Mr. J. A. Dawson 74 Bridge Street Port Melbourne, Australia

Dear Jim Dawson:

Sam Garrett, a friend of mine, asked me to answer your letter of March 20th. Sam is working pretty hard for his age, and usually has to go straight to bed after work, being too tired to do anythin else.

In your letter you touched upon many different subjects. Instead of answering them one by one I will attempt to deal with the thought that runs through all the subjects mentioned, namely, the thought of PRINCIPLE versus ACTION.

Firstly, to recall your letter to mind, let me repeat briefly the subjects you mention. In the beginning you question whether "progression", i.e., action, is not in direct contradiction to lofty morality principles. You mention certain successes of the opportunists which, in your belief, are the results of their actions. You question the value of "thinkers" as compared with the action of the "doers". You then have thoughts about the realism, based on action by the Communists, and counterpose them to the Simon pure idealists. You further on describe how you yourself are acting in a dual manner, having your lofty ideology, while at the same time you have adjusted yourself economically to capitalism. You proceed to show how in the state of Victoria the real life action) wins out against the established laws (principles). You mention a social crisis like a flood or tornado where aid (action) is often given without even receiving monetary remuneration. (established laws; principles). You show where in the Australian labor movement the active CP is apparently getting further than the "Principled" SP. of A. And finally, you speak of your mental satisfaction of understand And explaining the world, while you expect nothing from your activities.

Similarly, in your comment on Sam's article in the February issue of your paper, you again deal with the subject of action and principles, which in the last analysis was also the main theme in "Class Struggle (action) versus Socialist Exclusiveness (principle)". Let me, therefore, rather than answer your letter point by point, attempt to deal with the general subject of principle and action.

Let us start at the beginning: In order to understand anything at all we first must be able to see the facts. The most decisive fact in this world is the existance of two classes. The economic antagonism of these classes results in the class struggle.

The capitalist says: "hereI am, and here I like it, and therefore I shall stay here." This is a principle. It is a static law, an idea that does not change. The principle, the static idea, is therefore the expression of a material condition that is supposed or rather wanted to remain at its status quo.

The worker says: "Here I am, and here K cannot like it, and therefore I cannot remain here." This is motion, or action. What exists now bears in itself its own destruction (negation) and therefore cannot remain. As there is both motion and time, things cannot be tomorrow what they are today.

The only thing that we could possibly consider as static is the thing that has already happened, is past, and therefore cannot change anymore. As our society is based on the bourgeois revolution which is past, it cannot change by the force of this revolution. Reforms are therefore impossible.

Marxism, being the philosophy of our next social system, cannot therefore possibly be a set of principles, but, as long as the bourgeois revolution has not been superseded by a proletarian, can only be a guide to action.

(continued)

J. Dawson Apr. 25, 1948

Once the proletarian revolution has been accomplished and socialism established, then Marxism will become a set of principles, as it then will be a philosophical expression of a thing that has passed, and therefore can no longer be subject to time or motion. Similarly, Voltaire's and Rousseau's writings were a guide to action, and as such, helped to bring about the bourgeois revolution. Today, bourgeois democracy is only a dead philosophy, a barrier to anything that intends to move and therefore act.

Then how does it happen that so many speak of Marxist "Principles", and what's more important, act (or, rather fail to act) on the basis of regarding Marxism as a set of principles?

We all understand that a culture is based upon a certain economy. Capitalist economy, for example, has to attempt to excuse and becloud its contradictions by giving rise to the concept of leadership, by setting up a principle, law, axiom, or whatever one chooses to call it, stating that it is "natural", and "there have to be leaders and led. People born under an economic system will to varying degrees accept its culture, as this is all that is being taught. It follows that people living under capitalism will, to varying degrees, accept the concept of leadership. This naturally includes people who are in the labor movement, as one cannot expect these people to think in the same terms as children of socialism will do. Now, once a man accepts the bourgeois-culture idea of leadership, then he must also accept the concept of "principles". The two are inexorably tied up for the following reason: To lead presupposes that the leader has the "know how" while the led fails to have this. The "know how" means that he already knows what has to be done before any action at all has commenced to take place. In other words, the correctness of the action is not to be judged by the lessons learned while acting, but it has already previously been judged what is right and what is wrong. This is a principle, it is a law that has been laid down and is no longer subject to change.

It follows, therefore, that he who accepts leadership must regard Marxism as a set of principles, whether he is subjectively conscious of that or not.

Coming to the Stalinists, you mention in your letter we shall examinine them in the light of the above. They, accepting the bourgeois concept of leadership, naturally do think only in terms of principles; "Marx said", "Lenin said", or "Stalin said". This is the principle, the law, the dogma. Simultaneously the workers, whom these Stalinists or any other "principle" opportunists are claiming to lead—these workers are acting—they must move because "here we are, we don't kike it, and we therefore cannot remain". Whenever you see action in the Stalinist camp (or any place else in the world) it is the workers who actually do the moving while their leaders are trying to hold them back, not failing, however, to take full credit for whatever benefits the action of the workingman brought about. It is important that we do not ourselves commit the error to believe their statements. If we do think that the Stalinists are responsible for these actions, then we ourselves would accept the concept of leadership.

In any such case the Principle will and must clash with the action. The pre-established "know-how" must clash with the action that is moving, changing, and therefore alive. If the forces backing the principle win out then any action is brought to a dead stop; if the action is stronger than the principle, then the latter will be smashed, thrown overboard, or simply forgotten about like the laws in the state of Victoria.

For these reasons I must, with your permission, take strong issue with your statement that "...it (Workers Councils' movement) can in present circumstances be but one more ideological movement...".

J. Dawson Apr. 25, 1948

Firstly, I believe that the term "ideological movement" is a self-contradictory term as an "ideology" is basically a set of ideas or principles, and as such is not subject to motion. Only material things can move and change there shapes, and our thoughts will only move and change if they are expressions of such motions of material things. Ideas and thoughts that are not expressions of moving matter can only be recollections of a <u>Bast</u> movement. As such an ideology is a set of principles, and there cannot be any such thing as an ideological movement". Indeed, many dilletantes who meet as a weekly discussion circle, are actually all just as dead as the principles they are expounding. They are dead because they are not in motion in the class struggle and as such do not constitute part of the labor <u>movement</u>.

Now, as far as the Worker's Councils are concerned, I took issue with this point in a letter I sent to Dr. Pannehoch, a copy of which is enclosed. To again emphasize my main point: Worker's Councils are in my opinion definitely not an "ideology" but merely an organization by which the moving working class can channelize and coordinate its movement, so as to direct the full impact of its force against the class enemy and towards the creation of a socialist society.

With best regards,

Paul Speed

Sear Dr. Pannehock; This is a letter Paul sent to Dawin. It left a copy with me and I thought you which like a look at it. Thought you what you shink should like to hear what your shink of the criticism of hack yours and I the criticism thankers Coloniels of I thought afforecease hearing from I thought afforecease hearing from Samuel Carrett Soft Cohnhurst Detrait 6 Mich Mich MSA

Detroit 6 mich 6-13-49 1564 Elmhurst Dear Cameracle Pannihaek! Some days - ago I mailed you letter of Paul offeed and at that time advised your that I was going to mail your a document on Starkers Cauncill. The enclosed is the document, though we have an appendix - and as some the typing is finished will mail copy to you. He see some errors in back this document and the appendix but will correct this in still a 3d one which we are weerhing on He feel that we are living in a changing would and new things arise to make its change our conception of things and in this we feel that we do not approach The subject in a state manner! Have a letter from Dawson saying that his publication has been held up for funds. Il sent hime a few dollars as I have Hery antions to get all the issues containing your "Harkes Canneils." Hould like to helpout mare if I could. De are gained to enlarge on our position on fussia as The letterto you was too short to coner all the essentials but while we do not expect you to agree on this line me hape ejan wiel feel like auswering our position. He trespect your long struggle in The labor more ment and while we may never altagether be in agreement that our discussion will be on a level off comrades. Sincerely and comsadely S. J. Garrett

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Dear Comrade Pannekoek,

Throughout the labor movement, as well as the ranks of those who debate what the workers should do, we have always seen that the moment people disagree on points they call "principles" they will soon begin to insult each other. Finally they end up spending far more time and effort for fighting each other than for fighting the capitalists. I, for one, will try to avoid this kind of stuff in writing to you, even though our differences appear to be very great.

Dawson at first thought of the councils as an "ideological movement," but after giving the matter more thought he prefers to call it an "ideology." To me the essence of the councils as I see them, is that they are a movement.

This is the whole difference in a nutshell.

As much as I admire and respect the fact that your idea about councils constitutes a light in the darkness, it seems to me impermissable to let it remain an idea. Despite your most thorough knowledge and understanding of dialectical materialism, I believe that you have not properly applied this knowledge where the organization, the bringing about of the councils is concerned. Your idea of how production and society as a whole should eventually be organized seems perfect to me, and only a fool could find faults with it. But your suggested method on how to bring about this eventual set with it. up seems to me to be false to the core. Not that the method you propose would simply be a poor, inefficient or slow one; it is rather a way you suggest we workers ought to walk which would lead us straight in the

opposite direction into which you say we should go.
As you very well know when human society was split into two classes, the exploiting and the exploited. The former had to justify its existance, had to obscure the fact that it was a parasite on the latter. The fact that it WEX The exploiters had to find a way where they could claim that they also contributed to the material wealth of society without actually doing so. To contribute to the material wealth of society can only be done by physical home force. But physical labor was just the thing that the exploiters wanted to avoid -- it was the original reason why they wanted to exploit in the first place. They realized that any activity (human or animal) consisted of a chain with one link being of physical, the next of a mental, the third of a phisical, the 4th. of a mental etc. nature. The first link is our sensual reception of an existing material condition, the second is a recording in our mind of what had happened. If the sensual reception was pleasant we will memorize it as such and repeat it. This repetition is the third link, which is again of a physical nature. As time goes on we will be faced with new material necessities and if a solution is not selfevident we will search our memory to determine how we dealt with similar material situations, and this is what we call thinking.

Any new situation can only be examined in the way of the generalizations (ie classification of memories) we have reached. As such we will try to compare the new situation with a simular old one and attempt to solve it in a similar manner in which we dealt with the old situation. At all times is our thinking process therefore unbreakably interlinked with physical experiences, past and present ones, directly determined by our material experiences and caused by our material needs.

This chain the exploiters had to try to ke break-not actually, which is impossible -- but they had to assert that this chain was broken. Thereby they placed themselves in the first major contradiction. They said that they were the "thinkers" while the exploited were the "doers," both being necessary to perform any action, as it was known that thinking and doing were both necessary. Soon the "doer" realized that he could do his own thinking and he said to the exploiter: "What are you doing to justify your consuming?" To which the exploiter answered: "by thinking is my doing!" This is the contradiction: At first he says that thinking is one thing, and the exploited doing the other. Then when challenged, he replies full of hypocracy: Thinking is doing! Now which is which? Either they are different things, or they are the same, but they can't be both.

This is exactly the same contradiction you are in. When you state in your letter that "thinking was the action of the group in Holland" / ter noticed the acenteed deale and action and action and action and action and account action and account action and account action action account action account action account action account action action account account account action account account action account account acti

after you go through great pains to show that in the human being "wi thinking and acting are seperated."

+ AND DOING ANOTHER, WITH THE EXPLOITER DOING THE ONE THING.

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Answord: untithes thinken-doers to himself when writing a paryable. Not to make it basis of all class-antagonism (fewal barons, capitales in Warn) Enerce of capitalism is explortation by class marker of product and product, thus Russian system state-capitalism. Thinking as class-rule not trick of stewn people, based on insuff product. Now product abundant. Now problem of intellectual scientific leaders. Wait with crutiusm till book has appeared there. his man to Mattick

(2) Having thus accepted this important point of the idealistic ideology you proceed to say that "valuable thoughts must be brought in ( the discussions and thinking of the working class) from outside. Like Lenin you hereby accept bourgeois ideology, that the working class cannot do its own thinking and that therefore valuable thoughts must be brought in from the outside. Thus it is obvious that the hypocritical division of thinking and acting must by its own logic lead to a division of thinkers and doers, which in turn cannot but bring about a division between leaders and led, the very thing you intend to eliminate through councils. It is quite possible that you are a little subjective in this whole matter. That because your sincerity and devotion to the workingclass is beyond any doubt you may furnish feel that it would be safe, if you, for example would furnish the thoughts upon which the workingclass should act: that even though you would then be the (spiritual) leader you would still advise the workers to do their own thinking and organize councils. This may very well be so but a political line must stand on its own feet and can not depend upon the character and integrity of one exceptional individual. Believing that thinking and acting are seperated you furthermore feel that first the ideas in the heads of the workingman have to be changed. That once he exchanges the philophy of capitalism for a philosphy of socialism his action in changing the material conditions will follow.

This is impossible, as thinking can only be one in link ahead of a material condition. Thinking cannot run way ahead all by itself (it could if it were seperated from acting) but can only constitute the next link. Unless action will again follow the thinking, the latter can not proceed indefinetly under its own power. It must have a material basis, and where thes is lacking thoughts can not proceed any further. Thus, with your attitude, it is only natural that you feel an intense hatred for the Soviet Union. You realize that freedom of speech is curbed there to a great degree. Freedom of speech is most essential to anyone who believes the economic systems can be changed by first changing ideologies, i.e. convincing people. Actually it is a new ecomic system that will bring forth a new ideology, and not vice versa. Therefore, in dealing with any social situation we must first understand the economy which is the foundation. You have a called the economic system of the Soviet Union "State-Capitalism". As such it can only be understood as a specific variation of the capitalistic system. I can not possible agree with such an assumption. It would not lead us anywhere if we were to try to define capitalism, as a definition cannot always take all properties and characteristics of the defined object into wann consideration. Let us therefore ask the question. Why must capitalism go? It must go because it is an economy which is unable to satisfy the needs of the vast majority of the people. Why, then, is capitalism unable to satisfy these needs? Basically because the producers cannot consume the products they This leads to depression and war with all their respective evils. What therefore has to replace the capitalistic system? An economic system where the producers can consume the products they create without leaving an unsellable surplus. This is the case in the Soviet Union. As I understand Marxism we are not primarily concerned with the moral aspects of capitalism, i.e. the injustices it creates, but mainly with the economic aspects, i.e. the fulfillment of the material needs of the people. The church teachers that once men will have aquired a greater sense of justice then greed will be eliminated and all will be able to share and live in peace. In other words the economic improvement will follow the ideological convictions. Marxism claims that once the economy will have been straightened out then the basis for greed will have been eliminated. Thus the new ideology will follow the improved material conditions. Wages, which are still being paid in the Soviet Union are not the only or even basic criterion of the economic system. The basic criterion is the creation of SURPLUS VALUE, as it is the accumulation of unsellable commodities that is the root of the capitalistic evils. Let us now ask why surplus value is being accumulated, whether there is an economic necessity for its accumulation or whether it is only due to some whim of a few greedy people. We find that each capitalists profit is being divided into what the capitalist consumes himself and the money that goes into capital accumulation. Capital accumulation is thus all that money which was gained by selling the surplus commodities to a THIRD party, i.e. neither the worker nor the boss himself. Let us put it in simple figures. A workingman produces 10 pair of shoes (commodities). He gets paid \$7- and as each pair sells for \$1- he can buy only 7 pairs. One pair the boss will

consume himself and the 2 remaining pair constitute the surplus value, and if sold will be capital accumulation. If the boss would turn the 2 pair back to the worker then we wouldn't have any surplus value nor capital accumalation. Why then doesn't the boss do this and thereby eliminate all evils? After all the bosses greed and material interest should be satisfied by getting one pair of shoes out of each of his thousand workers, thereby living on a very high standard of living without having to move a finger for it. The boss must accumulate capital in order to reinvest it into his busin-

ess, buy new and more efficient machines in order to outcompete his competitor. As the total purchasing power of the consumers is smaller than the price of all the commodities on the market, some goods must be left over. Since no individual capitalist wants to be the one who cannot get rid of the surplus, competition is inevitable and mavoidable. Competition in turn brings

about capital accumulation.

If one man or group of men owns or own jointly ( without shares) the entire productive apparatus and material wealth of a nation then there will be no competition within this nation. In the absence of competition there will be no economic need for capital accumulation and there will be no corr esponding unsellable commodities. This in turn eliminates the basis for a & depression, international competition and wars. Lacking internal competition xxx (\* favorable export balances) center to be a necessity. We therefore cannot hay that one internally non-competitive state must be in competition with another tike like state.

If in such a country the working class receives less in wages than the price of what it produces the balance x can only be used for one of three things. The commodities that cannot be bought by the workers can be (1) either consumed by the burocrats who then would live one a high standard of living, or (2) turned back into the economy (new machines, corn for feeding more animals, fertilizers e.t.c.) or (3) returned to the working class by lowering priced and shorter working hours.

It follows therefore that an economy that is not divided into competing units must be a self-enriching economy which will neither create war, depressione t.c. this, regardless of who is actual or kikwaxiaktitular owner of the economy.

Often Nazi-Germany or "socialist" Britain have been thrown in the same pot and called "State-capitalist" which camonly aid to further the general

confusion.

Hitler never disowned anybody. Even the Jews were paid for their property and only afterwards relieved of the money through taxes. The stock market continued to operate in Germany throughout the entire Hitler-regime. Why? If Hitler would have owned the entire German economy wouldn't he have been awfully silly to buy from and sell to himself like a little boy would do it with a play store? The fact was that private ownership was existing just as before Hitler. But the capitalists had agreed on a temporary armed truce amongst themselves while fighting the working class and the foreign competitors.

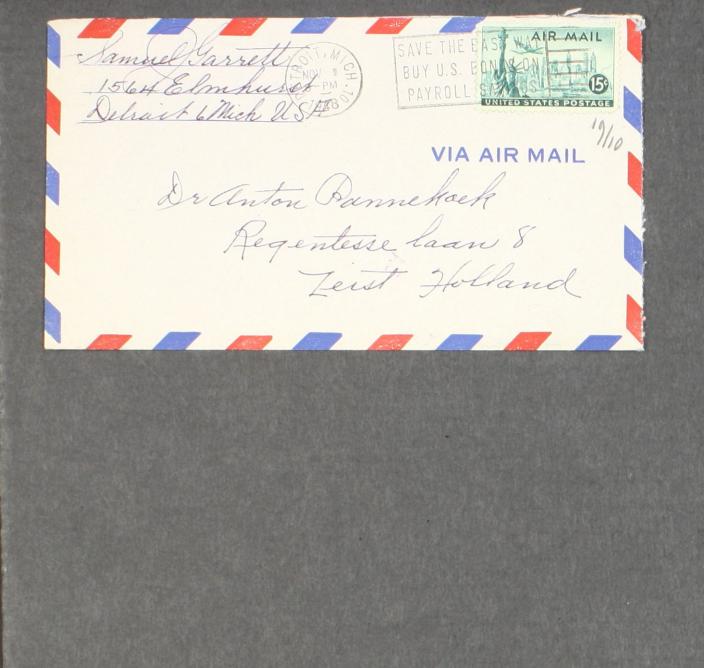
Bythe very nature of capitalism and private ownership such an armed truce can be only of a temporary nature. Should, at any point the market increased then this would be the end of the truce as each individual capitalist would then try to capture the largest chunk of this market for himself in order to again gain an advantage over his competitor. On the other hand, should the economic situation disintegrate below a certain point then again each individual capitalist will try to save his own skin even at the expense of

his erstwhile collaborators.

During a storm allships passengers will unite; if the storm subsides each will again look only after himself; and if the ship capiszes each will try to save himself in total disregard of the man right next to him. During the storm everyone will voluntarily obey the captain; after the storm or at the time of disaster, the captain; will have no power over the passangers Were the ship a gally then the captain would have power over the slaves before, during and after the storm and could let them drown to the last man in case of disaster.

In Britain the situation is fundamentally the same. Had the owners of the nationalized inderstries accepted government bonds as compensation then the government would have become the owner of the properties, as bonds carry no voting power. This would have been a death blow to capitalism. As it happened, however, the capitalists received certificates that were called bonds, but had voting power and therefore were actually stocks regardless of

the name which is but to fool the working class. Voting power is the essence of ownership regardless of the name a certificate may bear. The situation of ownership regardless of the name a certificate may bear. The situation in Britain is of such a nature that the capitalists had to agree to an armed in Britain is of such a nature that the capitalists had to agree to an armed in Britain is of such a nature that the capitalists had to agree to an armed in Britain is of such a nature that the capitalists had to agree to an armed in Britain is of such a nature that the capitalists had to agree to an armed in Britain is of such a nature that the capitalists had to agree to an armed in Britain is of such a strike "took over" and few days ago the U.S. Government, in the face of a strike "took over" the nations railroads. The U.S. Army now operates the railroads. And who is the U.S. Army? Gustav Metzman, president of the New York Central RR, who is the U.S. Army? Gustav Metzman, president of the National City Bank of a director of J.P. Morgan & Co., director of the National City Bank of wew York and dozens of other financial and industrial establishments, was New York and dozens of other financial and industrial establishments, was commissioned a colonel of the U.S. Army and placed in charge of the railroad system of which heapresident. "There is no change " said colonel Hetzman in a press interview" in the management, employment or in the normal responsibilties of individuals of each R.R. system. We all, as members of our own companies are still responsible to the directors and stockholders; we all, as new members of the a Army, are responsible to the Army are responsible to the Army are all, as new members of the a Army, are KENDENSIBLE responsible to the American public for the maintenance of these lifetimes of our nation."
In other words, as the colonel said, "there is no change". With best regards, Please excuse the poor typing Paul Speed Paul Speed P.S. We are also sending you a to set councils et c. 70 SAL 11 Sorry that the copy of Paul's document is a very poor copy of is the fifth draft and poorly typed get with no subtitles but after such your che get to the one to the case of it. Paul has an appendix to this one but it has not been ence typed It is now heing switten and as soon as it is finished will Let us hear what you think of the document as a send you a capy. and will sub-head it when you do if you will suit to Dawson asking him to forme it in due course of time, when fulled can fulled can be raised ete ette. whole and if any criticisme. be raised ete etfe. and if he pannot print it to return it to me. I am getting a dozen copies of yours for "Harkers Councils" That he is friending but so for hore any received the first issue. Secenced your nery/ nice letter and I have not had all apportunity to accesser it as yet the much lef The meatherial in your letter to me is taking up by Paul in the alane letter. As saafre to my health infrance where I can give some than ghes to this matter at issue I findle write you. Send all communications to Paul tonce at With comradely greeting I am Sam Harrett



1564 Elmhusst Dear Comracle Pannehorh: - Delsait 6 Mich USA I should have written you quite a while -ago acknowledging, with Thanks your regulired letter containing the documents I have been sometil leat under The weather for some time and Paul has been busy writing a document that we think will anster makey at the questions and krobbenes that he a hake arisen sinke the Russian revalution but he a general cantribution to margian literature in the general cantribution to Marsian literalise in the field of organization. He are well are any way that I wish this document and plus first to receive a copy of the document will attempt to give an author on the Theory and philosophy of arganization embracing matter first and lift to the organization of the Protestarist, not only for the Confamplified. However leut in the Socialism that will defeatablished will be the stand of the rame a "Bellamis Landing Bayward" paint of view but Iram a plialectical, personation as y view fort. He searched the likraries over here and find practically nothing in the marping the therethere concerning this Held gary I frame Fram nature in its organization to the reflection of man after this organizational after the series been there that we have oner here has been to braught out and we feel that this attempt will be very valuable for the coming period If your knew of lany treaties and the deriver of affair sure we would appreciate the time of the service we would appreciate the state of the service of the He are receining from Jim Dowson your 3 we almost arkined as she sauce point of viegt. We have gotten out about 100 pages of This document mentioned about and may decide to send their to your even hefare finishing as up figure we are not half therewith and all the Conclusions hong to be modef but would like for your to read and offer suggestions (oner)

In answer to what your said about the second part of the document returned, will say that we repudiate the whole "party" concept which if seems that your obapild hour gettined from the later document which your fenfel refer de previously. I murely mailed this to your previously, Showing four the enalation of our minds in the short period between the writings He Think lin This new document we are opening a somewhat new field Amaspian Atteratione and which shadeld figelf chazify not been auswered lefure He are gaining to saficit your help and Co-operation on This document, covering changes, factual, and dialectical formula Il have helfred fine Dawson as heat I could in getting acet your Ests'
and am maching him accarter

\$500 to day as I have what a struggle he must have to get it aut. Hope he may not he too much delayell in getting bant future useues. Much persanal regards and aur hest wishes we all as ever Couradely yours Samuel Garrell

## Dear Comrade Pannekoek, -

Paul received your letter, tho he has been in the hospital for nearly a month. I took it out to him and he was truly disappointed as he felt that you had totally ignored the core of his letter in your answer.

I want to say that I too was disappointed for it seems to us that your answer was merely a try at a justification for all the past method of thinking, and had nothing of the dialectic method in its composure.

I told Paul I would answer it for him but he told me that it was no use and advised against me even sending you a couple of documents which, despite his warning that it was useless, I am enclosing them to you herewith. The one on dual power gives better analysis of the Russian question from a marxian analysis as to a consideration of social forces, and while our own thinking has progressed since this was written, still it goes into the fundamentals, and if one had no "hang overs" from the past it should register.

Your letter seems to us to view Marxism more from a moral than a material view-point. What were you expecting in the S. U.? And do you expect perfection here, there or anywhere else? Will the change be made by people who are alive at the time or will it be a new crop who are born like bees and swarm into a new hive with all the vices of the past gone forever? You may continue to lookat it this way but we prefer to be more practical.

I am not answering your letter but would appreciate one from you after you read "The Job Of The Working Man" which I mailed to you some time ago and I am sure of your having time to read it. One of the documents enclosed is an apendix to this document, as you will see.

You will see by this Russian document that the working class of the world did not stump its toes on the Russian question as you and I did.. That is, instinctively conditions force them in that direction while most of the marxist have been fighting wind mills as Don-Q did (opportunism I mean) I hope these documents are of benefit to you and that I may hear from you soon.

Comradely yours





To wish you joy
at Christmas time

and happiness

throughout the New Year

Far your health

Ahappiness

Sam Garrell