

**Workers say
no to Kaiser
and to union**



by Felix Martin, Labor Editor

On April 2, I joined the picket line of the nurses, technicians, and maintenance workers of the Kaiser Permanente hospitals in Los Angeles. This was the first morning of their strike, and these workers, on mass picketing, told me they were striking "against both the union negotiators and management."

The union (Local 399, Service Employees International Union) had accepted a three-year contract—with raises of 5%, 3%, 3%—and tried to railroad a "Yes" vote from the workers. "The union sold us out," one Black woman worker said. "But we fooled Kaiser and the union too, and voted the contract down. We work hard; we have more patients than ever; Kaiser is spending all kinds of money on expansion. A person just can't continue forever like that."

The vote of the 4,500 workers who voted (out of 11,000 union members) was two to one to turn down the contract. The workers told me they were just trying to get back some of what they had given up in wages since a wage freeze in their contract three years ago. One worker said, "The company offer won't even cover what we lost over the last three years from inflation."

There was a real feeling of rank-and-file militancy on the picket line. One worker remarked: "In the 12 years our union dues have doubled. Kaiser works you to death, and then says, 'We're proud of you.' They treat us like children. They hold 'employee recognition days' where they give us hot dogs and frisbees. But the union seems more pro-management than pro-worker. We have to strike to get respect."

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Black World

**Concerning
violence
in Natal**



by Lou Turner

The Black township of Edendale, just outside the city of Pietermaritzburg in Natal Province, is only one of the many townships that have rejected the leadership of Zulu Chief Minister Gatscha Buthelezi and his Inkatha "National Cultural Liberation Movement" over the last three years. Just over the Easter weekend more than 40 people were killed in the violent warfare that has gripped the green rolling hills of Natal.

Indeed, the whole world of Natal has seen the most brutal and concerted terrorist campaign by Inkatha impi (Zulu warriors) in the last three years of internecine war. To counteract the new political reality in the country that threatened his dominance in his KwaZulu home-base, Buthelezi and his Inkatha warlords initiated

In-person report: Sebokeng Massacre, p. 8

a coercive recruitment campaign of youth in the area. Violent clashes between Inkatha and UDF (United Democratic Front) members and sympathizers ensued. To date nearly 3,000 people have been killed, and 14,000 made internal refugees in their own land.

'VALLEY OF DEATH'

So relentless has the terror and fear become that upon visiting Imbali township in early April, Nelson Mandela changed his earlier position of telling people to throw their weapons into the sea. Visibly shaken by what he saw and heard, Mandela urged people to vigorously defend themselves. Quite simply, the Natal midlands have become a killing field and Inkatha's warlords have plowed it deeply.

Press accounts portraying the violence as evenly divided between Inkatha and UDF/ANC followers have been criticized by the Joint Working Committee (JWC) of COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) and the UDF. According to Thandeka Gqubule, writing for the South African Weekly Mail (April 4-11): "Challenging this perception, the JWC asks how this view could be reconciled with the fact that there were few, if any, Inkatha refugees; that virtually all of the estimated 14,000 refugees have sought shelter in UDF areas; that

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**Youth face crises in school,
on the job, in the streets**



City University of N.Y. students walkout in 1989.

by Sheila Fuller

While President George Bush claims that he is the "education president" who is concerned about children, the truth is that education in the U.S. is in deep crisis. Less than 4% of the national income is spent on education, a percentage exceeded by all the other major industrial countries. Learning is next to impossible under conditions of overcrowding and lack of decent facilities. But the crises that youth face are not limited to the classroom, but extend to the streets and factories. In the streets youth—Black and Latino in particular—face police harassment. In the factory and service sector jobs young people have to work at minimum or close to minimum wage, if they can find work at all.

SEGREGATED AND UNEQUAL SCHOOLS

Today's high school and elementary students face a system of education that is segregated and unequal.

Many public schools are dilapidated and overcrowded. Sixty percent of Black elementary students in Chicago public schools attend segregated schools. Chicago schools with large enrollments of Latin and Asian students are receiving substantially less desegregation funds.

Many ideologues propose to establish a more rigid two track system of education than the one which already exists: one for the "college bound" youth, and one for technical education to meet "industry's need for trained and disciplined workers."

A civil rights activist told me, "This country is completely failing its population in terms of education. In my generation, if you had a college education you'd be almost guaranteed a job. That's down the tubes now. Most people can't even think of going to college without assuming a back-breaking load of loans. Only the rich can now think of college. It is truly a two-tier system of education."

Far from accepting this two track system of education which has its roots in our two-tier class ridden society, today's youth are questioning this very system of education, its racism, sexism and class nature.

In Chicago, and the Chicago area, during the months of March and April, there have been walk-outs and sit-ins at nine high schools and elementary schools, from Morgan Park to Whitney Young High Schools, and from Morrill elementary school to DeKalb High School. Students' demands have included courses on Afro-American history and history of other races and ethnicities, opposition to discrimination against Black and Latin students, more representation of student voices and

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Haitians march against racist AIDS policy

New York, N.Y.—The demonstration of 50,000 Haitians against U.S. racism April 20 shocked its own organizers as well as the government, tying up traffic and effectively closing the Federal building most of the day. It was organized principally by students, high school as well as college, and the news was spread by radio stations. No one had anticipated its breadth nor its depth. People came from many states and even from Haiti. Thunderous cries of "Black Power" and "No Justice, No Peace" along with Haitian revolutionary songs, shook lower Manhattan for hours.

The immediate issue was the Federal Food and Drug Administration's classification of Haitians and southern Africans as "high risk" for AIDS in February, recommending that they be excluded from donating blood. But the pervasive discrimination against Black people was surely what caused it to be possibly the largest Black demonstration in New York in 20 years, and participants are saying that it will change how all Blacks and immigrants respond to racism in the future.

One woman said, "The government said we are AIDS carriers in 1984. It was used as a reason to deport people, and others lost their jobs because of the stigma. But the doctors said we weren't carriers, and the Haitian community thought that was the end of it, when lo and behold, it raised its ugly head again. That is why we are fed up. It was labeling the race of people as having AIDS that brought out grandmas, young people, everyone. I think the bottom line is the government wants to stop Haitian immigration."

"The demonstration was great. It was like family; everyone was in unison. My friend from Santa Domingo was supporting it. There is a general movement of all people from the Caribbean to get together and speak together. Otherwise we are scattered little countries speaking different languages and suffering the same racism."

"I think the American control of Haiti was in the back of people's minds, but it was not so much the politics of Haiti, as the racism we are experiencing in the U.S. American Blacks supported the demon-



stration because they could see that if the government could do it to us, it can do it to all Blacks. When I returned to work, everyone was clapping and saying this was the best demonstration we've seen. If we can do this with our groups we will really be strong."

Signs read, "AIDS is not racist, the U.S. government is," "Fight AIDS not nationality." Others said "One blood" and "Proud of our blood." One woman said, "The U.S. has always blamed some minority group for its problems. It used to be Jews and Italians, now it is us." Another said the real reason was to end Haitian immigration "in order to make room for white immigrants from Russia and East Europe."

A man said "There was a spiritual quality to the turnout. The organizers were expecting 5 to 10,000. This was a universal issue which was political in nature—what the FDA did—and people were responding with a political act, but if it were just organized by one political party people wouldn't have responded that way. Some people said this shouldn't have been just a Haitian thing, but I think Haitians in America had to come together and experience the possibilities within themselves."

Polish women confront Solidarity

Editor's note: We recently received two articles from Poland which seem to prove that just as women were in the forefront of the struggles that brought Solidarity into being in the early 1980s, so they remain in the forefront of the struggles today when Solidarity has assumed responsibility for the very system Polish workers have been fighting against for decades.

One is an article from Gazeta Wyborcza describing life in Lodz, where women constitute 70% of those employed in the textile industry and where 60% of them suffer a variety of serious illnesses as a result of very hard working conditions—noise, vibrations, humidity. Lodz has the highest infant mortality rate in the country and in its amount of pollution is second in the world.

The second is an article about these textile workers which appeared in Tygodnik Solidarnosc (Solidarity Weekly). It was titled "When Kuron Arrives" and was written by Elzbieta Isakiewicz. Jacek Kuron, one of the earliest intellectual dissidents who helped found Solidarity, is now Minister of Labor and recently announced to the workers of Poland: "Different times call for different priorities. In 1980 I used to organize strikes. Now my job is to stop them." Below we print excerpts from "When Kuron Arrives."

* * *

Women here say that whoever called the hard labor we do "light industry" did not have all his marbles... Here is our Appeal: "We, women from the Defenders of Peace factory, are in full solidarity with the women from Stemil and Polmerino. We are exhausted by the difficulties of everyday life and whether we will be able to feed our children. We will not allow ourselves to have our human dignity trampled. We appeal to all those responsible for the fate of our nation to support our just demands and not force us to take to the streets..."

Here is our situation. In the evening new price increases are announced on TV. We come to work and talk to each other about the prices and begin to swear. We are told that striking will hurt us and the factory when production falls. Taking to the streets does not solve much but at least it reminds the authorities there is a working class.

We work in three shifts. How productive can we be if we leave the night shift after eight hours of work, stand in line until 11 AM, buy a scrap of food, prepare dinner, sleep two hours and go back to work?

The factory cannot afford to buy modern machinery so we keep working on Russian looms that are falling apart. Fixing them costs more money than they cost

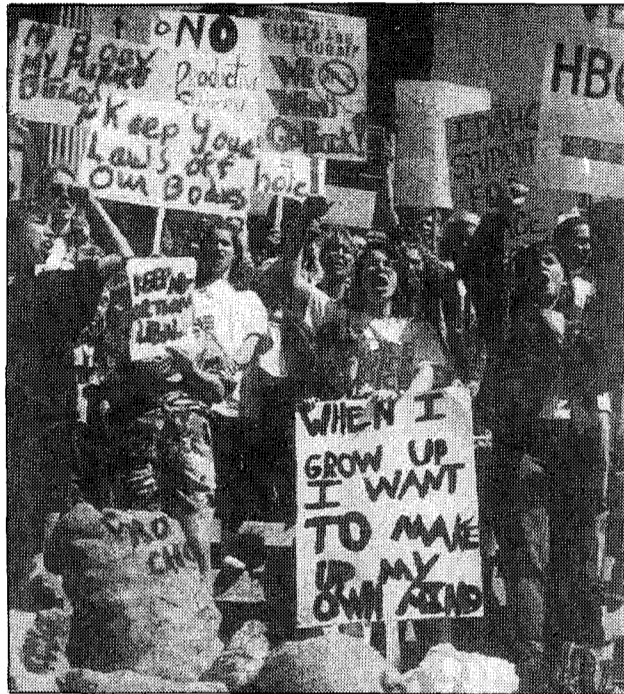
new. People are saying: New government, old absurdities.

Information between Warsaw and Lodz is poor. Solidarity representatives promised much, but have forgotten it. There is no contact with them...In the sorting department women react to the slogan "Solidarity" the way they did a year ago to the slogan "Party."

Kuron tells us there will be an improvement in the Spring. In 1990 things will normalize and in 1991 they will be completely normalized. Let him come to the factory and tell us that. Let him come and take my place at my wage. Let him show himself here. We'll come to meet him, one and all, with our empty bowls.

Pro-choice voices

Pro-choice voices are continuing to make themselves heard in forceful and increasing numbers around the country, as both the church and state work harder to totally eliminate the rights we fought to gain during 20 years of the Women's Liberation Movement.



• In Idaho, after the National Organization for Women and women nationwide threatened to boycott Idaho potatoes and tourism, Governor Cecil Andrus vetoed an abortion bill that would have prohibited 95% of all abortions.

• In Ann Arbor, Mich., in April, residents voted 2 to 1 to declare their town a "zone of reproductive freedom," approving a token fine of \$5 for anyone having or administering an abortion, if federal or state laws ever ban abortion. One woman state senator commented that the voters "trust our women to manage their own personal lives more than they trust the politicians in Lansing" (Michigan's state capital).

• Pro-choice demonstrators stormed the AT&T annual meeting in Los Angeles, April 18, opposing their withdrawal of yearly funding for Planned Parenthood. They have given \$600,000 over the past 25 years.

• The hiring of Hill & Knowlton, the nation's largest public relations firm, by the Catholic Church April 5 to create a \$3-5 million anti-abortion campaign has already sparked intense fighting within the firm. Along with staff resignations and a "significant loss of business," other ramifications include: ten senior staff women in the Washington, D.C. office wrote a letter to the firm's chairman complaining that they had not been consulted about this decision; a number of women staff members have offered their services free to pro-choice groups; talk is rampant among staff about how they are going to "subvert the campaign" or refuse to work on it at all, and 136 women and men in the New York office signed a petition saying: "We should not be representing any group in its advocacy of a position which would restrict the fundamental rights of all of us as Americans."

—Women's Liberationist

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The homeless remember

Los Angeles, Cal.—The homeless. It's a problem we as so-called caring people face every day. Like the morning sun or that first cup of coffee.

As a former homeless woman I have viewed some things that no person should have to face. Whether it's sleeping in a car or on the cold sand, it's all the same. No hot running water and at times, none at all. Wondering if the police will wake you in the middle of the night, harassing you, or will you get robbed, or worse?...Not because you're anything special, but because you're there.

I guess some of the simple things you miss most are shelter from the rain and cold, clean clothes, a hot shower, and most of all, self-worth. It's almost like being imprisoned because you go through the same routine every day and are confined to your surroundings.

The only way you know how to survive is from day to day. And you wonder—wonder about food, family and what others think of you when they pass with their families. You learn to resent all good, and consider yourself the only person with problems. You hate the sight of people. Yet you're sad to see them go.

And you yourself are a part of an ever-growing family of people of all ages, races, and social backgrounds. I knew a woman named Julie who lived with her two children, Jason and Todd (ages two and three years) in a VW van. Her story was that the landlord went up on the rent and she couldn't afford it. I liked her a lot because she had "spunk." Some days I would hang with her while she'd warm up some water and clean the kids and talk about rat and roach-ridden welfare hotels and her jobs and life.

Some people become homeless in getting away from pressures. Some have no choice. You learn ways to beat the system, use people, and all the while you're using yourself.

You make do and learn to share what little you have, especially if children are involved—hungry, cold, tired, crying children. Wondering when their homeless parents are going to take them home.

—Gloria Radlez

The homeless harassed

West Hollywood, Cal.—Recent police sweeps and a "no camping" ordinance have turned this small city from a haven for the homeless into an armed camp against the "invasion of undesirables." Up until a year ago the city allowed an encampment of around 75 homeless men, women and children and a city-funded meal program, serving 300 people every night, to exist in Plummer Park.

It was then that a small right-wing neighborhood group, Eastend Community Action (ECA), formed. They have proceeded to pressure the city council, write letters to the local newspaper and plaster the neighborhood with flyers calling for the city to "clean up the park," "stop the vagrant feeding program," close a local hot dog stand frequented by "undesirables" and escort homeless "sociopaths" out of the city.

Their campaign has met with marked success as the city council has caved in to every one of ECA's demands. During the recent elections the mayor, Abbe Land, hailed the ECA's actions. What is funny is that she and the ECA are quite vocal opponents. When confronted with this fact, and the near-vigilante spirit in the neighborhood, she said, "You have to see that it's necessary to seek a balance." This "balance" has meant rousting the homeless from the park and the total caving in to the ECA.

One evening we were returning home and found eight police cars outside our apartment building, which is adjacent to the park, and cops with guns drawn surrounding a homeless family sleeping on a mattress in our garage. As a homeless man told us, "Those guys weren't hurting anyone. He worked and they needed a place so their little girl wouldn't be sleeping on the streets. I've had to live in this park for over a year and a half and the biggest problem has been these guys who want to run us out because they're scared to see how many of us there really are."

These attacks on the basic human rights of the homeless are even more shocking in a city like West Hollywood which prides itself on being "The Creative City" and exists as a mecca for Lesbians and Gays.

—Ginny Adams and Stu Quinn

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by Mary Jo Grey

A thousand women marched and sang through the streets of Glasgow, Scotland, in a Reclaim the Night March for Safety and Freedom. This was the largest women's march in Glasgow since the Rent Strikes of 1916. As the March Organising Collective stated: "Violence still restricts us, and we must continue to confront the institutional apathy which refuses to acknowledge the extent of the effect that this has on women's lives."

—Information from Women's News

* * *

Women's groups across Canada are protesting the federal budget cut of \$1.6 million from the Secretary of State's women's program which funds 80 women's centres. At least a dozen women's centres were forced to shut down April 1. Others are struggling to stay open with volunteers. Most are located in small, rural communities and are geared to help women in trouble—particularly sexual abuse, violence against women, legal aid—with each centre handling hundreds of calls and drop-ins in a month.

* * *

Nearly 70 "Police Stations in Defense of Women," with all-female staffs, are now operating in Brazil in response to feminist protests over the acquittal of husbands or lovers accused of a series of murders. They also arose because of the insensitivity of male police toward raped and battered women. Their success has resulted in similar stations operating in Spain, Peru, Argentina and Uruguay.

—Information from Toward Freedom

* * *

The medical community has just discovered what women have known for years—that doctors don't take women's ailments seriously unless or until they are dying. A study published April 15 in the Annals of Internal Medicine states that women who have bypass surgery for heart disease are much sicker and slightly older than men having the surgery, and therefore much more likely to die. Charging bias against referring women for bypass surgery, the study said: "For women's symptoms to be acted on, they have to be significantly sicker, they have to prove there is something going on."

* * *

Stree Tekha, a feminist group in India, is seeking donations of feminist books for their new library, called "Kavya for Women." In India, a foreign book can cost as much as one-fourth of a woman's paycheck. Books can be sent to: Stree Tekha, 67, II Floor, Blumoon Complex, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bangalore-560 001, India.

Recollecting workers' ideas and actions

by John Marcotte

The Fall of the House of Labor, by David Montgomery, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987.

The mere presence of a time-clock or a stop-watch was enough to trigger strikes and protests in the early years of this century, as workers anxiously passed around dog-eared copies of Taylor's *Principles of Scientific Management* to learn what they were confronting in the class enemy. Listen to the words of a machinist from Davenport, Iowa in 1908:

"Now we object to being reduced to a scientific formula, and we do not want to have the world run on that kind of basis at all. We would a good deal rather have the world run on the basis that everybody should enjoy some of the good things in it, and if the people of the United States do not want to spend all of their time working, they have a right to say so, even though the scientific engineers claim that they can do five times as much as they are doing now. If they don't want to do it, why should they be compelled to do it?"

And actions followed words. The 460-plus pages of this book are full of that kind of workers' activity and thought, covering the years from the end of the Civil War and the abolition of slavery to the closing off of mass immigration from Europe and Asia, and the "fall of the house of labor," the ossification of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in the 1920s. Here is what the book is about, from the introduction:

"The history of American workers has not been a story of progressive ascent from oppression to securely established rights.... Their movement has grown only sporadically and through fierce struggles, been interrupted time and again just when it seemed to reach flood tide, overwhelmed its foes only to see them revive in new and more formidable shapes, and been forced to reassess what it thought it had already accomplished and begin again. The taproot of its resilience has been the workers' daily experience and the solidarities nurtured by that experience...."

DAILY WORK EXPERIENCE

The strength of the book, besides showing the workers' ideas, "home-grown ideology," and not just activities, lies in the concreteness of taking up that daily work experience. The digging the author must have done to find accounts that take you into the shops, the iron mills, textile mills and docks of the late 19th Century that tell how the workers related to each other and to the boss, amazes me. I would have thought that was lost for all time. You do see the different forms of organization and the different ideas of socialism and unions, of what they should be, as the creative responses to the changing work relations of capitalism and the class struggle.

I don't have to tell you the todayness either of the quote from the machinist, or from the introduction. Capitalism today is very different, yet in a sense you get a feeling of a parallel of today with the 1920s, when everything we thought was accomplished has to begin again. The AFL's 1920s "mix of defeatism and complacency" sure sounds like 1990!

Of course this book doesn't have any answers for today's labor movement, and it doesn't claim to. Yet I was reading it at the same time Martin Almor's article came out in the March N&L, drawing his conclusion from the coal miners' strike against Pittston that no gain is permanent or safe as long as capitalist relations exist. I have to say, that is the message to me of this whole history of workers and their ideas and organizations from 1865 to 1922. Degradation of work has only gotten worse since then.

This book tells the true history of labor, the good and the bad. Specifically, besides giving a full account of children and women workers, the author does not skirt

around the racism of white workers and their unions and even their socialist parties. It is an integral part of this story.

There is the racist International Association of Ma-



Pickers locked out of the McCormick Reaper plant faced murderous fire from Chicago police on May 3, 1886, just two days after the first nationwide May Day mass demonstrations for the eight-hour day.

chinists, which was finally allowed into the AFL in 1895 by dropping the exclusion of Blacks from its constitution, but made sure each lodge kept its ritual of pledging each member to propose no one for membership who wasn't white—which lasted till 1948. There are the uneasy relations, competition and solidarity between the white dockworkers' union and the Black dockworkers' union in New Orleans.

ERASING CHINESE WORKERS

Then there is the amazing story of the strike of 10,000 Chinese laborers against the Central Pacific Railroad in 1867—one of the largest-scale strikes of the century. Its demands were equal pay with white workers, a working day of ten hours on open ground and eight hours for tunneling, abolition of whipping and freedom for any worker to quit.

The book continues: "Not only this strike, but also the very existence of the Chinese who had built the railroad, was soon obliterated from the American consciousness. When the famous photograph of the joining of the lines from east and west was taken at Promontory Point, all Chinese workers were ushered out of the camera's range."

Not only that. "The unions and Knights of Labor in the Far West not only lobbied for legal prohibition of Chinese immigration but also...unleashed an 'abatement' campaign to drive Chinese by force away from mines, ships, and lumber camps and formed a League of Deliverance, which attempted to compel all San Francisco employers to replace Chinese workers with white union members....It provided an ideological cement binding a strong and aggressive labor movement to the bourgeois social order."

I think it is worth knowing all these stories as we go into the 1990s, saddled with an ossified "house of labor" and racism, as well as new creative workers' responses to a very undemocratic reality, such as the P-9 fight against Hormel in Austin, Minn.

No honor among thieves in command at Eckrich

Chicago, Ill.—Last March workers at Swift-Eckrich found out that the maintenance superintendent here at plant #6 was terminated.

He had a hardware supply store and family connections with a contracting firm. When there were supplies needed, or some kind of work wanted in the building, the superintendent was the person in command. He sold supplies and services to Swift-Eckrich at high prices and he was drawing a salary from the company!

This scam had been going on for over four years at this plant, and a lot longer at plant #3 where he used to work. This guy was ripping the company off for years, and with the company's knowledge! The plant manager had to know what was going on.

After the supervisor was let go the company began to look at what the workers might be supposedly ripping off. They began a policy of searching our lunch bags and even our purses both going into and out of the plant. Why? We heard that they found an empty liquor bottle and that was the reason. Do they also think we are taking meat out of the plant in our lunch pails?

But the real rip-off is what Swift-Eckrich is doing to us every day. They are stealing our labor and life away to make a profit. They make us work long hours, Saturdays and even Sundays! They are always telling us we are not working hard enough, that we have to produce more.

We are the ones who feel ripped off! We always feel this way. Now they have worked out a new way to do this in connection with the contract. Many of us won't get a raise for three years. We were told by people at the negotiations that a \$1,750 bonus over three years had been agreed to. But now we find that \$250 which we thought we were going to get very soon has disappeared and we will only get \$1,500 over three years.

How did Swift-Eckrich rip us off of \$250? Did the union officials agree to a \$250 give-back after the negotiations were supposedly over and never tell us?

—Swift Eckrich workers

Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

But one week after the strike began, management and the union called for a new vote. This time the vote was to go back to work. Management had been busy calling workers who hadn't voted the first time, and selling their contract which included a much larger raise for the technicians than for the maintenance workers.

I don't know to what extent the vote to end the strike came from technicians who were satisfied with what they were getting, and to what extent it came from workers who were concerned that striking might mean losing their jobs forever—as has happened many times in the 1980s. And here, the workers didn't even have the full backing of their union.

But those 3,000 workers who had thought for themselves and voted to strike are still in their workplaces, and management hasn't solved any of the problems that sent the workers on strike in the first place. The wrongs that capitalism causes will never be less; in the 1990s conditions will be growing worse, and workers will more and more feel the need to stand up for their self-respect and survival.

It is the workers themselves, from their own thoughts and experiences, who have a concept of a different, human way to produce and service our human needs. This is the type of discussion we need to be having more of with each other in the months ahead.

Greyhound strike solidarity

San Francisco, Cal.—This is my third strike at Greyhound. In 1974, we were out a week. In 1983, the strike lasted 47 days. Since the last strike, I lost two homes and two families. Even the scabs learn about this company real fast. Of the scab drivers who went to work in the last strike in 1983—only one has gone back to work in the strike.

In 1983, Teets, the owner of Greyhound, said if we didn't come back, he would sell the company. Teets took away four holidays, one week of vacation, and 8.7% of our pay. The union told us to give the new owner, Currey, a "good" contract, which we did in 1987. Then he turned around and said he was not obligated to do anything for the union. So we thought the union had sold us out.

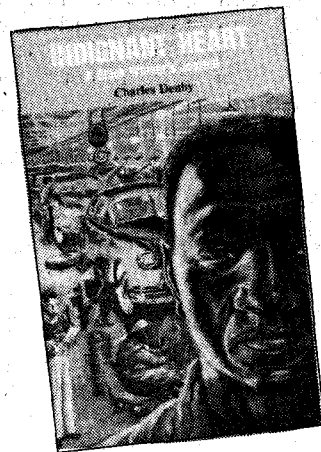
I think Currey is concentrating on breaking the union. I think he aims at declaring bankruptcy, maybe even getting a subsidy, like AMTRAK did. Teets still runs the company. The old Greyhound owns 25% of the company.

Currey's 1987 contract took away the pension plan for the newer employees and replaced it with a 401K plan. This strike is good. It may get new employees back on the pension plan. The ones that were hired since 1987 don't have a pension. They came in under the two-tier wage system set up in that contract.

I'm retiring soon, I don't have to be here. But I support the strike. We made a mistake when we agreed to the two-tier wage system. I feel sorry if you're a new employee coming to work. You have nothing to look forward to.

—Greyhound striker

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Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal by Charles Denby



• I first met Denby in 1948 when he had already become a leader of the wildcats, a "politico," but the talk I heard him give of tenant farming in the South and factory work in the North was far from being a "political speech." Listening to him, you felt you were witnessing an individual's life that was somehow universal, and that touched you personally.

—Raya Dunayevskaya

• The historic significance of the 1949-50 strike, however, was not only that the miners had revealed in the course of the strike that they were far ahead of their leaders — even such an able and militant leader as Lewis certainly had been. They had also demonstrated that to achieve their ends they had to create their own organization — the mass meeting....The spontaneity of the miners flowed from their own repeated collective thought and action that preceded their "spontaneous" activity.

—Andy Phillips

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From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya
Marxist-Humanist Archives

by Raya Dunayevskaya
Founder of Marxist-Humanism

Editor's note: The article printed below was written by Raya Dunayevskaya in November or December 1959 and published in The Socialist Leader (Glasgow, Scotland), in its January 1960 issue. The original typescript copy of the article was added to The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection in 1986 (microfilm #9488), in a new section on "The European Trip of 1959," which she felt had not been sufficiently documented previously. The article was part of her follow-through to debates with British socialists which flared up at Dunayevskaya's meetings there on "Automation and the American Worker," and "Marx's Debt to Hegel." On her return from the 1959 European trip Dunayevskaya proposed that News and Letters Committees begin work on a pamphlet on "automation and the production worker." This pamphlet, edited by Charles Denby, was published as Workers Battle Automation (#2843).

For 1980s views by Dunayevskaya of her 1959 European trip, see The Myriad Global Crises of the 1980s and the Nuclear World Since World War II (#11450) and her March 1987 "Talking to Myself" document titled "What is Marxist-Humanism? How to Project It at Momentous Historic Moments?" (#10869)

The two decisive criteria in regard to the bureaucracy, which stamp it "contemporary," and distinguish it from bureaucracies of all other ages, from the Byzantine Empire to the World Depression, are: (1) State Capitalism, as the new stage of world economic and political development, and (2) Automation, as the new stage of world scientific and technological development.

Automation has cut across the thinking of all people, but the Great Divide arose with the Depression. It is the 1929 crash that first split the world mind into two: on the one side stood the State Planners, which now included not only the owners and/or managers of production, but also the intellectual who had been sucked into the machinery of the State Plan.

For the objective pull of that new stage of world capitalistic development had changed the role of the intellectual from the spheres of culture and consumption to that of plan and production. A plethora of plans, from Stalin's Russia to Roosevelt's "New Deal" America, as well as from Hitler's Germany to Japan's Co-Prosperity Sphere, disclosed the fact that the new "Brain Trust" took time out to debate total versus partial planning, but never for a moment stopped to look at the throes of rationalized production.

At the same time millions upon millions of unemployed walking the streets, while other millions of unskilled in factories questioned the conditions of labour, compelled private capitalists as well as state rulers to attempt to escape from the deepening crisis by the further bureaucratization, of life, beginning at the point of production, and ending in the state offices in Moscow, Washington, Berlin, and Tokyo.

Neither World War II, nor the post-war world, changed anything in that bureaucratic pattern except put an end once and for all to any illusion that the interference of the State into the economy was only a war measure.

INTELLECTUAL AND LABOUR BUREAUCRATS

Within this new bureaucratic development, sociologists like C. Wright Mills can indict various schools of social science for developing a "bureaucratic ethos" and serving the military, governmental and business bureaucracies, but offer no basis whatever for overcoming these bureaucracies. His indictment of "the human relations in industry school," for example, is incisive enough: "Much of the advice of these scholars—explicit and tacit—can be neatly summarized in this simple formula: To make the worker happy, efficient, and cooperative we need only make the managers intelligent, rational, knowledgeable."¹

But, by specifically denying to "ordinary men" the capacity either to understand or to transform what is happening in the world, he can only appeal to the self-same "social scientists" to shed their "bureaucratic ethos" by acquiring a "sociological imagination." There is thus no basic distinction between himself and those he criticizes.

On the other side of the intellectual bureaucrat, however, stands the worker with thoughts of his own to resolve the totality of the modern crisis through workers' control of production. Throughout the 1930s this took various organizational forms, ranging from the C.I.O. in the United States, to the proletarian revolution in Spain. These spontaneous actions centered at the point of production, and on the matter of the new phenomenon of SIT-DOWNS, the labour leadership, whether young ones like Walter Reuther, or old ones like John L. Lewis, saw no way out for themselves either except to align with this new force.

The outbreak of World War II, however, put an end to this development of the labour leader under pressure of the rank and file. Here too the world witnessed the hothouse transformation of labour leadership into labour bureaucracy. Differing from the intellectual bureaucrat who elaborated his plans from a governmental centre, the labour bureaucrat exercised his power directly at the point of production.

The new labour bureaucrat, who began to compete with big industry in elaborating plans for conversion of

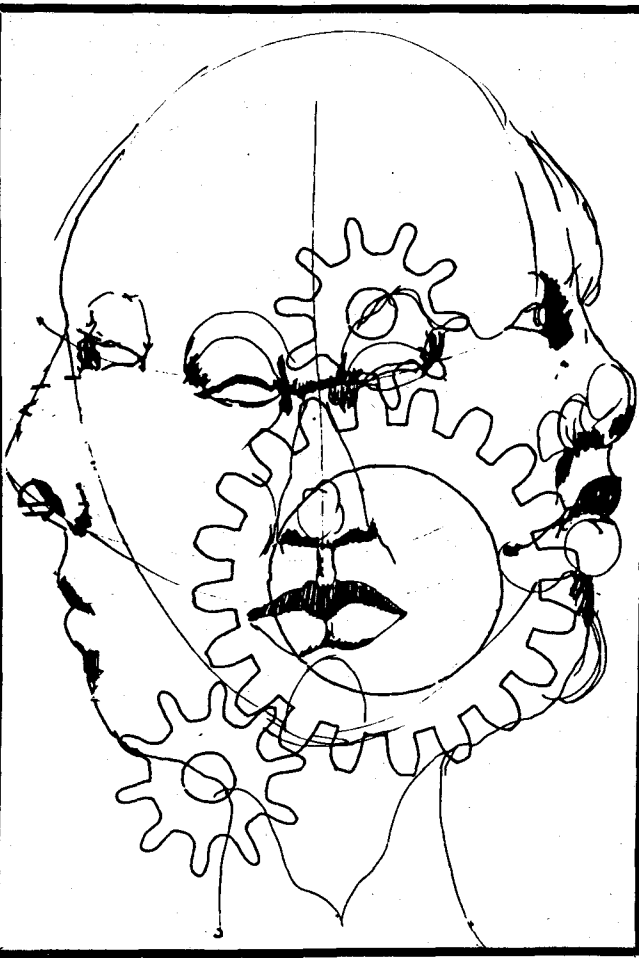
1. Mills, C. Wright, *The Sociological Imagination*, p. 92 (1959).

peace-time industry to war-time purposes, took over also the question of disciplining the worker, chaining him with no-strike pledges, extension of the working day, and bowing before the "progress" of ever greater and greater machines, till we reached the monster machine of Automation.

AUTOMATION AND THE SCIENTIST-PHILOSOPHER

While each country was thus divided into two worlds, the maturity of our age revealed itself in the one-worldedness of the state of technology. This was true *not* because the two groups of "Allies" kept no secrets from each other. Quite the contrary. Never had cloak-and-dagger techniques been carried into the field of science quite so overwhelmingly, and again without regard to Hitler and his "secret weapon" of the V-2 rocket, or the camp of Roosevelt and his secret of the atom bomb.

The one-worldedness of the state of technology came



about through the compulsion of the world crisis which had now taken the shape of total destruction. Thus it was no longer merely a question of losing one's place in the world market. The present penalty of not keeping up with the world technological development was death.

It is this that made me write in 1945² when America exploded the A-bomb and thought its secret fool-proof, that "at this stage of world competition, which is world war, Russia must find the secret of the A-bomb, or perish, and Russia doesn't intend to perish."

Everything in our age is invested with its opposite. Thus, out of the splitting of the atom, came *not* the greatest creative force on earth, but the most destructive weapon. And the post-war-time marriage of science and industry resulted in Automation which, far from lessening the burden of toil, both throws the labourers out of work and overworks those at the monster machine.

No other epoch ever imparted greater reality to Marx's analysis that "All our progress seems to result in endowing a material force with intellectual life, and stultifying human life into a material force."³

One contemporary intellectual did, at first, accurately appraise the disastrous impact of automation. "Let us remember," wrote Norbert Wiener,⁴ "that the automatic machine is the precise economic equivalent of slave labour. Any labour which competes with slave labour must accept the economic conditions of slave labour ... If we ... follow our traditional worship of progress and the fifth freedom—the freedom to exploit—it is practically certain that we shall have to face a decade or more of ruin and despair."

But, since Mr. Wiener looked to "pure science" as the motive force of history, how could his "human use of human beings" possibly differ from the scientist who could, with impunity, write of "Man Viewed as Machine."⁵ Evidently no human passion nowadays is be-

2. My draft of "Marxism and State Capitalism" handed into the Oxford University Press.

3. Marx, Karl: "Speech at the Anniversary of the People's Paper," April 1856.

4. Wiener, Norbert: *The Human Use of Human Beings*, p. 189 (1950).

5. Article included in 'Automatic Control' by the editors of *Scientific American*, 1955, also "A Review of Automatic Technology", U.S. Dept. of Labor; "Automation: Materialien zur Beurteilung der ökonomischen und sozialen Folgen", by Friedrich Pollock, 1956; and "Automation: Its Impact on Business and Labor", by John Diebold, May 1959.

State-capitalism and the bureaucrats

yond a mathematic formula that can forthwith be made practicable in a "buildable machine."

What is true of the scientist is even more true of the philosopher in a state capitalist world. Thus Hannah Arendt, who saw the "Origins of Totalitarianism" in human enough terms, now jumps, without any mediation, into a society "freed from labour" by Automation.⁶

ATTITUDES TO AUTOMATION

In contrast to the abstractions by men who no longer live in ivory towers because state capitalism will no longer allow intellectuals that escape, consider the attitude of the rank-and-file worker who, when told about Automation freeing the worker from toil and confronting society with too much "leisure," said:

"I don't know what he is talking about. I don't have any time to breathe, much less to loll about. The work-week at Ford's now (model change-over time) is 53 hours and here that man (Reuther) goes around talking about 'leisure.' As for the working conditions, they are worse than they have ever been since the C.I.O. first came into being. All Automation has meant to us is unemployment and overwork. *Both at the same time.*"⁷

The sharp division between scientist, philosopher and intellectuals, generally, on one side, and the rank-and-file workers, on the other side, is nowhere seen as clearly as between production worker and labour bureaucrat. Where the latter joins other "researchers and educators" and talks abstractions of promise and leisure and future, the production worker is concerned with the way it affects his daily life.

As could be seen from the study of the Renault plant, which is the most automated, the French workers' attitude to that "man-killer, the Automation machine," is no different from that of the American worker, but it is the latter that the present writer has interviewed most. They insist that with the invention of Automation, the speed of the machine knows no bounds of time, energy, or even humankind, that it has resulted in literally increasing the death-rate in industry.

In one auto shop one worker reported: "We weren't on the job one day when a man lost a finger, and had the one next to it crushed. Before the week was out, another man lost his finger and a third man had three fingers chopped off by the machine. There are signs all over the shop saying 'Are you doing it safely?' Inside half-an-hour after that man was hurt, the workers had written under all these signs, 'This Machine Is Not Safe Enough To Do It With.'"⁸

Indeed, directly after the launching of the Sputnik, a poll in Detroit revealed that, next to Russia, Automation is what the workers feared most. This is not due to the fact that they are not as "educated" as the educated and do not know the "promise" Automation holds, but because they are confronted with realities of Automation under capitalism.

They see it creates a permanent unemployed army which the intellectual bureaucrats, along with the managers of production, call "pockets of unemployment" that dot "prosperity."

They see it as a "man-killer" not only because it has, in actual fact, raised the death-rate in industrial accidents, but because, even where it is safe, it has made the worker "jumpy" and degraded him. He never seems to be on top of the situation any longer: the machine is complete master of him. These machines are "man-killers" that are constantly breaking down, and breaking down the nervous system of the men themselves. It is they therefore who have raised the decisive philosophic question: *Why* is the division between mental and manual labour so great that machine masters man, not man machine? *How* can one unify thinking and doing "in the worker himself?"

But no one, least of all the modern intellectual who is busy indicting bureaucracy "in general," listens to these impulses from the ordinary men at the point of production. Indeed the bureaucratic-mark of our age is that everyone is ready to lead; no one to listen.

ROAD AGAINST BUREAUCRACY

We have reached a stage of capitalistic development where the law described by Marx as the law of motion by which the technologically advanced country shows the technologically backward country the course of its own future *is true in reverse.*

The bureaucratization that is the concomitant of total planning, reaching into the daily life of every single life with its terror, forced labour camps, political tyranny, had taken the shape of Mussolini, Stalin, Hitler, not because these characters were Italian, Russian, German, but because such was the nature of total bureaucratic state-capitalistic planning.

Short of breaking with the mainspring of capitalistic development—which pays the worker the minimum it takes to feed, clothe and reproduce the next generation of labourers and extract from him the maximum unpaid labour that it takes to constantly expand production to keep ahead in the lawless laws of world market competition that has reached the form of nuclear destruction—there is no way out.

(continued on page 11)

6. Arendt, Hannah: *The Human Condition*, 1958.

7. Quoted in my *Marxism and Freedom*, p. 268.

8. Terrano, Angela in *News and Letters*, Detroit January 6, 1956. See also the chapter on "Automation and the New Humanism" in my *Marxism and Freedom*.

Editorial

British tax revolt exposes illusions of "free market"

Just when the media pundits convinced themselves that "free market capitalism" is the "wave of the future" and even the "ultimate form of human freedom," the British masses have revealed its utter bankruptcy in two protests that erupted on March 31—first, the demonstration in London of 100,000 against Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's poll tax, and then the revolt of over 1,000 prisoners at Strangeways in Manchester.

Though Thatcher's government portrayed the violence that broke out at the March 31 London demonstration as the work of a "fringe group of revolutionists," it was in fact an out-and-out police riot against a demonstration that brought to a culmination months of nationwide protests. These protests included hundreds forcing their way into local council meetings in Bristol, Birmingham, Bradford and Plymouth in March demanding repeal of the hated poll tax; they included a nationwide campaign to get people to refuse to pay the tax, which 15% of the population says they will boycott; they included strikes of workers at several industries, such as Shardlow, the largest engineering factory in Sheffield, where workers demanded that management promise not to deduct the poll tax from their paychecks if workers refuse to pay it. Demonstrations against the tax have taken place throughout Britain, especially in Scotland. On March 31, 40,000 marchers in Glasgow gathered in the largest demonstration there in 20 years.

What has so angered the British public about the poll tax is that it replaces local property taxes, which fund social services, with a flat tax that everyone between the ages of 18 and 65 must pay, regardless of income. It means a multi-millionaire ends up paying the same rate as an unemployed worker. Thus, while the tax rates for the rich will fall, those for working class families will increase 35%. As of April 1, everyone was required to shell out 10 (\$16.00) to 20 pounds (\$32.00) a week to local councils for the tax. All the workers get in return are cutbacks in social services, as the local councils will face political pressure to hold down spending.

That is precisely Thatcher's reason for implementing the tax in the first place. The whole idea is to cut social spending even closer to the bone, all as part of accumulating ever-more capital at one pole—while creating ever-more immiseration and pauperization at the other.

THATCHER'S TWO-TIER SOCIETY

The revolt at Strangeways prison, which broke out shortly after prisoners heard news of the police attack on the poll tax protest in London, is no less significant a measure of the two-tier society that Thatcherism has wrought. The revolt, which lasted three weeks, was the most massive prison revolt in post-war British history. It was sparked by the horrible "living" conditions endured by the prisoners in a country that has the largest number of prisoners per capita of any nation in the European Community. Strangeways was built in 1878 to house 976 prisoners, but 1,660 were crowded into it at the time of the revolt—most often with three prisoners to each cell, with only a bucket to defecate in and one hour a day for exercise outside the cell.

Both the prison revolt and the anti-tax protests have brought to the fore what 11 years of economic "restructuring" has done to Britain. In this period the percentage of national income spent on the public sector has fallen from 43% to only 38%. That translates into cutbacks in education so severe, that 60% of all youth are no longer in school by age 16. It has meant massive cutbacks in the health care system, to the point where one million are now on waiting lists to get needed medical attention. It has meant so many cutbacks in housing construction that one million people are homeless in Britain, with 50,000 living on the streets of London alone; nationwide, over 150,000 youth under 25 are homeless.

GLOBAL CAPITALISM'S RESTRUCTURING

Though Thatcher's poll tax is particular to Britain, it is very much part of global capitalism's ongoing effort to "restructure" itself by extracting from the workers the maximum while paying them the minimum. Just as Reagan saddled the U.S. with massive budget deficits in

order to make it impossible to reverse his cuts in social spending after he left office, so Thatcher imposed the poll tax as part of her effort to institutionalize cuts in Britain's social services. This is how Thatcher "prepares" Britain for its future, specifically, its full integration into a "free market" European Community by 1993.

As for our media pundits who are now taken with the "free market" as what represents the "future" of human development, Marx had their number long ago. As he wrote in the *Grundrisse*, "The assertion that free competition equals the ultimate form of the development of the forces of production and hence of human freedom means nothing other than that middle class rule is the culmination of world history—certainly an agreeable thought for the parvenus of the day before yesterday."

The days are long gone when everything can be reduced to a question of "free market" vs. "state plan." Just as the East European masses showed that state-capitalism that called itself Communism is a class-ridden, exploitative, inhuman system, so the inhumanity of "free market" capitalism is no secret to masses of people in the "West." As against the kind of future the rulers are trying to foist on us, can we work out a vision and path to a very different kind of future that recreates for our day Marx's vision, which brooked no accommodation with either "private" capitalism or what he called "vulgar communism"? Working that out is an inseparable part of deepening the protests against Reaganism/Thatcherism.



In the wake of German re-unification

West European capital eyes East Europe

Milan, Italy—When the Wall of Berlin began to be torn down by the German people and the struggles for freedom continued to expand throughout Eastern Europe, there was a sense of euphoria here in Italy and in the rest of Europe: this meant the end of the cold war, that Europe could unite and create its own destiny. These euphoric spirits were quickly dampened, first, by the Malta conference and, then, by the U.S. invasion of Panama. That invasion made it clear that the U.S. had no intention of giving up its cold war, brink of war, politics. Not even the most ardent apologists of the U.S. have had the courage to support the U.S. in its renewed aggression in Latin America.

In the meantime, the leaders of the EEC (European Economic Community) began meeting in continuous sessions to form its policy of aid to Eastern Europe. The first problem they had to face was the absurdity that the wealthiest country of Europe, Germany, is an occupied, enemy nation. It was decided to speed up the program for economic unity to make sure of the support of German financial capital within a united Europe. The risk was, and in part still is, that a united Germany would decide on a go-it-alone policy.

ing off what they consider to be the "burden" of the French and Russian Revolutions. Instead of revolution, they offer "pluralism" and "democracy" as guiding ideas.

Indeed, the word "democracy" seemed more popular than ever, but still poorly defined, at this "democratic socialist"-organized Conference. Not only social democrats, but also speakers from the reform wing of Chinese Communism referred to themselves as "democratic socialist" (as does the re-named East German Communist Party). Not a few speakers and participants viewed the latest uprisings against Communist totalitarianism as simply the fulfillment of 19th-century bourgeois democratic ideals.

Others see the new revolts as occasion to reconsider what Marxism is all about. Twenty-five individuals participated in a panel and lively discussion that took up "Dimensions of Raya Dunayevskaya's Marxist-Humanism." Among them were veteran leftists now re-examining their long-held views, such as one man who criticized himself and others for having ignored the counter-revolutionary Islamic fundamentalism within the 1979 Iranian revolution.

—A. Anielewicz

Nicaragua in transition

Managua, Nicaragua—As a result of the change of government here, in the University there will be a big change in the program in Marxist philosophy. The professors of those courses are now preparing to change themselves into professors of the history of Nicaragua and to give a philosophical interpretation of the events our country has lived through.

We are living through some tense moments regarding wage demands, for two reasons: first, the *cordoba* was devalued, and as a result the state gave us salary increases. But the raise given the teachers didn't meet our needs. So we have been having work stoppages of two or three hours a day. Today they give us a response, and if it's not in our favor we're going to have a protest march. This should not be interpreted as our being against the current [Sandinista] government; rather we are demonstrating what we have to do to get an acceptable salary before the UNO government comes in.

Other industries are also having strikes, principally to obtain wage increases. Right now two big companies are on strike. One is Corona, which is owned by a member of Violeta Barrios' family, and the other is also privately owned.

Our entire outlook is to hang on before the new government's actions. They want to privatize public property, which the workers oppose. There will be a very hard fight.

—Nicaraguan revolutionary
April 4, 1990

Socialist scholars debate Marxism, democracy

New York, N.Y.—Roughly 1,000 academics and activists gathered in Manhattan for the eighth annual "Socialist Scholars Conference," held April 6-8. Registration fees ranging from \$12.50 to \$30 may have been partly responsible for the near-absence of youth, as well as Blacks and Latinos. Panels and plenary sessions, 150 in all, focused on a wide variety of current affairs, theoretical issues, and cultural concerns.

At least one woman attendee, however, remarked that feminist concerns were marginalized at the conference, and few panels discussed women's issues. Another, herself a Chinese oppositionist activist in exile, criticized the lack of scholarly contributions presented as against the political and popular talks that predominated.

A large minority of talks discussed recent turmoil in Eastern Europe. These drew sizable audiences and seemed to engender much discussion. At least one veteran participant at these conferences, however, called the focus on Eastern Europe "this year's fad," one that will soon be replaced by some other fashionable topic.

Several panels, drawing audiences of up to 300 each, dealt with aspects of "postmodernist" theory. Those favoring such views congratulated themselves for having finally gotten "disentangled" from Marx and for throw-

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FIGHTING CAPITALISM'S 'WEREWOLF HUNGER'

B. Ann Lastelle's column last issue, "Work in the U.S.: injury and pain," was right on the mark in her experience of the working conditions in the U.S. and indeed the whole world. Workers must bend over backwards, sometimes literally, to endure the miserable routine of today's workplace. Her excerpts from Marx's *Capital* on the system under capitalism and its degrading working conditions for living human beings is also on the mark. And Marx wrote *Capital* in the 1860s—over a hundred years ago! Those that say today that Marxism is dead don't know anything about labor and know even less about Karl Marx!

Martin Almora
Milwaukee

Horror and anger swells up inside me when I read about the 13-year-old boy whose leg was ripped off by a machine at his job and the supposed protector of our health and safety, OSHA, fines the company a whole \$400! This is obscenity! A political/economic/social system which creates such horrors has no right to exist.

I went to work when I was 14 to help my family survive—it was hard and dangerous. The media, trying to justify a sub-minimum wage, describes teenage workers as having lower productivity and easier jobs. The reality is if you don't produce as much as an adult you're fired. They steal our youth and paint rosy TV pictures of kids whose big problem is a date for the prom.

Today I have a 21-month-old son and I worry about what he'll face in 11 or 12 years. We must begin to think out how we can have control over our own life and labor.

27-year-old worker
Los Angeles

Your editorial "Epidemic of child labor" (April, 1990 N&L) is a timely and important contribution, especially because of the quote from Marx. "Time for intellectual development, for the freer play of his [her] bodily and mental activity...for growth..." shows that the damage of "capitalism's werewolf hunger for surplus-labor" is done to young people who do not have to work just for food and shelter, but who think they have freely chosen to work. Media pressure on teens today to become consumers, to keep up with fashions of all types is terrific. Children working to satisfy these needs, too, become too drained to concentrate on schoolwork or long-term goals, let alone experience any full and free development to become the kind of human beings Marx envisioned.

Working teen's mom
Detroit

A THANK YOU AND A REMINDER: WE NEED YOUR HELP!

As the Gambia Anti-Apartheid Movement is trying to bring awareness into the Gambian society which has been highly polluted by capitalism, feudalism and imperialism, we have been helped greatly by *News & Letters*. Being a young organization, we have found the thought of Raya Dunayevskaya a true guide in our struggle against oppression and exploitation and we rely on N&L for important international news from other parts of the world, which we share with others here, making it available on our own magazine shelf and at our libraries. Should N&L not be able to continue it would have a serious effect on our movement.

GAAM
The Gambia

Editor's note: Many organizations and libraries who could not otherwise receive N&L receive donor subscriptions through our special International Subscription Fund. Can you help by contributing subscriptions for these readers?

Recently you printed a letter from someone complaining N&L never prints anything positive about Gorbachev. In my opinion, N&L's analysis has been accurate as demonstrated by the oppressive actions taken by the Soviet state-capitalist regime in Lithuania. Keep up the good work! Here's my check for your Appeal.

Reader
Kansas

Certainly Marxist-Humanism is at a very critical and pivotal moment in its

The Greyhound strike is a real class war. You never hear about the bus drivers run over by scabs, nor about the work conditions. The media only tells you about their wages, or about "violence" inflicted against the scabs. I was able to ride to Lansing on a non-scab bus, but to return I had to take a train to Battle Creek and then to Detroit at twice the cost. At least during the last strike, there was another bus company you could take—now they have it all sewed up as a monopoly.

Greyhound strike supporter
Detroit

To me the Chinese movement—though it was put down in blood a year ago—stood for freedom of thought, having your own mind. I reread Raya Dunayevskaya's interview in *Philosophy and Revolution* with a Chinese refugee, Jade, in the 1960s, where Jade talks about feeling like nothing more than an ant when she was building a dam during China's "Great Leap Forward." That's what every worker feels every day on the job.

It's an indictment against every class society. But the rulers can't give us our minds back. That is what we have to do, break these chains on our minds. Breaking down that division between mental and manual labor: that is when we will become whole.

Black worker
Los Angeles



WOMEN'S
LIBERATION —
TOWARD A NEW
BEGINNING?

In her essay "Women's Liberation and the Search for New Beginnings" (April N&L), Olga Domanski contrasts Sheila Rowbotham's "adding" Marxism to feminism to the need for Women's Liberation (WL) to go deeper on the question of WL's relation to Marxism as a philosophy of human liberation. Next, Domanski asks, "Is there more to it than that?" The need is to re-create Marxism anew for each age. The urgency of this challenge becomes clearer each day as WL faces attacks from outside and its own crisis within.

Ginny Adams
Los Angeles

Catherine MacKinnon's idea of "consciousness raising" as something opposed to the dialectic, which Domanski critiques in her essay, takes the individ-

inseparable historic/philosophic development as we confront the end of state-capitalism as it was in Eastern Europe. You are among the few publications in the world that raises the banner of Marxism in any form. How you respond in this moment is very important to your readers. Here is my response.

Feminist
Staten Island, NY

I feel myself obliged to keep up my contact with *News and Letters* Committees as often as I can because I want to know much more about the American Marxist school of Philosophy.

Reader
Zambia

I am constantly told by my family that I should stop trying to change the world, because one person won't make a difference. They say that as long as there are different kinds of people there will always be many different kinds of problems, especially amongst the colors, and there will always be minimum wage and sweatshops and the threat of war, and the masses will cause total confusion amongst themselves.

Since I have met Marxist-Humanism I say No, because in *News and Letters* Committees at the age of 23 I have found a place where I see myself as an individual and, at the same time, working to make the world better. I feel a need for a change in myself and this twisted society.

G.R.
Los Angeles

Readers' Views

ual out of the mass movement. The highpoint of the essay is the part on Adrienne Rich, who caught something in Dunayevskaya as a critique of tendencies of feminism, especially those that withdraw into an "inner world." But the designation of this epoch as a movement from practice that is itself a form of theory should have been only the take-off point in the essay.

Ron Brokmeyer
Oakland, Cal.

Congratulations on a fine piece on the Women's Liberation Movement theorists in the last issue. It made an essential distinction between the stances of Catherine MacKinnon and Sheila Rowbotham, but left not a shred of doubt as to what is the truly encompassing approach.

Writer
New York

I was glad your last issue took up a critique of the newest books by Women's Liberation theorists, because they are being read in all of the Women's Studies courses I encounter. A lot of people think the horizons of feminist theory are defined by a MacKinnon on one side, or a Rowbotham on the other. It's about time that Dunayevskaya got her due.

Feminist activist
Chicago

MacKinnon's hostility to Marx, and her elevation of the individual over society, reminded me of an attitude Dunayevskaya often warned against—passing off one's individual consciousness as mass consciousness. It's something she developed quite often in critiquing Mao.

Asian worker
California

ECONOMIC
CRISIS—
FROM
THATCHER
TO BUSH

One of the government's aims in imposing the poll tax was to curb the activities of local government. In the early 1980s, a youngish generation of Labor left-wingers (often 1968 vintage radicals) got themselves elected as councillors and promoted causes like equal opportunity employment, anti-racist education, and subsidized public transport, while making such gestures as flying CND, ANC or Palestinian flags over town halls. This was a thorn in the side of the Thatcher government, which goaded them to abolish the Metropolitan councils. The poll tax was meant to place Labor-run local authorities in a dilemma—cut back on services or set a high rate for the poll tax. Either was expected to lose them support. So far, the scheme has backfired in Thatcher's face.

Richard Bunting
Oxford, England

Some people are taking the "good soldier Sveyk" approach to the poll tax, obeying the law to the letter in such a way as to cause maximum confusion. One teacher in London offered to pay installments by the minute, offered two pence to cover the first payment, demanded the correct penny-and-a-fraction as change, and made a formal complaint to the police when this was refused.

Observer
England

Part of Bush's "I will never raise taxes" is to find ways of doing it without people knowing it. Using the excuse that only high-paying executives are sent to graduate school by their companies, a law was recently passed taxing anyone who gets free tuition as a benefit. It affects far more people like me who have been putting up with low-paying jobs for the free tuition. The result was an enormous cut in my paycheck.

Graduate student
New York

THE EAST EUROPEAN REVOLTS

Left Alternative calls itself "a movement for a self-ruled and democratic socialism." It includes both Marxists and non-Marxists—young anarchists who are members as individuals since they refuse any kind of organization, members of independent ecological groups, members of the Independent Peace Association. The Communist Party (CP) is strictly excluded as it is, in our opinion, a rightist party. We may find some allies in the movement that calls itself Obroda (Revival) that includes Communists who left the CP after the 1968 invasion and do not intend to return, although officially invited to do so. We also look for connections with small groups defending workers' councils in the factories. You should know that the new laws the "government of national consensus" will put to vote in the Federal Assembly will severely limit the power of the workers' councils where they now exist and would not even allow for them in "public utilities" enterprises at all.

Correspondent
Czechoslovakia

Is Russia really a superpower? It hardly has power in its own country, much less in the rest of the world. I know you are attacking Gorbachev's thought which is attracting many intellectuals. However, it should be pointed out that Russia is being held up as a superpower by the U.S. because this is the only way the U.S. can justify its aggressive policy, not only in Europe but also in the Third World.

The U.S. is not as strong as it once was. It could not keep up its military spending if Japan and Germany did not buy treasury bonds to help pay the national debt, and that is just one example. How long will Japan and Germany be willing to maintain their secondary role? The Far East has shown enormous economic development in recent years. Now there is the question of what will happen with Germany.

Correspondent
Italy

The Christian Democratic Union (CDU) which won the East German elections, ran under the slogan "give new ideas no chance." The fact that the CDU was allied with the Communists for the last 40 years seemed not to matter. We see many old faces with new roles; the secret police finds work with the West. This was no revolution—the old exploiters remain with smiles and their hated symbols. The "capitalist" regime finds no problem in taking over the East's instruments of state power. To them, only the "economy" needs "reforming"—so they can bring in a more "efficient" mode of labor.

Subscriber
Heidleberg, West Germany

WHITHER NICARAGUA?

Everyone is saying that the Sandinistas lost the election because of economic reasons. I disagree with this view. If people only thought about the economic situation, the people of Guatemala, El Salvador and the Philippines would have given up long ago. The Sandinistas have to take this loss seriously, and take a close look at themselves. I think they lost touch with the people.

Salvadoran exile
Washington, D.C.

ON ANTI MILITARISM

I wish to say something about the article on ROTC in the April issue. I am not opposed to those who have been protesting against ROTC because of its homophobia. But to fight on this level, is to leave it on the level of civil society. Fighting against ROTC solely on the basis of it discriminating against gays leaves the door open for you to get trapped into militarism if the bourgeoisie suddenly decide to no longer keep gays out of ROTC. We can't limit the fight to an equal right to be killed.

Worker
Chicago

LENIN AND TODAY'S PHILOSOPHIC GAP

The important excerpt from Raya's writings printed in the April issue, the document you called "The Significance of Lenin's Philosophic Ambivalence," brought to my mind the title she had given her chapter in *Philosophy and Revolution*: "The Shock of Recognition and the Philosophic Ambivalence of Lenin." Melville's phrase was surely aptly employed there: "For genius, all over the world, stands hand in hand, and one shock of recognition runs the whole circle round."

Editor
New York

Raya Dunayevskaya is the first Marxist I have read who has both a great appreciation of Lenin and a profound critique of him. In *Philosophy and Revolution* she shows he was the first post-Marx Marxist that felt the need to return to Marx's philosophical roots in Hegel to understand the problematic of his age. But he never published his *Philosophic Notebooks* and instead allowed *What is to be Done?* on the vanguard party to be republished and used for the education of the whole Third International.

What Dunayevskaya was writing in 1986-87 was an even deeper philosophic critique of Lenin, for giving most importance to Nature which he called Practice. Did Lenin thereby leave a philosophical gap that left the door open for the counter-revolution led by Stalin?

Dominican-American revolutionary
California

Dunayevskaya's point that Lenin failed to fully prepare us for Stalinism hits home when you look at East Europe today. It is apparently hard for those who have suffered under the Stalinist regimes to see any of the many positive features Lenin did have. What it tells me is that even if you are as great a revolutionary as Lenin, if you don't raise and work out the question "what happens after the revolution," your legacy will get buried.

Student of Marxism
Chicago

Isn't it an irony that Lenin fought so hard for national self-determination,

and yet now they tear down his statue in the name of it? Yes, you have to critique Lenin, but you also can't skip over the importance of his contribution.

Librarian
Michigan

Lenin would have been the first one to smash to bits any statue that was built to him!

Revolutionary
Philadelphia

Dunayevskaya's column in the April issue raised a lot of questions for me. Does it mean a philosophy has to reach organizational ramifications for a true "philosophic moment" to be achieved? It seems to me she was saying that Lenin didn't fully follow the dialectic into an indivisible relation between theory and practice.

Susan Van Gelder
Detroit

The column by Dunayevskaya in the April issue was very appropriate in showing how revolution and reality merge. One thing that struck me was Dunayevskaya's discussion of how following the death of Stalin, there was a lot of excitement about philosophy from the workers she was talking to. It helped show Dunayevskaya that the Idea of Freedom shows itself to "leaders" one way, to the "rank and file" in another way, but it's still the same Idea that predominates. The question of what is your attitude to objectivity is as important now, as it was then.

Revolutionist
Oakland, Cal.

THE BLACK DIMENSION

The recent announcement that Oakland Mayor Lionel Wilson was forced to rescind the deal to bring the Los Angeles Raiders back to Oakland confirmed the excellent column John Alan wrote in the April issue of *News & Letters*. The grass-roots movement of Black residents outraged by the multi-million dollar contract offered to the Raiders by the Oakland City Council succeeded in getting a referendum on the deal put on the November ballot. Clearly the Raiders controversy was not a "sports issue," as Alan's analysis showed. The

question now is whether Wilson and the City Council will as aggressively pursue funding for education, housing and health care for poor Oakland residents as they did in putting together the deal for the Raiders.

Lou Turner
Chicago

It is easy to hide behind the platitudes printed in the media about fighting drugs to clean up the Black communities and make them better places for people, or about promoting democracy in Nicaragua and making that a better place for its people, etc. I once actually believed those statements. My next line of thinking was naive, "Why don't they use that \$80 million (for prisons) to make the society less alienating and thus get at the root of the drug problem?" My frightening conclusion now is that that is not an objective of this government.

Not so naive any more
California

Learning about the medical and health situation in the U.S. makes it clear that the poor in your country do not have much opportunity to benefit from the human rights the U.S. is supposed to support, which the rest of the world keeps hearing about. We share your anxiety over a system that offers greater opportunity only to a privileged class of people.

African revolutionary
West Africa



POLLUTING
OUR
MINDS

Your March lead, "Poisoning the environment has become the way of life and labor," was right on target in making the point that pollution in whatever form—oil spills, chemical plants in the Third World, or whatever—are the norm, not the exception.

Environment activist
Detroit

All political struggle in this area can be summed up in one word: water. Every serious political person should

read *Cadillac Desert*, a history of water politics west of the 100th meridian. It's especially necessary for non-Westerners who have very little understanding of the West and Southwest. Could someone from Chicago, or Detroit, or New York who has never been West write, so it could be passed along to me to tell me what they would like to know?

New subscriber
New Mexico

Earth Day used to be a dim memory among a small handful of greying ex-hippies. Now it is celebrated around the world. Wonderful! Who could oppose saving the planet? Yet locally we were not permitted to co-sponsor some Evergreen Alliance activities because they don't consider us "environmentalists"! Articles on injuries and work conditions workers themselves have brought up, including farmworkers, evidently "don't count." And issues like fighting lead poisoning and neighborhood clean-up are called "social justice," not "environmental issues."

N&L Committee Member
Detroit

More than 300,000 farm workers are made ill every year through pesticide exposure. For our future and theirs, please ask your readers to boycott grapes—and to send a donation if they can afford it, to:

United Farm Workers
P.O. Box 62, La Paz
Keene, CA. 93531

FROM MERIDEL LE SUEUR

The brochure that describes Raya Dunayevskaya's archives at Wayne State University is a reminder of how well she prepared us for the continuation of Marxist-Humanism. It is important that her books are being reprinted because they prove the importance of theory coming from below, from the struggles of the working people. Luxemburg's comments to Lenin are illuminating and I am glad Raya's book on Luxemburg will be republished soon. The organization of socialism must be from the organization of proletariat, from the actions of the workers themselves.

Meridel Le Sueur
Minnesota

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS FROM NEWS & LETTERS

—BOOKS—

- Marxism and Freedom ...from 1776 until today**
1989 Columbia University Press edition. New 1980s introduction by author 381 pp.
by Raya Dunayevskaya \$17.50 per copy
- Philosophy and Revolution from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao**
1989 edition. New introduction by author 372 pp.
by Raya Dunayevskaya \$14.95 per copy
- Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution** 234 pp.
by Raya Dunayevskaya \$10.95 per copy
- Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future** 294 pp.
by Raya Dunayevskaya \$15.95
- The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism: Two Historic-Philosophic Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya.** Contains "Presentation on Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy of June 1, 1987," and 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes." 52 pp.
\$3.00 paperback, \$10.00 hardcover
- Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal**
1989 Wayne State University Press edition includes Afterword by Raya Dunayevskaya, "Charles Denby 1907-83" 303 pp.
by Charles Denby \$14.95

—PAMPHLETS—

- Constitution of News & Letters Committees** 25¢ postage
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Black/Red View

by John Alan

President Bush announced that he plans to veto the 1990 Civil Rights Act now being prepared in the Senate. The new Act is primarily an attempt, on the part of liberals in the Senate, to strengthen the legality and the enforcement power of affirmative action programs, seriously challenged, and in many cases invalidated, by the Reagan majority on the U.S. Supreme Court.

If Bush vetoes this Act (there is now no reason for him to back off), he will have the ideological support of a growing vocal element within the Black middle class, who regard civil rights issues, including affirmative action programs, as past history! This element is contending that the ground for future Black "progress" is in the field of "economics," i.e. in the market place of competition, and it is incumbent upon the Black community to make internal the economic and social changes to meet this new challenge.

WILSON AND SOWELL

The only thing that is remarkable about this "new" ideology, this new Black agenda, is that it was worked out theoretically a decade ago both by the "liberal" Black sociologist, William Julius Wilson, at the University of Chicago, and Thomas Sowell, the neo-conservative Black intellectual at the Hoover Institute.

What essentially joins Wilson and Sowell is their attempt to explain the existence of two Black Americas, one middle class and affluent and the other desperately poor, uneducated and without the possibility of escaping from a life of poverty. Both men focus upon the "economy" as the determinant for the existence of poverty and class distinctions within a society. In their concept it's the "economy" or "the market reality" sitting alone upon a cathedral which determines whether "a given group's skills are valuable benefits to a larger society."

Wilson made a fetish out of high technology and corporate management; in his opinion the two together became the veritable pathway to "the declining significance of race" in employment. Wilson's thesis is that the "vigorous recruitment of the best Black talent by the corporations" was the origin of the present Black middle class. We find in Wilson's thesis the history of the "labor market's" changing attitude toward race, not the passionate struggles of Black masses for freedom.

Sowell not only makes the "market reality" the determinant force in society, he dehumanizes the human being altogether by inventing a category of innate "human capital." According to Sowell some people have "human capital" and others don't. He defines "human capital" in many ways, but the whole concept boils down to the 19th century story of success through moral values of frugality, discipline and productivity. The crucial question, for Sowell, is whether society can afford to provide the means for those who lack "human capital" to have children.

Both Wilson and Sowell worked out their peculiar vision of how the "market place" "selects" those for affluence and those for poverty, thus creating a sharp divide in the Black American world. But neither Wilson nor Sowell venture behind the phenomenon of their market places to show that this "selection" exists in the very nature of the process of capitalist production wherein poverty is the necessity for the existence of wealth. Of course, they are not concerned with the fact that the divide in the world is directly related to the unfinished Black revolution.

DIVERGENT CLASS ATTITUDES

It is precisely because there is a profound schism in Black America that poignant questions have been raised by some as to whether a real Black community exists. It has also raised the question as to whether any of the existing organizations actually represent the real concerns of a Black world when there are sharply different attitudes toward the realities of American racism.

In the Black middle class world of the educated, the professionally trained people, primarily employed in the

Contradiction of two Black Americas

government bureaucracy, politics and to a lesser extent in corporations and hi-tech industries, there is an attitude toward reality that is markedly different from the other world of poorly paid and permanently unemployed Black workers. These worlds no longer live next door to each other nor do they speak to each other about the issues of racism.

There is now a tendency for middle class Blacks to minimize the issue of racism, unless it impinges directly upon his or her upward mobility. In many cases urban Black politicians and state politicians, once they reach the top corridors of power, will submerge the historical persistence of racism into a false universal of the common good of the community. Indeed, their hunger for power caused many of them to see issues of racism as an impediment to their road to power.

Eyewitness report of massacre at Sebokeng

Johannesburg, South Africa—Many things have taken place in the last two months: the situation in Natal, we've had things happening in the Vaal where people were shot in Sebokeng. I was present there and had to escape just before the shooting began. I and three other comrades had to leave there just as the police began shooting the tear gas. Just after we left they started shooting at the people. They shot about 20 people to death, injuring 264.

On March 26, we organized a march through the



town of Sebokeng. The authorities didn't allow us to have the march through the town, so every township organized its own march. Sharpeville organized one which had about 55,000 people; Sebokeng, where I was, had more than 50,000 people.

We marched toward Vereeniging and the police stopped us. We tried to talk with them, but when we marched a little further the police put up roadblocks. When we stopped there we tried to hand over our memorandum to the police. It was very peaceful, there were no problems. People were just singing, there was no attempt to attack the police.

And then the police, many of whom had been standing on top of their vehicles, went into their vehicles and suddenly one guy started shooting at the people. The people had just been sitting down on the ground, and now they got up and started to run. Then all the other police started shooting at the people as they ran away. That is how they killed nine people right there. It was similar to what happened in Sharpeville in 1960.

The purpose of the march in Sebokeng was to deliver all the grievances of the people there to the National Party offices in Vereeniging. For instance, we have the rent boycott and we wanted to deliver a memorandum telling why. But they didn't allow us to go into town. Then the UDF (United Democratic Front) decided to hand over the memorandum to the police station in the area. We asked them to hand it over to the National Party office.

Just after we handed it over to the police, they started shooting. Now, the police are saying that the people were throwing stones. But it didn't happen before the police started shooting. The government has said that it is going to investigate the whole situation at Sebokeng. People are still recovering from the massacre at Sebokeng, but soon they will start organizing for May Day.

Black World

(continued from page 1)

the areas which have been devastated have all been UDF areas; and that most of the dead have come from UDF areas."

Not surprisingly, Inkatha leaders brought to trial for their role in the terror have been acquitted by the apartheid courts. The police in the area have acted more as a screen for Inkatha violence than as a restraint. While that explains why the residents have demanded the disbanding of the police force, it does not explain why Mandela gave his tacit support to President de Klerk's dispatching troops to Natal, troops which are now under the direction of the very same police administration that the people want disbanded.

Meanwhile, armed camps have formed in the hills around Pietermaritzburg made up of the young "comrades" sympathetic to UDF and the ANC, and the fol-

lowers of Inkatha. This war zone is split into two opposing regions separated by a lush green valley that the residents have come to call "the valley of death."

Meanwhile in the rest of South Africa, detentions have soared in the wake of a new security crackdown in the months following Mandela's release. At the same time, some of the largest mass rallies in South African history have been held, such as the half million people who rallied at Motherwell, outside Port Elizabeth, to hear Mandela in early April.

POLITICAL SHIFT IN 'HOMELANDS'

A mass rally of 100,000 to hear Mandela in the nominally independent "homeland" of the Ciskei was perhaps more significant. For it is in South Africa's "homelands"—which are part and parcel of the rural political situation that has engulfed Natal—that apartheid's bridge over troubled waters is collapsing. The ten bantustan areas are undergoing the profoundest political change in their history, precisely at the moment when de Klerk hoped that these puppet governments would serve as a moderating buffer at the negotiating table.

In a period of ten days in March three "homelands" experienced an abrupt political shift brought on by popular mass upsurges. The people danced in the streets when the despotic Lennox Sebe was overthrown on March 4 in a military coup. On March 7, 100,000 people marching in Bophuthatswana to demand the resignation of President Lucas Mangope and reincorporation into a unitary South Africa, were fired upon by the military. Seven people were killed and scores wounded. As in Ciskei, this led to mass revolt against government installations. In Venda, on March 13, the government was forced to call for a referendum on reincorporation following weeks of mass demonstrations, backed by a civil service strike.

The despotic social relations created by white colonial domination and the traditional ethnic hierarchy (induna) have been radically shaken. Indeed, the liberation movement has come face to face with the bulwark of South African reaction. The violence in Natal, as well as the mass upsurges in the "homelands" for reincorporation are repercussions of these entrenched contradictions coming to a head.

The political shift in Natal has not only challenged the whole structure of Buthezi's power, but the very cornerstone of apartheid ideology and administration which operates through it. Thus, to dismiss the interne-cine struggle in Natal with the Western media reductionism of "black-on-black violence" is to ignore the actual dialectic of social forces coming into collision, and which nevertheless cannot be comprehended outside of the dialectics of liberation.

Letter from a South African revolutionary

I am still shocked by the events in South Africa and how the white press is dragooning our people into something the Liberals know will not take the people anywhere. Does this mean I am not excited by the release of Mandela and other political prisoners? Of course, I am. What I am not excited about is what the Liberals are doing with him in their press and some of the things he has said so far showing that in some areas he is far behind the thinking of the people of South Africa, especially, the youth. This was to be expected. After all, 27 years in prison is a long time, even though one was reading papers and meeting people.

His coming out has been made a media event and unfortunately, he seems to like it. At this rate, I do not think he has even had time to sit and take in the situation and realize that in South Africa no single organization, let alone one man, can bring down the apartheid garrison. It will need a concentrated effort of an umbrella organization, clear in its objectives, with leaders committed to the liberation of the oppressed people of South Africa and not the white Liberals and those whose interests they are guarding.

In the month he has been out, he has not sat down to think out those issues and problems. Now that he has been to Zambia to meet the leaders of the ANC (African National Congress) in exile, they are not only going back to South Africa to have talks on talks with the government, there is even talk of the Mkhondo cadres joining the South African Defense Forces. How ri-

diculous: a people's army thinking of being part of the army of the oppressor! If any of them ever read Vo Nguyen Giap, they have forgotten what is in that book and had better go back and read it.

The whole press at home and abroad whipped up this euphoria, making our people think that Mandela was the Messiah who would save us all. But, the people are not fools. Now that they have seen and heard him, they know he is a man like any other. The people in the present mood, their hopes and expectations dashed to the ground, will soon realize what is happening, will soon know that in that negotiated settlement only a few of our people will be admitted to the Promised Land; the majority will be left behind still sweeping streets.

The youth will be the first to see that they have been led up the garden path, while a few "leaders" and their hangers-on were allowed in. The people are no fools. The Mandelas should know that. The Liberals know it. But they don't care when Blacks kill other Blacks. Why should they care? All the better for them. That way the "menacing hordes" are being reduced.

Pessimistic? I am afraid I am. I see the biggest sell-out of the century and a long bitter struggle for our people. It is going to be a situation worse than Afghanistan. Our people killing each other to save the assets of American, English, French, German conglomerates. How tragic!!

—Phyllis Ntantala

Essay Article

by Kevin A. Barry

We live in an age of retrogression in thought. From French philosophers to American professors of political theory, from East European Stalinists changing their colors in the wake of mass upheavals against their totalitarian rule to the conservative politicians and journalists who monopolize the U.S. media—from all of these sources—we hear day after day, unanimously, monotonously, that "Marxism is dead." We hear that the true course of the world is toward Reaganomics in which the capitalist market represents genuine "freedom," and that nuclearly armed bourgeois democracy is the last hope of humanity, its final achievement. In short, that history has "ended."

Are we really living then in the twilight of Marxism, of revolution, of the possibility of totally new human relations? Raya Dunayevskaya published a fitting answer to such notions in her very last article on Hegel: "It never fails that, at momentous world historic turning points, it is very difficult to tell the difference between two types of twilight—whether one is first plunging into utter darkness or whether one has reached the end of a long night and is just at the moment before the dawn of a new day."¹

A key notion here is that regardless of which type of twilight we face—whether that of the long night of continuing retrogression or the dawn of a new day—the revolutionary thinker in either case is compelled, Dunayevskaya writes, "to dig for new beginnings, for a philosophy to answer the question 'Where to Begin?'" Dunayevskaya holds that even "the great French Revolution did not produce totally new beginnings in philosophy," but that those philosophic new beginnings were first sketched out by Hegel's *Phenomenology*, in 1807.

In a similar sense, Dunayevskaya's book *Philosophy and Revolution: From Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao*, which spelled out comprehensively for the first time the dialectic for our age—Hegel's absolute negativity as new beginning—was first published not in 1968, but in 1973, in the period after the great movements of the 1960s had failed to create either a new society or a totally new philosophy of revolution. Her last writings of 1986-87 on revolutionary dialectics, some of which are included in the 1989 Columbia University Press edition of *Philosophy and Revolution*,² point to still newer aspects of the dialectic, at the same time as they reach back toward her original 1953 writings on Hegel's Absolutes.³

In his 1989 Preface, philosopher Louis Dupré has written that in *Philosophy and Revolution* "Raya Dunayevskaya has restored the unsettled, restless, intrinsically dialectical quality of Marx's thought from the deadening systematization of official Marxism as well as from the 'abolition' of philosophy perpetrated by her own mentors, Lenin and Trotsky." (p. xx) Let us examine some of these issues, which point to the creativity of Dunayevskaya's thought, and which give the lie to any notion of the "death of Marxism."

I. WHY HEGEL? WHY NOW?

At one level the title "Philosophy and Revolution" expresses a move from philosophy to revolution, as can be seen in the progression from the first chapter on Hegel to those at the end on today's crisis-ridden world: that of the African Revolutions, of the East European revolts, and of the Black, women's and youth movements. But the title also expresses the need for a Marxist-Humanist philosophy within those freedom movements, so that, as the book concludes: "[W]hen we work out so new a relationship of theory to practice...Philosophy and revolution will first then liberate the innate talents of men and women who will then become whole." (p. 292)

Recall that even so great a Hegelian Marxist thinker as Herbert Marcuse seemed to move us in a different direction when he wrote of the transition from Hegel to Marx as one "from philosophy to social theory" and thus "an advance beyond philosophy itself."⁴

It is exactly this type of attitude, found even in Marcuse, which *Philosophy and Revolution* seeks to overcome. It does so not by a move from Hegel to Marx alone, but also by a move from today back to Hegel, back to a confrontation with Hegel's Absolutes, not only as the origin of Marxism, but also as the immediate and pressing task of Marxist-Humanist thought today.

This is seen in the structure of the book itself, where the entire first section—with chapters on Hegel, Marx and Lenin—is entitled "Why Hegel? Why Now?" It is also seen in the author's most original interpretation of Hegel's Absolutes, especially of the way in which, at the end of the *Encyclopedia*, Hegel

Philosophy and Revolution and the life of the dialectic today

suddenly transforms his concept of Absolute Mind into the "self-thinking idea." Dunayevskaya writes: "No matter what Hegel's own intentions...how could he have stopped the ceaseless motion of the dialectic just because his pen reached the end of his *Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences*?" (p. 6) Such a view is totally opposed to any notion of the end of history or of the end of philosophy.

So startling and new was this concept of Hegel's absolute negativity as new beginning as elaborated in *Philosophy and Revolution* for the first time, that it prompted the non-Marxist Hegel scholar George Armstrong Kelly to write an appreciative critique. Quoting the above passage, Kelly held, however, that Dunayevskaya "proposes to substitute an unchained dialectic" for that of Hegel, and that, therefore, her interpretation is "alien to Hegel's intent."⁵ Dunayevskaya's detailed rejoinder is included in her Introduction to the 1982 edition of *Philosophy and Revolution*, an Introduction reprinted in the current edition. She answers Kelly directly on the Hegelian text at issue, but then concludes: "What we are really disagreeing on is today, and our attitude to philosophy and revolution, when in the contemporary world it becomes philosophy of revolution." (p. xxxii)

II. LENIN AND HEGEL

The question of a philosophy of revolution was also what Lenin was grappling with when during World War I he wrote his Notebooks on Hegel's *Science of Logic*, and when he moved from there to a new concept of the dialectics of revolution itself. Lenin was the first of the post-Marx Marxists to return to Hegel, but Dunayevskaya writes that these studies also led him to gain "from Hegel a totally new understanding of the unity of idealism and materialism. It was this new understanding that subsequently permeated Lenin's post-1915 writings..." (p. 103) The reference is to Lenin's famous works *Imperialism and State and Revolution*, and also to his theoretical writings on national liberation.

Dunayevskaya writes, for example, that after 1917 "Bukharin contended that it was no longer possible to admit the right of self-determination since Russia was now a workers' state." (p. 111) She also cites Lenin's sharp reply: "We cannot deny it [self-determination] to a single one of the peoples living within the boundaries of the former Russian Empire. (p. 111) To Lenin, the national liberation movements were nothing less than a creative new subject of revolution, one which arose alongside the proletariat in the era of imperialism. If monopoly and imperialism had "negated" competitive capitalism, then the national liberation movements were, in Hegelian terms, the "negation of the negation."

5. George Armstrong Kelly, *Hegel's Retreat from Eleusis*, Princeton University Press, (1978) pp. 239-40. See also the review of *Philosophy and Revolution* by Joseph Wachtler in *Hegel-Studien* (West Germany), Band 11, 1976, which makes a somewhat similar critique of Dunayevskaya's statement that "Hegel comes to life, over and over again, in all periods of crisis and transition" (P&R, p. xxiii).

Chapter Three discusses not only Lenin's achievement, but also his ambivalence: "Lenin had not prepared his *Philosophic Notebooks* for publication, and in this resided his ambivalence." (p. 106) He left a "totally contradictory double vision" (p. 107) on the dialectic as his legacy, since he allowed his earlier mechanistic book, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, to be republished, while keeping the *Philosophic Notebooks* private.

That is where Dunayevskaya leaves the issue in the 1973 text of *Philosophy and Revolution*. But in the new 1989 Introduction, drawn from material for her uncompleted book "Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy," she begins with the striking statement, "I am now changing my attitude to Lenin." (p. xxxvi, emphasis added)

Here Dunayevskaya concludes that as Lenin worked his way to the threshold of the Absolute Idea, the last chapter in the *Science of Logic*, he got stuck at that point on Hegel's assertion there that the "Practical Idea" was higher than the "Theoretical Idea." In the 1989 Introduction Dunayevskaya holds that Lenin here gets pulled back into a one-sided concept of practice when he ignores Hegel's accompanying statement to the effect that "the Practical Idea still lacks the moment of the Theoretical Idea." (p. xxxix) In this sense, Lenin misses the fullness of Marx's concept of praxis, of the unity of thinking and doing.

Lenin thus remains at the threshold of the Absolute Idea, and of absolute negativity. As against Lenin's self-limiting reading of Hegel, Dunayevskaya notes in the 1989 Introduction that her own reading went all the way through the final chapter of the *Logic* on the Absolute Idea. Why is this important today? As early as 1953, Dunayevskaya notes that Hegel's Absolute Idea contains a concept he terms "absolute liberation" where "there is no transition in this freedom," while in Lenin's day, she holds, "transitions, revolutions, seemed sufficient to bring about the new society."⁶ Our age demands total liberation, without the single-party state as a "transition."

III. VIEWING THE HEGEL CHAPTER AS A DIALOGUE ON THE DIALECTIC

Turning to Chapter One on Hegel, we can observe many instances there of a dialogue with various philosophers—from Marx and Lenin to Merleau-Ponty, Lukacs and Sartre—as Dunayevskaya carves out her own view of Hegel's absolute negativity as a new beginning for today. Take just a single page, 37. There, she traces some of the critique by post-Hegelian philosophers of Hegel's move from the *Logic* to the *Philosophy of Nature* in his *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*. These critiques, each of them with a different vantage point, are by Marx, Lenin and Sartre.

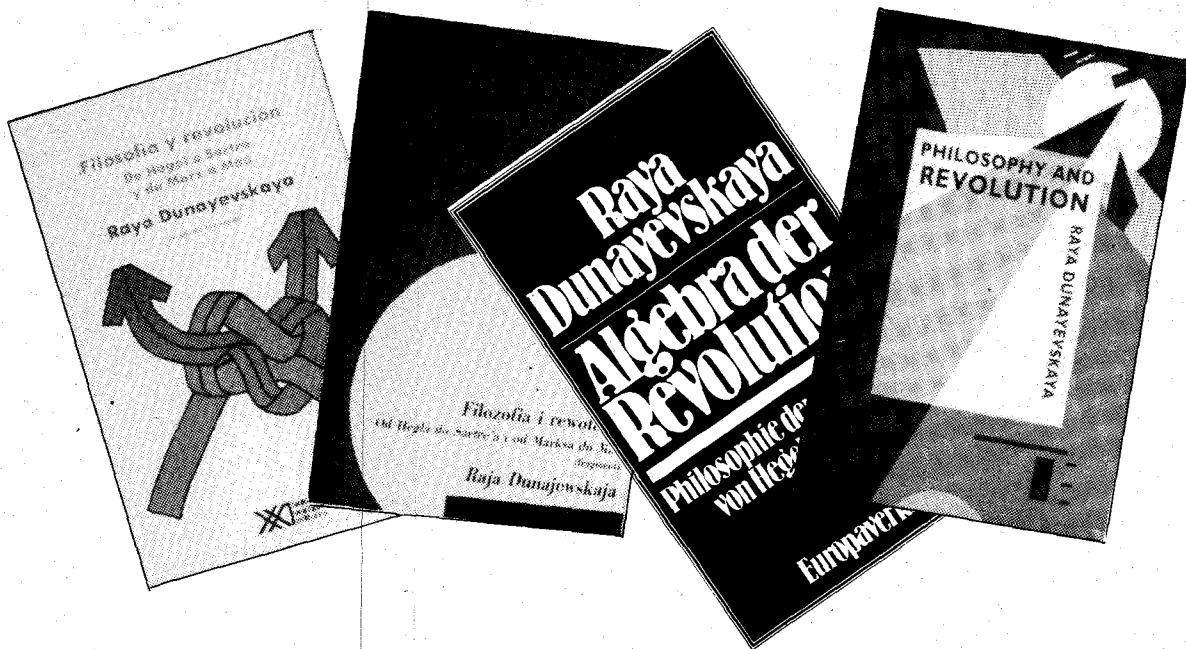
Yet, after tracing each of them, Dunayevskaya concludes that for today we need to move away from these critiques to a still newer vantage point, that of (continued on page 11)

6. TPMMH, p. 37.

Note: Earlier versions of this essay were presented at meetings celebrating the new Columbia University Press edition of *Philosophy and Revolution* in Berkeley, DeKalb, Chicago and New York.

1. Raya Dunayevskaya, "Why Hegel's Phenomenology? Why Now?", *News & Letters*, May 8, 1987.
2. All subsequent references to *Philosophy and Revolution* (P&R) will be to this edition.
3. Raya Dunayevskaya, "The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism" (Chicago: News & Letters, 1989) includes both these 1953 writings and her "Presentation on Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy of June 1, 1987." Hereafter TPMMH.
4. Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960), pp. 251, 257.

The global dimension of Philosophy and Revolution



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Democratic Workers' Movement emerges in Russia

Editors's note: The document excerpted below is from a resolution passed by the Democratic Workers Movement which met in Leningrad in December, 1989. This consultative workers' meeting took place under the theme, "The Possibility of Unifying Workers on an Independent Basis." Among those taking part were striking miners of Vorkuta and the Vorgashorsk mine, representatives of the Free Trade Union from Donetsk and Moscow, the Union of Workers of Latvia, the workers' trade union "Independence," the trade union "Justice," the "Workers Initiatives," workers of the Democratic Union, People's Front and the Organization of Anarchist-Communists.

At the meeting it was noted that the striking miners demonstrated the strength and solidarity of the working class. The miners proved that the workers have their own professional class interests. The strikers opposed the ruling class of socialists with their organization and acted not only for their own economic demands, but for the demands of other sectors of the population.

The longest and most organized of the strikes were in the Vorgashorsk pit. The Vorgashorsk men pushed for political demands along with their economic ones. If the strikers in the Kuzbass and Donbass arose spontaneously, but in an organized way, the Vorkutinsk strikers were distinguished for their creativity and planning.

AS A RESULT OF the strike battle the miners attained several improvements in their economic situation. The most important success consisted of the fact that the workers again felt themselves masters of the situation, and this served as an infectious example to other workers. In the Spring-Summer period it is anticipated that new entries into the workers struggle will occur from different cities of the country.

The ruling class of socialists with the help of their legal party and the government trade unions, made an attempt to split the strikers' movement. Deceitful propaganda flew at the strikers, accusing them of pursuing their own economic aims at the expense of other social groups.

The office/maintenance workers did not take part in the strike. During a second strike in Vorgashorsk the striking miners went without pay. In this the class differences between the miners and other workers were evident. The Vorkutinsk miners were refused some economic demands. This was because these demands were not supported by all the workers of the north whose interests were defended by the miners.

The meeting showed that the strike of the miners exposed a divisiveness and lack of solidarity from other workers. This made more necessary a unification of workers on an independent basis.

All participants of the meeting expressed unanimity with regard to the importance of the creation of an independent non-party trade union, free to carry on the

collective struggle for professional-class laws and for workers' freedoms. Nevertheless there arose three fundamental points of view: 1) a call for the creation of a single class trade union divided into workers and professionals; 2) a demand to blend trade unions of workers and professionals; 3) a view which reflected the desire to create a new workers' party. If the first two views find support, then the third will not be reached. The



Striking Russian miners in Siberia in 1989 rallied under a banner that read "Power to the People's Soviets."

workers who gathered at the meeting considered that the creation of a workers' party would lead to the dictatorship in the name of the working class by the hands of the working class, against the working class. The experience of our country attests to this.

THE CONSULTATIVE MEETING of workers noted that the current conditions give three directions to the workers movement: The command-dictatorship direction headed by the unification of the workers' front; the reform direction led by the Peoples Front; and the democratic, that is independence. The final goal of the Democratic Workers Movement is the workers' governing production themselves and controlling power at every level. This latest workers' move is apparent in the local strikes and in the work of various types of worker initiatives.

Despite the different points of view, the people gathered at the consultative meeting in Leningrad considered the possibility of unifying on the basis of a Democratic Workers Movement, of supporting contacts with each other, and of bringing about local action through joint negotiations.

We, the workers, consider that the territorial-national and economic conditions of different regions bring their own special features to the workers movement. Therefore we assert that a single group, that is a central ad-

ministration, is bad for the development of the strikers' and workers' movement. We recognize a multi-sided form and method in our peaceful struggle, and consider that the workers themselves should choose the independent trade union which best suits them.

The conference expressed support for the working class of the colonial republics in the struggle for national independence against the Kremlin metropole.

The consultative meeting of workers believes that the independent trade union movement must not close its eyes to any formal, half-formed or informal organization. Therefore we should not exclude them from collaboration if they are not opposed to the professional-class interests of the workers. We, the workers, note the acute necessity to include the Democratic Workers Movement of our country in the world workers' movement.

United we are strong! For Independence—Steps to Freedom!

New York club fire

New York, N.Y.—The evening of March 24, 1990, turned into tragedy in the Bronx and laid bare 87 people killed by a fire that swept through the Happy Land Social Club, where mostly Honduran immigrants and their families met to socialize with friends and neighbors, and a system that cares little for the people that live within its borders.

Fire, Police, and Building Departments knew of the unsafe conditions in the club. No fire alarms! No sprinkler system! Only one exit! The landlord knew. The City knew. A "Preemptory Vacate" order had been issued Nov. 20, 1988. On Nov. 30, 1988 the building's owner was issued a summons for building code violations.

The Fire Department tried five times to inspect the premises but they always found the club closed. The club was open Thursday, Friday and Saturdays. When did the Fire Department go, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday? The Police Department Public Morals Division arrested the manager of the club on two occasions for illegal sale of liquor. Obviously taxes and liquor licenses are most important to the city.

Mayor Dinkins' response to immediately close all such clubs throughout the city solves nothing. And the increased inspection of such places will continue only until another story grabs the headlines. Greedy New York City landlords will continue to reap in rents from their violation-ridden unsafe buildings.

The families of those killed in the Happy Land Social Club fire, a fire waiting to happen, have had their lives tragically changed. How will they return to a "normal life?" Indeed, what has a normal life been for these immigrants? The Statue of Liberty may be a beacon, with its give me your poor, your weak, your downtrodden, but these shores have never been generous, nor kind to immigrants. Not when it needed immigrant labor for its farms and factories in the past and not today.

The families of those who frequented the Happy Land Social Club, seeking some solace there, and the community itself are in a state of shock and grief that has been wrought not by one crazed man but a system that cares more for rent and profit than for human beings living within its capitalist cities.

—Angela Terrano

H.S. students boycott

DeKalb, Ill.—On Tuesday, April 17, students at DeKalb High School protested the oppressive conditions we face at school. Our main concern is the firing of a gym teacher, Amy Silverman, who was told she was not being rehired for the following year. Other demands include: the removal of styrofoam from the campus, opening the campus for lunch, getting cleaner bathrooms, and a smoking lounge.

Before school, a few of us held signs, passed out flyers and asked other students not to enter the building. No one seemed to want to protest with us and basically all used the same excuse, "I would, but it is too cold." About ten minutes before school started the press came and students came out to see why the press was there. Five minutes later the assistant principal, Ken Kennedy, came out with the Dean of Students, Mrs. Barris, and a couple of other administrators and told us if we didn't go back into the school immediately that we would all be punished for insubordination.

He said those who needed to talk to him about this could come up to his office. When I got there, about 20 people were already there. We talked for a while, then discovered that we weren't getting anywhere. One student walked out of the office and the rest followed, until we ended up in the front office caught in a shouting match with Kennedy in front of the press.

When first hour was over, Kennedy told us to go back to class and no one would be punished. We were definitely not satisfied, so we whispered to the press to meet us across the street in a half hour. Then we all marched across the street and up and down the sidewalks chanting. This went on throughout the day, with some students coming and going and some sticking it out the whole day.

We have been heard now but not much has been done in response to our demands, except the administration has now put doors on a couple of the stalls in each of the men's bathrooms. But we plan to go to the school board meeting and hopefully outnumber them.

We are not finished fighting yet!

—DeKalb High School student

Today's Russian youth movement

by Stu Quinn

While much has been written in the Western press praising Mikhail Gorbachev for his "new ideas," the little attention focused on Russian youth has painted them as either infatuated with Western capitalism and consumer goods or as a pretty nihilistic lot (much as these same journals and newspapers paint U.S. youth). This is far from the truth. For the past decade, as intellectuals in the East and West have proclaimed that "Marxism is dead! Western capitalism has won!" sections of the Russian youth have been thinking and acting quite differently.

In the late 1970s, under the impact of the deepening crises of Brezhnev's state-capitalist rule and the imperialist invasion of Afghanistan, young people organized underground clubs for activities and discussions of everything from radical film-making to rock music, from ecology to anarchism. Some of the clubs focused on an attempt to work out what Marxism is today and what young socialists in a supposedly "socialist" country should do. They began to publish samizdat (underground) journals such as *Alternatives*, *Searches* and *Left Turn*. While centered in Moscow and Leningrad, these publications were in demand across Russia.

These clubs continued through the '80s, their members enduring imprisonment and official harassment, uniting into the Federation of Socialist Clubs and in 1988 organizing the Popular Front (PF). During 1988-89 they founded the Russian Socialist Party (RSP).

Boris Kagarlitsky, now 32 years old and active for more than ten years, is a leader of the RSP, co-ordinator of the Moscow PF, and their best known representative. He is the author of two books available in English — *The Thinking Reed* and *The Dialectic of Change*, both published by Verso Press — which show both the seriousness and resolve of the young socialists and exhibit some of their present limitations.

The Thinking Reed unearths the history of Left opposition to the Russian ruling class among youth and sections of the intelligentsia. One example is the revolutionary student movement of 1956-61.

This movement of "rebellious youth" began in the aftermath of Khrushchev's expose' of the "excesses" of Stalin. "In 1956 an oppositionist student movement began to take shape which could no longer express itself within the bounds of 'permitted criticism'.... Whereas for the intelligentsia the 'secret report' signified hope for change...the students set about forming oppositionist organizations with a revolutionary tendency."

The best features of Kagarlitsky's books are their unearthing of this history of revolt and his conviction that it is important to rediscover what Marxism is, especially in Russia where the state and society are presented and accepted by much of the world as socialist. These features continue in his second book, *The Dialectic of Change*, as he analyzes mass movements and the ruler's "reforms" in Russia and Poland. He delivers a brilliant and blistering critique of technocracy, technocrats and the "managerial revolution" — a critique obviously aimed at the ruling class of his own country. Yet we see him standing on much the same ground as the Gorbachevites as he supports Jacek Kuron's thesis of a "self-limiting revolution" within his elaboration of a theory of reformist revolution from below.

In the chapter devoted to the Polish revolt of 1980-81 entitled "Poland: Reformist Revolutions," we find Kagarlitsky's justification for viewing "self-limiting revolution" as appropriate for Poland 1980-81 and (by extension) Russia today: "In other circumstances such words would be evidence of hopeless opportunism, but in this situation they simply expressed a high degree of revolutionary responsibility.... Behind them lies not time-serving and a striving for 'social peace,' but a sober grasp of the tragic lessons of the class struggle. East European revolutionary movements have perished one after another by going too far. Democratic socialism in Poland is impossible while the global historical process does not create the appropriate conditions (in this sense the limitations encountered by the revolutions in both Poland and Nicaragua are, in their own way, alike despite the radical differences between them)."

The comparison of Poland and Nicaragua is pertinent and telling, yet what gets lost in this thesis is a working out of, precisely, "the dialectic of change," the relationship between the freedom struggle in a small country and the restless masses within the superpower, the perspective of how to develop rather than truncate the Idea of Freedom so that it can begin again on higher ground at the next "stage" of upsurge. Wouldn't this be more expressive of "revolutionary responsibility" than assuming that we must lower our sights from full liberation?

It would be incorrect to characterize Kagarlitsky's works as "Left Gorbachevism," yet he does not develop an absolute opposite to Gorbachevism. However, throughout his books he does call for working out what Marxism is today, the relationship between theory and practice and the relationship of spontaneity and organization. If we are to create a new world, these are questions which need to be worked out.

Youth face crisis in school, on the job, in the streets

(continued from page 1)

an end to the closed campus which prevents students from leaving school during their lunch breaks.

In the Los Angeles area, there have been walkouts at eight high schools, ranging from a simultaneous walkout of 2,000 Black and Latino students at Leuzinger and Hawthorne High Schools to walkouts of students at University and Lancaster High Schools. They have been demanding the reinstatement of Black and Latino principals and teachers; protesting discrimination against Black and Latino students, and demanding the repeal of dress codes. The Los Angeles Student coalition has also held marches demanding "No racism from South Africa to Los Angeles."

The colleges and universities have also been the site of many protests taking place over the past few months. A survey of 300,000 college students in their first year shows that four out of ten had participated in protests last year. These protests included the March for Women's Lives, the march for the homeless, rallies against racism and in solidarity with the Black struggle in South Africa, and protests against environmental pollution.

At the University of California at Berkeley, a group of Black, Latino, Asian, Native American, gay and lesbian students called for a two-day strike to demand the admission of more students and teachers of various races and ethnicities; more courses on races, ethnicities and women; the creation of a bi-sexual, gay and lesbian studies department and formation of multi-racial centers on campus.

Students at other campuses have held marches, rallies and boycotted classes to protest tuition hikes and cuts in financial aid. At Rutgers University, students were joined by university workers who were being forced to work without a contract. And, on April 10, students at 50 colleges across the country held rallies in support of a woman's right to control her own body on the National Day of Campus Pro-Choice Actions.

ALIENATING JOBS

Just as the many protests on college and high school campuses are challenging the racism, sexism and class divisions of this system of education, many young workers are also questioning and resisting their conditions of life and labor. One young worker from DeKalb, Illinois told me:

"I got my first job when I was 14. I've learned a lot more outside of school than inside it. When you're out of school you realize there is so much you cannot do in this society. I just quit a job at a grocery store because I resisted the speed up and was considered a trouble-

maker. Now I work in a factory where we make parts for race cars. I do spray painting in a place where ventilation is terrible. All this environmental pollution unnerves me. If I had my choice of what to do, I'd like to be a photographer and a bicycle mechanic and an environmentalist to make sure that we don't work with hazardous substances. But in this society bosses only care about making money and climbing the corporate ladder."

What this young worker said about the kind of work he was doing and the kind of work he wished to do reminded me of what Karl Marx had written about labor in a class society vs. labor in a classless society:

"...as soon as the division of labour comes into being, each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape. He is a hunter, a fisherman, a shepherd, or a critical critic, and must remain so if he does not want to lose his means of livelihood; whereas in communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow."

Protest racism at Loyola U.



On April 11, 200 students at Loyola University, Chicago, held a rally to protest the racist remarks of a professor, Al Gini, directed toward a Black student. They demanded his resignation, as well as a multi-racial and multi-ethnic system of education and divestment of university funds from South Africa.

Essay Article

(continued from page 9)

Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*, the concluding book of the *Encyclopaedia*, which directly follows the *Philosophy of Nature*.

As early as 1953, Dunayevskaya's letters on Hegel's Absolutes move from the *Phenomenology* to the *Logic* and to the *Philosophy of Mind*. In one of her last writings, that of June 1, 1987, she cautions against the view that for Hegel "Absolute Mind was no more than what Absolute Idea was in the 'Logic,'" tying this problem in turn to a second error: thinking that in "separating, indeed breaking, with the elitist party, that it is sufficient to do so politically without doing so philosophically."

How can a move from the Absolute Idea in the *Logic* to the Absolute Mind in the *Philosophy of Mind* help us make this break so that we can reach for the fullness of what Dunayevskaya has termed the "Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy," the projected title of her unfinished book?

Chapter One of *Philosophy and Revolution* does not offer a direct answer, but we can observe there something which may help us. Early in this chapter, Dunayevskaya quotes the magnificent statement from the *Phenomenology*: "...everything depends on grasping and expressing the ultimate truth not as Substance but as Subject as well." (p. 18) It is fairly easy to link this statement to all of the creative new revolutionary subjects.

But a bit further on in the Hegel chapter, we can see how in her view Hegel has transformed this concept by the time he reaches the *Philosophy of Mind*. Here Dunayevskaya quotes Hegel a bit differently, on the need for "defining substance as subject and as mind." (p. 35, emphasis added) It would thus appear that without Mind, i.e., philosophy, even the most creative grasp of the new subjects will not carry us through to total liberation of society and of the human person.

This problematic is what draws us toward the highest development of the dialectic, Hegel's Absolutes. But to get there, we must also confront some of the misreadings of Hegel's Absolutes.

In Dunayevskaya's 1989 Introduction, she follows Hegel in critiquing the intuitionist philosophers such as Jacobi who, she writes, equate "mind to consciousness." As Hegel writes, for the intuitionist, "what I discover in my consciousness is thus exaggerated into a fact of consciousness of all, and even passed off for the very

row, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic.

This vision is precisely what today's state-capitalist rulers oppose, whether they call themselves "Communists" or "free-market" capitalists.

IN THE STREETS

The alienation that youth feel in this class society when on the job or in school is something they confront when they are just hanging out "on the street." It is here where the realities of drugs, racism and even violent death—the number one killer of young Black men—confront youth daily.

"I threw rocks at your window but you fired bullets at my friend." These are the words of a Black youth who participated in a violent demonstration outside the Teaneck, N.J. police station on April 13, three days after the murder of Phillip Pannell, a 16-year-old Black youth who was shot by a policeman.

Pannell was one of the youth who was targeted by the police, just for being on the street. The policeman who murdered him was not even suspended until after a vigil by Black youth turned violent.

On Jan. 31, a 14-year-old Latino, Jose Louis Lebron, was shot dead in the back of the head by a police officer as he was running, after having stolen a \$10 bill from a man in Bushwick, Brooklyn. After Jose Lebron's murder, hundreds of Bushwick residents surged into the streets, blocking the ambulance that had come to remove his body.

May marks the tenth month since the death of Yusef Hawkins, a 16-year-old Black man who was murdered by a gang of white youth in Brooklyn. The opening arguments in the trial of two white youth who killed Hawkins have just begun.

Whether it is among high school students or college students, unemployed Black youth or young workers, there is an undercurrent of revolt against the alienation and retrogression all youth are facing.

Over the past few months protests by youth have been taking place in city after city across the U.S. Most of these are ignored by the media, or reported in isolated short articles. On March 24, some 15,000 people, many of whom were youth, braved a heavy snow storm in Washington, D.C. to march against U.S. intervention in Central America. Simultaneous marches took place in San Francisco with 10,000; in Los Angeles and Seattle 5,000 marched; 1,000 in Austin and hundreds participating in Denver and Cleveland. But the media suppressed coverage of these events.

Such attempts to make youth "non-people" cannot possibly succeed. As we begin the 1990s this new generation of youth are searching for pathways out of today's stifling reality.

nature of mind." (p. xliii) In the 1973 text of *Philosophy and Revolution*, Dunayevskaya warns us of two possible misreadings of the Absolutes.

The first misreading is to view Hegel's Absolutes as "the empty absolute of pure or intellectual intuition of the subjective idealists from Fichte through Jacobi and Schelling" with their "bare unity of subject and object." (p. 44)⁸ The second misreading is to see Hegel's Absolutes as a "mere reflection of the separation between the philosopher and the world of material production." (p. 44)

Even though no footnote is given here, a study of Dunayevskaya's correspondence with Marcuse has convinced me that this second misreading probably refers to Marcuse's view of Hegel's Absolutes as a product of pre-technological thought and thus not relevant to the dialectics of liberation for today.⁹ Thus, for Dunayevskaya, the twin dangers are to read Hegel's Absolutes as (1) an intuitionist rejection of dialectical Reason, of Mind, or (2) as "classical" concepts with no contemporary relevance.

As against the rejection of Hegel's Absolutes not only by Marcuse, but also by other Marxist philosophers such as Lukacs, Dunayevskaya cites Sartre's view that the experience of Nazism "made us rediscover the Absolute at the heart of relativity itself." (p. 22) However, Sartre did not move from there to a grappling with Hegel's Absolutes. That was Dunayevskaya's contribution alone.

Her confrontation with Hegel's Absolutes concerns especially the final paragraphs of the *Philosophy of Mind*, added just before his death, in 1830. These end not with an ordinary Hegelian syllogism, but with the concept of "self-knowing Reason," as Dunayevskaya is one of the few to underline. (p. 41) Dunayevskaya writes that here in Hegel's final writings "Logic is altogether replaced by the self-thinking Idea" and that this "is the greatest manifestation that the self-movement is ceaseless" in Hegel's philosophy. (p. 42)

Thus, as against any notion of the end of history, or of the end of philosophy at the conclusion of Hegel's system, we get instead ceaseless self-movement. This underlies the concept which forms the underpinning of the whole dialectical structure of *Philosophy and Revolution*: Absolute Negativity as New Beginning.

8. See for example Lucio Colletti's essay "Hegel and Jacobi" in his *Marxism and Hegel* (London: NLB, 1973), pp. 139-146, an attempt by a post-Marx Marxist to attack Hegel by erroneously linking him to Jacobi's intuitionism.

9. See the letter of Marcuse to Dunayevskaya of Dec. 22, 1960, in the *Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, microfilm #9944. See also my essay "Dunayevskaya-Marcuse Dialogue on the Dialectic," *News & Letters*, April 1988.

9. Philip, Andre: "France's New Elite" in *The New Leader*, June 22, 1959.

10. See footnote 8.

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Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

In April, Gorbachev continued to tighten the screws on the tiny republic of Lithuania (population four million) after it refused to rescind its declaration of independence of March 11. He cut off oil and gas supplies, sent in troops to occupy key installations in the capital, Vilnius, and sent soldiers on midnight raids to arrest "deserters"—i.e., youths who refused to serve any longer in the Russian army, where Lithuanians suffer from brutal treatment.

Despite some occasional verbal support from the West, Lithuania is being left to bleed alone. In fact, it was during the height of the crisis over Lithuania that President Bush met with Russian Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, to set a Bush-Gorbachev summit for May 30.

Now that Gorbachev is willing to let go of East Germany, Lithuania counts for little, as the West German paper *Stuttgarter Zeitung* noted on April 7: "It was certainly no accident that precisely when the situation in Lithuania is tense, the date for the second Bush-Gorbachev summit was announced. Rather, it was a political signal. The quarrel over Lithuanian independence shall not interfere with normal business, because there is much more at stake than the right of Baltic self-determination."

Such cynicism was matched by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, April 18, when his ostensible call for Gorbachev to avoid "violence" in Lithuania was ac-

Lithuania: Gorbachev tightens the screws

tually a carte blanche to strangle self-determination movements there, just as Reagan-Bush had done in what they always called the U.S.'s "backyard," Nicaragua. Baker advised Gorbachev: "It is in our (sic) interest to settle regional conflicts in a way that fosters peace, freedom and democracy, as we did in Central America."

The complicated road toward independence for Lithuania is also strewn with inter-ethnic conflict and distortions of history, which threaten to undermine the movement from the inside. For example, the territory now called Lithuania includes a population of about 10% Poles and 10% Russians. Before the Holocaust, Vilnius was a major center of Polish and Jewish culture and was a center of Marxism.

Lithuania's brief period of independence, 1920-40, was not a gift from the capitalist West, but rather a concrete result of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 which toppled the Russian Empire which had ruled over Lithuania. Lenin's position was clear enough in those years: "Any Russian socialist who does not recognize Finland's and Ukraine's right to freedom will degenerate into a chauvinist. And no sophisms or references to his 'method' will ever help him to justify himself."

Lithuania's bourgeois republic of 1920 was overthrown in a military coup in 1926 by the right wing anti-Semitic nationalist Antanas Smetona, who expelled all liberals and leftists from the parliament, eventually setting up a single party state with a feudal knight-and-horse

coat of arms. That coat of arms has been dusted off today by the modern Sajudis nationalist movement holding power in Lithuania.

By 1939, the Hitler-Stalin Pact paved the way for the seizure of Lithuania by Stalin in 1940, who had also annexed Latvia, Estonia, and part of Poland, and attempted to conquer Finland.

In 1941 Hitler invaded Russia and took over Lithuania. He recruited a native Lithuanian SS which enthusiastically participated in the Holocaust. Other Lithuanians fought against Hitler in a large partisan movement, but it did not cooperate with the Jewish resistance. Hitler killed hundreds of thousands of Jewish and non-Jewish Lithuanian citizens, and after 1944 when Stalin retook Lithuania, he did the same, deporting hundreds of thousands to Siberia.

Today, Gorbachev is making appeals increasingly to Great Russian chauvinism to hold his tottering empire together. He has put an anti-Semitic Russian nationalist writer into the government, while to this day nearly 100% of the high office holders at the national level are Great Russian males like himself.

As the nationalism of a dominant nation, Russian nationalism is the most reactionary, but there are also grave dangers to the freedom movement appearing from narrow nationalism among the oppressed nationalities, as well: not only in Lithuania, but also in Azerbaijan, in Armenia and in many other lands where totalitarian state-capitalism has been undermined in 1989-90.

Peru's election

Peruvian voters raised Alberto Fujimori from obscurity into the post-election lead against former front-runner Mario Vargas Llosa, forcing a presidential runoff to be held by June.

Fujimori's recently-constructed independent, politically "centrist" and bland campaign proved more palatable than "el shock" projected by Vargas Llosa, who vowed he would wield Thatcherism across the Peruvian economy: privatization of over 200 enterprises, massive government layoffs, reduction in government services and programs (such as food subsidies) for starters. Together Vargas Llosa and Fujimori got 60% of the vote, showing a shift to the right in Peru.

Workers have gone out on a nearly constant wave of strikes as their real wages have fallen by 50% in the last two years. The foreign debt payments withheld by Alan Garcia did nothing to fundamentally aid the economy outside of buying a small boom four years ago, which has been wiped out since.

Meanwhile in the Upper Huallaga Valley two days after the election, U.S. officials announced the first major combat between pilots of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency and Shining Path guerrillas aiding cocoa growers. The use of U.S. so-called "civilian" personnel in direct military engagements in Peru, Bolivia and Colombia is growing in ominous frequency.

Zimbabwe: Mugabe's win

The national elections in Zimbabwe last month delivered a clear victory to President Robert Mugabe's ruling Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), yet only 54% of the electorate participated, compared to 95% in the 1980 and 1985 elections. Mugabe won nearly 80% of the presidential vote.

One of the first measures Mugabe vowed to change with his victory was to amend the constitution (set up by the British ten years ago when Zimbabwe won independence) so that the government will have power to

acquire land from white farmers for redistribution.

The major focus, however, has been on Mugabe's long-term goal of one-party rule. After the elections Mugabe said, "we can take it as a mandate...and establish a one-party state. It is up to our party's Central Committee to decide."

Mugabe-ZANU has held one-party rule as a goal formally since 1984, when it decided that it would take place "in the fullness of time and in accordance with the law and the Constitution." However, recent critics have included students at Zimbabwe University who have criticized the government for corruption. They along with trade union supporters have been met with suppression by the government.

Hungary moves to right

The April elections in Hungary, echoing the retrogression in East Germany, have brought the right-wing Democratic Forum to power in coalition with two other ultra-conservative parties: the Smallholders and the Christian Democratic Peoples' Party. The Forum's leader, Jozsef Antall, will become the next Prime Minister.

The Forum ran against the Alliance of Free Democrats. In a loose coalition, both groups earlier had opposed Communist Party rule. The Forum appealed to narrow nationalist tendencies by promoting a return to "Hungarian" and "Christian" traditions.

Antall praised the 1945 elections in Hungary (the last before the Communist Party took power), not the 1956 revolution, as the post-war high point. In that hardly-democratic election, the Smallholders Party won. Antall sought to attack his left opponents in the Alliance of Free Democrats by linking their activities, especially in the 1956 revolution, to Marxism: "We are the two poles of Hungarian political life."

This line reached a peak towards the end of the campaign when the Forum began denouncing leaders of the Free Democrats for their "Bolshevik mentality." Not surprising for a campaign based on "Christian values," incidents of anti-Semitism against the Free Democrats were also reported. But the defeated party has nonetheless said it will be "part of a responsible opposition."

Protests in Nepal



After at least two months of sustained opposition, the Nepalese people have begun to loosen the absolute grip on power exercised by King Birenda. Tens of thousands of protesters have held rallies and mass marches and the country has been shut down by several general strikes since February.

The protests have continued despite the high death toll of the demonstrators. The mass demonstrations have lent support to two political groups, the Nepalese Congress Party and the United Left Front. On April 15, demonstrators expressed dissatisfaction with the slow pace of change as thousands surrounded the location where the government was beginning talks with the opposition political alliance. They chanted "Lawmakers are thieves, leave the country!"

The king was forced to lift a 30-year ban on political parties, reduce his power, dismiss his Prime Ministers and dissolve Parliament. A new oppositionist Prime Minister, Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, and his coalition cabinet were sworn in April 19.

The mass movement has forced other concessions as well. These include releasing all political prisoners; compensating families of those killed in protests; removing anti-democratic clauses in the existing constitution, and nationalizing all council property.

Crackdown in China

As the first anniversary of the start of the massive freedom movement in China approached, the government clamped an even heavier lid on public dissent. Students said agents infiltrated campuses. Since late March, a number of students and teachers from at least six universities have been arrested.

The government issued a decree forbidding any open observances of Qingming, the traditional day for honoring the dead. Police and soldiers closed Tiananmen Square several times. At one point a man was arrested as he tried to lay flowers in the square. Students reported that they held their own observances in secret.

One voice the Chinese rulers could not silence was that of Chai Ling, a student leader who became "commander of the headquarters to defend Tiananmen Square" before the June 4 massacre. Along with her husband Feng Congde, also on the government's most-wanted list, Chai spent ten months hiding in the "underground" until they could get out.

Chai said she heard about developments in East Europe while still in hiding: "The colossal changes in Eastern Europe surprised and encouraged us...we had made the first step, and it was a correct step."

In a later interview Chai said: "Today my feeling is that I am not 100% satisfied with what we did...We did not go far enough, take our actions far enough...we were not in contact with people abroad and had little understanding of the impact we had. But I think that, after 40 years of repression, this was the most pacific and reasonable revolt imaginable."

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today; Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao and Rosa Luxemburg; Women's Liberation*, and *Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* spell out the philosophic

ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her re-creation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time. In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.