamphlet. It alone did not limit itself to the stories of Freedom Riders, exciting as these were, and became instead an integral part of Marxist-Humanism. In turn we are able, 5 months ^{before} the 100th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, to plan a pamphlet which, again, will not limit itself to any single issue, but be the official National Editorial Board statement on the Negro question. It will mark a big step forward, and I hope the convention will vote for it.

Whatever Negritude is--and it is many different things to many different Africans--the Negro's vanguard role in American development, as analyzed by ourselves, not only as a part of the National Question, but as integral to our Marxist-Humanist philosophy, made it possible for us to anticipate this Humanism on the part of the Africans where we could meet with them at the crossroads of the African Revolutions.

Paradoxical as it may sound, we are reticent about shouting to the rooftops about our unique contributions to Marxism, not because we do not appreciate them, as theory, but because we have not drawn to their logical end the organizational ramifications, even though we alone sent the National Chairman to Africa in a fluid situation where the course of history can be affected. On native grounds however, the organization, as organization, can rise to its full stature, proud that it has met the challenge of the times only with the creation of full-time organizers and all of us living our lives within the perspective of recruitment.

PART II: ON THE QUESTION OF FULL-TIME ORGANIZERS: WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT IS NOT

A.) What It Is Not

Let's begin with what it is not, since it is very difficult to grasp the new in a stage of development without first summing up the past stages, and thereby distinguishing from them:

(1) It is not a synonym for organizational consciousness. We have always had a certain consciousness of organization or we wouldn't have kept together as a group. Had we not been aware of what we stand for as a philosophic and political tendency, we would have gone our separate ways as individuals. Instead we became a committee that had not only broken with old radical organizations, but with some who had thought as we did, but did not act on the principle of listening to workers. Without this first stage, it would have been impossible to take a single step forward. It was and is important to have what we called "full fountain pens"--to take down what workers said, what youth said, what Freedom Fighters aspired to--for the source of all theory comes from these instincts, those struggles, the aspirations and the thoughts of the masses. We were clearing our heads and they needed clearing. But we were not an organization. Of necessity we lost many who came with us during the split since there never yet was a split when those who are tired of the compulsions of Marxism to be active in the actual class struggle use the split as an excuse to retreat to their private realms.

We had too many political innocents who did not appreciate the lesson that it was not the so-called "gods that failed" but these weak souls who fell by the wayside. In a word, the task of the leadership, in that early period, was not recruitment. It was to see that the inevitable outflow of dilettantes--and this included workers as well as intellectuals, though more of the latter--did not harm the organization of Marxism, but,

instead, consolidated the principled grounds on which Marxist-Humanism stands. This, then, is what organizational consciousness meant—the realization that one couldn't claim to be a Marxist-Humanist by staying at home, but only by becoming a part of the cadre that lives by that philosophy and thus gives life to the indissoluble link between philosophy and organization.

(2) Full-time organizers are not synonymous with committee members publishing a paper, not even when that paper is as great as N&L and demands as unique a combination of worker and intellectual as our paper does. From the Abolitionist Liberator (1831) to the Russian Marxists' Pravda 70 years later, newspapers of such a principled nature were tremendous organs for propagating ideas of liberation. They succeeded in making the principles known to many "outsiders." This communication with the outside creates a very important periphery of people as well as ideas; but it is an organization only in embryo, not in fact.

In one respect, we were at this stage a very advanced group, because we at once assigned the task of finding the American roots of Marxism and restating it for our age. This formulation of needs meant that we were so to speak, "skipping" the whole stage of 1903 to 1914 during which Lenin's conceptions appeared only as "an organizational question" instead of at once showing the unbridgeable theoretical gulf between Menshevism and Bolshevism. In another respect, however, we were very backward: it took us more than two years before we finally drafted a Constitution for our Committees. The Constitution is still something to be proud of, but, again, a scaffolding is not yet the whole building.

(3) Full-time organizer is not the same thing as self-development of the individual. Certainly we will never give up this principle of self-development. But it is a fact that it predominates over the development of the organization. It was correct for the period in which it was enunciated but it would be inadequate for our present period of development. I believe Louise put it best when she said that we must learn to speak Marxist-Humanism not as an abstraction, but as the concrete method by which to win new members. Anyone knowing what a fine orator Louise is, is aware of how well she can and does speak. As a Marxist-Humanist, there is an underlying philosophy to her Freedom Rider story. Yet, she has a right to be dissatisfied because the Freedom Rider story was concrete, but the Marxist-Humanist conclusion did appear as an abstraction.

(4) Heading in that direction is not yet the same thing as traveling on the main highway. Naturally every stage in our development, and particularly so the thesis of our last convention—"From Organizational Consciousness to Organizational Building"—points to the road we have reached entitled "Full-time Organizers of Marxist-Humanism." But we have first to shake off the burden of the "guilt feeling" on the party question before we can truly embark on the new road. So let us first break down this question, and do so naturally not through psychology, but through the actual dialectic of history.

B). The Transition Point, or The African Experience

None of us have any reservations about showing the role of the Bolshevik Party in achieving the 1917 Revolution. Yet, because the party has since been transformed into its opposite--the monolithic monstrosity in Russia, we act as if that is inevitable. This is no different from the old social democratic conception of the automaticity of capitalist collapse so they need do nothing to affect the result. To get rid of the concept of inevitability and automaticity it is necessary not to separate the objective from the subjective. The Social Democracy became transformed into its opposite because capitalism had moved from competition to monopoly-imperialism and created with it an aristocracy of labor. Communism became transformed into its opposite because state capitalism had produced the administrative mentality, the intellectual bureaucrats.

Lenin helped change the course of history by refusing to bemoan the transformation into opposite, and, instead, proceeding to the final negation -- the negation of the negation -- by going to the lower and deeper strata of the proletariat and peasant masses and oppressed nationalities. And thus he resolved the contradictions in theory by the concept of the population "TO A MAN" running production and the state, and the practice of that new universal meant the association of the party with this spontaneous mass revolution.

For our age this methodology involves looking for the new forms of revolt that accompany the new stage of capitalism -- state-capitalism -- its negation through Humanism, the Marxist Humanism inscribed both on Hungarian and African Revolutions.

There is not a single African that does not speak with awe and reverence of the party. He does so not because he is told to do so by his leadership nor because of the negative features in the single party state which he does oppose. He does so out of his own volition and because he believes there is absolutely no other way to achieve freedom. The party, to him, means the organization that has put an end to the fragmentation that imperialism brought.

That fragmentation is not limited just to tribal or geographic divisions, that is to say, the obvious divide and rule method of colonialism. By putting an end to fragmentation, the African means that it is impossible for an individual, any individual, be he small or great, learned or illiterate, in power or out of power, a brave revolutionary or a cowardly Uncle Tom, a chosen "genius" to be sent abroad or the leader to be imprisoned, absolutely anyone, and therefore everyone is absolutely impotent as an individual.

It must be stressed also that this identification of fragmentation with the individual, though it no doubt has some origin in communal living, as a tribe, is of this era and not of the past, is directly related to the gaining of freedom, the type of freedom that is more than nominal; that is to say, not just political independence, but economic strength.

This is not something out of books -- neither books by his native leaders, nor those from behind the Iron Curtain extolling the monolithic state. This is out of his own experience in the actual struggles for freedom. This unity of philosophy and organization makes the Africans swear by, not at: the party. It is this which infuses Negritude with a philosophy of Freedom Now. It is this which makes them reverse the Marxist principle that no society can be free unless the individual is free.

To the African, no individual can be free unless society is. There may seem to be no contradiction in this, and indeed it is only a different formulation of the same thought. But the African persists in his own formulation because to him it is not only that society cannot be free, but that it cannot even exist unless it is organized, has its party which would thus give it the strength to challenge neo-colonialism though it still isn't armed and imperialism is. Thus they have fastened on to the indissoluble link between freedom and organization. It is this which we have to gain for our present development, not as a generalization, but as the concrete growth of our organization.

The chief thing is that the Africans have used the party as the instrument of revolution, whereas Stalin used it as the instrument of counter-revolution, to help establish state-capitalism. We have, in our horror at the Stalinist counter-revolution, as well as the Trotskyist concept of the party to lead, gone to the other extreme of very nearly dismissing party organization. As if the degeneration of the vanguard party compels the rejection of party organization. Or, to put it another way, as if there were no difference between the spontaneous mass organization that arises in revolutionary times, and that small grouping which persists (through quiet times as well as turbulent days) to maintain not only the historic link with the proletariat's glorious tradition, but to keep it ever afresh through daily activity as well as through fundamental reformulations of theory to meet the challenge of the times. As if the unity of the movement from theory to practice with that from practice to theory could be achieved "unconsciously."

It is not altogether a negative characteristic that we have learned this from the African instead of by a mere restatement of old principles, or even the dialectic of our own organization development for when you learn it from the masses who are the source of all theory, its restatement becomes the transition point to a new stage. As we move to the new stage, let us draw together the 4 points of what the question of organizers for Marxist-Humanism is not -- (1) not merely a synonym for organizational consciousness, (2) nor one for publishing a newspaper; (3) not merely another name for self-development of individual, (4) nor merely heading in the same direction but not yet riding down the main highway.

C.) The New Stage, or the Organization as Molder of History

To fully understand how the new stage differs from any, and all, other stages, 2 things are paramount:

- 1) The unity to be achieved between theory and practice can be neither an abstraction which Hegel called "a featureless unity," nor merely "a long-winded weary story of its particular detail." It must have features, that is to say, a human body, a very specific human body -- that of organizers for Marxist-Humanism, full-time and otherwise.
- 2) The actions undertaken by these organizers and this organization is not some monthly "action sheet" which gives people something bite-size to chew on and creates the illusion that these people are accomplishing by writing to their Congressmen or collecting signatures which characterizes the Birchers, on the one hand, and the labor bureaucrats and old radicals on the other hand. It must be the actual live struggles both at the point of production and on the civil Rights field; with the youth, and against the drive for war, etc. all leading to getting new members for the organization, the only organization that is governed by a total philosophy, the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism, a philosophy that is itself a form of action, as well as the action itself, stemming from many different directions, both spontaneously from the workers and consciously from the organization's containing a link with history, history of the past in order to mold the history of today, today not tomorrow.

You see how impossible it is to project Marxist-Humanist ideas without an organization. Take Barbara -- she's as fluent in understanding and expression of Marxist-Humanism as any of us. I want to stress that I am saying this not because she is an intellectual and words comes easy to her. Marxist-Humanism is deep down in the marrow of her bones. And yet when it comes out of her mouth at the time she addresses non-Marxists, it appears as if the compulsion to be a Marxist is hers, and need not be that of the outsider.

Naturally, there is nothing as vulgar in it as "the many roads to Socialism," but it is inevitable when there is no organization which is tangibly present -- and she herself is not yet permeated, as we all are not yet permeated with the newness of this new stage -- it is inevitable, under such conditions, that Marxist-Humanism appears, as one who departed from us told us, "an intellectual tendency" rather than a serious organization.

It's not necessary here to argue against the stupidities of Owen, not to mention the slander that we're an "intellectual tendency" at a time when no other group of the so-called Left has the relationship of worker to intellectual that characterizes our group, much less carries on the activities that we do. All I'm stressing is that before he transformed

it into a big lie, the grain of truth which he did not recognize, but which we do recognize, was that we had not yet reached the stage we have not yet reached — that of full-time organizers for Marxist-Humanism.

The literature session will deal in sufficient detail with our body of ideas, which never were disembodied from living people. But I do wish here to point to the truth, that, without the preliminary stages of theoretical development — the theory of Marxist Humanism that was germinating in our tendency long before its fruition in MARXISM AND FREEDOM — N&L would itself have been impossible.

It may seem like a simple idea, and a simple one it is, to have a worker as editor. But it took over a decade of hard theoretical work to come to that simple conclusion, and since, as Lenin put it, "the workers are shy", the idea did not come from them but from us, the theoreticians.

It is true that without N&L, MARXISM AND FREEDOM, in turn, would not have achieved the concretization that it achieved in the last part on Automation and the New Humanism. At the same time, without M&F, Workers Battle Automation, for example, could not have reached the generalizations that make it even more pertinent today than when it was written, and not only for the American workers but the Europeans as well.

It goes, without saying, that without the actual action of the Freedom Riders, there would have been no Freedom Rider pamphlet, but the FR pamphlet is a great deal more than just this action. The fact that it has yet to realize its organizational potentiality for Marxist-Humanism makes all the more necessary that we never forget the two pre-requisites for this new stage of full-time organizers: first, the organizing features in place of the "featureless unity" of Marxist-Humanist theory and practice; second, the organization as a molder of history.

Paradoxically as this may sound for us who speak so often and so loudly of history, the latter is the hardest for us to comprehend fully because implicitly we take it for granted, but explicitly we attribute the role to the masses alone. It is true they alone have the force to change history. It is not true that by themselves they can effect the totality of the changes they want. Nor is it true that, at best, we play only a secondary role. The dialectic of history is such that theory itself becomes a material force, and practice is both the source and verification of theory. Only one thing is missing: the organization.

Unless we recognize the uniqueness of our contribution to Marxism we will be unable to build an independent organization with its own raison d'être. More precisely put, it is not only a recognition, but the acting out of OUR ROLE AS MOLDERS OF HISTORY. This, then, is central to the new stage of all of us becoming ORGANIZERS FOR MARXIST-HUMANISM.

To become organizers for Marxist-Humanism means, first of all, that full time, or otherwise, we have (a) an organizational face, not a home, but office, a business office to show we mean business; (b) regular hours, both at meeting time, and outside of meeting time, so that people know when they come with their problems, whether that be how to function in a trade union caucus, on a civil rights issue, or as individuals who want to join so that they too can mold history; (c) the articles for N&L are written there and all our friends on the periphery become conscious that it is the place to come to hand in their piece for an organ that has a local, a national, and an international circulation; (d) use it for carrying on a correspondence, not just once a week for payment of dues to center, but an active correspondence with other locals and individuals as well as with our local peripheries to bring them closer to the organization; (e) finally, issue certain statements on local or national issues, some that come from the center, but others that you may creatively and after much thought wish to issue to show our stand on crucial issues.

This amounts to a great deal more than the putting on of a new hat or even a full change of clothes. This entails a reorganization of oneself, a total reorganization of oneself, from attitude to action.

As for the full-time organizers, they must: (1) have no other job but this one. Without such concentration and immersion into the organization, we will find it very difficult, if not impossible, to convince anyone that a new organization has been born and they are invited to come in on the ground floor.

(2) the actions to be planned, as the thinking that goes into them, must begin from this individual, the full-time organizer, who has the time for it. He must

(3) become so aware of all other organizations and publications, that it becomes second nature to intervene creatively through letters, articles, contacts. The challenge from us in the field of thought must be persistent, serious, timely. Here timing is of the essence. The most profound statement means less than nothing if it arrives after "deadline."

(4) The National Tour of the Chairman must not be a helter-skelter affair, but be planned from the center which, though naturally responding to local needs and initiative, sees to it that even where the speech is as "author", there is at least one planned as National Chairman of N&L Committee to keep before the public the ORGANIZATION involved. In some cases it may also be initiated from the center trying where locals could not succeed. Or challenges may be issued to other organizations for debates.

(5) Finally, the full-time organizers are the ones who initiate political statements on current events, nationally and politically, though, of course, they are checked with the center. On the other hand, the full-time organizer at the center must be so alert and in such close touch with the locals that, more often than not, he will have his views "there" before the request from the local has ever reached us.

Having been this specific I may now be forgiven, I trust, if in the summary, I project the objective world as well as the question of full-time organizers into a philosophic instead of a concrete world.

CONCLUSION

I do this because the biggest jobs will be the ones we cannot tell in advance, those that will flow from the very dialectic of the new actions, the ones that will move the organization forward. Whether we show that we are as much an objective result of the movement of history as is the proletariat itself; or we show that while we have been "caused" by this objective movement, its effect, — effect becomes transformed into cause and thus itself affects, changes the course of history — we can talk of the future only as an "ought". Once we have embarked on a new stage, however, the "ought" becomes an is; the perspectiva, a deed.

Ever since the new book was projected we have spoken of "subjectivity absorbing objectivity" as if maturation encompasses only individuals. It is true, of course, that social individuals, masses, do prove the maturity of the age and the boundlessness of the world. But this does not exhaust the meaning of subjectivity. In all its ramifications, "subjectivity absorbing objectivity" is seen equally in the existence of "the party".

With the African experience absorbed, we can bring to the question of organization, our sense of historic continuity, a continuity not only with the past, but with the future.

Let me put it another way. The phrase, "The Realm of Subjectivity or of Freedom", with which Hegel introduces the Doctrine of the Notion comes at the end of the section on Essence. That is to say, it came out of Essence. In "economic" terminology — I'm referring to Marxian political economy — Essence is the sphere of production or production relations. This then is the "past", or more precisely put, prologue to the present.

Its present motive force is the struggle for freedom, or, speaking philosophically the "categories" of freedom. The Doctrine of the Notion begins with Subjectivity, proceeds to Objectivity, and ends with the Idea, that is to say, with Subjectivity that has absorbed Objectivity and in that way, in that way alone, achieved full liberation.

Liberation is a heady wine. It is the final negation, the transcendence of the opposition between Notion and Reality. To speak in our language, with the merging of the ideal and the real, the new society is born.

These then are the three stages through which Subjectivity has developed: (1) from Essence at the point of Actuality, that is to say, the class struggle, (2) through Notion at the point of Objectivity, where ideas clash with the real world, head-on, (3) to the Idea at the point where Subjectivity has absorbed Objectivity, that is to say, at the point of the unity of theory and practice, the Absolute Idea or the new society.

Our devotion to Hegel is due to this philosophic anticipation of the actual maturation of the masses as well as of ideas of freedom. By no accident Hegel too speaks of organization even though he limits it to organization of thought. Nevertheless each stage of thought reaches its highest development as an organization:

- (1) in the PHENOMENOLOGY OF MIND, "pure theory" appears as the organization of thought as a science;
- (2) in the HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY, "pure history" is what the young Hegel had assumed previously: "The Mind of a people in its riches which rests on subjectivity is an organization", and the mature Hegel now adds that the common root of this "is the spirit of the time."

Because, to Hegel, Mind is not the abstraction his interpreters attribute to it, but is the concrete spirit of a specific historic epoch, the dialectic of logic turns out to be the logic of freedom.

We can now understand more clearly why Marx the Hegelian, when he broke with bourgeois society, made the following statement on the way to joining a workers' organization: "Philosophers have interpreted the world. The point is to change it."

Our organization has no small part to play in this change. For it has been left to our age to put an end to what Marx called the pre-history of mankind, so that the true human history can finally unfold.

* * * * *