

Dec. 20, 1985

Dear Raya:

Please find enclosed what I am suggesting for inclusion in the FF pamphlet from the 1985-86 Marxist-Humanist Perspectives. The two new features are that 1. I suggest that we call this part the "Afterword" and 2. that it include Section III from the Leadership session under a title such as: "A New Concept of Leadership and the Dialectic Method."

I don't mean to appear so bold as to presume that I could append an adequate title to your work, or even to suggest that this most organizational document is appropriate for a pamphlet devoted to a single force of revolution, but my reasons originate out of a serious concern that we have not taken up fully enough what has been concentrated in the last 8 years in the development of Marxist-Humanism. The first question, it seems to me, begins with our original reason for doing a study on Frantz Fanon and American Black thought. In the mid-1970s when we began this study we had singled out the search, and indeed thirst, for new theoretical beginnings in the Black dimension. In a certain sense our study was a manifestation of your "confession" in the 1982 Introduction to Philosophy and Revolution where you admit that "although I hold fast to the structure of the work (P&R), which begins with Hegel because that was the development historically and dialectically -- I nevertheless have advised some activist youth who have found it difficult to grapple with Hegel to read Chapter 9 first". The Fanon study was certainly no "popularization" of P&R, and I can't say how many who read it then sought out and grappled with P&R. But, I do know that FFSABT could not have been written without that philosophic work of revolution, and clearly the present new edition could not have been without all the new philosophic-organizational developments of the last 8 years.

My hyphenating philosophy and organization is not rhetorical, but concerns the second question involved in proposing to publish this section from the Leadership thesis. If the popularity of this study of Fanon proved anything it was our original reasons for attempting to concretize philosophy and revolution as concept and as book within the Black dimension. And it is our expectation that the new edition will be as popular as the first. However, whether or not we succeeded in having philosophy as present in our study as you did throughout the structure of P&R, the fact is that this very new work on Black reality, thought and revolution will reach a new and wide audience who has absorbed the developments of the last 8 years and who will want to test their experience and thinking in a philosophic-organizational manner. To use the current counter-

16823

culture expression, I believe there is a "new wave" in thought and in revolution that I think we must be bold enough to speak to and engage by the most concrete and total means. After all who would have thought that the seemingly most "internal", organizational document of a political organization -- the draft perspectives thesis -- would become our most public projection of Marxist-Humanism as philosophy and as organization, and as the most serious ground to become a Marxist-Humanist by attending our national Convention.

My point is what I think you were saying in the new Introduction to P&R on Fanon when you wrote that "Frantz Fanon's profound articulation of the African freedom struggles as being 'not a treatise on the universal but the untidy affirmation of an original idea propounded as an absolute'...was not leaving it to others to work out a philosophy of revolution." In other words, no where in the Black dimension, with all the Black intellectuals extolling of Fanon -- including Ngugi -- and nevertheless not getting past Jamesism, there is no organization that has made a category of Fanon's dialectic of liberation. And the proof of how specific, concrete and total that is came out of the Black South African fight for freedom and a new Black Consciousness. However, our "confession" is not only that that wasn't all there was to our concept of Fanon as "world revolutionary", but that was not the beginning or the ground for our singling out what we did (and when we did) in the thought of Frantz Fanon. And it isn't really true that it was Marx, though we surely couldn't have without him -- the truth, organizationally and philosophically, is that Marxist-Humanism as a body of idea allowed us to project Fanon's "new humanism" as a new beginning in the Black movement, nationally and internationally. My proposal for including this very special thesis on "The Marxist-Humanist Concept of Leadership and the Dialectic Method" as part of an "Afterword" on Marxist-Humanist Perspectives is, thus, for the purpose of making the search for new philosophic beginnings in the Black thought and revolutionary activity a true "return to the source," i.e., to the whole body Marxist-Humanist ideas and actual revolutionary experience.

Looking forward to seeing you on 12/29.

Yours,



16824