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Mehring Books publishes “Marxism, History & Socialist Consciousness” by David North

16 August 2007

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Mehring Books has published a new book by David North, which is now available for purchase online. We post below the Foreword to “Marxism, History & Socialist Consciousness,” written by the author.

In May 2006 two former members of the Workers League (predecessor of the Socialist Equality Party), Alex Steiner and Frank Brenner, published a critique of the theoretical work, political line and practical activity of the International Committee of the Fourth International. Entitled *Objectivism or Marxism**, the document was unsparing in its criticism of what its authors perceived to be the moribund state of political and intellectual life within the International Committee. Given the fact that nearly three decades had elapsed since the authors had resigned from the Workers League and abandoned active revolutionary socialist politics, the International Committee was under no special obligation to respond to the criticisms of Steiner and Brenner. However, as has so often been the case in the past, the criticism provided an opportunity to clarify important issues of revolutionary history, Marxist theory and socialist program. The most compelling reason for preparing an extensive reply was that the Steiner-Brenner document was a veritable compendium of pseudo-Marxist and essentially reactionary conceptions popular among petty-bourgeois radicals influenced by various schools of thought associated with the Frankfurt School and contemporary neo-utopianism. The document presented in this volume, *Marxism, History and Socialist Consciousness*, originally published on June 28, 2006 [and circulated among the members and supporters of the Socialist Equality Party and the International Committee], is the

reply of the International Committee to the Steiner-Brenner document.

Exactly one year has passed since *Marxism, History and Socialist Consciousness* was dispatched via email to Steiner and Brenner. The receipt of this document was noted on their web site, along with the observation that it “deserved a careful and considered reply.” However, proclaiming that “Nothing less than the future of the revolutionary movement depends on it,” Steiner and Brenner warned that they “would not be rushed.” At least in this they have been true to their word. Their reply, on which we have been told that so much depends, has yet to see the light of day.

But the world moves on. And while it is possible that Steiner and Brenner may yet bring their belated magnum opus to fruition, it seems to us that something akin to a statute of limitations has been passed. There is no reason for us to wait any longer in bringing *Marxism, History and Socialist Consciousness* to the attention of a broader public interested in Marxist theory. It is my hope that this document will prove helpful in illuminating the profound and unbridgeable chasm between Marxism and various contemporary forms of petty-bourgeois radical ideology.

David North

Detroit

June 28, 2007

To order this new title online click here.

* The document can be accessed at <http://www.permanent-revolution.org>. [return]

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