July 17, 1959

Dear Maximilien Ruebel:

I wondered whether you were aware of the fact that Ernst Wolfe, who was head of the American section for some years, and is a sort of “specialist” for the State Department here on Marxism, has been attempting to use your Essays against me “to prove” Humanism was a stage Marx “passed through.” In Problems of Communist (Do you get this official journal of U.S. Information Agency?) he had an uncondemned attack on me. He mentioned only Marcuse’s Preface to my work, but it MARXISM AND FREEDOM he was attacking. In contrast to my “making” a Humanist out of Marx, he said Rubel was the more scholarly and detached person who saw Humanism as only a “stage.” These people do not even read their sources, Evidently so happy that you had drawn a distinction between dialectics as method and dialectics as ontology and imputed to Lenin “an error” in this view of Hegel that by now you became his “favorite.” Tomorrow he’ll throw you out as well when the near-conspiracy of silence around MARXISM AND FREEDOM is broken, not by intellectuals who have found their tongues but by the proletariat in action. In any case, I thought you’d be interested in having this information.

This note is also a way of telling you that I will depart for Italy the first week in September, and remain a few weeks in Milan and environs for lectures around MARXISM & FREEDOM in its Italian edition, which La Nuova Italia will bring out soon. Naturally I will also go to Paris and hope to meet you and others and see for myself what has happened since De Gaulle’s victory.

I wondered whether you had noted also that many of the statements of the Hungarian revolutionaries had a Humanist framework. I enclose my article on Afro-Asian revolutions which deals with the Humanism that arose in 1956 in East Europe — I am convinced in fact that ever since the death of Stalin the revolutionary opposition of both youth and old politicians has taken a Marxist Humanist form. You cannot in our age really keep theory and practice divided for any length of time.

Did you or did you not get a chance to review my work for any French periodical? The question was first raised by Maoquines, but then the events moved so far to the right in France, that a foreigner had a hard time to orient oneself. Whether or not such a review was written, you certainly have an opinion of it that I would like to know. May I hope to hear from you before I depart for Europe? Also tell me whether you’d be interested in seeing the special Preface I had written for the Italian edition.

Yours sincerely,

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