

Mary Jean Walter
716 NORTH First Street
Yakima, Washington
98901 USA

June 5, 1973

Dear Paulo,

It has been long over a month since I received your kind reply to my first letter to you. My explanation is somewhat close to yours: I have been very busy, fatigued, experienced death and failure all within these past couple of months. My great Uncle, whom I had been caring for died on May 5. We had been running a tutoring Center for two months and had to close it down because of internal difficulties - that is, among ourselves.

I have experienced great discouragement in the work of education here in Yakima, but have, I think, conquered the despair. We began teaching reading to 40 young people who cannot read. We were running on very little money, thus had to accept anyone who was willing to work with us as tutors. Several quit, and there were two who were opposed to the idea of political education, and fearing their own freedom, were satisfied to run the young people around town in cars, not willing to sit with them and help them with reading difficulties let alone enter into dialogue. Three of us continued until my Uncle's death

and then we closed down in the hopes of re-building after a period of criticism (self-criticism) and reflection.

Since then, my brother John has joined us. Do you remember him from the meeting with the Jesuit fathers at Seattle University in January? He was then a Jesuit Scholastic but left the order this May after a long and agonizing decision. He speaks of the influence of your thought, of meeting you, ~~has~~ having helped him in this decision. He has worked on your thought in depth choosing the book as the object of study in some of his courses at Gonzaga University. He did a very fine comparison of your thoughts on liberation with the ideas of the Jesuit, Bernard Lonergan. It was interesting to read. Since he has joined us, we reviewed the book (yours) completely over a three-day period (a group of six of us) and I must say, it helped restore faith and hope in the work of education here, as it provides a deep motivation it seems to me. We also read from Chairman Mao his ideas of failure and self-criticism as well as discerning the enemy and antagonists.

Now we have set to work again. We have set down our philosophy

and objectives for running a private school. We must be accredited by the state. There are many difficulties: strict fire codes for the house that we bought. We have planned a fund-raising campaign, filling out forms, choosing books, talking with students and parents. The students want very much to come to the Center. They are going to campaign for funds with us.

It is most difficult to perceive this project in a global sense; that is, that it will effect revolution. In my own mind and heart I do believe that it could advance humanization though on a very limited scale. That is why I believe in it despite the great frustration and my frequent sense of littleness. There are many obstacles to cross.

I wanted you to know that we are struggling in spite of the apparent failure. If we could open this center and begin to build a pedagogy it would be a great victory.

We need your prayers and if you have ideas, please write them. Do you think we are in the right direction?

Give my regards to Elza, and I hope that this letter finds you both in good health.

Love,
Mary Jean