

May 23, 1984

Dear Friends:

Such exciting things are happening in labor in Toledo, -- where a strike has been ongoing since May 2 and came to a climax yesterday when, on the one hand, the company brought in scabs and, on the other hand, a totally spontaneous point of labor solidarity poured out from every other UAW and union shop in the area to confront a vicious police attack -- that, watching the confrontation on TV, you could not help but think of the 1934 Toledo Auto-Lite strike which preceded even Flint and the organization of the CIO. Indeed, it also reminded us of the comparable event in the 1949-50 miners strike, which is exactly what we will be announcing in this coming issue of N&L.

Jim at once called the UAW locals involved in Toledo and got some excellent interviews. The REB decided two things at once: 1) to send two carloads this morning both to help in whatever ways we could, and to get interviews with the strikers as well as photos for N&L. Jim, Mike, Eugene, Lou and Laurie all have exciting material they brought back; 2) We decided that this should become the Lead.

Because the Middle East is so critical a situation right now as the Iran-Iraq war is heating up the whole Oil situation for the West, and that was originally what we wanted for a Lead, Kevin was asked to write a serious article for this issue. The point is that there are so many points of crisis just on the question of the Middle East alone, the manner in which these multiple points are included in the Perspectives could be the jumping off point. Indeed, the present situation will not be understood fully unless we keep in mind the fact that the civil war in Lebanon in 1974 was aborted in a way in which we showed not only the crisis of the ruling class, but that it was the test for the whole Left, from the nationalists to the PLO, from the CP to the Trotskyists -- a crucible which was by no means over with the counter-revolution. The complexity in the Middle East seems endless as what was originally considered its center -- Arab-Israeli war -- got extended to Israel's genocidal invasion of Lebanon, and is presently intensified with the Iran-Iraq war and the danger of an actual nuclear confrontation between the U.S. and Russia. Kevin's article must, however, focus on the latest and while analysis is called for no conclusions will be jumped at.

The REB heard two reports, one on Organization by Mike and a Sub-Report to Perspectives by Olga. Please read the abbreviated reports and discussion and schedule a discussion in your locals, making sure to send your minutes to the Center. Note especially the concrete motion that flowed from the Organization Report for the imperative need for a subscription drive in this special period of the move of the Center to Chicago and the further concretization of the whole body of ideas in both the new type of classes on Perspectives and the concrete testing of ourselves on the objective scene in N&L.

Another important feature flowing from the Organizational Report was the proposal that we send an REB member to Cincinnati to participate with Gary and his friends in a discussion of our Perspectives. Eugene volunteered and will communicate directly with Gary on the time and arrangements.

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Please note in the REB minutes that we have received some quite good correspondence from the British Marxist-Humanists, including not only articles, especially on the ongoing miners strike there and the participation of the women in that struggle, but reports of several meetings that have held and/or are planning both around that participation by the women, and around Soweto Day for which they are working with our friends there in the BCM. We will have at least two British Marxist-Humanists with us at the Convention in July where they will be making their reports in person.

The correspondence this week also included a letter from a young subscriber in Ohio responding to Jim's column and describing his own experiences as a young proletarian who was 18 when he organized one shop. We take for granted that Terry has sent her Dear Sisters letter directly to the N&L-WL Committees, and that Los Angeles has sent the leaflet they produced against the genocidal Iran-Iraq war.

Finally, please mark on your calendar and adhere to it strictly: DEADLINE FOR THE JUNE-JULY ISSUE OF N&L IS NEXT THURSDAY, MAY 31.

Yours,

Raya