

Class struggle as the essence of society is a very profound *philosophical* conception. The survival of the fittest, the Darwinian conception for nature is reproduced on a higher plane in society as the struggle of different *groups*, and these groups are distinguished by their role in production, proletariat, petty-bourgeoisie, bourgeoisie. Today the chief, the imperative necessity is to help the proletariat arrive at consciousness of its maturity. Hence any agitation or propaganda or writing, verse or prose, which leads it to think of leadership as residing elsewhere than in its own bosom, as coming from anywhere except out of its own depths, is a blow against it. It cannot continue Democrats today, Republicans tomorrow, Democrats day after, Republicans after that, etc., ad infinitum. That is why we call today for a Labor Party—a political party based on the unions. All the progressive petty-bourgeois intellectuals and artists; farmers; Negroes; the discarded old folks; all need to *follow* this party. The task of the intellectuals in particular is to break down all the intellectual ties with bourgeois society and clear the minds of the great masses of the people. The chief thing is to reject Roosevelt and Co. *in toto* and *a priori*. Class is decisive. One day I'll tell you how after the French Revolution, the revolt against Hume, led through Kant, Fichte, Schilling, Hegel and Feuerbach to Marx, step by step with an inevitable logic culminating in the doctrine of the class struggle. It is a fierce doctrine, harsh and unforgiving, chiefly, however, because the ruling class make it so.

What is most exciting is that that sequence from Hume to Marx which I have been studying for the last three years and which has had an effect on my thinking and on my personal life beyond all explanation, this I find repeated with an almost photographic exactitude in modern poetry. Yes, modern poetry! The sequence from T. S. Eliot to Auden, Spender and Cecil Day Lewis is a repetition of the sequence from Hume to Marx. It is and must be so, for the human mind having said A, must say B. I would never have looked at it all, not unless I was ill, but for you. And the sequence I would never have discovered but for W. B. Yeats. Some years ago he wrote an essay which I read lately and have been reading steadily since. *He knows poetry*. That was his job. He analysed it with the eye of a master. And as he traced stage by stage the development there before me was the classic philosophical sequence. Hegel had traced it in ancient philosophy, had himself been the completion of the greatest example of it, and now here it is again. The book that my friend is preparing will trace this in philosophy and history. For years people have argued about dialectic. They don't know what it is. This book will challenge them all. But the perfect exemplification which Yeats gives in his analysis was a great thrill for me. In fact it is so far the best exemplification. And there in the very heart of it, tangled up inextricably with it is yourself, living, warm and lovely. Do you see why I call you my little miracle? One day we'll have a jam session—you and me. It will begin with philosophy—the method of thought, i.e., logic, the inevitable development of ideas, and we'll reach poetry by that road. Then we'll see as clear as day what the concept class means and what the absence of it has meant to poetry. Always remembering however that the poet reacts to life *emotionally*—and without that, though he were the wisest man in the world, he could not write a line of verse. But the more humanity develops the more the emotional response depends upon a conception of the world which does not so much guide the poetry, but releases and expands the personality, integrates it, opens horizons, and thus gives the emotional responses a range and depth and power impossible otherwise. This, sweetheart, is to live. When the

disciples asked Christ about the world to come and the places they were to get in it, he told them "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you." They could not understand. They just *couldn't*. The glory of life in our age is that this intense, individual, personal life can, in fact, must be lived, in harmony with the great social forces that are now striving to carry humanity over the last barrier. When I say I love you it comes from very, very far.

If you read the Guernica thing carefully, you will see that Clark* understands but, chained by the Stalinist doctrine, is in the same position as Picasso is as a painter. *He cannot draw the argument to a conclusion*. He cannot grasp why Picasso is so confused. In fact Picasso sees far more clearly than he the futility of the nonclass opposition to Franco.

All my love, darling. You see it is not a phrase "all my love." It just is that—if you understand me.

[unsigned]

September 8, 1944

Well, Monica, 100% Monica, there is one citizen whom you have made to rejoice greatly—and that is me. Do you know that this morning you sounded like a different person from the girl I have known these five years. Some uncertainty and (I can't find a word) had left your voice and it was calm, assured, genial, and lovely to listen to. (You *ought* to act very well. Your emotional responses are translated almost automatically and very intimately into your physical expressions. It is a good base.) Confidence and command of yourself and you will do many wonderful and useful things. What were you feeling so deeply happy about this morning? I have often wondered about your acting. Now at least I know one part of it. But—I have never heard it before and we have talked many hours on the 'phone. If you can command it always, then you have one very beautiful weapon with which to conquer. I tell you when I heard something like it once before—the very first day I called you. But there was a hint of artificiality—and after a minute or so it dropped away. At odd times I would catch a hint of it—but very briefly. However it was there all Sunday morning, and I could feel that it came from deep inside somewhere. I have spoken for many many years and I know that only rarely do I get the best out of myself, but with me it is usually ill-health. But with you I think you will need a deep inward assurance to get the best out of yourself. The night of the broadcast the voice was clear and natural, but it lacked the arresting resonance and complete fusion of all tones which I heard on Sunday, i.e., this morning. Now I know and Stanislavsky writes in the Britannica in his masterly essay how difficult it is to have that complete physical control that enables the actor to use his voice, and make his movements as he ought to. He thinks, and I agree, that most of them are far below standard. Robeson has a magnificent natural organ—I rehearsed him for a few weeks and the voice is a miracle—but he lacks real sophistication in its use. He has nothing like the diction and feeling for words that Bette Davis for example has; and the beautiful style and real distinction

* Kenneth Clark, influential British art critic and historian.

C.L.R. James, Special Delivery: The Letters of C.L.R. James to Constance Webb, 1939-1948, ed. Anna Grimshaw (Oxford/Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), pp. 176-177.