

Excerpt from "From Organizational Consciousness to Organization Building", Report to the News and Letters Committees Convention, Sept., 1960.

4) The Average Man as Philosopher and the New Book

When we speak of the pull of the future on the present, of freedom as the first necessity of life, we are not unaware of the fact that, while man lives not by bread alone, he must have bread

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to live. But this necessity to participate in all class struggles does not diminish, but, on the contrary, heightens the need of a total philosophy.

The real maturity of our age is proven precisely in this—that at the very time that petty bourgeois political intellectuals speak of "the end of ideology," and philosophers bemoan a movement "from ontology to technology," the average man has become the man preoccupied with ideology, has become a philosopher.

It is here from whence the need arises for our next book. Perhaps the best approach to the problem of the cadre is not frontally, but indirectly, through consideration of the time differential between MARXISM AND FREEDOM and the new book.

When developing the Absolute Idea before 1956, the negative aspect—Russian state capitalism as signifying the new stage of capitalism the world over—was the predominant factor, and the positive aspect of Marxist Humanism, where it wasn't theory but fact, in the Hungarian Revolution, came in only at the end. Indeed the Hungarian Revolution first occurred while we were completing the first draft of the book.

Before the October 1956 Hungarian Revolution, Humanism then appeared as philosophy rather than as a fact. After the Hungarian Revolution, it became philosophy and fact. With Africa, it is philosophy, fact, and forward movement into the future.

Or, to put it in another way, in Africa the pull of the future on the present has found the present leaping ahead of itself.

Thus the situation, in 1960, is totally reversed: the positive aspects—both the new stages of the African Revolution and the new stage of consciousness, especially on the part of the youth throughout the world, are the predominant features.

Indeed the new stage of revolution cannot be separated from the new stage of consciousness. It is this which will dominate the new book.

While the Automation pamphlet could not have been written without MARXISM AND FREEDOM, the pamphlet, in turn, has laid the foundation for the new book not so much because it is a concretization of MARXISM AND FREEDOM as because it is a reflection of the fact that, although revolution is not yet present in the technologically most advanced land, the new stage of consciousness is here.

The why the organization must grow is embedded there.

The why the Marxist Humanist cadre must be forged springs from there.

Not the least of the roadblocks in the way of an unarmed people fighting the armed might of capital and state is the fact that it is ideologically disarmed not only by the paid penny- liners of the capitalist class but by the so-called vanguard groupings too busy trying "to lead" to realize that they are being led into the quagmire of a state capitalism, and too much of the cut of the administrative elite to be capable of learning from the masses the elements of a total philosophy which links it with Marxist Humanism.

In a word, the groupings calling themselves Marxists, let alone outright Communists, have become a millstone around the neck of the proletariat trying to free itself in body and mind from automated capitalism.

To remove this roadblock, to have the movement from theory to practice, merge with this movement from practice to theory on the way to the new society, is the why of organizational growth and of cadre building. The removal of the roadblock means the creation of a form for the release of the creative energies of the masses in which you yourself experience the miracle of creation.

Consider the five year span since we have been born as NEWS & LETTERS and began what no one else, in this country or abroad has, a paper edited by a worker, with the unique combination of worker and intellectual characterizing its every word, that has this month reached the climax of a special, collective (as well as making no distinction between member and non-member) pamphlet on WORKERS BATTLE AUTOMATION, the only one of its kind anywhere since Automation ten years ago became the symbol of production of our state capitalist era.

Consider the three (or nearly three) year period since the publication of MARXISM AND FREEDOM, which for the first time in 100 years, openly related itself to its American roots in the abolitionist movement, and re-established Marxism in its original form of Humanism which, by no accident at all, was precisely the banner of both the revolution against Russian totalitarianism in Europe, and that against Western imperialism in Africa.

Ponder on the why we, and we alone, published a year in advance of the current critical situation in Africa which has reached the crossroads an analysis of the Afro-Asian revolutions precisely from the point of view of contending ideologies as well as struggle for freedom.

Look over again the timeliness of the "South Africa, South USA" issue and see whether anyone else with loss of a tradition in analysis of both the Negro Question in America, the connection of imperialism with the race question—not only Negro, but Jew and other minorities—could possibly have risen to the challenge of the times.

All these achievements, without looking at the international scene where we have certainly made our mark both in the unfurling of the Marxist Humanist banner in general, and concretizing it in the British Labour News page, not rewritten from the bourgeois press, properly "class angled" as the old radicals do, but written by British workers and intellectuals themselves.

Now the new book cannot be written before it is written. Thus no contents page is available to make explicit what is implicit here—that we now can write the sequel and are ready to undertake the extra responsibilities involved in creating free time for the Chairman.

The implications for organizational growth and cadre building must be, however, further spelled out, and must become your concern today and your work tomorrow.

III. ONCE AGAIN—Organizational Growth and Cadre Building

The cadre must not be limited to the leadership.

It must consist of the organization as a whole. This is first and foremost.

Even a cursory look at the difficult situation which confronted Lenin directly after the revolution, and plagued him to his death, 1918-1924, will tell us how all-important is the necessity to extend the cadre to the whole organization.

Here was a revolutionary leader, the greatest the world had until then seen, burning up with the new knowledge that the party work must be checked by the NON-PARTY MASSES. Otherwise the party built to be the vanguard of the masses would inevitably degenerate into a lord-servant relationship, was, in fact, already in the process of decay, now that the party was in power and its leadership contaminated with "a passion for bossing."

Yet, so critical was the situation which threatened the young workers' state surrounded by world imperialism aiming at its overthrow, that Lenin could not impart this new knowledge either to the party, or to the International which had adherents not in power, without tying this new truth to its opposite because it