

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

Vol. 37 — No. 7

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER, 1992

25¢

Workers organize themselves



by Felix Martin, Labor Editor

On June 1, 1992 several thousand drywall workers and tapers walked off their jobs at hundreds of job sites across southern California demanding higher wages, benefits and union representation. One hundred fifty-three workers were arrested in Mission Viejo on July 2 and jailed on charges of trespassing and kidnapping for storming the job site and forcing out scabs.

Another 68 workers were arrested on July 23 in Hollywood, where a demonstration was held at a job site to convince others to leave the site. The police and the highway patrol attacked the demonstration, and it spilled over into the Hollywood Freeway. An eyewitness told the *Los Angeles Times*: "All of a sudden there were men all around me yelling 'we want work not food stamps.'" Television reports showed several strikers bleeding severely, and the paramedics were never called.

WAGE CUTS, LABOR ABUSES

The workers' wages have been cut 60% over the last 12 years. The Orange County Human Relations Commission in a 1989 report entitled "zero Dollars per Hour" reported on numerous labor abuses. The subcontractors of drywallers took the most heat: "Cash pay is rampant in construction. Payment in drugs is common in the cash pay game in the drywall and framing industries."

The real lawbreakers, the developers and the subcontractors, never go to jail. These damned thieving rascals are not bothered by the law. The laws are there to protect them from the workers. When workers work and keep their mouths shut no matter what their bosses do to them, everything is fine. When the workers are forced to do something for themselves, the police are Johnny-on-the-spot to beat the hell out of them and jail

(continued on page 3)

Black World

Africa and AIDS



by Lou Turner

There are few moments in Africa's history when, as a continent, it has come under the singularity of a common destiny. African liberation was an idea and movement whose self-determination constituted such a singular historic moment which was continent-wide in the 1960s. AIDS has conspired to bring about such a singular moment in Africa today.

AIDS AND EUROCENTRISM

The lost decade of the 1980s saw millions of Africans perish in man-made disasters of war and famine. Now, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), one million African men and women have died of AIDS, and six million more are estimated to have the HIV or retrovirus that causes AIDS. By the end of the century WHO estimates that some 15 million Africans will be infected, reducing African life expectancy from 60 to 47 years.

Until recently the central African countries of Uganda, Rwanda, Zaire and Congo had felt the greatest impact of the disease. Now, however, the disease has spread indiscriminately throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

Though the traditional social structures which normally absorbed victims of AIDS have been severely disrupted by war, famine and drought, more debilitating has been the West's sustained underdevelopment of Africa, which is now accompanied by its ideological hegemony. All too often Western reporting on AIDS in Africa assumes the Eurocentric perspective of writers like Scott Kraft of the *New York Times Magazine*, who wrote (March 1, 1992) that "the most important reason for the rapid spread of AIDS in Zimbabwe and elsewhere on the continent is the Africans' own culture."

Without so much as a mention of the legacy of Western colonialism and the West's present neglect of Africa, Kraft links the alleged "cultural cause" of Africa's AIDS epidemic to the subordination of African women. What is so Eurocentric about this is that, given the widespread heterosexual transmission of the disease, African society has been more responsive at the grassroots level

(continued on page 9)

The U.S. economy in disarray



Dominicans protest in Washington Heights

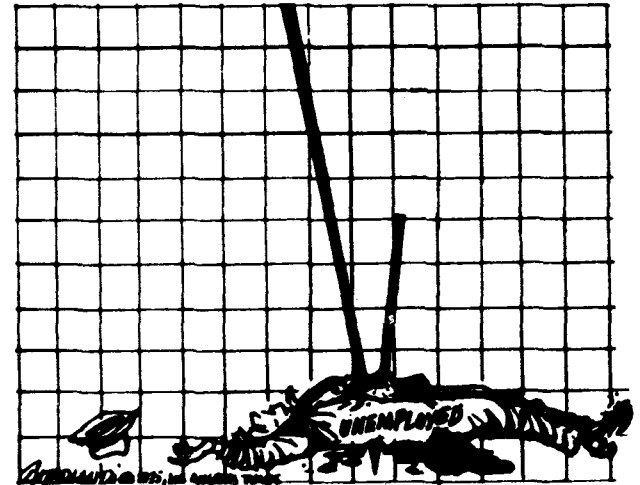
by A. Anielewicz

Last month two very different events in New York City—the Democratic National Convention and the rebellion in the area around Washington Heights—exposed the deep social-economic crisis that is growing in the U.S. That the Clinton bogus economic program, as part of the Democratic Party's further shift to the Right, is somehow assumed to represent an alternative, shows how morbid is the U.S. economy and how unpopular President Bush has become. Clinton's scheme of Reaganite "trickle-down" corporate tax breaks and heavy subsidies to a few high-tech showcase projects only represents a fiddling with Reagan-Bushism.

The explosion in the Washington Heights section of Manhattan captured the truth of these United States in the 1990s. Setting fire to stores, cars and abandoned buildings, raising a banner declaring "From Los Angeles to Washington Heights: No Justice, No Peace," battling cops and repudiating "community leaders," thousands of Dominican youth and other residents of the pauperized areas in and around Washington Heights, Manhattan erupted in seven days of rebellion, July 3-9, after the police killing of Jose "Kiko" Garcia. (See article page 8.)

Their accumulated rage was so great that, as one participant told *News & Letters*, "Guys were waiting for something like this to burn everything down." Only by deploying thousands of cops to occupy Washington Heights was New York City's Democratic administration able to quash this latest outcry of opposition before the Party's convention delegates arrived to rubber-stamp the "centrist" version of peace without justice that Clinton calls "healing."

Bush's latest public relations ploy was less successful. While he and leaders of the other major industrial powers had hoped that their July summit in Munich would be a celebration of victory over "Communism," what French President Mitterrand called "the morose state of the world economy" turned it into a universally acknowledged failure. With every single one of these nations—including Japan, and especially Russia—either in a recession or straining to emerge from one, and with almost all of these leaders facing popular discontent



back home, none was in a position to bail out the others, much less the world economy.

The unemployment rate in the European Community has been ratcheting upward for two decades; it now stands at 9.4%, and at 20% among young adults. Living conditions in the Third World have deteriorated so greatly that the 1980s are now being termed "Latin America's lost decade." The U.S. is experiencing the worst stagnation since the Great Depression: the average annual growth of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) since Bush took office is 0.6%, representing a decline in per capita production over a three-year period. This has helped plummet the world economy into its worst slump in a decade.

UNEMPLOYMENT SKYROCKETS

The U.S. unemployment rate skyrocketed from 7.2% in April to 7.8% in June; the number of people unemployed 15 weeks or longer shot up from 3.0 to 3.7 million. For teenagers and Blacks, unemployment rates are far higher, 23.6% and 14.9%, respectively. Ten million Americans are now "officially" unemployed, nearly 3-1/2 million more than when the recession began two full years ago. None of these figures include another six million who want full-time jobs but can only find part-time work, the 1.1 million "discouraged workers" who want jobs now but have given up looking, or the untold

(continued on page 10)

- Editorial—Genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovinap.5
- From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya—The Power of Abstractionp.4
- Philosophic Dialogue—Labor's liberationp.3

On the Inside

Stop Bush's war-mongering in the Gulf

As we go to press, George Bush's imperialist sabre-rattling over Iraq has intensified to a new war-mongering pitch. Without warning or the concurrence of the UN, he has dispatched 2,400 additional U.S. troops to Kuwait to join the ongoing military maneuvers in the Persian Gulf involving aircraft carriers, a naval battle group, and heavy ground equipment, left there after the Gulf War.

Is George Bush trying to save his faltering election campaign by going to war? Are the pressures for war too much to hold off until after the election in November? And will Bill Clinton's lining up behind Bush's imperialist moves raise the prospects of a new war?

Throughout the month of July, Bush and Saddam Hussein faced-off on whether UN inspectors would be allowed to go into Iraq's Agriculture Ministry. Bush's sabre-rattling on this single issue has only helped conceal a whole host of crises gripping the area which threaten regional war.

The danger of nuclear and chemical weapons is not a question alone of Hussein's compliance with the terms of the cease fire agreement. That agreement didn't stop him from driving millions of Kurds into the northern mountains. The danger is also seen in the U.S.'s record sale of \$20 billion in high-tech armaments to the Middle East just since the end of the Gulf war.

The production of this high-tech weaponry is so

tightly tied to the present stage of state-capitalist global competition that the *New York Times* recently described how an Iraqi-owned British company (Matrix-Churchill) hired a California-based fiberglass, shower stall company, through a subsidiary company in Illinois, to build a factory in Iraq for the production of missiles and nuclear weapons. And all this with U.S. government approval.

Moreover, the UN inspectors in charge of dismantling Iraq's weapons of mass destruction have all been or are presently involved directly in the production of these weapons for their own countries. This could explain why Rolf Ekeus, the UN's man overseeing the dismantling of Iraqi weapons, agreed to Iraqi demands that the inspectors be from "neutral" countries. His own country, Sweden, is itself a large arms producer.

Saddam Hussein has at the same time increased his genocidal air attacks on the Shiites in the south, and terrorist bombings of the Kurds in northern Iraq. There is every indication that a major confrontation inside Iraq is looming ahead. The Kurds will take the brunt of the attack, and supply, as usual, the most determined and courageous fighters.

War and the loss of life of more Iraqis can only be averted by the deepening of the fight for freedom inside Iraq. That is what demands our support, as we work to stay the bloody hands of George Bush.

—August 4, 1992

Woman as Reason

by Anne Jaclard

Operation Rescue (O.R.), the fanatical anti-woman blockaders of women's health facilities, failed to impede a single woman's access to a clinic that performs abortions in New York City during the Democratic Party Convention, as it had threatened to do. What thoroughly routed the 100 or so O.R. members was over 5,000 women and men who turned out for clinic defense.

During the eight days O.R. threatened to disrupt health care, hundreds of women and men turned out at each of nine clinics around the city every morning at 5 a.m., ready to move to any of the 150 clinics that might be attacked. O.R. drove around town in a bus each day looking for an undefended clinic without success. In desperation, on Monday they blockaded a clinic that was closed Mondays.

LIMITATIONS/CONTRADICTIONS

I participated in the clinic defense, but found many contradictions and limitations within that activity, both inherent ones and ones imposed by the organizers. First, we were defending money-making businesses, and we seemed to be asking only that they remain open, with ubiquitous signs reading "Keep abortion legal." This is vastly different from the women's movement's original goal of free abortion on demand, free, safe contraception and quality health care.

Related to the limited demand was our dependence on and cooperation with the police, who allowed us to help them keep the clinics open, as long as we did it their way: staying behind barricades, keeping the sidewalk clear, etc. The police can and will decide at any time that keeping "order" is more important than keeping the clinics open and close them instead.

Whereas doing clinic defense is necessary and in a way empowering, both its content and tactics involve taking Operation Rescue's ground. They have a top-down military type operation, and so do we. They try to blockade clinics closed, so we blockade them open—even though they only attack one, while we exhaust ourselves having to defend many.

A huge part of the April March for Women's Lives in Washington, D.C., and the many marches I have been to since, consists of support for women candidates and for federal legislation to restore abortion rights after the Court takes them away. This shows both a defeatist attitude toward keeping our rights, and a wholly unwarranted faith in the "democratic system" to restore them after we lose them.

"Democracy," even combined with "vision," is not the dialectics of women's liberation, the road to self-emancipation. If any movement should understand how quickly reforms given by the state can be taken away, it is the women's movement, which has won and lost so much in the past 25 years. Moreover, if any period reveals the hollowness of the trappings of democracy without the content of freedom, it is these days after the Rodney King verdict.

VISION CAN'T BE LIMITED

Clinton is smart enough to pick up on women's desire for change and to speak of women's rights and "vision." I puzzle over how women can believe he will make a difference in light of our own movement's history. I think it is due to an attitude which sees neither that masses in motion are history's creators, nor that this history has a goal of freedom, of new human relations and control over our lives.

Some women may be afraid of the idea of revolution because they have no idea what it means, having known only the Reagan-Bush version that revolution equals absolutism or dictatorship. This view

Vatican pushes hate

To no one's surprise, the vatican has once again issued a fiercely lesbian and gay hating document, eagerly encouraging an openly hostile stance to gay rights, calling this "obligatory discrimination." While they hide behind the empty rhetoric of "morality," "common good" and "civil society," their destructive, controlling intent cannot be fully masked. As usual, lesbian and gay people are reduced to their genital activity and are not seen as full human persons. (One must wonder what second-rate "safe" painter would be hired by today's vatican to replace the gay Michelangelo...) Lesbians and gays are seen only as a threat to some mythical sense of "fundamental moral values."

The fact that the vatican saves its slimiest bile to smear people engaged in acts of joy, affection and love, says all one needs to know about the church hierarchy. What is most troubling is how clearly this document illustrates the vatican's desire to squash any and all self-development and self-definition by lesbians and gays.

It seems obvious to me that lesbian and gay freedom cannot be left to the powers that be, nor can we—lesbians and gays and our allies—get trapped on the bifurcation of whether we are innately born with sexual orientation or whether we choose it ourselves. In the face of the structural violence and oppression against lesbians and gays (see N&L, July 1992, p. 2, for an article on the murder of two lesbians in Detroit), and the incitement to active hatred encouraged by authoritarian powers such as the vatican, it must be our own movement into being which can and should lead us out of this exploitative world.

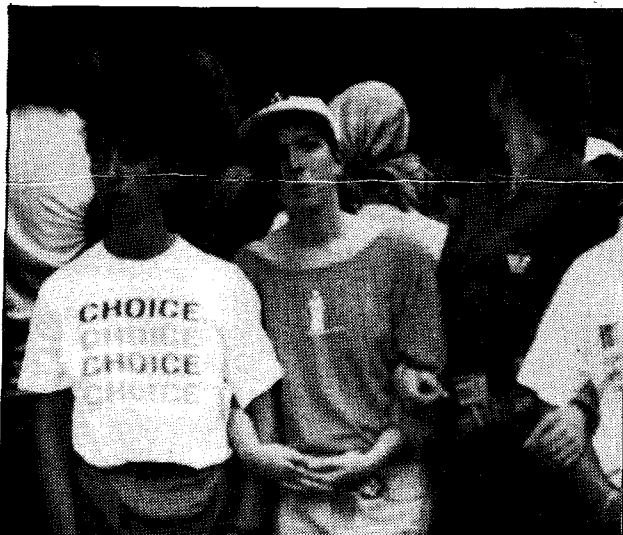
—Radical Lesbian Feminist, Los Angeles

Clinic defense shows contradictions

could come from lack of experience in mass movements, in which everything in your life begins to be transformed; from lack of revolutions which even attempt to remake society in this worldwide period of retrogression; and from the prevalent limited modes of thought, including postmodernism as well as the dominant culture telling us there is no goal to believe in or strive for, and everything is relative.

A vision of something better is not the goal of freedom for women if it is limited by the ideas of existing societies, in fact, if it has any limitations. We can't even know now what a free society will look like, but we need to understand it will be free of all the restraints of this one, and for that we have to understand this one in the way that Karl Marx analyzed it and mass movements since have concretized the understanding.

In the 1990s the very idea of what we want has moved so far to the right, many can't see anything beyond reforms. "Vision" still remains within reform unless you have a method to expand it. The dialectics of liberation begins with freeing our minds from narrow visions and from modes of thought that restrict the change imaginable.



News & Letters photo

Clinic defenders link arms to stop anti-abortion fanatics from blockading women's health facilities in New York City during the Democratic Party Convention.

Discussion review: Work Engendered

by Laurie Cashdan

Women workers living through the nightmare of labor conditions in the Reagan/Bush era might have reason to cheer the women whose stories weave through the essays in *Work Engendered: Toward a New History of American Labor* (1991) edited by Ava Baron. They might identify with striking women weavers in Mary Blewett's essay, who marched on city hall in Fall River, Mass. in 1875 yelling "Bread!" "Tyranny!" until one hit the mayor over the head with a loaf of bread after he ordered them back to work or to the poor farm. Women today might solidarize with Cuban and Italian women cigar makers in Tampa described by Nancy Hewitt, who in a 1910 manifesto called on the legacies of Joan of Arc and Louise Michel, a leader of the 1871 Paris Commune.

Ava Baron's effort in *Work Engendered* to carve out a new feminist direction for U.S. labor history comes at a moment when women workers confront both worsening conditions of life and labor and contradictions riddling the labor movement. Any measure of Baron's theoretical and methodological framework for labor history, therefore, must be taken in its relation to these daily struggles. Baron's introductory essay best outlines the thrust of what has been called a new labor history.

Baron worries, with good reason, that male historians still pose gender as a side issue. Gender doesn't just pertain to women, she insists. Both gender and race permeate the concrete historical development of class relations in the U.S. even if just white men are in the shop. Baron critiques conceptual frameworks, including feminist ones, which show capitalism and patriarchy as parallel but separate systems.

NOTIONS OF GENDER

She delineates three further problems which hinge on the way notions of gender or sexual difference are socially constructed and play real live roles in the workplace. First is to understand "when and why sexual differences become culturally and politically significant" (p. 21). Gender extends beyond the home to production relations when bosses or workers use ideas about masculinity and femininity to divide or unite labor. Second, she aims to explain why, if women are historical actors who resist oppression, we "consent to oppression" at times. Third, how do we theorize "sameness" and "difference" among women without either universalizing white middle-class women's experiences or eroding any sisterhood different groups of women might experience?

Baron proposes poststructuralism as a theoretical and methodological framework which speaks to issues that remain unresolved by Marxism and feminism by offering the basis for a "gendered labor history." Pivotal to her conception is an analysis of why women workers may actually "consent to op-



Women-Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

Five women's rights groups in Poland have formed the Federation for Women and Planned Parenthood to fight the increasing efforts of the Catholic Church-controlled government to ban abortion and birth control. Despite polls citing that more than 60% of Polish citizens favor legal abortions, at least half of the Parliament has vowed to support a bill restricting abortions and jailing any violators.

* * *

In the name of Islam, oppression and violence against women in the Horn of Africa, has been escalating. Women are being pushed out of jobs, excluded from public life, and subjected to harassment, beatings and sexual assault—especially by police. Recently, Tadella Demeke, a graduate student working with women refugees, was kidnapped in the Sudan and is being held in Ethiopia. We demand her immediate freedom!

—Information from

Women Living Under Muslim Laws

* * *

Parade spectators in Blacksburg, Va. cheered this year's prize-winning choice for best theme in the annual Fourth of July Parade—a pro-choice float sponsored by the Coalition for Family Planning. This came just days after more than 100 women and men from southwestern Virginia had taken to the streets in Roanoke, Va. protesting the Supreme Court's decision allowing states to restrict women's reproductive freedom.

—Information from

New River Free Press

* * *

The Fund for the Feminist Majority USA is calling on women's organizations worldwide to denounce the brutality and exploitation of women domestic workers in Kuwait. Hundreds of these women workers from the Philippines, Sri Lanka, India and Bangladesh have been raped and beaten by their Kuwaiti employers or police. Tens of thousands of Asian women have been recruited to jobs in Kuwait, only to be trapped there as slaves with their passports taken from them, and no money to pay the exorbitant \$1,463 demanded by Kuwait to fly them home. Action is being demanded of the U.S. State Department and Kuwait's U.S. ambassador to free these women.

—Information from

Women Living Under Muslim Laws

pression" in many contexts. Here, ominous ramifications of this "new" theoretical/methodological framework begin to emerge, as Baron develops a poststructuralist understanding of "unstable and multiple subjectivities" or "identities."

In this view subjects do not have fixed identities whose interests they pursue. Subjects are "constructed" within cultural ideas or discourses about gender (and class and race) which continually shape ideas about who we are and what we should do.

However, with few exceptions, the essays in this book focus on gender as a limiting or even counter-revolutionary form of consciousness. It is a web from which it is impossible to break without intervention from intellectuals outside the working class. Dolores Janiewski's essay, for example, argues that Black and white women couldn't transcend socially constructed notions of Black and white womanhood to come together in the 1930s because there was not yet a "feminist movement that could engage the loyalties of women across...racial and class boundaries" (p. 90).

'WOMAN AS FORCE AND REASON'

The essays where women do fight prejudices which divide workers—those by Mary Blewett, Elizabeth Faue and Nancy Hewitt, for example—do not offer new points of departure for feminist theory which could take off from the high points of women's creativity because they get hemmed in by the framework of Baron's introduction. The stories here all end in defeat, which becomes the point of departure gender as an analytic category must explain.

What has not even been approached, by either Baron or the Marxist historians she critiques, is Marx's own notion of "history and its process" in which Subjects of revolution don't just resist, but embody what Hegel called the "self-determination of the Idea of freedom." Subjects are both "force and Reason," in Raya Dunayevskaya's words, struggling to overcome barriers to freedom. It is true that various groups at concrete historical points pursue a freedom resting on the unfreedom of others. But the point is to elicit the deepest dimensions of the freedom struggles and their critiques of existing society.

The concepts of "multiple subjectivities" and "unstable identities" conceive women workers as objects, not subjects. Baron's actors are the feminist intellectuals outside the shops who can clarify it all. Theory and practice become further divided than ever before by this analysis of culture and ideology which excludes a notion of the creativity of the human Subject. What a difference it might make if a new American labor history rooted itself in Marx's idea of history in the Grundrisse, in which humanity "does not seek to remain something formed by the past, but is in the absolute movement of becoming."

Philosophic Dialogue

by John Marcotte

The short book, *The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism*, selected writings by Raya Dunayevskaya, offers the clearest understanding of what is going on in the world today. Whether it is why we had Reaganism in this country or Thatcherism in Britain or Gorbachevism in Russia, or why the unions are under attack here and the Solidarity union movement in Poland has fallen apart, the ABCs of Marx's Marxism are spelled out very concretely and explain what all this means.

With all the talk of the supposed joys of the "free market," how refreshing to find an explanation of private property under capitalism. Bourgeois private property is not private property at all; it is the abolition of the private property of the direct producer, the peasant, the artisan. It is the power to dispose of the labor of others (pp. 21-22).

PAST AND FUTURE

From this book we learn a lot more than that Russia is state-capitalist. Yes, we witness how the greatest revolution on earth was transformed into its opposite. We see the actual laws passed against the workers, year after year—and we see the opposite to all that, the rebellion of the workers, the creativity in resisting.

We get a sense of what it meant when there was a workers' state—that seems so long forgotten!—workers' power, the power of that dream come to life, the sudden aspirations released of the most downtrodden workers and peasants of Russia. We get a sense of what the new, concrete—very concrete—freedom meant, what it was and what it can be.

This book is not about the past, but has the future written all over it: "The hardest thing for an intellectual to see [is] that...not a single step ahead can be taken out of the chaos and the Plan...economic crises and world wars—not a single step out of these calamities can be taken until that one thing, the mode of labor, is changed. Otherwise, all the old crap reappears....An absolutely new form of labor would have to arise" (p. xvi, fn. 19). I think of Nicaragua's failed revolution. Was that ever the perspective? That is why to this day 1917 remains the only revolution where the proletariat gained power, because that was the perspective.

CLASS DIVIDE IN SOCIETY

After the useful and clear introduction, Part I serves as the overview/introduction to the whole, taking you through time, history and ideas. Then comes the 1942 essay, "Labor and Society," which clears the ground for

Worker contradictions

Chicago, Ill.—The bosses at Toys-R-U's had a meeting to tell us their line: we must have so-called "teamwork," which means we have to do more. Then they give us fewer hours and fewer people to do the work. The second thing they told us was that we have to help customers more on the sales floor. I was told that I must smile when dealing with customers.

As bad as that was, the worst thing was that one worker started to criticize another worker because she had a problem with that person. I am not saying that she should not bring this out, but not in front of the bosses who love it when we fight each other.

After that meeting a friend of mine said we must not let them separate us, because we are in the same boat. This is not the answer. The problem is not only the bosses' mind game and how they try to separate us from each other. The reason the bosses can separate us is that we have to deal with the contradictions within the working class, like sexism and racism.

Labor in this society must come together with others, like Blacks, women and youth. It is only as a totality that we can have a new beginning that may give us a vision of how we can change this sexist, racist world. We must not just hail the worker. We must point out what makes us revolutionary and what does not, and transcend those things that do not. As Marx said, the workers are revolutionary or they are nothing.

—David L. Anderson

News & Letters

Vol. 37 No. 7 AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1992

News & Letters (ISSN 0028-8969) is published 10 times a year, monthly, except bi-monthly January-February and August-September for \$2.50 a year (bulk order of five or more — 15¢) by News & Letters, 59 East Van Buren, Rm. 707, Chicago, IL 60605. Telephone (312) 663-0839. Second Class postage paid at Chicago, Illinois. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to News & Letters, 59 East Van Buren, Rm. 707, Chicago, IL 60605.

Raya Dunayevskaya, Chairwoman,
National Editorial Board (1955-1987)

Charles Denby, Editor (1955-1983)

Olga Domanski, Peter Wermuth, Co-National
Organizers, News and Letters Committees

Eugene Walker, Managing Editor

Mike Connolly, Marxist-Humanist Archivist

Felix Martin, Labor Editor



News & Letters
is printed in
a union shop.

Labor's liberation

the next step—seeing Russia as state-capitalist—because you get right to the class divide in society, which is a profoundly philosophic question. This is what the whole book is about.

To see that so-called Communism is state-capitalism is to deal with the question: What is capitalism? No one seems to understand that today any more than in Marx's day, which is why he wrote *Capital*. What is labor? What can labor be? In this 1942 essay you get right to the point as to why your labor is a "drudgery man must perform to earn a living, and not a mode of activity in which he realizes his physical and mental potentialities" (p. 18). Understanding what labor was and is liberates a view of what it can be.

To anyone who has worked, these essays are never just about Russia or just the 1940s. They ring true about our daily condition. These essays are never just economic or just political, they are philosophic. They are about human beings and their relations to one another,

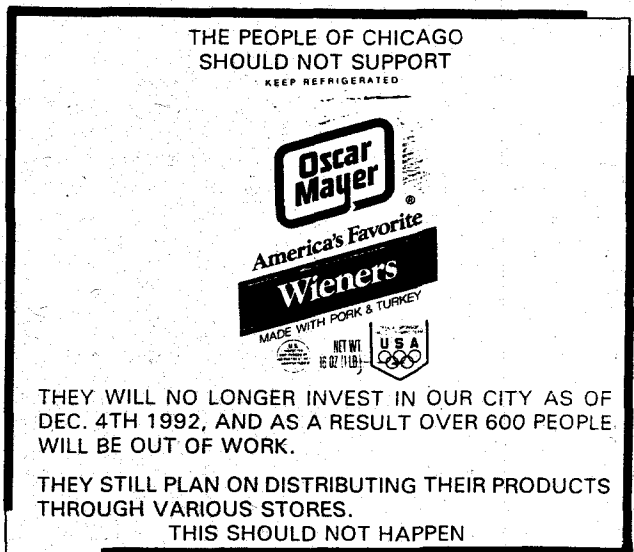
(continued on page 5)

Oscar Mayer

'We've got to fight!'

Editor's note: The Chicago Oscar Mayer plant is scheduled to close on Dec. 4, 1992; the second phase-out on Sept. 4 will involve more than 100 people. One worker below discusses the situation and some of what the workers are doing.

Chicago, Ill.—The situation is sort of dismal. Most of the workers, especially the older workers past 40 years old, are basically almost unemployable. Most of us have injuries: arthritis, carpal tunnel syndrome, bad necks, bad shoulders, bad knees. We're walking dead people; they work you to death. Other employers know



The leaflet that Oscar Mayer workers distribute

from a study that 13 years is a lifetime for packing-house workers. Even if you don't tell them about the injuries, they're going to assume that you've got them.

Oscar Mayer and Kraft (which owns Oscar Mayer) are not allowing us to transfer to any of their other plants. We can go to these places, but we're not going to get any preferential treatment, no special recommendations. We asked them: If your company perceives itself to be family oriented—because this is what they do, appeal to the public and the family—then how can you take the people who made you what you are and not allow them an opportunity to survive?

What they're offering us, the final package that they seem to think that we should be so grateful for, is actually, when you break it down, nothing: six months for your health insurance, two years for your life insurance, \$1400. All of this is dependent on if you sign the release form. It releases them from all responsibility. We've been telling our people: Once you sign this, you have no recourse if you find down the road that you have some injuries or health problems that your doctor can focus on this company. You can't sue them because you've signed your rights away.

We've got to fight them, and we have very little to fight with. It would be a lot easier if we had the cooperation from our union leadership. When we leafletted down at City Hall, we made sure the union understood what we were going to do. The union gave us no reply, so we proceeded as usual without them. Four union representatives were there, but in an unofficial capacity. We're trying to set up a meeting with our union president, but he is unavailable or out of town every time.

Members have been leafletting stores in their neighborhoods. We are getting a really good response from the public and other workers. So many people have had the same or similar experiences, and they are sympathetic to the point that they won't buy any Oscar Mayer products. It doesn't take a lot of explanation; everybody seems to be in a mood to assist us.

Contract negotiations have begun at the Madison, Wis., Oscar Mayer plant. The company is using us up, and they're going to try to use us to break the workers in Madison down. We are not going to push for extra production to help the company. There is no point. We've had real good cooperation from the people in Madison. We owe them, even if for no other reason than because they're workers just like we are.

—Black production worker

Exclusive AFL-CIO

New York, N.Y.—In early May I attended the founding convention of the Asian Pacific Labor Alliance-AFL-CIO (APALA) in Washington, D.C. It was attended by nearly 500 Asians (Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, Koreans, Pakistanis, Indians and Caribbeans). I belonged to an unofficial delegation of Local 1199, who were literally "pushed to the wall" from registration until the end of the convention.

As observers, we were crowded at the back away from the tables of the official delegates, who were AFL-CIO affiliated unions. Not only were we not given voting power, we were hardly allowed to speak. Well, we can plainly say, what can you expect? It's AFL-CIO in command!

So at the end of the first evening, several women confronted Tony Sarmiento, the AFL-CIO's national labor educator, who is Filipino-American. Our question was mainly on the discrepancy between what the goal is of APALA, that is, unity among Asian workers, and its constitutional provision about including only members of AFL-CIO affiliated unions. Sarmiento tried to convince us that it was necessary to have that provision to assure the development of one single union.

We asked Sarmiento about what happens to Asian workers who don't belong to any union and those who are unemployed and therefore can't belong to a union! He tried to pacify us by assuring us that these questions could be brought up in the next day's workshops, and he wanted us to convince 1199's leadership to join either AFSCME or SEIU so we can officially join APALA. That doesn't answer our question.

—Filipina health care worker

No raise, time stolen

Chicago, Ill.—The facilities maintenance company that I work for at O'Hare airport decided that it was time for us to have a meeting about benefits. They scheduled the meeting for 10:00 on a Thursday morning and stated that those workers who don't normally work at that time would not be paid for attending. This day was my regular day off, but I figured it to be important, so I decided to attend, traveling the 30 miles that I always do to work.

The company representative did not arrive until after 11:00. After muttering an "I'm sorry," he launched into a presentation about an investment program that he thought we would be foolish to pass up. He went on and on, and then he announced that there would be no raises for anybody this year.

I felt kind of numb, and the expressions on my fellow workers' faces told me they felt the same way. Investment program! No raise! What was I supposed to invest? I'm not getting enough money now to make it. Anger took over. The company took three hours from me to tell me to invest in capitalism, which I'm against.

I returned to work the following day and learned that my fellow workers felt just as I did, some of them showing their anger by putting signs above the time clock, knocking things over in the shop, and making statements about the owner needing another yacht (he already owns two) and we can't even get a raise.

"Only in America," my team leader said as he handed us our work assignments. "And by the way," he added, "you know why the company rep. was late yesterday? He was up drinking all night before the meeting and couldn't get up in the morning."

—Martin Almora

Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

them for resisting arrest. The immigration authorities are on the spot to deport any "illegals" who have become "troublemakers."

The daily protest and organizing activities by thousands of construction workers covers the areas of Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside and San Diego counties. Weekly demonstrations in front of the Santa Ana Court building by the drywall workers and their families are the most militant labor demonstrations seen in a long time in this part of the country. It is no accident that they come in the aftermath of the Los Angeles rebellion. The organized unions have kept away from these self-organizing drives.

RISING RESISTANCE

The rising resistance of Latino workers in southern California is met by rising open racism against Latinos, who are being blamed for the bankruptcy of the state. A participant was quoted in a *Los Angeles Times* article saying: "There is a double standard. American society loves Mexicans. They love Mexicans as long as they are working for subminimum wages, as long as they don't complain. Once they start asking for things within their rights, Mexicans become the enemy."

Workers in every trade have to become one class. When one worker hurts and the capitalists don't take care of the problem, all workers must go home until the problem is taken care of, without loss of wages. We also have to fight the union bureaucrats who are also the enemies of the workers.

Why do we need capitalists—or union bureaucrats—to tell us what we need to produce for ourselves, our needs? Our labor produces everything. Their stupid thinking produces nothing. Doesn't it make you see how stupid is this system we produce under? How much longer are we going to put up with this capitalist production that robs us of our labor?

From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya Marxist-Humanist Archives

by Raya Dunayevskaya
Founder of Marxist-Humanism

Editor's note: Each year, at the concluding session of the Plenums and Conventions of News and Letters Committees, Raya Dunayevskaya presented a report on the "dialectics of leadership." For the 1985 Plenum, she titled her report, "The Self-Thinking Idea in a New Concept of and New Relationship to the Dialectics of Leadership, as well as the Self-Bringing Forth of Liberty." In September, 1985, Dunayevskaya edited her presentation for inclusion in a Post-Plenum Discussion Bulletin. We have reproduced her edited version below, adding the explanatory footnotes. The whole bulletin is included in The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, microfilm #10348.

I. "THE POWER OF ABSTRACTION"

It is not only the title that is abstract and strange but the whole context of what I will present here—long, long before I come to the concrete question of the dialectics of leadership—is going to be abstract. In fact, I'm going to make "pure" abstraction of the Self-Thinking Idea, a veritable Universal, because I wanted, first of all, to firmly establish that the Self-Thinking Idea does not—I repeat, does not—mean you thinking.¹

Forget what I never stop repeating in the critique of Hegel, that it's not Ideas floating in the upper regions of the philosopher's heavens that "think"; it is people who think. That is totally wrong if you are serious about tracing the Logic of an Idea to its logical conclusion. Therefore, instead of any person (including what was primary to Hegel—philosophers) thinking, I want you to face the Idea itself thinking, i.e., developing it to its ultimate.

At this point, remember how rarely you think something through to the end. Indeed, if you do follow an abstract thought to the end, and if your Idea is the wrong one, you will wind up sounding like an idiot. That is, thinking "in and for itself" will end up by proving that the Idea is no Universal. But if your Idea was correct, the concretization will prove you a genius. Ideas "think," not sequentially, but consequentially, related to other Ideas that emerge out of historic ground, and do not care where all this might lead to, including transformation into opposite.

And yet, it is precisely because it is abstract; it's precisely because it goes to the ultimate without caring where this leads, that we can see what Logic does to a concrete Idea. It is this type of Absolute Method that Hegel had in mind as he was reaching the conclusion of the Absolute Idea, and said all truth is Subjectivity and Subjectivity alone. It is philosophy and not philosopher; and if that philosophy is revolutionary and if that Idea is the Idea of Freedom, then a new Humanism will first arise. Then the end will result in the Self-Bringing Forth of Liberty.²

But it took a Marx to see that, and only then could we talk about the whole person who is not just personality but Subjectivity—body, emotion, thought as a totality that is bound for a new journey: the absolute movement of becoming. It is this "power of abstraction" (that is Marx's phrase, not mine) that Marx introduced early in the very Preface of *Capital* on the most concrete thing of all, a Commodity.³ After introducing the "power of abstraction" in the very Preface of *Capital*, before ever the reader had plunged into that most difficult Chapter I, he kept developing it further all the way to his very last decade.

II. THE NEW IN THIS YEAR'S CONCEPT OF THE DIALECTICS OF LEADERSHIP

Our problem today is what is new in our concept of Leadership? And what does it mean that this subjectivity alone contains the truth and with it subjectivity has absorbed objectivity? It is this new sense of objectivity—"Human activity itself as objective (gegenstandliche) activity," as Marx put it⁴—that our age is the first to understand fully; that is, the first to understand Marx's meaning in distinction from Hegel's. Just try to concretize this in historic terms and you will see what a hard and very nearly impossible task that is.

For example, when I first tackled the question of Hegel's meaning of subjectivity in that sentence, I hardly went further than class, class distinction. I refer to the section on "Two Kinds of Subjectivity" in the new chap-

ter on Mao I added to *Marxism and Freedom*.⁵ Since that wasn't exactly what I meant, since what I was trying to bring in which was new was the distinction between two kinds of Marxism—Lenin's and Mao's—I didn't really "prove" that you could consider yourself a Marxist and yet be so near the cliff that, by just the slightest deviation, you would fall right into the abyss of a new void.

I tried again in 1969 in ["The Newness of Our Philo-



sophic-Historic Contribution,"] a letter to [a friend], who did not see the very deep gulf that existed between Herbert Marcuse and me.⁶ That was good, but not yet good enough, as I was only on the threshold of Absolute Idea as new beginning...

The double edge of the dialectic is that the very new birth which contains a new stage of production means the perishing of all previous stages, so that the new dialectic can start from new beginnings, new passions, new forces, new Reason. Do not follow any post-Marx Marxists. It is true that Lenin did return to Hegel on the dialectics of revolution. None can compare to him. But he both stopped short on the question of the Party, and did not let us in on the process of his thinking...

III. THE PROCESS—Becoming Practicing Dialecticians as One Projects Marxist-Humanism: New Type of Collectivities, New Concept of Leadership; the Absolute Method

"Absolute Method...(means) objectively universal ...every beginning must be made from the Absolute ...The progress is therefore not a kind of overflow..." —Hegel, *Science of Logic*, Vol. 2, p. 471

"The concrete totality...is the beginning...for the transcendence of the opposition between the Notion and Reality, and that unity which is the truth, rests upon this subjectivity alone." —Hegel, *Science of Logic*, Vol. 2, p. 477

The concrete problem today is Organization and Leadership; what you have to work out is how, at one and the same time, you cannot deviate from the principle and yet [must] be open to all new, objective and subjective developments. Let's use these abstractions as the context in which we reconsider what we mentioned as our main proposal on the bi-weekly⁷ and how we mean to prepare for it by a trip to Appalachia as well as Mexico, and to the new strike in steel as well as to Spain and even India. And with each trip we developed a new collectivity.

5. For the 1964 English-language edition of her *Marxism and Freedom*, Dunayevskaya added a new chapter entitled "The Challenge of Mao Tse-tung."

6. "The Newness of Our Philosophic-Historic Contribution" is included in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, #4407.

7. At the September 1985 Plenum of News and Letters Committees, Dunayevskaya proposed that the Marxist-Humanist monthly newspaper, *News & Letters*, be transformed into a bi-weekly newspaper, beginning in 1987. For Dunayevskaya's practice of revolutionary journalism in the 1987 bi-weekly *N&L*, see the Supplement to *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, Vol. XIII.

'The Power of Abstraction'

Whatever the particular collectivity, all are tied both with reaching outward and with the new concept of the dialectics of leadership, dialectic methodology. Take the concrete proposal to transform *N&L* into a bi-weekly next year. Whether we embark on these national/international trips or whether we take on the immediate task of selling *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution* not as salespeople but as founders of Marxist-Humanism, the need is for one more look at the Absolute Method as we examine the concrete tasks listed in our Perspectives.

Consider Marx's "new moments" in his last decade along with the new moments grasped at turning points of his life, and here is what you will find when you think of Marx's Archives: 1) When Marx decides that the accumulation of capital is not the universal, he doesn't mean that it is not the universal in capitalism. He does mean it is no universal for the world, and that the underdeveloped, non-capitalist countries can experience other forms of development. But even then he qualifies it by saying that they must do it together with what the advanced capitalist countries do.

2) Marx's second conclusion in his final decade was that the revolution could actually take place first in backward Russia rather than in advanced Germany.

3) The gens form of development, he further concluded, is higher as form of human life than class society, although the former, too, showed that, in embryo, class relations started right there. And, most important of all, is that the multilinear human development demonstrates no straight line—i.e., no fixed stages of development. The Iroquois women, the Irish women before British imperialism, the aborigines in Australia, the Arabs in Africa, have displayed greater intelligence, more equality between men and women, than the intellectuals from England, or the USA or Australia, or France or Germany.

Interrupt yourself here for a conference with Marx on the Critique of the Gotha Program, which includes the sentence that was so alive and worrisome to Marcuse in his last decade that he asked me what I made of that sentence on labor being "the prime necessity of life." Here is Marx's whole paragraph:

"In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual under the division of labor, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labor, has vanished; after labor, from a mere means of life, has itself become the prime necessity of life; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be fully left behind and society inscribe on its banners: from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

Now let's look at the same type of new moments at other turning points of Marx's life, which opened new doors for him and which he, in turn, opened for a new generation. Take the artisans that Marx, in the *Grundrisse*, considered as having experienced a greater self-development and initiative, by working manually as well as mentally, than even those considered geniuses, like the artists.

Or turn back to when Marx first discovered that new continent of thought and of revolution and broke with capitalism in 1843 and called for "revolution-in-permanence," not only in order to uproot the old society, but to undergo a "revolution in permanence" in every facet, including self-development.

When it comes to taking responsibility for the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism in this age, when we are aiming for nothing short of actually helping to transform the objective international situation, here are the problems we face:

Why was it that the 1905 Revolution, which certainly had international impact, made Lenin most conscious of Asia, but "Africa," at best, was thought of as "India"? All was the "Orient." If anyone thought of Egypt at all it was only because the Greeks were there and it was half "Mediterranean."

(continued on page 5)

Explore other writings by Dunayevskaya on the historic-philosophic question of organization

● "Organizational Interlude," Chapter 9 of *Marxism and Freedom* (1958). On the administrative mentality of the modern revolutionary intellectual as rooted in the Second International's disregard of dialectics.

● "Facing the Challenge," Part 8 of *American Civilization on Trial* (1963). On how the turning point for the reconstruction of society occurs when theory and practice reach a unified organizational form.

● "Philosophy and Revolution as Organization Builder" (1973). On Lenin as a Lassallean.

These documents, as well as other material related to this subject, are contained in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection: Marxist-Humanism—a Half Century of Its World Development*, available on microfilm from numerous libraries. These documents are also available on hard copy from *News & Letters*.

● Letter to Harry McShane of June 17, 1980. On the positive alternative to the elitist "party to lead" concept.

● "The Philosopher of Permanent Revolution Creates New Ground for Organization," Chapter 11 of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982).

● "Talking to Myself" of Jan. 21, 1987. On the illumination provided by her 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes" for working out the inseparability of philosophy and organization.

1. See Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, paragraph #574. For Dunayevskaya's discussion of the "Self-Thinking Idea" as Hegel articulated it in "Absolute Mind," the final chapter of his *Philosophy of Mind*, see Chapter I of her *Philosophy and Revolution*, pp. 33-46.

2. Hegel projected his concept of the method of Absolute Negativity in "Absolute Idea," the final chapter of his *Science of Logic*: "The negativity which has just been considered is the turning point of the movement of the Notion... for the transcendence of the opposition between Notion and Reality, and that unity which is the truth, rest upon this subjectivity alone." (Johnson and Struthers edition, Vol. II, pp. 477-78.)

3. Cf. Marx, *Capital* Vol. I: "The value-form, whose fully developed shape is the money-form, is very simple and slight in content. Nevertheless, the human mind has sought in vain for more than 2,000 years to get to the bottom of it...Why? Because the complete body is easier to study than its cells. Moreover, in the analysis of economic forms neither microscopes nor chemical reagents are of assistance. The power of abstraction must replace both."

4. Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," (1845), *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 3.

Editorial

There is no other word for it but genocide. Sarajevo, a city of 560,000, has been reduced to ruins by artillery fire from Serbian nationalist fanatics. Civilians are deliberately shelled as they line up to receive UN food relief. House to house expulsions and killings openly termed "ethnic cleansing" are taking place. As reported in the *New York Times* (7/10/92), when a Serbian unit took over a neighborhood of Sarajevo, they pulled a young man out of his apartment and demanded to know his name. He answered, "Selim," a Muslim name. Without saying a word the Serbian gunmen slit Selim's throat. On an even larger scale, far from the scrutiny of the world media, such massacres have been going on throughout eastern Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The big imperialist countries, led by the U.S. under Bush, have decided to let Bosnia-Herzegovina bleed. It took them months even to condemn Serbia verbally, and still longer to pass economic sanctions. The U.S. and France, for example, have spent more time jockeying for leadership than aiding Bosnia-Herzegovina, especially after the U.S. was stung by French President Francois Mitterrand's one-upmanship in personally visiting Sarajevo. Other countries such as Austria have been reluctant even to admit refugees.

TWO TYPES OF NATIONALISM

Inside the former Yugoslavia, two types of nationalism are at war with each other. One is the particularistic, racist nationalism of the fanatics who control the Serbian government and who comprise the bands of assassins and snipers that ring Sarajevo. The other is the aspiration of the peoples of Bosnia-Herzegovina for national self-determination as a pathway for all of its ethnic groups to live together peacefully.

As Muhammad Halifzovic, huddled in a basement in a Muslim neighborhood of Sarajevo with 100 other people for protection from the shelling, told a reporter. "Here we have Serbs, Croats, Muslims, Jews and Slovenes. We're living here as a family. This is a small Sarajevo, and a small Bosnia too." (NYT 6/10/92) This universalistic concept of nationalism is anathema to the Serbian fanatics: they want to physically destroy it. In fact, many Serbs living in Bosnia-Herzegovina oppose the racist Serbian fanatics, and have fought alongside the defenders of Sarajevo and other towns.

The so-called "ethnic cleansings," killing or driving out non-Serbs—Croats, Muslim Slavs, Hungarians—have been going on in Serbian-conquered areas of the former Yugoslavia since last year. They began in the Krajina region of Croatia, where the death toll has reached over 7,000. Reprisal killings of Serbs have also taken place.

Since early April, this horror has now been dwarfed by the genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina. As soon as this former Yugoslav republic—population 44% Muslim Slav, 31% Serb, and 17% Croat—voted overwhelmingly for independence a few months ago, it was invaded. Backed up by the Yugoslav military, including the air force, heavily armed Serbian irregulars have taken over 65% of the country.

The town of Gorazde in eastern Bosnia, population 60,000, is slowly starving to death under a murderous Serbian siege. As against Sarajevo, where some food supplies are arriving from the UN, here no food can get in and communication with the outside is limited to ham radios. Some 2.3 million refugees have now fled

Genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina

their homes, or been driven out, and over 50,000 people have been killed in the fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the largest number of them Muslim Slavs. People being expelled from their land have been locked for days on freight cars without food.

IN FASCIST STYLE

All of this is part of a naked bid for territory by the Serbian government, led by a former Communist apparatchik turned demagogic nationalist, Slobodan Milosevic. In true fascist style, when his Serbian forces invade lands and massacre other ethnic groups, Milosevic invariably claims that really, secretly, the oth-



er side is the aggressor. He began this policy in the 1980s in the Serbian province of Kosovo, population 2.1 million, of which the vast majority are ethnic Albanian, with only 10% comprising a Serbian minority. Today, as he forcibly prevents the elected parliament of Kosovo from meeting at all, he claims to be defending the Serbian minority against Albanian oppression!

Even inside Serbia, however, Milosevic's support is beginning to wane, especially since the economy began to collapse after UN sanctions were proclaimed in late May. In huge demonstrations in late June, up to 400,000 people demonstrated in Belgrade against Milosevic. Peasants in the Vojvodina region have also begun to withhold grain in a protest strike. However, the Serbian opposition does not disagree with all of Milosevic's policies. For example, they tend to support him on the issue of Kosovo.

Shockingly, a number of former socialist humanist intellectuals have lent Milosevic support, giving him a veneer of respectability within Serbia. Most prominent among them is Mihailo Markovic, a founder of the Praxis group in the 1960s, who today serves as Vice-President of the ruling Serbian Socialist Party, the renamed Communist Party. Recently, as reported in *Le Monde* (7/9/92), Markovic defended Milosevic and his policies once again, even as the massacres were reaching their height in Bosnia-Herzegovina. This "transformation into opposite" of someone who once upheld a version of Marxist humanism is truly chilling.

The victims of Serbian genocide are being abandoned in the same way as the Kurds have been, after Bush's "great victory" in Iraq. After all, there is no oil here. If mass pressure does finally force some type of relief to

Bosnia-Herzegovina, we can be sure that capitalistic interests for territory and economic resources will predominate over so-called "humanitarian" aspects.

Philosophic Dialogue

(continued from page 3)

specifically at work. In the middle of a polemic against Shachtman, you see what production relations meant concretely to a rank-and-file worker in "the Russia of Lenin"—that "participation" was not "quality circles" or any such fantasy! (pp. 28-29).

Opposed to that, in analyzing Stalin's Russia's economy, you see each law as it was passed, in 1929, 1930, 1932, 1938, 1940, as each tried to sweat more labor from the Russian worker, who resisted creatively at each step. These essays are all about the questions: What is work? Can labor emancipate itself? Can humans be free?

The natural audience for this book is workers. But how do I explain the fact that the Marxist-Humanist theory of state-capitalism is not more widely accepted on the Left among intellectuals, who have had access to it before this book? Can there be an inherent resistance to it on the part of left intellectuals? Why, for that matter, are there so many left parties and revolutions, and none place the relations at the point of production on the agenda the day after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie?

'REFORMED' SLAVERY?

The essays in Part III actually address this question, the administrative mentality of the intellectual in the age of state-capitalism. There is a class pull. In Dunayevskaya's 1958 work, *Marxism and Freedom*, we see where even Hegel foundered on this class barrier—the supposed "backwardness of the masses" (p. 38).

In this new book, we see George Padmore, who "did not take fright at barrack labor [of Mao's China] because he was sure of his place among the leaders" (pp. 107-8). It brings to mind all those, including sincere and no doubt well-intentioned "socialists" and "Marxists" (sic), who advocate a "mixed economy" for Russian and East European workers. Mixed economy has always meant capitalism. Would they advocate "a little bit of slavery" or a "reformed slavery" if they knew they would be the ones on that production line or in that unemployment line?

As the introduction states, too many revolutionaries have failed to grasp the class divide separating Marx's Marxism from its absolute opposite, Communist totalitarianism. This is not a minor point. It is not "just" the class divide; the class divide is everything. It is philosophic: your thinking falls on one side or the other; there is no in between.

You objectively represent the proletariat's interest—or you represent capital's, no matter how "revolutionary" you are. When push came to shove in 1917, every layer of Russian society and every revolutionary party opposed the proletariat—except Lenin's Bolsheviks, and I qualify, Lenin, who was grounded in dialectic philosophy.

FULLNESS OF PHILOSOPHY

Mass organizations themselves seek the fullness of philosophy. Today, after 20 magnificent years of self-organization in Villa El Salvador (see report p. 8), a shantytown of 350,000 in Peru which has 5,000 popular organizations covering every facet of life, people yet feel the need to create a forum for discussing ideas of the future.

For that reason, the introduction correctly includes under one category every tendency from Grenada's New Jewel Movement to Poland's Solidarity union leaders, who called for a "self-limiting revolution": "It was...not so much Stalinism that proved its historic nonviability in the 1980s...as much as the independent, anti-Stalinist revolutionary who is barren of philosophy" (p. xxiii). The class nature is key, is philosophy, and these intellectuals end up objectively representing the interests of capital. They never changed the mode of production, and "all the old crap reappears."

From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya

(continued from page 4)

Why was it that Rosa Luxemburg, so far in advance of all other Marxists, so movingly described the [imperialist subjugation of the masses in the] Kalahari Desert, Morocco, Namibia, Martinique—but couldn't see them as Reason?

Could it possibly be that all her love for, and dependence upon, the spontaneous unorganized masses who could "push" the leadership to act in a revolutionary way meant that even in that new love the vanguard concept was predominant for leadership?

Philosophy is both more than, and at the same time totally different from, "decision-making," in the crucial sense that decision-making, too, is a first negativity unless self-development of the individual means all individuals.

In the concrete, that would mean that when we, in our classes, bring in a philosophic question to be discussed, we do not reduce that to decision-making, even though decision-making is an indispensable preliminary to the self-development that is individual responsibility for philosophy, preliminary to eruption of actual revolution.

Or take the question of the preparation for transforming N&L into a bi-weekly, and together with it the "nitty-gritty," most concrete question for all—the special fund. That is actually the greatest determinant as to whether we do know how to sell the book, not as salespeople but as founders of Marxist-Humanism...

The sharpest expression of theory is methodology—and let's never forget that methodology is the result of the complex interaction of 1) social base; 2) theoretical analysis and practical activity, and 3) the struggles with rival tendencies and rival methodologies.

The point about all of these concrete tasks outlined for this year (and some for next) is that they must be tested by the Absolute Dialectical Method. The question of the new-book-to-be on "The Dialectics of the Party"⁸ and, most important of all, the real historic-philosophic beginning of the century-long-delayed outline Marx sketched for future generations in his *Critique of the Gotha Program* must be tested by the Absolute Method. Then we will actually be expressing what that dialectics of "the Party" as well as the dialectics of the revolution are leading to—a new, truly human society.

The interpenetration of philosophy, organization, self-development would result in humanity itself developing its full potential. The development of all human faculties assures the birth of a new man, a new woman, new youth, and of the classless, non-racist, non-sexist society.

Sept. 1, 1985

8. Dunayevskaya subsequently changed the planned title of her book from "Dialectics of the Party" to "Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy: The 'Party' and Forms of Organization Born Out of Spontaneity." For a discussion of her dissatisfaction with the phrase "Dialectics of the Party," see her "Talking to Myself" of May 19, 1987, in *Supplement to The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, Vol. 13, #10942.

The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism

selected writings
by Raya Dunayevskaya

Part One: Not by Practice Alone: The Movement from Theory

Part Two: Origin and Development of State-Capitalist Theory

Part Three: State-Capitalist Theory Within Marxist-Humanism

168 pgs.

\$8.50 (+ \$1.05 postage)

order from News & Letters, 59 E. Van Buren, Chicago, IL 60605

WOMEN'S LIBERATION AT A DEFINING MOMENT

While I am not a lawyer, and cannot pretend to understand the intended nuances of it, I hear the phrase "undue burdens" coming from the Supreme Court decision in the Pennsylvania abortion case, as an ominous one. First, it admits of "burdens" on freedom, thereby making freedom nonsensical. Second it declares that the state is the definer and arbiter of such burdens. Thus "burdens" can be "due" or "undue"—or such would seem logically to follow. But who has heard the phrase, "due burdens"? It would reveal too much to say that "due burdens" are levied against pregnant women.

The fact is that women's "right" to an abortion in this country—supposedly upheld in this sleight-of-hand Supreme Court decision—is enacted entirely within a field constructed by authoritarian state and religious power. Thus it resembles a gauntlet for women more than it does freedom.

Jennifer California

What I felt and observed at the pro-choice rally held here June 29 was a widening of the distance between the world of the spirited crowd of several hundred mainly white women, and the world of the major, historic uprising that happened right here in this very city two months earlier. It was disturbing that even those few speakers who were critical of the orientation that projected the Democratic Party as the path to women's freedom, and claimed passionately that "pro-choice" is "pro-change," were mute on the topic of the Los Angeles rebellion. It brought home to me the urgency for the Women's Liberation Movement to address both the critical dimensions of race and class and the question of the interrelationship between spontaneity and radical thought.

Michelle Landau Los Angeles

One thing that disturbed me so much about the Democratic Party Convention was the way the abortion issue was used. The Democrats swung totally to the right on almost every conceivable issue, from supporting cuts in "entitlement programs" to supporting a "strong defense," and from mimicking the Republicans' talk of "family values" to support of the death penalty. Yet through all of this, the Democrats kept shouting their support of abortion rights. It's as if to them there's nothing contradictory in supporting a "pro-choice" position and adopting the most reactionary of positions. It indicates that just saying you're pro-choice is not the measure of whether you're really for freedom.

Infuriated Illinois

Have you seen the recent piece by bell hooks in the 20th anniversary issue of Ms. magazine? I think you'll find the following comment of interest: "We must continually claim theory as necessary practice within a holistic framework of liberatory activism. We must do more than critique the at-times reactionary uses some academic women make of feminist theory. We must actively work to call attention to the importance of creating a theory that can advance renewed feminist movements, particularly highlighting that theory that seeks to further feminist opposition to sexist oppression. Doing this, we necessarily celebrate and value theory that can be and is shared in oral as well as written narrative."

Revolutionary feminist New York

What could be more ludicrous to encounter in the vast open spaces of Montana than the proprietary debate over the young Ms. Quayle's womb? The *Billing Gazette* brought me the news that Dan Quayle's daughter is now subjected to having her lack of freedom and autonomy publicly discussed. Her own mother (again proving that women can be among the strongest enforcers of patriarchal law) states unequivocally that her daughter would "take the child to term" if pregnant. The Vice-President, meanwhile, retreats to Christian sentimentalism in the form of a paternalistic superiority from which he can both judge and "support" his daughter, "whatever her decision."

Of course, given the "right to lie" movements invention and eager publication of "post-abortion syndrome," one can only too easily guess what kinds of mental tortures will be applied in the name of "support" and "love." This system—in which the rulers of the media openly discuss how they would limit and patronize their own families while they ignore the real day-to-day needs and problems of most women in—is sick and must be swept aside.

Traveling feminist Montana

Quayle doesn't care what a fictional character like Murphy Brown does with her life. He was attacking Black women, and the treachery is that this has gotten covered over.

Teacher New York

I must note an unfortunate omission by N&L: in the otherwise insightful lead by Lou Turner concerning the Los Angeles rebellion he mentioned Barbara Smith as a "Black socialist feminist" (p. 6). I know that no one would identify Barbara Smith as only a "Lesbian socialist feminist" or as a "Black lesbian." Why was her Lesbian identity not mentioned? She has been a highly visible presence in the Lesbian liberation movement, and has been forthright about her Lesbian politics. Since Lesbians of color have consistently asked their white feminist sisters and Black male brothers to not force them into a position where their identity is split, I feel compelled to draw attention to this.

Radical Lesbian Feminist Los Angeles

THE LATINO DIMENSION, NORTH & SOUTH



The City's response to the rebellion in Washington Heights has been to increase the number of police in the area and to remove the public trash baskets. The baskets were thrown about during the "disturbances" and the trash was set on fire. The way to quell rebellion, obviously, is to remove the baskets. I expect now city officials will attempt to justify the lack of public services in Latino neighborhoods by pointing out how dirty the people are: they throw their trash on the ground.

Looking for a Trash Basket New York

The Washington Heights community exploded after the killing of Jose Garcia. Protests were called by established politicians, but the people responded with a spontaneous outbreak. At one of the protests you suddenly saw 50 different political parties show up, but the people didn't want any leaders. Everyone was debating and it could not be manipulated. There are now political posters up everywhere telling people to come to this or that meeting, but people are not going. The spontaneity of the revolt raises, however, a real problem—how to keep it going without trying to be a "vanguard."

Dominican activist New York

After what happened in Los Angeles, and its ramifications all over the country, and what is happening in the protests in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Peru and Argentina—places where the role of the youth is crucial—the significance of the rebellion in El Alto Manhattan last month shows that the Latino Dimension in America (not only the U.S. but all America) is gaining momentum. We see, we feel, that something new is emerging, beyond what the intellectuals can grasp. The youth are the motor, and there is without doubt a new social consciousness in them. Now is a special moment and it is our responsibility to put our efforts in this struggle, not as "leaders" but along the masses. Marxist-Humanism is an important weapon that must be projected all over.

Carlos V. Argentinian exile

Latin America, the Latin American

Readers' Views

people, are suffering, perhaps, their worst crisis of the century and sadly, its true magnitude is ignored not only by the governments but also by the Left in general. Cases like Haiti, Venezuela and Peru are only the most evident consequences of the so called "New World Order." Poverty, repression, high mortality rates, pollution, etc. show to what extent "those who rule" will go to impose inhumane politics that only favor themselves. In spite of this, the Left is still debating about the importance of "democracy" (as some abstract entity) or, in the case of Sendero Luminoso, reaching for an extreme situation to destroy the old without creating the new (stopping at first negation). Once again we can confirm the negative effect of so-called "intellectuals" and the vanguard.

Latino Intellectual New York

TRY MAKING A LIVING

Against the recommendation of the ASCME Council 25 negotiators, nearly 16,000 Detroit city workers turned down a contract with a 10% pay cut on July 1. Three weeks later, Mayor Coleman Young announced he was seeking bids from private contractors for clerical services and would lay off 1,000 clerical ASCME members. With smaller bargaining units, such as the Emergency Medical Service Technicians, he has announced the lay-off of most or all of the membership while seeking contractors with which to replace them.

One clerical worker told me, "No one trusts the mayor. We see all the waste and corruption that goes on and we don't see why the city workers should pay for it. We think even if we took cuts, he'd still privatize at half the pay and with no fringe benefits, and that layoffs would come anyway. I'm sorry to see some of these smaller unions settling, because we all need to stick together. Otherwise, the mayor will just go on and do what he's doing. But why does he have to do it with such pleasure? Even if we lose, I'll still be glad I stood up for what I think is right. These union officials aren't doing what we elected them to do. We have to go down to those meetings and make them listen to us."

Municipal worker Detroit

Martin Almora was not boeing paranoid when he wondered aloud whether the union contract negotiations were actually going on outside the bargaining room where he sat (see "What kinds of deals?" June 1992 N&L). That is precisely the way a management rep bragged that our new contract with AFGE was negotiated last fall, when our union president was unable to control everyone on "his" bargaining team. This was our first new contract after a decade of renewals, and all they did was incorporate ten years worth of private deals. Afterwards, both sides touted this fiasco as a breakthrough in "win-win" bargaining, which means nobody loses—except the rank and file.

Federal employee Chicago

LABOR AND CAPITAL

They are allowing all of the production to leave the U.S., go to Mexico, go overseas, and then they're shipping the goods back here. Who's going to buy the goods? If the rich man is going to take all the money and keep it, the poor man can't even make any to get it. And without the working force our country can't exist. My thoughts were once that possibly they want to subjugate us to the point that we become like a Third World country, so dependent on the government for everything that you won't make any moves to use whatever rights you supposedly have—I say, supposedly. That way you're controllable. If they continue the trend the way it is, people are not going to go hungry, they are not going to do without, they are not going to continue to allow the government to

send money overseas to buy friends who buy weapons and turn them on other people to kill them, which we support with our taxes. This is not going to continue, because you're not living anymore, you're existing. In other words, there's going to be a revolution of a sort, and it's starting to begin, because the very poorest individuals have begun to see lack of hope and a future.

Laid-off Oscar Mayer worker Chicago

SOUTH AFRICA AFTER BOIPATONG



The latest issue containing the article by Lou Turner was especially good, since so many on the Left seem to think the ANC is a legitimate "Left" group, overlooking the Stalinist control.

H.S.L. Philadelphia

Lou Turner's critique of the ANC for soft-peddling such disasters as the Boipatong massacre was one of the best analyses of the situation I have read. I don't however understand why he asked why ANC Secretary General Cyril Ramaphosa should entertain illusions that a fundamental shift has occurred in the government's attitude toward sharing power. I don't see anything mysterious in that at all. Ramaphosa is thinking of how to secure his place as an administrator of the "new" South Africa, not about how to overthrow the system. His consciousness is dictated by his aims.

Solidarity activist Chicago

REVOLUTIONARY SISTERS OF COLOR

Revolutionary Sisters of Color, a grassroots socialist feminist organization that has been meeting together since October, 1990, is pleased to announce its founding meeting and conference: "Building the Leadership of Women of Color for Revolutionary Change." The meeting will take place in Washington, D.C. Sept. 25-27, 1992. Our founding meeting's primary focus will be to introduce and build Revolutionary Sisters of Color as a nationwide organization; to make links with sisters in struggle around the world; and generally to encourage and support the activism of radical women of color. Women of color who would like to get additional information and registration materials for the September meeting can write to Revolutionary Sisters of Color, P.O. Box 191021, Roxbury, MA 02119-1021.

RSOC Roxbury, Mass.

LONDON NOTES

Your readers may be interested in knowing that the pilot issue of "London Notes," a new autonomist magazine, has just been issued. It carries news and discussion of the L.A. Rebellion, the struggle over women's bodies, class composition in Europe, "squatting and social housing," and contradictions in independent studies college programs, and more. The editors "put emphasis on the autonomous grass-roots nature of the class struggle, and on the autonomous grass-roots struggles of each section of the working class (waged and unwaged) against any top-down imposition of a program in the name of the working class, and against any subordination of the needs of the marginalized sections of the working class." For a copy, send \$4.00 to London Notes, Box LN, 121 Bookshop, 121 Railton Road, Brixton, London, England.

Massimo De Angelis England

SPONTANEITY, PHILOSOPHY, ORGANIZATION

The Draft for Perspectives is a challenge to all the unfreedoms we confront today. Philosophy broken down into its two roots—philo and sophia—means love of wisdom. To use it means a passion for being fully free. When the Draft speaks of “free creative power as the plunge to freedom” it is not as a tactic but as a pathway to liberation. It is a marvelous expression because it is not beholden to any “limits of the given.”

**Supporter
California**

* * *

I don't know what the Draft for Perspectives means when it says revolutionaries have to “assume responsibility for the self-determination of the Idea” of freedom. To say an idea is “self-determined” sounds to me like it can exist on its own account; how then could anyone take “responsibility” for it?

**Student
Chicago**

* * *

Since so many Marxists were really raised on Engels' interpretations, which gave undue stress to the “materialist” side of the dialectic, I wish the Draft for Perspectives had quoted Marx's “translation” of Hegel's concept of the self-determination of the Idea: “The practice of philosophy is itself theoretical; it is critique that measures the individual existence by the essence, the particular reality by the Idea.”

**P. Leslie
Illinois**

* * *

I didn't get much out of Dunayevskaya's column on “Spontaneity, Organization, Philosophy” (see June N&L). I assumed from the title there would be more connection between spontaneity and organization. It opens up the question of what happens after the overthrow of the state, but it doesn't go far enough. We all talk of ideas as a material force, but what form of organization is needed, how is this different than before? I didn't get a hint of this from the article.

**Mitch C.
New York**

Dunayevskaya's column discusses how radicals take for granted their understanding of labor. She suggests that in the Critique of the Gotha Program Marx's concept of “freely associated labor” as the only real alternative to capitalism informed his concept of organization. I take this to mean “freely associated labor” is not just the goal of human society, but has to be worked out within the revolutionary organization itself.

**A.A.
New York**

* * *

It seems to me Dunayevskaya is suggesting it isn't so much the form of organization that is crucial, as much as the principles one is grounded in.

**Rachel
New York**

* * *

Dunayevskaya's 1979 letter to an Iranian revolutionary (see July N&L) is very much related to the title of the Draft for Perspectives—“Spontaneity, Philosophy, Organization: The Test of Today's Crises.” She was contributing to the discussions among Iranian Marxist-Humanists, who were grappling with “what to do” in confronting “what happens after the revolution.” The 1979 letter opens dialogue on concretizing that for organization; one year later, in the 1980 Introduction to the Farsi language edition of Marx's 1844 Humanist essays, she is showing how deep is the uprooting being called for by the masses in the Iranian Revolution. Though that was suppressed by Khomeini, the questions that motivated her to write the piece are more timely than ever.

**Internationalist
Michigan**

* * *

I found it striking that the Draft for Perspectives called the Los Angeles rebellion a “defining moment” because of the relation it posed of spontaneity to a group like us. It's too early to know the full meaning of the revolt, but there is a critical role for a group such as N&L in this period.

**Feminist
New York**

The “reformed” Communists continue to try to twist Marx to fit their latest political line. I attended the organizing conference of the Committees of Correspondence last month in the Bay Area, a group formed by those (such as Angela Davis) who split from the Communist Party after the fall of the Soviet Union. One speaker stooped so low as to use Marx's Critique of the Gotha Program to support the aim of dressing up the old CP in new clothes. He said that Marx stuffed his scathing critique in a drawer, refusing to show it to anyone, because “one step of real movement is worth more than a dozen programs.” He then said the COC is that one step forward, and that all separate programs should be abandoned for one “unified Left.”

**Julia Jones
Oakland, Cal.**

Editor's note: Our “Draft for Perspectives, 1992-93,” published in the July issue of N&L under the title, “Spontaneity, Philosophy, Organization: The Test of Today's Crises,” is available from N&L for 75¢ (includes postage).

**TRAGEDY
IN
BOSNIA—
HERZEGOVINA**



“Marx's Philosophy of Revolution vs The Visage of Hitler.” These words from Raya Dunayevskaya's 1986 lecture published in June 1992 N & L couldn't have summed up the situation in the former Yugoslavia, specifically Bosnia, more precisely. We once again return to a situation like Europe in the 1930s, a small “multi-ethnic” state confronted by a more powerful neighbor intent on “ethnically cleaning” the area where Serbs, Muslims and Croats have lived side by side. Stories of cattle-cars

of human freight, of young men taken from their houses and murdered, as well as the horror of war in Sarajevo and other towns abound.

As in the 1930s the great powers stand by, none see it to their advantage to intervene; Bush sees no Gulf war type “victory” as election capital, but only a stalemate. Meanwhile, the human tragedy increases daily. The U.N. Secretary General calls it a “rich man's war” and points to Somalia, as if the degree of horror can be measured, as if these things are not intimately linked.

**F. Shelley
New York**

* * *

Built into the capitalist order is the idea that the human being, the creator of all value, has no value. This is the reason you can have 50,000 people killed in Sarajevo and the various rulers dancing around the question. What they are doing is nothing, and this is the way the rulers feel about human life.

The way they sustain this type of attitude is with denial of the historical movements of humanity to bring forth a new society. As mass struggles produce a desire for freedom, this is written up and denied in the papers the next day. What goes in the history books is all doctored up; it's nothing like what actually happened. This usurps the capacity for humanity to break through barriers; it steals their imagination. We find a totally different outlook in the pamphlet American Civilization on Trial.

**Black city worker
Chicago**

RUSSIA TODAY

The sad fact is that the so-called democrats here sometimes behave themselves like their predecessors. Yeltsin like Gorbachev wants to keep in his grip the collapsing Russian Federation. You probably heard that recently Tatarstan declared its independence. Many other autonomous republics will no doubt follow its example.

**Subscriber
Russia**

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**
1991 University of Illinois Press edition. New introduction by author. Forward by Adrienne Rich. 240 pp.
by Raya Dunayevskaya \$12.95 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** 29¢ postage
- Marx's Capital and Today's Global Crisis**
Contains introduction, “Today's Epigones Who Try to Truncate Marx's Capital,” and Chapters Five through Eight of *Marxism and Freedom*
by Raya Dunayevskaya \$2 per copy
- The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.**
by Andy Phillips and Raya Dunayevskaya \$2 per copy
- 25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.**
A History of Worldwide Revolutionary Developments by Raya Dunayevskaya \$1.50 per copy
- American Civilization on Trial, Black Masses as Vanguard.**
Statement of the National Editorial Board. Includes “A 1980s View of the Two-Way Road Between the U.S. and Africa,” by Raya Dunayevskaya, and “Black Caucuses in the Unions” by Charles Denby \$2 per copy
- Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions**
by Raya Dunayevskaya \$1.25 per copy
- Frantz Fanon, Soweto and American Black Thought,** by Lou Turner and John Alan
New Expanded edition contains Introduction/Overview by Raya Dunayevskaya, Lou Turner and John Alan
Appendices by Rene Depestre and Ngugi wa Thiong'o \$3 per copy
- Selections from Raya Dunayevskaya's Writings on the Middle East** \$2.50 per copy
- Working Women for Freedom**
by Angela Terrano, Marie Dignan and Mary Holmes \$1 per copy
- Dos ensayos por Raya Dunayevskaya.**
Spanish language pamphlet
1989 edition \$2.00 per copy

—ARCHIVES—

- The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development**
A 15,000-page microfilm collection
on eight reels \$160
- Guide and Supplement to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development**
Full description of 15,000-page microfilm collection \$4.50

—NEWSPAPER—

- Subscription to News & Letters**
Unique combination of worker and intellectual,
published 10 times a year \$2.50 per year
- Bound volume of News & Letters**
(August 1977 to May 1984) \$20.00

MAIL ORDERS TO:

**News & Letters, 59 East Van Buren,
Room 707, Chicago, Ill. 60605**

Enclosed find \$----- for the literature checked. (8-9/92)
Please add 85¢ for each item for postage.
Ill. residents add 8% sales tax

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

• News & Letters is available on microfilm from University Microfilms International, 300 Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.
• News & Letters, as well as other Marxist-Humanist literature, is available on tape for the blind. For information, write to News & Letters.

Haiti: A view from the grassroots

In 1492 Christopher Columbus commented on the generosity and beauty of the first people he met in the "New World," who called themselves Tainos ("people of the good"). Five hundred years later, Haiti, the site of that first landing, exhibits all the contradictions of a sad history of exploitation through colonialism, imperialism and capitalism. Now a visitor to Haiti encounters the descendants of the two groups most affected by the invasion: the indigenous people of the island and the victims of the slave trade begun only a few years after Columbus' first journey. Today Haiti is in the process of disintegration. The more the people resist exploitation and oppression, the more they suffer from increased repression.

The average income of the lowest 90% of the population is \$150 per year. The demography of Port-au-Prince makes the class distinctions clear. Slum dwellings crowd the narrow streets right next to mansions. The rich obviously have the same attitude toward the poor that the early settlers had toward the indigenous and slaves: not quite human.

Since the coup in September 1991, people have been zombified, their hopes dashed, their attempts to organize met with continuing repression. The violence is different from that during the reign of the Duvaliers: then it was terror from inside, "passionate" violence. Now it's cold, cynical, scientific, psychological oppression.

The government has a stop-and-go policy toward overt violence. Shortly after the swearing-in of Marc Bazin as the new prime minister (de facto government number two) it was important to cover up the repression so ambulances picked up the bodies of people killed during the night instead of leaving them on the streets, but people said the violence was as bad as during the first days after the coup. The system of section chiefs, abolished by Aristide, is firmly in place again. Most section chiefs have large organizations of thugs and informers, many of them former Tontons Macoutes. Added to the 7,500 official army troops, they form an army of repression of probably 30,000. Severe repression everywhere results in the displacement of hundreds of thousands from the countryside to the cities; thousands more leave the cities for the countryside to try to find safety.

At the Haitian Red Cross one of our friends met a

Peruvian barrio resists

New York, N.Y.—After the murder of the grassroots women's leader Maria Elena Moyano by PCP-Sendero Luminoso (Communist Party of Peru-Shining Path) and the *autogolpe* (self-coup-d'etat) by the president of Peru, Alberto Fujimori, it is evident towards whom the cannons are pointing. Peruvian popular organizations are caught in the crossfire. This was the topic of the presentation by Cesar Espejo, human rights activist in Villa El Salvador (the barrio in which Moyano was vice-president), who was invited to speak by the Peruvian Support Group in New York City.

Cesar Espejo began with the meaning of Maria Elena as a symbol for the Peruvian women. President Fujimori visited the barrio after the coup to offer weapons to the people in order to confront Sendero. This offer was received by a resounding "no," thus showing the power of self-determination and self-development (human development) of the people in Villa. In a country where more than 50% of its population lives in extreme poverty, the popular organizations constitute the most important alternative to both a destructive state for the few and a guerrilla who does not present a new beginning.

Villa El Salvador is an example of popular organization. With 350,000 inhabitants, they have created cooperatives and popular assemblies, 800 "soup kitchens" (for 15 to 20 families each), a program for "vaso de leche" or glass of milk for every child, and an "industrial park" for micro-enterprises emerged from the informal economy that gave 15,000 new jobs for the youth.

The primary actors of this are the organized women of Villa. Maria Elena was and is the expression, the face of this human power. Sendero knew this and killed her, thinking that her death would mean the death of the whole movement. Sendero did not get the point. In Villa El Salvador, there are 5,000 different organizations and commissions and, despite the fact of Fujimori's coup and the massacre of 100 community leaders by Sendero, the struggle is still alive.

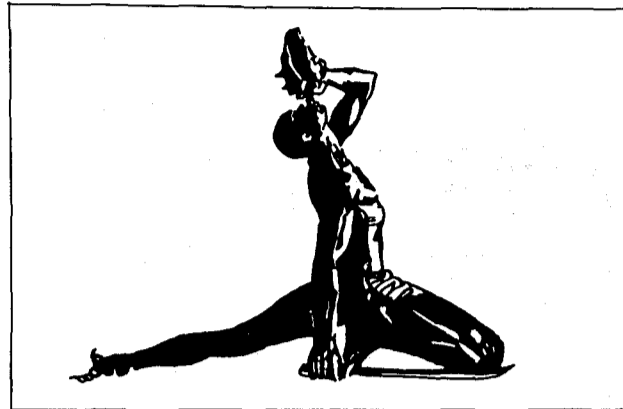
Fujimori's justification for the coup was a "paralyzed congress," a corrupt judicial power, and Sendero. For Sendero, Villa El Salvador, as a symbol of popular mobilization and organization, is dangerous and must be destroyed. Thus the popular movement is caught in the crossfire.

The popular movement is holding back the attack of both the state and Sendero. They are trying to deepen their links nationally in spite of the indiscriminate killings of their community leaders. Moyano's death is not the end of the popular movement, of the struggle for a "new beginning." The popular organizations continue that struggle supported by years of experience full of humanity.

Villa El Salvador's community center with clinic and library was destroyed by a Sendero bus bomb, and they are raising funds to rebuild. Contributions should be sent to Grupo De Apoyo Peruano, 298 Fifth Ave., Suite 136, New York, N.Y. 10001-4592, noting they are for the community center.

child who had come in on a boat that morning, a week or so after the U.S. Coast Guard had returned all those fleeing the country; he said that there are "lots" of Haitians still at Guantanamo Bay. We talked to one man in hiding, a member of the Aristide government, who had tried to fill out papers applying for asylum in the U.S. Just getting to the Embassy to pick up forms and to be interviewed is practically impossible.

Bazin comes to the Palace walking on 2,000 dead bodies, according to the Haitians, and he won't be able to govern. He's enormously unpopular with the people. All the ceremonies of his inauguration were in French and therefore understood by only 15% of



the population. The Macoutes don't want him and only made a deal with the U.S. State Department to keep Aristide out. Although he's staffing his cabinet with family members, clients, or members of the military, he can't find enough people to fill what are referred to as "coffin jobs." He's clearly a puppet for the military. Everyone knows this regime won't work and that the army is buying time. Bazin is disposable. The de facto government is using him because of his ties to the World Bank; next they might find someone with a reputation for justice, maybe even a Christian. But Bazin also can't be taken lightly. He has important support, especially from the U.S. in spite of its protestations to the contrary.

The major factor preventing the return of constitutionality is the U.S. The period of U.S. occupation from 1915 to 1934 has left Haitians with a fear of invasion and its effects, and people always talk about "the American Plan." In its current manifestation the American Plan supports the military while giving lip service to the democracy. Even before the election results, U.S. observers tried to convince Aristide to drop out.

Clearly a new society is emerging. The Haitian people have changed during the last 25 years. They are capable of judging, making good decisions, and resisting, with amazing ingenuity. Haitians have a different perspective on time from ours. They view life as a process, they understand that their social system has to crack from the inside, and they believe in dreams. They know when to step back and when to step forward; they know what they want, and sooner or later they'll get it.

—Esther Bowman

Mexico: Ending the national accord

Mexico City, Mexico—An entire historic period is coming to a close in Mexico in these final years of the 20th Century. That century had started in Mexico with the deep revolutionary movement of 1910-17. That Mexican Revolution was a strange mixture of bourgeois and social revolutions. It's true that the social class which reaped the fruit of the armed movement was the bourgeoisie; nevertheless it was the peasant dimension which played the most important part in the armed struggle. To be able to pacify the country and organize a new State, the bourgeoisie was obliged to come to an understanding, a national accord, with the form of the Constitution of 1917, which has been one of the most advanced fundamental laws in the world throughout the 20th Century.

Several articles stand out as synthesizing the reformist-progressive, nationalist-popular character of the Constitution:

- Article 30: Guarantees the right to mandatory, free, non-religious education.

- Article 27: All of the land as well as underground resources are property of the Nation and can be expropriated when needed. Small and collective landholding is re-established. The right of small farmers to the means of production (water, fertilizer, and credit) is established. Large landholdings (latifundia) are prohibited. (President Cardenas based himself on this article to expropriate the oil companies in 1938 and to carry out a profound agrarian reform between 1934 and 1940.)

- Article 82: The president of the Republic cannot be re-elected; to be president, one must be born in Mexico of both Mexican parents and grandparents.

- Article 123: Establishes the right of workers to organize themselves into unions, confederations, political associations, etc; establishes the right to strike; prohibits child labor under 16 years old; establishes the constitutional minimum wage (must be sufficient to satisfy all the basic needs of a worker's family including recreation, health and education); establishes social security.

- Article 130: Establishes the lay (non-religious) character of the State; prohibits the Church to administer schools.

The 1917 Constitution contains all the elements of a national accord. That is precisely the constitution-

El Alto Manhattan

Washington Heights, N.Y.—We arrived to the funeral house running, escaping from the police. Santo Domingo, 1965. El Alto Manhattan (Washington Heights), 1992.

A young Dominican of no more than 15 years old was at the top of a traffic light shouting, with the accumulated fury of a history of oppression: "We Dominicans are human beings!" The tension was irresistible; once in a while a bottle, a piece of metal flew towards the "blue boys." The people's uprising against an occupation army. The night came.

On July 3rd, Jose Garcia, a Dominican-born immigrant, was killed by Joseph O'Keefe, a policeman from the 34th Precinct covering the northern part of Manhattan, who was notorious for his abusive methods.

O'Keefe was patrolling along the stretch of 162nd Street between St. Nicholas and Broadway with two other detectives inside an unmarked police car. He spotted Jose Garcia and assumed that he was involved in some kind of drug deal. A quick chase gave way to the brutal beating of Garcia by detective O'Keefe.

An eyewitness saw O'Keefe beat Garcia with his walkie-talkie to the point of unconsciousness and shoot him twice while he was on the floor, one more statistic of police brutality in this Dominican community. Garcia, his death, lit the fuse of a revolt of people claiming justice, lasting five days and four nights.

The media, conservative and liberal, were terrified about the violation against "sacred" private property. Meanwhile, a community, an oppressed people, made their voice heard. The system is not invincible.

When Mayor Dinkins met publicly with the Dominican community asking for peace, a 12-year-old Dominican young woman interrupted him, shouting: "You want peace, order, sacrifices, but in this country we are treated worse than dogs!" The mayor, like other "community leaders," met with the people of the Dominican "ghetto" asking for peace and promising justice.

The desperate presence of these opportunist politicians was only due to the proximity of the Democratic National Convention in this city. Their speeches were no less hypocritical than those of the Republicans. Years of retrogression caused by Reagan and Bush's conservatism have reduced the ideological gap between both parties. Lou Turner was very clear in the June issue of *News & Letters*: "This is the position of Black and liberal leaders who assume the utopian attitude that the crisis of the inner cities can be resolved within the capitalist system."

When Jose Garcia was mourned, the streets were at war—the people confronting thousands of policemen. An occupation army like in Santo Domingo, 1965, was the image for most Dominicans. However, the people were in the streets confronting them, spontaneously, without "leaders," but with an idea of humanity.

The Latino Dimension in El Alto Manhattan, like South Central Los Angeles, shows to the world and particularly to Latin America its presence, its struggle, its life. Today, more than ever, it is important for our sisters and brothers to the South of the Rio Grande to be conscious of this, our presence in this Northern country. The Latino Dimension covers America. The dialogue is open.

—Sin Mas and Carlos Varela

al spirit which since 1917 has been made a mockery of. The majority of constitutional reforms have been against its spirit. But no government had ever gone so far in violating this spirit as has the present administration. The reforms of Article 27 which were carried out at the end of 1991 constitute the greatest historical retrogression of the last 70 years.

The practical results of this reform point to the following:

- to concentrate property in land to make agriculture "profitable" in capitalist terms, that is, the small land owners and those working the common land will be dispossessed by economic necessity. It is the classic process of "separating the producer from his means of production."

- to permit access of U.S. corporations such as United Fruit, General Foods, Anderson Clayton, etc. to the Mexican countryside; to increase U.S. imperialist investment; to create a new class of "farmers" associated with big capital; the new "farmers" will be the "caciques" (bosses) who have controlled the peasants for the last 50 years.

All these changes will result in a new capitalist accord in line with the New World Order. It is a total renunciation of all national interests and a total subordination to U.S. interests. Mexico is the new Puerto Rico. The effects of the reform will be extremely serious. Some five million peasants will end up without means of production and will be forced to migrate to the cities and to the U.S. (as undocumented "braceros"). This will increase the problems of unemployment, misery and violence in the Mexican cities, and in the U.S. it will cause an increase in racism and anti-Mexico phobia which is increasing daily with the recession.

And more. The government is also thinking of changing Articles 30 and 123. The object would be to change the education system to fit the needs of big capital and to take away workers' constitutional rights to organize themselves. As far as Article 130, the government has already "reformed" it by forming an alliance with the upper hierarchy of the Catholic Church. Now it remains to be seen if they also plan to modify Article 82 to permit re-election of the president.

—Student

Black/Red View

by John Alan

A myriad of events are now being planned to celebrate the quincentennial anniversary of Columbus' encounter with the "New World," but a pertinent question still remains unanswered by the planners: what did Columbus bring to the Americas that still determines the character of class and race relations in the "New World"?

To answer this question, we need to rid ourselves of the concept that Columbus was a brave navigator who discovered a new world and see him as an historic personality created by a definite historic period of world trade. His voyage of discovery was in the pursuit, not of a "New World," but of the establishment of a New World Order of Trade.

ENCOMIENDA SYSTEM

Columbus' world of trade was based on the fetish of gold as the universal expression of exchange value. During the 15th century, when mercantile capitalism left its Mediterranean chrysalis and ventured into the Atlantic, there was literally a mania for gold. The 15th century, the century of discovery, was in reality the century which sent the Portuguese around Africa and Columbus across the Atlantic in a greedy quest for gold.

However, gold can only become a universal commodity by the exploitation of labor. Thus, Columbus imposed upon the natives of Hispaniola, the colony he founded in the Caribbean, a new kind of alienated labor known as *encomienda*. The *encomienda* gave the Spanish settlers the right to expropriate tribal land, but also the unlimited right to use native labor to work the plantations and mines. This social division of labor, which first appeared in the "New World" when Native Americans were forced to work for a world market, is an enduring legacy of Columbus' encounter.

The *encomienda* system of alienated labor opened the way to African slavery, peonage and finally to wage labor. The real history of the post-Columbian Americas can be written within the context of the development of these forms of alienated labor and the opposition to them organized by Native Americans, African Americans, peons and workers.

The human cost to establish Columbus' world market

'No peace' protests

New York, N.Y.—"No choice, no peace" was a rallying cry for over 5,000 women and men who demonstrated against violence against women on the first night of the Democratic Party Convention. We protested not only the anti-abortion religious right-wingers, but also the Party program's inadequate response to the current "war against women" of violence and harassment. Thus the call for "choice" was extended from the right to abortion, to a woman's right to choose how to live her life in all its aspects—to walk the streets at night, to date without being raped, to hold a job without harassment, to have control over her life. The diverse crowd took up the chant, "Our bodies, our lives, our right to decide!" Most of the speakers, however, urged voting for women as the solution to sexism.

"No health care, no peace" was the theme of the rally against AIDS attended by 10,000, who vowed to be silent no longer about the needs of gays, addicts and women who are suffering and dying by the thousands. But the rally excluded speakers from the militant ACT-UP and WHAM groups, causing 2,000 people to leave the rally, whereupon the police clubbed them and dragged people away. ACT-UP thwarted the police's efforts to contain all the demonstrations to specific areas by conducting sporadic "die-ins" in the streets.

A demonstration against the growing police state drew 250 protesters and 500 police, who again clubbed demonstrators.

"No jobs, no peace" was the theme of a march of unemployed people, both youth with no prospect of jobs, and mature people laid off after many years.

"No Aristide, no peace" was shouted by Haitian New Yorkers who have been in the streets continuously since last September's coup ousted their president.

The Democrats came and went. We got no justice, and they got no peace. A taste of the future?

—N.Y. Protesters

Police abuse fought

Oakland, Cal.—Four months ago, the day after the Rodney King verdict, I was beat up by five white cops on my way home from work, and then charged with inciting a riot. I'm fighting it in court by myself because I can't find a lawyer to represent me. None of those cops have even showed up any of the times I've been to court. I won't give up until they show up and tell me how they can come and beat me up and put me in jail for walking home from work.

They arrested hundreds of Black men that same day. They just had them all lined up like it was slavery. They kept me in jail for five days. My leg swelled up the size of a baseball where they hit me. I remember just lying in my cell, burying my face in the pillow and just crying because I didn't know why I was even alive.

What happened to Rodney King happens all the time. This is the story of my life since the day I was born. I feel so oppressed and depressed all the time. It's like the whole society is an obstacle course to keep us down because we're Black. I have this rage that's been building inside of me since I was born. They'll have to kill me before I give up.

—Tony

The human cost of Columbus' slave legacy

was paid for in the annihilation of the original people of the Caribbean island and the decimation of those living on the continent. This loss of human labor power was so tremendous that, even before the death of Columbus, the African slave trade had begun to replenish this cruel consumption of human labor.

Professor Philip D. Curtin, in his analysis of the Atlantic Slave Trade, revealed that hunger for human labor power in the "New World" caused Spain to reduce

Africans to an abstract unit of labor power known as a *piezas de India* when contracts for slaves were given to the Portuguese. A *piezas de India* was a physical specification as to size, age, and health. Women, children and the old were fractions of a *piezas de India*. Thus, the contracts were never an order for a number of individuals, but for a needed amount of labor power.

Curtin concluded that a *piezas de India* was a "rationally conceived estimate of manpower requirements. In this sense they are not unlike the production targets in planned economy."

ALIENATED LABOR TODAY

It took a bloody civil war to end what Marx called "a purely industrial slavery" in the U.S. to open the door to universal wage labor. But wage labor is just another form of alienated labor, and at certain times it can approach the barbarism of the *encomienda*. It is the capitalist form of alienated labor, a social division of labor where wages appear as an equal exchange for labor power. It is not free of exploitation.

In fact it is wage labor that is now being assaulted by President Bush's attempt to establish a new world market under the control of U.S. capitalism. He is pursuing a policy to cheapen wage labor here in the U.S. and, at the same time, he is attempting to control wider areas of cheap labor abroad through the implementation of "free trade zones."

The Catholic Archbishop of San Francisco, John R. Quinn, opened a window on a "free trade zone" in an article he wrote after a recent visit to Guatemala. Quinn wrote that under the natural beauty of Guatemala "is poverty, repression, racism and unspeakable violence...the root of this injustice is the scandalously inequitable distribution of land." He went on to write that the living standards are no better for those who work in the *maquilas* section of the economy, i.e., assembly-for-export sector. In this sector, factories owned by U.S. corporations pay a wage of \$2 per day, which is one-third of what is needed for a living wage.

In Guatemala, *encomienda* and wage labor live side by side. One can't avoid thinking that the Los Angeles revolt was a thunderous cry to end the Columbian legacy of alienated labor and poverty.

Chevron's racist pollution

Oakland, Cal.—On Tuesday, June 23, chaos erupted at my office in Point Richmond when a bright yellow toxic cloud was spotted pouring from the Chevron refinery less than one mile away. This was the fifth such incident in nine months from Chevron alone [see April N&L] and city officials were busy assuring concerned residents and workers that there was no danger, despite immediate physical effects felt by those within a mile.

A local paper published a full color photo of the toxic cloud and announced that the West Contra Costa County Toxics Coalition (WCCCTC) was to have a community meeting in Richmond. At the meeting, over 150 concerned citizens, overwhelmingly Black and some Latino and white, packed a small community center to address the recent accident at Chevron, as well as a toxic explosion which occurred in Martinez, 20 miles away.

The meeting began calmly with a panel of local environmentalists providing facts about the health risks posed by such accidents, as well as exposing the racist nature of the locale of toxic factories. The room came alive when a heated debate arose between residents and the representatives from CAL-OSHA, a group associated with the county health department, who tried to argue that Chevron does not pose an imminent risk to workers at this time. The audience knew better. They knew they were still experiencing difficulty breathing and other ailments from the Dec. 5 accident, as well as from other accidents, and that things at Chevron and the other refineries in the area are only getting worse.

I spoke with a retired Black worker who worked at Standard Oil as an operator for 26 years who told me, "At Standard Oil they let loose waste through the stacks twice a week and never told anyone about it. We worked with the chemicals in that plant which would burn right through your skin." He challenged the WCCCTC during the meeting to help build a mass movement to stop Chevron rather than trying to sue them. "Chevron has all the lawyers on their side. It's going to take a community effort to stop them, not just one guy going down there. Suing those oil companies is like suing a rock. Ain't nothing going to come of it."

Another retired Black worker who used to work as a maintenance man for Chevron told me, "Chevron never told us what was in those tanks we had to clean out. They just said, 'We'll give you ten cents an hour more if you clean it out.' Now they're laying off all these people at the plants, they have too much work on just a few, and it gets even more dangerous. They either have to get more help in those plants or shut them down."

One woman who lives in Richmond said, "I was up on my porch and I saw the smoke come up suddenly and before I knew it, it was up in my face, making my eyes water, and it even made my hair nappy. Seems every time that thing blows, I'm right there."

Despite the widespread understanding that the city of Richmond and their courts will never shut down Chevron, WCCCTC is forging ahead with their lawsuits. However, they have plans for a big march on Chevron on Sept. 12 and hope to build a community-wide base of support by then.

—Julia Jones

South African strike



Demonstrators in Soweto were part of the millions who stayed away from work on August 3 and 4 in one of the largest protests ever against apartheid South Africa.

Black World

(continued from page 1)

of education and breaking down cultural barriers to fighting AIDS than the "advanced" U.S. Such Eurocentric judgments of African culture, along with stigmatizing African societies, closes off the free flow of information needed to work out a human rather than administrative way to deal with AIDS.

After all, the West, the U.S. in particular, remains the area of the greatest AIDS "infestation" (if I can use a word often reserved by Western writers for Africa). Even under the Victorian authoritarianism of President Banda, Malawi outdistances U.S. public health education on AIDS and its prevention. Not only has Malawi subsidized the sale of condoms—a policy neither President Bush nor his opponent Bill Clinton has proposed so far—but in Malawi, school children by the age of 10 are taught in government schools about the sexual transmission of AIDS and by 12 they learn about condoms. "It seems that we are now breaking through the stigmatic phases" of AIDS in Africa, says Dr. Eric van Praag of WHO. "Communities are opening up and accepting AIDS as part and parcel of their societies. I think that we (in the West) can learn a lot from the African response to AIDS" (*Africa News*, Dec. 9-23, 1991).

Naturally, this is not to suggest that women in African societies don't suffer from male dominated patriarchy. However, African culture and history is also replete with forms of social resistance by African women to male and imperialist domination. It is grassroots self-reliance and re-creation of that revolutionary legacy that has gotten far too little attention, even from Third Worldist and Afrocentric writers.

FATAL CONTRADICTIONS WITHIN

The fundamental contradiction underlying African traditional society, affecting Africa's response to the epidemic, is nevertheless, the ubiquitous man-woman relation. The epidemiology of heterosexual AIDS transmission in Africa and the U.S. is the fatal expression of that alienated relationship, that is to say, control over her sexual and reproductive life is alienated from the African woman.

As against the predictable Eurocentric view of Western writers on AIDS in Africa which privileges the "democratic slavery" of the Western family and its "values" over the "communal slavery" of the African family, we need to turn to Marx's dialectic of communal and modern societies.

Marx's notion that in miniature the contradictions within the family develop into those within society and the state means that AIDS has fatal consequences beyond the man-woman relation and the family, ones which reach into the economic and political life of modern African society. The prospect of losing manpower, skilled labor and a professional elite in developing countries due to AIDS reveals the transformation of the contradictions in man-woman relations and the family into those within society and the state. So much has the insidious logic of capitalism become a determinate part of the epidemiology of AIDS in Africa that many corporations and commercial farms believe that even if the disease decimates the work force, the current high rate of unemployment assures them a steady labor supply!

It is only when "the unrestrained and unchallenged dominance over the African woman...the customary and legal rights of males to unlimited numbers of partners according to his wishes (is) questioned and jettisoned," writes one African women's liberationist, E. Maxine Ankrak, a Ugandan social worker and lecturer at Makerere University, will the epidemiology of AIDS in Africa loosen its death grip.

The United States' economy in disarray

(continued from page 1)

numbers who face job prospects so bleak that they have "chosen" to stay at home or in school, or to retire early.

Almost every other measure of economic activity in the U.S. also points to a further downturn, a scenario bourgeois economists now say is as likely as not. Even if it does not transpire, this is sure to be the slowest "recovery," following the longest recession, since the Great Depression.

The present recession, moreover, is no self-correcting "cyclical" downturn. The ratio of constant to variable capital (means of production to workers) has become so lopsided that even if output again expands at more than a snail's pace, employment will not. Due to productivity gains, 59% of U.S. manufacturing firms now say that at least some of their recent layoffs are permanent. Chrysler's just-announced investment of \$225 million for a new line of Dodge trucks will add a mere 70 jobs and the company as a whole will still be laying off workers. As a front-page *New York Times* article put it recently (7/5/92): "heavy industries have so modernized their plants in the last decade, using computers and automated production lines that...mass production no longer means mass employment."

THE TODAYNESS OF MARX

Capitalism's ideologues will never comprehend Marx's analysis that, no matter how sky-high its productivity rises in material terms, the value of new output cannot keep pace with the value of capital already accumulated. This is because "the constant technological revolutions make the time necessary to reproduce a product tomorrow less than the time it took to produce it today."¹

Yet the capitalists themselves know from experience the consequent fall in the rate of profit. Measured by U.S. domestic non-financial corporations' ratio of after-tax profits from current production to net reproducible assets, the profit rate has fallen by one-half, from an average 6.7% in the 1960s to 3.7% in the 1970s and 3.3% in the 1980s, even with Reagan's tax breaks.

Precisely because a massive military buildup and more than a decade of "restructuring" have failed to halt the falling rate of profit and the consequent deficiency of productive investment, capitalist production cannot sustain the huge explosion of government, corporate, and consumer debt, the massive bureaucracies and seven-figure executive salaries. ("The excesses of the 1980s" is but the pseudo-moralistic way the ideologues themselves now tacitly admit that "boom" times are no longer sustainable.)

Therefore:

(1) The financial crises—unpayable Third World debt, the S&L scandal, the fragility of the major commercial banks, and the debt explosion at home—have not disap-

1. Raya Dunayevskaya, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, p. 43.

Put kids first!

Chicago, Ill.—A steady rain didn't stop 200 welfare workers from the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) from coming out on July 30 to protest massive budget cuts that have already eliminated the jobs of state employees and doubled or tripled the caseloads of those who remain. Over and over they chanted, "Hey Suter, put kids first!" Suter is the Director of DCFS and she just put 300 workers out on the street. One laid-off worker in adoptions had thirty years of seniority! Dozens of hand-lettered signs, like "Count my caseload" and "30 cases not 80," questioned a system that blames grossly overworked caseworkers for not being able to keep up with a rising tide of child abuse.

One Hispanic woman at the rally remarked, "I don't know why the other agencies aren't out here. They've all been cut." That is certainly true. Nor are state employees the only ones being laid off. Whole agencies like the Illinois Cancer Council, which depend on state funding for their very existence, are being summarily closed. Public library systems are being cut by as much as 40%.

When told about the cuts at DCFS, a Black woman who works on the federal side remarked, "In Chicago the homeless have built these little huts next to the railroad tracks. Now the city says they should be torn down. You've already put them out of decent apartments and put them out of jobs. What are they supposed to do, just die? If I can take some boards and build a shelter around myself, why shouldn't I? The land is vacant anyway. People shouldn't be surprised when they can't walk down the street without having their purses snatched, because no one is going to live in that kind of poverty. I work in a payroll office, so every day I see the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. We've got people making \$80,000 or \$90,000 a year and then they get a \$10,000 bonus! How much money can one person make! Shouldn't it just come down the line? If we do all the work and we're the ones who make the bosses look good, why are our bonuses only \$200?"

Today's cuts in state budgets around the country resemble the wholesale slaughter of federal agencies that began almost the moment Reagan took office in 1980. But because Reagan was very selective—limiting his attack to agencies with a social mission—those cuts had the appearance of being determined only by ideological interests. By now, the only agency not being cut is the beloved IRS.

—Jan Kollwitz

peared, but make themselves felt in the inability of the U.S. economy to recover from recession. With \$4 trillion in federal government debt, and states such as California facing unprecedented budget crises, temporary stimulus from tax and spending manipulations is impossible.

Stopping scab papers in Pittsburgh



On July 17 several thousand protesters—striking members of Teamsters Local 211 and their supporters—fought off the strike-breaking actions of Pittsburgh newspapers by preventing deliveries of the first editions published since May 17. The drivers struck against a company plan to eliminate 450 of 605 delivery jobs and all 4,500 youth carriers. The papers suspended publication two days later.

So is stimulus from consumer spending, as working people struggle to reduce their debts as never before.

Even the Federal Reserve's attempts to stimulate business borrowing through 23 reductions in short-term interest rates since mid-1989, reductions which have brought those rates to their lowest level in nearly 30 years, have failed to rejuvenate the economy. The banks and S&Ls are so burdened by losses that, instead of lending, they are setting aside ever-greater amounts of capital to stave off total collapse.

(2) Service sector growth, too, is now unsustainable and job losses are no longer confined to goods-producing industries. Once the effect of rising employment in one industry (health care) is removed, government figures reveal that the loss of 913,000 service-producing jobs between June 1990 and June 1992 makes up 36% of the total decline in that period. Such losses will surely continue: experts agree that few medium- and large-sized firms have finished "downsizing" their workforces.

For more than a decade, many ideologues argued that mass unemployment was merely the temporary result of a "sectoral shift" from manufacturing to services. Today's ongoing job losses in services reveal, however, an unmistakable permanent swelling of the industrial reserve army of unemployed, which had been masked by the sectoral shift with which it coincided for a time.

Even before the latest recession, the reserve army has been growing in the form of a low-wage and low-benefit "contingent" workforce, as state-capitalism, unable to raise profitability through production, has tried to raise it by imposing austerity and labor "flexibility." "Freelancers, contract workers and people paid by temporary and employment agencies" are estimated to comprise more than 5 of the 12 million "self-employed" in the U.S. And relentless pauperization is disclosed in recent findings that, between 1969 and 1984, the percentage of Black men with zero annual earnings rose from 16% to 28% among 20-24 year olds and from 8% to 16% among 25-54 year olds.²

Labor "flexibility," which the Democrats' new platform endorses, has also pitted worker against worker to such an extent that real average weekly earnings last year fell to their lowest level since 1958, and are now 19% below their 1972 level. A new study demonstrates that the average worker would have to labor 245 extra hours per year, an extra hour each workday, to maintain his/her 1973 standard of living.³ Even the salaries of college graduates have been falling since 1989. As a Black woman in a protest by unemployed people outside the Democratic Convention told *News & Letters*, "no one's more disillusioned than these kids who go to college and come out and find there's no job. 'I made it,' they say. Made what? To go work in McDonald's?"

2. Gerald D. Jaynes, "The Labor Market Status of Black Americans: 1939-1985," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Fall 1990. This study also demonstrates that any trend toward equalization of Black and white men's earnings and employment rates since the mid-70s is an illusion created by treating such paupers as non-persons even in a statistical sense.

3. Juliet B. Schor, *The Overworked American* (New York: Basic Books, 1991), p. 81.

At the same protest were the Taystee workers who are responding to the closing of their bakery plant by organizing a boycott of their ex-employer, Stroehmann's, and rallying Black community support to open a cooperative plant. The Clinton-Gore post-Convention traveling show itself brought media attention to other "little" strikes which usually go unreported, such as those against Fischers' Packing Co. in Louisville, Kentucky and Whirlpool in Evansville, Indiana. But today's most significant revolt is the urban rebellion "From Los Angeles to Washington Heights" which has brought the non-viability of this degenerate system to such a new point of consciousness that it has made the idea of revolution suddenly thinkable again.

The very future of humanity now depends on our creating time and space for this idea to self-develop. We cannot allow electoral hoopla and lesser-evilism to divert us from this task. Marx long ago showed that the capitalist system is incapable of renewing itself except through the destruction of existing capital. "The true barrier to capitalist production is capital itself."⁴ In this century, such destruction has thus far taken the form of two World Wars. Since there is certainly no end in sight to the present two-decade long global economic crisis, the question today is: what utterly barbarous form of destruction will be needed to "resolve" the crisis this time—or will the system's gravediggers, the employed and unemployed working people, rise up to reconstruct society on new human foundations?

4. *Capital*, Vol. III (New York: Vintage, 1981), p. 358.

Argentina schools strike

With a massive demonstration, July 4, educational workers in Argentina—teachers, professors and administrative employees—accompanied by students from the three levels of education—elementary, high school and university—went on a 24-hour strike demanding the continuation of public education and an increase in the educational budget equivalent to 8% of the gross national product. Taking into account that the minimum salary for a high school teacher is \$280 a month (in a country where the cost of living is similar to the U.S.) and that a course at the public university has an average of 70 students, it is not surprising that the march mobilized 100,000 people.

The students, protesting the government project to impose tuition, demanded their human right to education, a right that is in jeopardy due to the regressive policies that only can favor a minority (the rich). They also demanded an educational law that can secure free permanent education for everybody, participation of the community in the definition of educational policies, and the autonomy of the university.

The strike was 100% effective in the entire country. The demands were not limited to better salaries, but also included those of the students—complete participation of the students and educational workers in the decision-making of educational policies.

During the rally, the only three speakers were a student for each level of education, showing the level of consciousness and solidarity among students and workers. Conservative ideology affects all of humanity all over the world. Bush is attacking public schools in the U.S. and, of course, a puppet like Argentinian President Carlos Menem wants to follow the "emperor." What Menem forgot is that the Argentinian people do not forget their history of struggle. In 1918, the student movement of the province of Cordoba, began the struggle to reform the reactionary and conservative university. This movement in a few weeks spread all over Latin America marking the birth of a new generation of revolutionaries.

Once again, history shows us that in these years of retrogression the "collective memory" (the history of the people's struggle) serves as a weapon for revolution. President Menem, who called the strikers and demonstrators terrorists and subversives, like in the "best" years of the last dictatorship, forgot about that.

—Argentinian activist

HOW TO CONTACT NEWS & LETTERS

CHICAGO: 59 E. Van Buren, Rm. 707

Chicago, IL 60605 (312-663-0839)

Call for meeting information

DETROIT: P.O. Box 27205

Detroit, MI 48227

Thursdays, 7:00 p.m.—Central Methodist Church,

Woodward and Adams

OAKLAND: P.O. Box 3345

Oakland, CA 94609 (415-658-1448)

Sundays, 6:00 p.m.

390 27th St., Oakland

(between Telegraph & Broadway)

LOS ANGELES: P.O. Box 29194

Los Angeles, CA 90029

Sundays, 5:00 p.m.

Echo Park United Methodist Church

1226 N. Alvarado (north of Sunset)

NEW YORK: P.O. Box 196

Grand Central Station

New York, NY 10163 (212-663-3631)

Thursdays, 6:30 p.m. in August,

Sundays in September

Washington Square Church

135 W. 4th St. (East door), Manhattan

FLINT: P.O. Box 3384

Flint, MI 48502

Subscribe to and write for N&L.

Youth

by Maya Jhansi

In the April 1992 issue of *News & Letters*, I wrote about the right-wing attack on "political correctness" and asserted that this attack is an attack on our minds, on the very idea of freedom. It has perverted the meaning of freedom by "confusing" clear-cut issues about racism and sexism. To them, freedom includes the freedom to exploit. In light of this, what has been the response of the so-called "politically correct"? Is what is being called "politically correct" really a radical challenge to this degenerate and exploitative society? Though I cannot attempt a thorough and inclusive exploration of this issue here, I would like to begin by focusing on an essential component of academic multiculturalism today, that is, the question of culture.

Right-wing ideologues like Allan Bloom exclaim that the introduction of the history and literature of people of color and of women has led to the breakdown of the "unity" and "universality" of knowledge in academia. Universality to the right wing means racism, sexism, elitism and Eurocentrism. It is a glorification of "Western civilization," and by Western they don't mean revolutionary history, but the history of pillage and plunder. This certainly is what we, the "politically correct," are all against. But what about what we are for? It is easy to be against something; the real challenge is articulating an opposition without limits and without compromise. Does multiculturalism (in the general) do that?

FORM AND CONTENT

I would assert that it does not, mainly but not exclusively because multiculturalism abstracts culture from revolution. This has a two-fold character: First, in the humanities, culture is substituted for revolution. This plays itself out most blatantly in what is called postmodernism. Changes in form in art are called "radical" and "revolutionary" while older forms of art are deemed "conservative." Canonized literature and art is called conservative (regardless of the author's politics), and postmodern literature is deemed "politically correct."

To the extent that Black, Third World or women's literature subverts the form of traditional literature, it is called revolutionary. The extent to which this literature follows traditional literary conventions determines its complicity with specific ideologies like racism or sexism. That's why Henry Louis Gates privileges Zora Neale Hurston (a Black woman writer from the 1930s who wrote in Black dialect) over Richard Wright or Ralph Ellison because the former subverts traditional literary conventions through her use of dialect.

The key point here is that to them it is not the content that is important but the form. Subsequently, the kind of literature you like determines whether you are radical or conservative. If you prefer Shakespeare or Pope to Salman Rushdie, then you are of necessity a right-wing Europhile embedded in a conservative agenda. If you like Hurston and Rushdie and think Shakespeare is a scam or if you think all literature is equal (from Danielle Steele to Hurston to Shakespeare) then you are radical, whether you support Perot/Bush/Clinton or not. What is touted as "pluralism" reveals itself for what it is: cultural determinism.

Secondly, outside of the arts, multiculturalism does not so much abstract culture from revolution as it sees no difference in the two. That is to say that the whole concept of "diversity" reveals itself as a sort of cultural solipsism that destroys the ground for any sort of internationalism. Differences between cultures are seen as absolute since human beings are culturally and socially "constructed."

A revealing example is a recent article I read by Indian feminist Chandra Mohanty titled "Under Western Eyes" in which she asserts the need to deconstruct Western feminism and construct in its

No to parental consent!

Chicago, Ill.—The recent Supreme Court decision which makes teenagers get parental consent before having an abortion directly affects me. It is scary and makes no sense. It says that if a kid gets pregnant and wants to have an abortion against her parents' will, she can go to court. But if the court decides you are irresponsible, then you have to have the baby! Then how could she be responsible enough to bear and raise a child? I don't see how kids will be able to get a legal abortion—especially when you have to go through the courts.

Many teens will try to have an illegal butcher abortion before they would tell their parents they are pregnant. Teenagers are still children themselves, and when you make them have another child, you're making them drop out of school. Once we have kids, we're responsible for them. Yes, we can put them up for adoption, but going through pregnancy will still change your life. You immediately have to become an adult when you are not ready. Your future will be destroyed.

Many of us also think, why would we bring a child into this world when there is nothing for it? Why would I have a child ever? Many of my friends are angry at their parents for bringing them into this world. When I think of my own future, I don't see anything good for the U.S. because we keep making stupid mistakes. I don't think it's hopeless, but the way we're going now it looks that way.

—Woman high school student

Multiculturalism and revolution

place an amalgam of culture-specific feminisms.¹ One example she uses to show the difference of cultural context is the issue of the veil during the 1979 Iranian revolution. She claims (as did the Ayatollah) that the veil was a liberatory act by Iranian women



since it defied Western imperialism.

Supporting an oppressive part of a culture and calling it anti-imperialist can be called nothing less than counter-revolutionary. The veil is dehumanizing and by wearing it women are assumed to be sexual creatures, bodies without heads, that need to be hidden so that men don't get distracted—women are blamed for sexism. That Mohanty, who calls herself a feminist, can take the same position as a fascist dictator like the Ayatollah reveals, at best, the limitations of "multiculturalism" and "diversity."²

1. This article can be found in the book *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*, ed. Ann Russo and Lourdes Torres, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1991, pp. 51-80.

Youth in Revolt

by Tom Parsons

Students at the National Autonomous University of Mexico occupied buildings and shut down the campus there to protest a proposed tuition increase that would have raised tuition by one million per cent (from six cents to \$670). In the wake of the protests officials suspended the increase indefinitely.

* * *

Students in Belgrade and three other Serbian cities have ended their month-long protest of the government of Slobodan Milosevic. Fifteen thousand students seized and occupied the downtown Belgrade buildings of the university. The students are demanding new elections and an end to the brutal wars Serbia is waging against Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Since the last major protests here in March, student leaders have been punished by being sent to the front lines. Before suspending the protest, students and faculty supporters attempted to march on Milosevic's mansion. They were blocked by thousands of police. Students vowed to resume the protests in mid-August if Milosevic is still in power.

* * *

Hundreds of Guatemalan students blocked traffic and set up barricades of burning tires to protest the brutal breakup of a peasant land demonstration by police. The students stopped rush hour traffic outside the state University of San Carlos as unrest grew against the government of President Jorge Serrano.

* * *

After a police van struck and killed two youths on a motorcycle, British towns have been gripped by riots and street fighting this past month as the police fought Black, Asian and white youths.

Most of the rioting has been in the depressed towns of the North, and every night there have been reports of new outbreaks. The biggest outbreaks were in Blackburn, where Asian youths fought running battles with the police along city streets and in Huddersfield where a drug raid on a housing project resulted in seven nights of fighting involving hundreds of youth.

All have been amazed at the high level of organization and anger against the police. Tory MPs have tried to blame "sinister organizations." There were not only stores of stones, molotov cocktails and bottles, but the use of CB radios, as youths came together against their common enemy. It was only with an increase in violence that the police were able to gain control.

(information from F. Shelley)

Coming next issue

Special section on 125th anniversary of Marx's Capital

Includes a previously unpublished writing of Raya Dunayevskaya

CULTURE AND REVOLUTION

While the debate on multiculturalism is seen in this light, i.e., West versus rest, unity versus diversity, right-wing versus radical, the presuppositions about culture and revolution show these oppositions to be false. While multiculturalism is certainly against the Eurocentric, white male view represented by the Right, they offer no challenge because they accept the right-wing ground for debate by accepting the "West" of Allan Bloom to be the "West" in reality.

The "West" is not some monolithic entity. It has a history of struggle against itself. The "West" is not all white males, and not all white males are George Bush. There are classes, races and sexes that form the dialectic between Western capitalism and those forces of revolution battling it. Likewise, everything from a non-Western culture is hardly revolutionary, e.g., the veil or the caste system in India. Culture is not absolute, and it does not determine history. Human beings create both culture and history. To the extent that I am human, the Greeks are as much my history as a white person's, and Shakespeare is as much my triumph as anybody's. Likewise, Black history is not just for Black people. Black history is American history; it is world history. Women's history is not just for women; it is human history. Fanon put it best at the end of *Black Skins, White Masks*:

"I am a man, and what I have to recapture is the whole past of the world... Every time a [wo]man has contributed to the victory of the dignity of the spirit, every time a [wo]man has said no to an attempt to subjugate his[her] fellows, I have felt solidarity with his[her] act."

2. Mohanty's position is also historically uninformed. The March 7 order by the Ayatollah for women to wear the chador was followed by five straight days of protest by Iranian women's liberationists. In fact, women in Iran even invited Kate Millet to Iran. Kate Millet, in turn, was called an "agent of imperialism." Mohanty's position though under the banner of "multiculturalism" is hardly new: it reproduces the position of the old Left who supported Khomeini. For a more detailed discussion of this, see Raya Dunayevskaya's *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution*. In this book Dunayevskaya traces the seeds of this uprising by women to an indigenous history of revolutions where women were not only force but also Reason.

End capitalist education

Jonathon Kozol's book, *Savage Inequalities*, (Crown Publishers, Inc.: New York, 1991) is an important and revealing documentation of the disgraceful condition of U.S. public schools. The accounts of extreme disparities in the educational experiences and opportunities between children living just across town from each other and attending public schools are overwhelming! Schools in the Mississippi Valley, Chicago, New York, New Jersey, Washington D.C. and San Antonio are seen in Kozol's book. The ugly message is repeated in each locality: children living in poorer neighborhoods, especially where mainly Blacks and Latinos attend their public schools, have grossly inadequate facilities. Kozol explains how terribly under-funded schools must choose which basic necessities they will do without.

Kozol talks with students and classroom teachers, not only the school administrators, in his book. Often words of youth and workers get to the bottom line of the crisis. Kozol poses questions like: what if the schools were equally funded? One student at Cherry Hill H.S. in New Jersey said, "First they wouldn't be equal. You know as well as I. So long as there are no white children in our school, we're going to be cheated. That's America. That's how it is" (p. 155).

In a suburban New York high school, there is a totally different perspective: "I don't see why we should do it. How could it be of benefit to us?" (p. 126) "The point is you cannot give an equal chance to every single person. If you did it, you'd be changing the whole economic system" (p. 128).

Kozol sees the widening gap of school funding and argues that to equalize public schools, distribution of finances must be equalized. However, there is a long history of legislation creating a whole system to institutionalize the deprivation or favoritism in U.S. public schools today. Kozol says, "All this leads us to the point, acknowledged often by school-finance specialists but largely unknown to the public, that the various formulas conceived—and reconceived each time there is a legal challenge—to achieve some equity in public education have been total failures" (p. 209).

But Kozol still thinks reforming the system of financing schools would solve the problem of education in the U.S. Even if this came true, Kozol does not address what kind of education there should be, what should be studied, and who gets to decide.

As a student in public schools my whole life, I can say the division between mental and manual labor is wide in schools and having textbooks and computers doesn't make it a less miserably alienating experience! Today, the public schools that are college oriented are simply preparation for the corporate training grounds of the university.

Obviously, the system is designed to maintain itself—the status quo. Those who already are privileged get more, and those who haven't enough will keep getting less so long as the system remains intact. The only way to break the circle is to totally break the cycle apart, leaving nothing of the barriers public schooling has forced on all of us as we've tried to educate ourselves and our children.

—Marna

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

The civil war in Somalia, coupled with the drought in Africa, plus the inability of world capitalist organizations to alleviate human suffering, has added up to the estimate by relief officials that fully one-third of the country's from 4.5 to 6 million people may die in the next six months unless a massive quantity of food is made available.

There are few images of human-made disaster that can compete with the Somalian refugees who, on a hijacked freighter run aground off Yemen in June, jumped into the sea in an attempt to survive. At the minimum, 90 people drowned, but many more—perhaps hundreds—died from starvation, thirst, and heat on the ship and on the beach.

One Red Cross official described conditions for Somalians: "Here is hell." Another observed that "every kitchen has its graveyard." The greatest death toll has been among the children. "The people here are dying like flies," said one United Nations aid worker in Mogadishu. "Some of them die in line waiting to get a bowl full of slop. I have never seen anything like this in my life." It is being called the single worst humanitarian crisis in the world.

Civil war began in Somalia after the overthrow of President Siad Barre in January, 1991. But the heaviest fighting began ten months later when factions in Mogadishu split. In the period preceding a cease-fire last spring, anywhere from 14,000 to 30,000 people, most of them women and children, died, many from starvation; some 7,000 were wounded. The reality of starvation is greatest in the rural areas, where 2.5 million people are seeking food and shelter from the fighting.

The United States and Russia sent millions in weapons to the Siad Barre regime in the 1980s—weapons which are now mostly responsible for the deaths of the civilian population. The Bush administration, which has

Death lists in Egypt

Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak, in June, accepted an invitation to visit Israel, thus moving the U.S.-orchestrated negotiations a bit further along. Not enough attention has been paid to the growing crisis inside Egypt, however.

In recent months, as the economy has deteriorated, Islamic fundamentalists have become more aggressive. The shocking murder on June 10 of Egypt's leading and-fundamentalist politician, Farag Foda, has been followed up by a series of murderous attacks on Coptic Christians. Many prominent intellectuals, deemed "anti-Islamic" by the fundamentalists, have been placed on their "death lists." Those so named include the recent winner of the Nobel Prize for literature, Naguib Mahfouz.

Subscribe to News & Letters

only \$2.50 per year

News & Letters

59 E. Van Buren, #707, Chicago, IL 60605

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* (1958); *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) 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

War, famine in Somalia

characterized the deadly destruction within the nations of the former Yugoslavian republic as nothing more than a "hiccup" to which the U.S. need not respond, has likewise given little attention and a paltry \$62 million of humanitarian aid to Somalia. An emergency airlift of food from the UN has been held up as international bureaucrats can't figure out how to get it past the warring clans.

In "Will Somalia Survive?" the *Christian Science Monitor* put this horror in a world perspective: "It is easy to dismiss the country's current tragedy as something out of a primitive order of things. But Somalia is,



to its misfortune, right in the midst of modernity....Nothing has occurred in the Somali capital of Mogadishu over the last year that has not been acted out on a vast scale by the developed world of the 20th century. In abandoning Somalia to its fate, the developed world turns its back upon aspects of its own historical plight; rootless nomads with guns are not unique to backward countries."

French anti-Semitism: yesterday and today

This summer, on the 50th anniversary of the 1942 deportation of French Jews, a new debate over the Holocaust has broken out. These deportations, which began on July 15 and 16, 1942 during the Nazi occupation, were carried out by the collaborationist Vichy government. Of 76,000 Jews eventually deported, only 2,600 survived.

On June 15 of this year, a manifesto signed by over 200 French intellectuals, including prominent figures such as Etienne Balibar, Pierre Boulez, Cornelius Castoriadis, Regis Debray, Jacques Derrida, Jean Lacouture, Louis Malle and Nathalie Sarraute, stated in part: "It was on its own authority, and without being asked to do so by the German occupier, that the French state of Vichy separated the Jews from the national community...It ordered their arrest by French police." The signers called upon President Francois Mitterrand to "recognize and proclaim that the French state of Vichy was responsible for persecutions and crimes against the Jews of France."

For five decades, French public opinion has refused to

Appeal from the Philippines

Manila, Philippines—I am the sister of Fernando Baldomar, one of your subscribers. I want to inform you that my brother was killed last August just before his 45th birthday. My brother was a good, active, urban poor leader of the oppressed, depressed and exploited people in our society (particularly in our small community.) He was the president of the Samahang Pang-Nayon ng Navotas (SPN), an affiliate of the Pagkakaisang ng mga Maralita sa Navotas (PAMANA), a federation of urban poor organizations.

The family is poor. He left eight children, mostly in primary grades. We brought the case to the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), but up to this time the case is unheard.

We have witnesses. Our primary suspects are Navotas policemen. Baldomar was forced outside his home at gunpoint. His wife, Lydia, followed outside and struggled to hold Baldomar but she was hit by the abductors. A witness said that Baldomar was shot three times, sustaining gunshot wounds in the chest, stomach and head before being carried to a vehicle. His family looked for him at different police stations, but their search ended up at the Navotas Metro Funeral Parlor.

Money is powerful, and we don't have that. Here if you are rich and in power you will succeed in any case, but if you are poor you are nothing. The family cries for justice in my brother's death. Human rights violations in our country are very high.

We have lawyers from Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG) who helped us process the case. Now, we don't have resources for sustaining the case like daily expenses, transportation, etc. Would you please help us.

—Lonita de los Santos

Editor's note: If you would like to contribute to help pay expenses for continuing this case in the Philippines please send contributions to News & Letters, 59 E. Van Buren, Chicago, IL 60605 and we will immediately forward them to the Philippines.

face up to the significant degree to which government officials and ordinary citizens collaborated with the Nazis, instead preferring to exaggerate the support enjoyed by the anti-Nazi Resistance. But public opinion was outraged in April, 1992 when an appellate court dismissed charges of crimes against humanity which had been lodged against Paul Touvier, who executed seven Jews during the Vichy era.

In an incredible statement, the three-judge panel said it had dismissed the charges because the Vichy government never pursued "ideological hegemony" and "only" persecuted people by race and religion, and that therefore it had not committed crimes against humanity! This ruling was not a total aberration, however no French citizen has ever been brought to trial for specifically anti-Jewish crimes during the Occupation.

Then, on July 7, it was revealed that two additional Vichy officials were indicted secretly in June for crimes against humanity. Why secretly, the public has asked? Could it be because one of them, Maurice Papon, is politically well-connected, since he was the Paris police chief in the 1960s and the Budget Minister in the 1970s, both times in conservative governments? Will these charges too be dismissed?

Mitterrand then announced that his answer to the intellectuals was that he would not accept responsibility for the Holocaust on behalf of the state because, he argued, the present-day French state has nothing to do with Vichy. Protests broke out over his sidestepping of the issue, and he was booed as he laid a wreath at a ceremony honoring the victims of July 15 and 16, 1942. Other public demonstrations were held on July 15 and 16, including one where protesters placed concentration-type barbed wire around the gates of Papon's luxurious home. More protests are sure to follow, not alone as a memory of past horrors, but also as a critique of the very real, growing French neo-fascist movement of today, the National Front.

Crisis in Algeria

The June 29 assassination of figurehead President Mohammad Boudiaf pointed once again to the deep crisis in Algeria. It was announced that Boudiaf was killed by a 26-year-old lieutenant while giving a speech. The lieutenant evidently had fundamentalist sympathies, but it is unclear whether factions within the ruling military might have had their own hand in the plot as well.

Ever since January, when a massive fundamentalist surge at the polls was stopped by a military coup, Algeria has been simmering on the brink of civil war. One side is the discredited, corrupt military, in power in one form or another since 1962. On the other side is the retrogressionist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), which wants to set up a totalitarian theocracy. Left groups, such as the Front of Socialist Forces, which have opposed both the military and the FIS, have so far remained marginalized.

Join the dialogue—

Order N&L Pre-convention Discussion Bulletins #1 and 2. Only \$1.00 each.