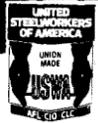


Theory/ Practice NEWS & LETTERS

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx



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Sweatshops not economic recovery



by John Marcotte

Ronald Reagan's recovery is recovery for the rich. While corporations report record millions in profits, 35 million, or over 15 percent of the country live below the official poverty rate, the highest in 20 years. In my shop while our bosses drive around in the newest Cadillacs and take trips all over the world, we had to fight six months just to get a pair of cotton socks for our boots in the acid soaked plating room.

What kind of new jobs does this Reagan recovery offer? The poverty rate tells it all. They're not the better paying jobs that were lost to robots and plant closings. They just hired a dozen new workers in my shop. They're paying them \$3.62 an hour. Some have to travel an hour and a half each way to get here. They all spend \$22 a week on transportation. One of the new women leaves her three children home alone to come to

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Black World

Black women writers today



by Lou Turner

The new in the literature of Black women writers in both America and Africa impels a second look in order to work out how it relates to the earlier Harlem Renaissance writers and the present situation. The Black women writers to be briefly taken up here—Paule Marshall, Buchi Emecheta, Alice Walker and Phyllis Ntantala—present a critical dimension of Black thought in a body of literature expressing not only a bold originality of mind but a warmth of life embracing every aspect of the Black and woman's condition.

Distinct, however, from Black women writers from the Harlem Renaissance, the critique of existing social relations, especially personal relations, in the literature of today's Black women writers necessarily flows out of the political experiences of women in the Black movement of the last 30

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Reagan's Central American wars vs. revolutions in theory and practice



by Raya Dunayevskaya

National Chairwoman, News and Letters Committees

Editor's Note: The 1984-85 National Convention of News and Letters Committees met the second week of July. The opening address, *Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, 1984-85*, was delivered by Raya Dunayevskaya, National Chairwoman. Below we print brief excerpts from sections of this Thesis, *The Movements from Theory as well as from Practice vs. the great Artificer, Ronald Reagan, for whom the whole World is a Stage*. The full text of the Thesis is available from News and Letters Committees. See ad page 9.

To Ronald Reagan, for whom the whole world is a stage where he prances around with a smile on his face but armed to his teeth, this year's trip to the Summit was preceded by, and is being followed by, getting Congress to enact all his goals, whether it be on the MX missile and the astronomical deficits, or whether it be in playing up the "strong recovery." The real coup he recently engineered was the continuation of the stranglehold on Central America, specifically El Salvador. As initiated by his first Secretary of State, the war-hawk

Haig, who had declared El Salvador the center point of the global crises, this is continued by the soft-spoken but equally rapacious Shultz. The latest image Reagan had put over on Congress (who had heretofore not approved the money for El Salvador) was the presentation of Duarte as a democrat who would put an end to the death squads if only Congress would provide the money to help him "control the Army." That is the phrase used by Duarte for many a year now, and hardly for democratic purposes.

It is true that Duarte did not enjoy the confidence of the extreme rightist regime against whom he had won the election in 1972, that he had been arrested, tortured

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ON THE INSIDE

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History of Black Cincinnati pg. 8

News & Letters subscription drive begins

Nineteen eighty-four has been a year both of Orwellian overtones and of intense freedom action and thought. Ronald Reagan "jokes" about the annihilation of Russia, launches his war upon the peoples of Central America through surrogates like El Salvador's President Duarte, dictates to the world (along with the Pope) what are acceptable methods of population planning, and continues his offensive against the mass of American people through his union busting National Labor Relations Board, his anti-Black, anti-woman Justice Department and Supreme Court.

The other poles of world capitalism, Russia and China, continue their own forms of oppressive rule, whether in Afghanistan or Poland, or stifling dissent within their own respective countries.

As against these practitioners of unfreedom, East and West, there has been a blossoming of revolutionary deed and idea from all corners of the globe: the dissidents of Poland's Solidarnosc defiant still; the permanent rebellion within Southern Africa; Latin America's masses in outright insurrection from the southern cone to the isthmus of Central America. Within our country a "second America" — of Black masses' activity of which the Jackson campaign was but the tip of the iceberg, of labor militancy as in the Toledo rebellion of last May, of anti-Central American intervention youth, of women battling the feminization of poverty and the battering of women — continues to make its presence felt.

Nineteen eighty-four is a crucial year for us at News and Letters:

- We have moved both the publishing center of News & Letters and the organizational center of News and Letters Committees to Chicago after almost three decades of functioning in Detroit.

- We have issued *Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, 1984-85* from our National Convention. (Excerpts are printed beginning on this page.)

- Raya Dunayevskaya, the Chairwoman of the Na-

tional Editorial Board of News & Letters is completing an introduction to a new work, a selection of essays on Women's Liberation, to be published by Humanities Press in 1985. This will be an extension of the living Marxist-Humanist body of ideas which has created three major works — *Marxism and Freedom, Philosophy and Revolution and Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* — as our view of Marx's Marxism and its rearticulation for our day.

- This fall we will be holding classes in each of our locals which will combine a look at objective events over the past ten years and the Marxist-Humanist methodology which has both analyzed those events and singled out revolutionary pathways forward.

AND WITH THIS ISSUE OF NEWS & LETTERS WE ARE LAUNCHING A SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE AS WE BEGIN PUBLISHING IN OUR NEW HOME, CHICAGO.

News & Letters is the only journal in the world which presents a Marxist-Humanist analysis of global events and presents all the voices of revolt, writing reports of their own actions and ideas. At the same time News & Letters refuses to separate this analysis of objective events, this presentation of freedom activists speaking for themselves, from the working out and presentation of a philosophy of freedom, Marxist-Humanism, within our pages.

Three columns help to tell what kind of a paper we are: *Theory/Practice* by Raya Dunayevskaya presents the theoretic-philosophic framework of Marxist-Humanism within our paper. *Black World* written by a young Black intellectual, Lou Turner, presents the Black dimension as national/international, as thought/deed. *Workshop Talks* is written by two workers, Felix Martin, a worker with almost two decades experience in the auto shops, and John Marcotte, a young worker whose experience has been in smaller production shops, working side by side with immigrant workers from many Third World countries. In addition there is a Women's

Liberation page and a Youth page, each written and edited by activists in those movements.

With this issue of our paper we are launching a subscription drive which will run through December 31. You as News & Letters readers can become a part of our drive. You can participate by first, of course, subscribing yourself if you have not already done so. You can buy gift subscriptions for your friends who you think would like to read this paper, or for a library which you want to carry this paper. You can send us names to be sent a sample copy of News & Letters to see if they would want to subscribe. Perhaps a bookstore where you live might be willing to carry a small bundle of papers each month and you might visit such a store with News & Letters in hand and ask them to order it.

Finally, you can send us suggestions of groups—union locals, community groups or activist solidarity organizations—where we might be able to give a short talk about our newspaper.

Please let us hear from you on your ideas.

Yes, I am interested in helping in your subscription drive. Here is what I would like to do:

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WOMAN AS REASON

The following are excerpts from a review of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, written by Michelle Landau, and a letter on Raya Dunayevskaya, the book's author, written by Terry Moon. Both were published in full in the August-September issue of *off our backs*.

...Dunayevskaya's tracing of Luxemburg's feminist dimension is no scholastic matter of isolated quotes, nor is it a psychological reconstruction of what Luxemburg "really" felt. Rather, it is that today's Women's Liberation Movement has given Dunayevskaya new eyes and ears to see both Luxemburg's greatness and her shortcomings; it is that for Dunayevskaya, the dialectics of revolution...can never again be kept in a separate compartment from Women's Liberation....

It is (the) urgency for social revolution that animated Luxemburg's vision, action, thought, and speaks to us today, for surely social revolution is needed if we are ever to end this nightmare world. It was the dialectics of the 1905 revolution in her native Poland—when the masses in motion were a "land of boundless possibilities"—that drove Luxemburg to new heights, in everything from actual participation in the revolution to her pamphlet summing up those experiences, *The Mass Strike, the Party and the Trade Unions*...

And yet...both on the "Woman Question" and on spontaneity, Luxemburg failed to follow through and develop her insights. Thus, by 1910, when she was mercilessly exposing the opportunism of the SPD leadership and they responded with vicious, personal, sexist attacks (in private, but doubtless known to her), Luxemburg studiously maintained what Dunayevskaya calls a "tone deafness" to male chauvinism. Moreover, she remained a member of the party she saw degenerating: "The worst working class party is better than none..."

TODAY'S WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

One of the greatest achievements of the contemporary Women's Liberation Movement, Dunayevskaya argues, is the break with the 1960s Left which told women to wait until "after the revolution" to raise feminist demands. But has the revolutionary potential inherent in that break been followed through? Dunayevskaya considers this problematic in "The Task that Remains to be Done: The Unique but Unfinished Contributions of Today's Women's Liberation Movement," by taking the reader on an exciting historic journey....

These pages are alive with individual women, from Maria Stewart, Margaret Fuller and Sojourner Truth in the 19th century, to Ding Ling, Fannie Lou Hamer, and

* *off our backs*, 1841 Columbia Rd. NW, Rm. 212, Washington, D.C. 20009

Mukta's 'wedding'

Editor's Note—In the last issue of *News & Letters* a feminist correspondent from Bihar, India had written us about forms of marriage in that country and the story of a friend, Mukta. The following are excerpts from a letter about Mukta's wedding.

How shall I start today? My heart is still heavy after Mukta's 'wedding.' About a month ago, Mukta along with her female cousin Laxmi went for a feast to another village. In the house where they were staying, the family put "sasan"—turmeric powder—on her as a sign of marriage. Just like that, nobody asked her whether she wanted to get married to the boy in the family or not. But she did not want, and in the night she called Laxmi and decided to run away. It was a village right in the jungle and going away in the night was dangerous.

They reached home and after a few days overheard that the family of the boy was coming to 'take' her back. She ran away to some other village and stayed there for a few days until the storm was over and the family of the boy had gone back. At that time, both families discussed it and agreed to the wedding. Mukta's mother told them, "We like it—you can take her anywhere you find her."

When she came back I asked her do you want to get married? She said "No." Do you like this boy? "No." Why? "Because he is illiterate and I would like somebody who could teach me a little every day. I want to learn." Mukta has never been to school but through informal education she has managed to learn reading, writing, stitching and some nursing.

Everytime we met at that stage I tried to communicate to her that she was responsible for her own life, that her future was in her hands and no one could force her to do anything she did not want. She kept repeating, "I cannot bear everybody getting angry at me and later on if I am in difficulty they will leave me alone, they will not help me, saying that I did not listen to them. I will have to go."

The day of the wedding came. When I went to her house, she was crying loudly and bitterly as women usually do at the burial time. She was just being pushed away by a group of people of the village. She was stopping again and again after every step.

Everybody from the village gathered near her home. She bid farewell to every child, every woman, everyone. Some young girls went to accompany her and leave her in the new husband's house. I still can see her in my mind going away, crying and crying; this was her 'wedding' day! I heard some men telling her, "This is our custom, women have to leave the natal village. This is the way it has always been done in our society." This is the patrilineal, patri-local, patriarchal society so cruel to women. I have never seen such a painful wedding day. I know that some men in the village blame us because we are 'teaching' the women some things that 'take them out' of their 'culture.' I feel really rebellious and angry today! and helpless!

—P.

Dunayevskaya discussed in feminist press

Maria Barreno in the 20th. And in the category "Individualism and Masses in Motion,"...she shows us...the March 1917 Russian Revolution initiated by women textile workers on International Women's Day...the 1929 "Women's War" in what is now Nigeria...Black women in the South of the 1960s and women in Iran, 1979.

'MALE' VERSION OF MARX

...Dunayevskaya critiques Women's Liberationists for too easily accepting the "male" version of a truncated Marxism that obscures not alone Marx's writings on Women's Liberation but the totality of his philosophic methodology....

This book...lays challenging ground for addressing the questions we confront in our activity, whether on form of organization, the relationship between Women's Liberation and other forces of revolution, or the relationship between social revolution in America and "solidarity work" with the Third World...

—Michelle Landau

Dear Carol Anne Douglas,

...I too had many disagreements with Allison Jaggar's book, *Feminist Politics and Human Nature*, most of all her insistence on truncating Marx...You write in your review of Jaggar's book that "a number of East European Marxists have written since the '60s that alienation is possible under socialism (or some state controlled forms of it — the existing ones)." You further state that "socialist feminists do not advocate that kind of socialism. But their theory does not account for its existence..."

I wish you would have mentioned the one woman revolutionary philosopher whose theory not only takes into account the "experiences of hundreds of millions of people" in Eastern Europe, but whose theory does account for the existence of oppression in so-called socialist countries. In the 1940s Raya Dunayevskaya worked out the theory of state-capitalism from a revolutionary

Victory in Tokyo

Tokyo, Japan—Four feminists, who were outraged at a sexist advertisement placed on railway trains by Kodansha Ltd., one of the major publishing houses in Japan, won a major victory here. The ad "was graphic; a male hand holding chopsticks as they picked at a female breast, very much the way a Japanese businessman would poke at a piece of raw fish." While the slogan of the ad was allegedly "Father also enjoys reading," Japanese characters with double meanings were used so that the true meaning was "Men enjoy women's bodies from end to end."

The four women, all school teachers and members of the International Women's Year Action Group, sent a protest letter to Kodansha on May 21 and met with a manager and other employees on May 25. They demanded immediate removal of the posters and a pledge against future ads which dehumanize women. Within days of the protest, all posters were removed and an apology was issued. One of the activists, Mariko Mitsui, summed up the situation: "Japanese public transportation is clean and free from graffiti, but you see, full of sexist messages." The women feel that this victory is one which can be duplicated in future protests.

Information for this article was received from the publishers of *Feminist Forum*, who requested that it be reprinted. Contact them at Tokiwa-so; 28-19 Kamochiai 2-Chome; Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 16; Japan.

Berkeley cleaners' strike

Berkeley, Cal.—We, the women of the Laundry & Dry Cleaning Local 3, have been on strike against David Mathis, the owner of Virginia Cleaners, for five weeks now. He refuses to renew our union contract. We're only asking 17 cents an hour increase in wages and 23 cents for health and benefits. He wants to freeze our wages for three years and take away two paid holidays.

I have never walked a picket line before and now I see what tremendous support we're getting from the clerical workers at the university, for example. A lot of people are turning away. Some people ask if it's OK to go in just to pick up their clothes. We understand that workers cannot buy new clothes because of our strike. What we are asking people is not to carry their dirty clothes in until we get it settled.

Those inside really hate it when people drive by and honk for support and we yell back. They can't stand the ruckus. Mathis is hurting. We used to work five days a week, 8+ hours a day. The scabs, some of them our union members, unfortunately, have been going home early. No work. The strike against the store in Oakland lasted two or three days and the owner signed the contract. Everybody there walked out. The managers tried to run the business themselves, but they just can't do it.

What it will take here is a lot more long hours on the picket line, a lot more hurting. They are trying to bust the unions all across the country, even in other countries. Other strikes have been dirty and violent. It all goes back to Reagan. Cops have been called on us numerous times. In the first week the cops were here every couple hours all day long, the whole week. On Saturday they even had a paddy wagon.

We women need to unite to get some respect. We don't know how long the strike will last, but we're prepared to stay out as long as it takes.

—Laundry worker

perspective using the categories in Marx's *Capital* and Russia's own statistics. Why are we pretending in 1984 that that hasn't happened?

NEWEST ARTICLE

To begin to try and correct that, I would like to look closely at the latest article by Raya Dunayevskaya: "Marx's 'New Humanism' and the Dialectics of Women's Liberation in Primitive and Modern Societies" published by *Praxis International*, Vol. 3, No. 4, January 1984...a Yugoslavian dissident journal that asked Ms. Dunayevskaya for this article...

What is key about the form of this article is that Dunayevskaya wants to look at "Marx's Marxism as a To-

(continued on page 4)



Half a world away from Argentina's Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, Lebanese women and their families shut down Beirut, July 9, demanding government action to find and release thousands who have disappeared in this war-torn land. With pictures of their missing relatives pinned to them, women in both Moslem west and Christian east Beirut blocked roads with burning tires, trees, iron bars and bricks.

The victim of last year's gang rape in New Bedford, Mass. has been forced to move, due to harassment of her and her whole family. Her lawyer said her "life in exile" was "a fifth sentence in the case." The Rape Crisis Center has set up a Jane Doe fund to help pay her expenses. Contact: the New Bedford Women's Center, 252 Country Street, New Bedford, MA 02740. Meanwhile, the four convicted rapists are appealing for a new trial.

The largest nurses' strike in history ended July 9 in Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., after 39 days, with an agreement on the key issue of hospital-wide seniority rights, but the 6,300 strikers from 16 hospitals still face an uncertain job future. Many hospitals said they might call back only 10-20% of the nurses, and a representative of the Minnesota Nurses Association cited "considerable difficulty" getting hospitals to bring back nurses according to the new agreement.

More than 15,000 women—mostly miners' wives—rallied in London, Aug. 11, in support of the five-month-old British miners' strike, pausing in front of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's office in "silent protest." Earlier, a petition signed by 20,000 women from mining communities demanding that Queen Elizabeth support the coal miners was presented at Buckingham Palace.

Women's jobs drydocked in naval shipyard

Bremerton, Wash.—With all Reagan's military buildup, the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard (P.S.N.S.), one of the major shipyards in the country, employing around 10,000 people, is not expanding job-wise at all. The job situation hasn't been so bad since the problems at Boeing more than ten years ago. Production depends on the overhaul of giant aircraft carriers. The Ranger, docked here now, is supposed to be around for about a year, and then no major jobs we know of are scheduled. We've heard talk of Reduction in Force and forced leave.

I have about eight years seniority. I'm worried about keeping my job, and yet they will hire lowest salary-grade clerks to run a new computer system they are planning for my department.

Women have great difficulty getting into the higher paid blue-collar jobs today. One woman managed to get in ten years ago by putting only her initials on the job application. She was hired with a large group of beginners, or helpers. When she showed up to work they said, "But you're a woman!" They kept her, but put her on garbage detail, making \$3.40 per hour. I was hired into a GS category the same year at \$3.08 per hour. Great changes have occurred in those years as the spread in pay between white-and blue-collar has increased drastically. And today many women are stuck in the white-collar, even though they are sole support of the family.

It is not that there aren't many women who would just as soon stay in white-collar as change to blue-collar. But they make it impossible to make a living wage, and you're stuck.

P.S.N.S. worker

Time-off key in NYC hospital strike

New York City, N.Y. — On July 13, 52,000 hospital workers struck 30 hospitals and nursing homes here, when the League of Voluntary Hospitals refused to meet the demands of Hospital & Health Care Employees District 1199. The union initially demanded a 10% wage boost for each year of the two year contract and, for workers whose jobs demand seven day coverage, an assurance of every other weekend off (EOWO).

The League, which includes the largest non-profit teaching hospitals in the area like Columbia Presbyterian, St. Luke's-Roosevelt and Montefiore, feigned shock at union demands and offered instead 4%. Doris Turner, President of 1199, called that phoney and "insulting" because the increase was to take effect three months into the contract, so in actuality it would be less than 3%.

The League tacitly admitted this by subsequently offering a "real" 4%, but refused to consider honoring the EOWO, which is pertinent to about 20% of the striking workers. Fifteen days into the strike the union submitted the League proposal to its membership who turned it down 20 to one.

In the sixth week 15,000 workers overwhelmingly rejected another League offer which still did not guarantee EOWO. The League then threatened to hire replacements for all the strikers.

In most of the hospitals being struck the RNs are not 1199 members, but have their own association, which has voiced support for 1199's struggle.

In the past when the League hospitals were threatened with a strike they made arrangements to move patients to non-struck hospitals and cut back services, admissions and elective surgery. This time they have sought to maintain business as usual by overworking their non-union staff, hiring per diem and temporary workers, beefing up hospital security with private rent-a-cops and calling in all their regular altruistic volunteers who are a part of every hospital population.

'Worse Than A Sweatshop'

The reason the strike has lasted so long is that the average person out here is much more intelligent than they think. We know the hospitals are aiming to get rid of the old workers and bring in new ones at less money. They've been hiring "volunteers" at \$10 per hour. The State Manpower has also sent them "temps."

The working conditions are not good in there. There is too much "bossism." You know what a sweatshop is like? This is worse. It's a shame. St. Luke's is one of the "big five" volunteer hospitals, one of the richest in the country, affiliated with Columbia University. Yet, nurses' aides wear disgraceful clothes, what I call "cin-

Paper products hell

Chicago, Ill.—The company installed a new press for a paper products line which combines several operations, and hired additional workers to run it. The machine was started up at full speed on the fourth day of operation.

The engineer made it clear that "this line should never stop except in case of emergencies." But the workers couldn't keep up. The woman at the head of the line didn't have time to throw off the bad sheets as she caught them, and the next woman couldn't straighten the torn and crumpled stacks. Some of the strippers were arguing with the supervisor that they wanted to strip more sheets at a time, but he yelled back that smaller amounts would be faster. The conveyor continued to run although the stripped forms were falling off the end of the line.

After one woman had been struggling for at least an hour, the engineer came up close and said, "Your job is to make these stacks as straight as possible, so things will go easier down the line." But one of the strippers yelled, "Take it easy. You can only do what you can do."

This type of production and the accompanying speed-up is nothing new in the world, but it seems to be new to this plant. The essence to me is that the rate of work is set by the speed of the machine, which is in turn controlled by supervisors and engineers. Workers are forced to do what they can't do now, but will learn to do. That becomes the expected rate and mode of work, not only for those workers, but for all who come after. Individual styles of work are eliminated. Quantity becomes the sole concern.

Marx was certainly correct when he wrote, "At the same time that factory work exhausts the nervous system to the uttermost, it does away with the many-sided play of the muscles and confiscates every atom of freedom, both in bodily and intellectual activity. The lightening of the labor, even, becomes a sort of torture, since the machine does not free the laborer from work, but deprives the work of all interest."

—Woman worker

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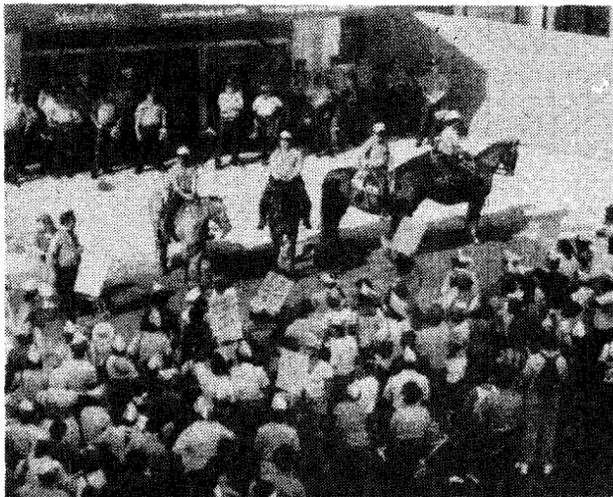
Charles Denby Editor (1955-1983)
Felix Martin Labor Editor
Eugene Walker Managing Editor

der dresses," like Cinderella. Old, faded yellow dresses, meant to demean people. Why not white? That's the color for nursing.

They have cut the staff here until it seems I'm often doing the work of three people. Yet they have a campaign to make sure every bed is filled. An aide is responsible for eight patients, plus has to run all the errands. We want every other weekend off, because the job is too taxing.

The mood today is "fire the workers." The country is hitting rock bottom. I've seen how the mood in the hospital changes with the political reign.

—St. Luke's nurses' aide



Striking hospital workers confronted by mounted police

'Be Fair To Those Who Care'

Five thousand hospital workers rallied in midtown as their strike entered the third week. The crowd overwhelmingly Black and Latino, was well fired up even before the speeches started. Many had come directly from the scores of picket lines around the city where they have been confronting attempts by the hospitals to expand operations.

Picketers have faced urine and filthy water thrown from hospital windows and on several occasions picketers have stormed entrances to be fought back by the police. The rally had many solidarity delegations from other unions, and 1199 was selling buttons that said, "Reagan is hazardous to your health."

One woman who works as a nurses' aide in the Bronx said, "The hospitals are trying to pit us against the patients and create a backlash. But I think the patients understand that this strike is for their dignity as well as ours. Fair treatment for those who do the work must be the basis of patient care. That's why we are saying, 'Be fair to those who care.'"

At the end of the rally the strikers decided to march to the Roosevelt Hotel where negotiations are being held. Saying that they didn't have a parade permit, the police tried to make a roundabout route there. Instead the crowd surged directly up Fifth Avenue, blocking all traffic for nearly an hour.

—Strike supporter

Stop St. Mary's lay-offs

San Francisco, Cal.—Service Employees' International Union, Local 250, the Hospital Workers Union, is conducting an informational picket line at St. Mary's Hospital to publicize the massive lay-offs of the members of our union and to gain support. They will be laying off another 33 nursing assistants in September.

The lay-offs started two years ago when over 80 nursing assistants, food service workers and housekeepers were let go with only a week's notice and a letter on how to file for unemployment. By now they are laying off people with over 20 years service, mostly women and minorities, generally the lowest paid hospital staff. One man has just been told he is no longer qualified to do the work he has been doing for the past 17 years. Of our 400 members they laid off 150.

It is clearly a union busting tactic. They are replacing the nursing assistants with registered nurses. They claim economic reasons are behind these lay-offs, but they are expanding into new buildings, hiring more assistant administrators and paying the administrators \$142,000 a year, while nursing assistants get \$20,000 a year or less.

Six months ago an administrator actually said that lay-offs are good for people: "It allows them to get in touch with themselves and to find new careers." The management simply does not care about the workers, in fact it's past not caring: they are callous, cruel and vicious.

The union has not been successful in stopping the lay-offs. In a lot of instances there was acceptance of management's position or reliance on legal process. The membership, around 150 of us, went down to the union hall to demand that something be done. So now we are picketing.

What we have is corporate health care in this country. It's health care for the pocketbook, not for the people who need it. People need to be united, to find a way to help each other, a way to create some kind of action in the country. People need to put aside the minor differences they have and bring democracy to this supposedly democratic country in whatever form that takes: civil rights, anti-war or labor movement.

—Hospital worker

Store clerks say no to part-time starvation

by Felix Martin, Labor Editor

In early August retail supermarket clerks in the United Food and Commercial Workers here in Los Angeles jeered and booed their union leadership at a mass membership meeting for trying to sell them another concession contract. The workers ended up voting down the contract by 51%, but the union is now saying a new vote has to be taken through the mail because a lot of workers supposedly didn't vote.

The truth is that the union leadership was surprised at how angry workers were at the contract, which would allow a two-tier wage system to come into supermarkets for some new-hires and freeze the guaranteed work week at 16 hours—instead of the 30 hours many workers demand. The workers are saying that a month earlier they voted 95% to go on strike if they didn't get a decent contract, so why do they have to vote a third time on the same issue?

NO BENEFITS

What concerns these supermarket clerks most is the question of a guaranteed work week and seniority. Many work less than ten hours a week—so they get no pension or medical benefits. One woman told me, "I used to work a 40-hour week and then they cut me down to 30 hours. I look around at all these new-hires who are working 15. Soon they might cut me down too. Why can't we get a guaranteed 30-hour week, with no cut in pay?"

A Latino worker told me the other major issue is seniority rights: right now management can transfer a worker from one store to another, without keeping seniority status. That way, a worker working a 40-hour week can get transferred and end up working 16 hours.

It was because the union leadership was ready to "compromise" with management for a guaranteed 16 hour week and a two-tier system paying 5% of the clerks \$4 an hour less than scale, that they were booed at the mass meeting in Long Beach. One worker told me, "The union leadership pulled the same thing on the workers at McDonnell Douglas this year. Why do we have a union leadership that allows workers to get divided into two tiers? Who are they working for anyway?"

WHY VOTE AGAIN?

What workers were angriest about was having another vote on the same agreement, just because the union leadership lost the vote. A lot of workers told me they didn't trust the mail vote, because that way the union leadership has all the ballots in their hands and can make the vote come out the way they want. This is just what happened to the Greyhound strikers, when they had to mail their ballots to Arizona.

In my last column I wrote that workers need a shorter work week in order to live—especially when they are being worked overtime while their brothers and sisters are unemployed. But now I also see that workers cannot live on the shorter work week management is trying to bring in as part of the concessions.

Management hopes cutting workers' hours will save them a fortune in paying out benefits. That the union leaders have yet to take a strong stand on this issue shows how little they understand how permanent the drive for concessions has become.

Many workers, however, do understand that. "It is about time we stopped talking to ourselves, and get together with other workers facing this pressure for shorter hours," one worker told me. As more and more contracts come due in more industries, that becomes more important than ever.

Safety's price at Union Oil

Rodeo, Cal.—The explosion that killed 11 workers at Union Oil near Chicago really woke us up here in Rodeo. When you go into work you don't know if you're going to come out alive. Our plant has a real good safety record so far and everyone seems to go all out and cooperate when it comes to safety.

A loose bolt or gasket might not show up right away but with several thousand pounds of pressure and over 1000 degrees heat you're going to have a mechanical breakdown occasionally. Our job is to walk around and look for that. But there's no way to know when a pump is going to break down. It's like knowing when you are going to get a flat tire.

You have to hope you'll catch it so the fire won't get away from you. Sometimes you might hear a leak, but a lot of times it just goes without warning. They've been taking x-rays of towers here to find thin spots, because what leaked in Chicago was a tower weld releasing butane. They couldn't contain it, and when that happens it's like a bomb.

Our plant is pretty new so they go all out for safety. They'd rather spend \$10,000 now on maintenance than \$10 million to replace the whole thing. The Tosco refinery in Martinez here is real old and they keep burning it down. They killed two or three workers about a year ago. They're heavily in debt with a lot of pressure from the bankers and rather than lose production they'll keep patching old lines.

Even though they are a lot more safety-minded here we feel like they care more about their capital than us, because we can be replaced a lot cheaper.

—Union Oil worker

Mexican workers in U.S. tell of conditions

Chicago, Ill.—I'm a young woman from Mexico visiting members of my family who have come to the United States to live a better life. Today they live in a community where the poor hang around together, living in trailers, paying rent for the land the trailers are on.

They live fairly modestly, having a bed to sleep in, a stove to cook on, a refrigerator to store the little amount of food they have to make it through the week and a TV to entertain so their minds don't have to think about the disgusting jobs at the plants.

Almost everyone in this community southwest of Chicago came from the rural section of El Fuerte, Michoacan and worked in the harvest. Now they work in plants getting no more than five dollars an hour. This is not enough. Women in the community stress the difficulty of living, especially after they realize the promises of the landowners are vague.

One woman who lives in the trailer park said, "The owner promised there wasn't going to be an increase in rent to those of us living in trailers we own. Before we bought them we thought that they would make our survival less expensive, but it is a lie. Some of us started paying less than \$100. Now rent is over \$100 per month. Life is as difficult as ever even though at first it seemed easier."

"The utilities are over \$50, which is too much. Most of us don't have air conditioners, nor appliances that would use up energy. In fact our homes are very hot at this time of the year."

Another woman spoke to me of her work experience: "I have been working in the potato plant for almost 10 years. I started at minimum wage and now I get \$4.50 an hour. I have been waiting for all these years for better working conditions. When I began at the plant I had an incident with the supervisor. I didn't know what I was supposed to be doing at first, so I did the same thing as other workers did, which was to peel potatoes. I saw the workers sweeping up before leaving so I began to do so. The supervisor came behind me very mad, grabbed the broom from me so roughly that 'a piece of meat' was torn out of my arm. Then she threatened to fire me if I spoke up."

"With a cut arm I couldn't work comfortably. The liquid from the potatoes irritated my cut. But if we have any problems, injuries, they kick our rear end and send us home. They never want to hear about a problem, which is always our problem. They tell us to come back when we feel better."

"Recently I asked for my vacation, but the boss refused because I refused to work the night shift for a month. I had no means of transportation and the 30 minute walk is too far and too dangerous. After fighting for my money, I got tired and told the boss to keep it and use it to buy candles when you die."

Many workers have faced the same problem. The owners always have excuses when it comes to paying debts. When vacation time comes they lay off some of

the workers. "We know it is just an excuse not to pay us. It happens to too many of us to be a coincidence. Also we have complained about the union which we think has been bought off by the company and doesn't do anything for us. Before they laid us off, some of us had wanted a union that would help us get pay for gloves, goggles and aprons. We buy all these things every week for this kind of work. We also wanted the company to wash our dirty work clothes and to fix up the whole place where we work. We wanted to chose our own union, but before anything happened we got laid off."

What I see happening to Mexican people here I used to see happen back in El Fuerte, Michoacan. Men, women and youth work in the plants or in the fields picking fruits and vegetables. Many youth drop out of school to work.

Olympic jingoism opposed

Los Angeles, Cal.—As the Olympic torch spread a trail of distracting jingoism across the country, in Los Angeles, site of the Olympics, activists helped keep alive the flame of human freedom in holding numerous protest activities against chauvinism, racism and Reaganism.

The day before the pompous Olympic opening ceremony, a multi-racial group led by Black South African poet Dennis Brutus attempted to walk into the final meeting of the International Olympic Committee to demand they take a stand against the participation of two South African athletes in the Olympic games.

Then on the following Sunday, Brutus as well as other Africans and Black activists from Los Angeles held a street-side meeting to expose the hypocritical tokenism of having Blacks participate in the Olympics, while in the very shadow of the Coliseum Blacks are hungry, unemployed, and angry. The engorged power of the police force using even more means of harassment against Black masses during the Olympics was also attacked.

As the Games continued for the next two weeks, many were reminded of the realities of U.S. imperialism's aggression against the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran masses by numerous picket lines and guerrilla theatre events, culminating in a march against Taca Airlines, which participates with the INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) in the "death flights" deporting Salvadoran refugees.

The highlight of the Olympic protests came on Sunday, Aug. 5, when 5000 marched and rallied in a "Survival Day" for "jobs, peace and justice". Unlike some of the earlier protest actions surrounding the Olympics, this one was firmly controlled from on top by a coalition of anti-nuclear and Left organizations, who made sure little discussion of revolutionary struggle, either in the U.S. or in Central America, took place.

Taken as a whole, the many activities and deep questioning of this system that surfaced in the midst of these Olympics shows that there are two worlds in each country, even one for which the flag, patriotism, and "winning" has taken on a new voice.

—Olympics protestor

One young woman, my cousin, works alone with her brothers and sisters from 7 A.M. to 9 P.M. Sometimes she works in the fields, other times in a packing plant. When she works in the fields, her sister replaces her in the packing plant. It is mostly white owners hiring immigrants. Many realize that the American dream is a lie, but they don't go back to Mexico because it is just as bad.

—Maria

Militarization of Peru

Since a state of emergency was declared in Ayacucho Province in Peru in December, 1982, and the area was placed under military control, over 2,000 people have been killed. Quechua-speaking Indians in highland communities have been subjected to particular attack. There are reports of entire peasant villages being reduced to ghost towns. The former district attorney of Ayacucho Province has a list of 1500 missing persons.



The state of emergency has been extended to other provinces, Huancavelica and Apurima, and in early June the entire country was put under a state of emergency with constitutional rights suspended for 30 days.

The government has used the existence of a guerrilla group, Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) as its excuse for a state of siege. The ruling Accion Popular party has been pushing a law through parliament which would limit workers' right to strike. A special police force specifically trained for mountain terrain and permanently based in the Andes may be created. A leading opposition television program of political analysis and commentary was shut down. "Terrorism" has become a key word to create an atmosphere which makes any opposition difficult to sustain.

But the movement in Peru in opposition to the ruling powers is far deeper than this terrorist group which not only attacks government forces, but terrorizes and kills Quechua-speaking peasants who will not cooperate with its plans. A popular movement has arisen which is against both the government's militarized repression and the terrorism of Sendero Luminoso.

One sees this popular movement among a United Left coalition which has a member in parliament and which has won control of a number of municipal governments in Peru including in Lima and Cuzco. The last several years has witnessed several nationwide work stoppages protesting government policies. And in occupied Ayacucho itself, an Ayacucho Association of Relatives of Detained and Missing Persons has been formed as one step to halt the government's state of siege.

Latin American Studies student

WOMAN AS REASON

(continued from page 2)

talities."...The main concentration in this article...is on Marx's recently published (1972) *Ethnological Notebooks*. Here the concern seems at least twofold. One is Dunayevskaya's emphatic assertion that Friedrich Engels is no Marx and that his unilinear work, *Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State* (supposedly based on Marx's *Ethnological Notebooks*) was "damaging...to future generations of Marxists..." But it is not only "Marxists" she is concerned with...Dunayevskaya aims "to disentangle Marx's views on women and dialectics from those of Engels..."

DIALECTIC AT WORK

Engels saw only the greatness of women's freedom in primitive societies and after the onset of private property he saw only women's oppression. Engels described the effect of private property on women as "the world-historic defeat of the female sex." Marx, on the other hand, saw both women's relatively greater freedom as well as the origins of women's oppression right within the primitive commune. After class society, where Engels saw only "defeat", Marx saw unceasing revolt. What Dunayevskaya is showing us is the dialectic at work where, even in the study of anthropology, Marx is able to see the duality in each situation...the possibility of new paths to freedom.

...To see the relationship of Marx to the dialectics of women's liberation, one would have to study Raya Dunayevskaya and read Marx for oneself. Certainly this article is a good beginning—short, concise, difficult enough to make one ask questions, and so very clearly revealing a genuine passion for transforming society that it will make you want to take the plunge and do the "hard intellectual labor" needed to hear both Marx and Dunayevskaya thinking.

—Terry Moon

Marx's "New Humanism" and the Dialectics of Women's Liberation in Primitive and Modern Societies

by Raya Dunayevskaya

50¢

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

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees, an organization of Marxist-Humanists, 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 a new human society based on the principles of Marx's Humanism as recreated for our day.

News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard not separated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. A Black production worker, Charles Denby, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper. Raya Dunayevskaya, the Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees, is the author of *Marxism and Freedom, Philosophy and Revolution* and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, which 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.

Where *Marxism and Freedom*, whose structure was grounded in the movement from practice throughout the 200 years from 1776 to Today, discloses Marx's "new Humanism," both internationally and in its American roots, *Philosophy and Revolution*, in recreating Marx's philosophic roots both in the Hegelian dialectic and in the actual revolutionary movements of his day, articulated these forces of revolution as Reason — Labor, Black, Youth, Women — of our day. By tracing and paralleling this age's 30-year movement from practice to theory with our own theoretical development for the same three decades, Marxist-Humanism in the U.S. has met the challenge of the "new moments" in the last decade of Marx's life by disclosing in them a trail to the 1980s. It is this trail, these paths of revolution — be it in the birth of a whole new generation of revolutionaries, including the transformation of Women's Liberation as an idea whose time has come into a Movement or the emergence of a whole new Third World — that form the content of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's*

Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution.

This work challenges post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism. At a time when the nuclear world is threatened with the extinction of civilization itself it becomes imperative not only to reject what is, but to reveal the revolutionary Humanist future inherent in the present.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcats against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation — activities which signalled a new movement from practice which was itself a form of theory. Vol. 1, No. 1, came off the press on the second anniversary of the June 17, 1953 East German revolt against Russian state-capitalism masquerading as Communism, in order to express our solidarity with freedom fighters abroad as well as at home. Because 1953 was also the year when we worked out the revolutionary dialectics of Marxism in its original form of "a new Humanism," as well as individuality "purified of all that interferes with its universalism, i.e., with freedom itself," we organized ourselves in Committees rather than any elitist party "to lead". The development of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S., 1941 to Today is recorded in the documents and on microfilm available to all under the title, *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, on deposit at the Labor History Archives of Wayne State University.

In opposing the capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim . . . to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate the mass activities from the activity of thinking. Anyone who is a participant in these freedom struggles for totally new relations and a fundamentally new way of life, and who believes in these principles, is invited to join us. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.

U.S. Auto Radiator imperils workers' lives

Detroit, Mich.—U. S. Auto Radiator workers informed *News & Letters* about two serious accidents that occurred there in July. On July 19, a press repeated on a worker in Plant 2 and it cut off four of her fingers. A week later, a maintenance man in Plant 1 was going to put in a new light when he was electrocuted. N&L distributed a leaflet with the workers' stories, and below we print one worker's response about working conditions at U.S. Auto Radiator.

There were a bunch of people, including the insurance man and the union man, in here looking at the press that cut off the woman's fingers. The supervisor had had new lines painted on the floor and the machines scrubbed so they were looking spic and span. He wanted it to be presentable for the insurance man. But the visitors were only looking at the one press which cut off her fingers.

The company really pushes safety all the time, but they don't practice what they preach. Another machine, the same kind of press that got her, has also been going haywire and repeating. Last week the girl who works it put her hands down, and the machine kept going up and down without her even touching the pedal. If she had had her hands in it, it would have gotten them, and the company would have said it was her fault.

There's one soldering machine that leaks water. They keep three buckets by it, but if they fill up, you can slip. There's water all over. The water is to cool the tanks down so they don't crack, and it goes continuously. The workers are drenched by the time they leave,



On the picket line at U.S. Auto Radiator during the strike of 1982

but what worries me is that with all the oil and water on the floor, people slip.

There are also a lot of fumes from the soldering machines. Most of the people on the soldering machines have never even been asked if they want a mask. When they change the solder, the fumes are just gagging. They are supposed to be sucked up by a fan, but they aren't. Everyone in the plant will tell you the fumes are all over. If we all get lead poisoning, it's because they are not taking precautions and making sure the fumes are sucked up.

Everyone wants the whole plant to be shut down, because there are so many things wrong with it. The company never considers the employees. They always tell us to hurry, and that is how people get hurt.

—U.S. Auto Radiator worker

UAW holds AP strike back

Editor's Note—Workers at AP Parts Company in Toledo, Ohio, members of United Auto Workers Local 14, have been on strike since May 2, 1984. On May 21, 4,000 workers from other shops in Toledo joined the picket line to blockade the plant (See N&L, June, 1984).

Toledo, Ohio—The UAW vice-presidents came down here last Wednesday (Aug. 8) to give us a little pep rally. About 300 people from AP Parts came. AP broke off negotiations again, and the UAW came to put some pressure on the company. But it was UAW president Beiber's idea to call off the mass rally planned in June. That would have caused AP to bargain.

Recently we all got form letters from Paul Putnam, president of the company, telling us that workers in the plant now are "temporary insurance" that we'll have work when we come back! It's their way of keeping us on edge. A lot of us are broke. As long as we're on strike, they won't give us jobs in Toledo. The only way is if we settle or AP moves out of town.

AP has become about the worst place to work in the whole country. It's like before there were unions. Now with scabs in there, people are getting hurt, even though AP is trying to cover it up. Recently a woman lost three fingers on the same machine where, before the strike, a buddy of mine lost nearly his whole hand—four fingers. On this stamping press your hands are chained to the machine, and the safety pulls your hands out of the way. When it didn't work, the machine came down on his fingers.

Things have changed for labor. The unions were strong until the last five years, but now the tide has turned. Everyone was working in '67 when I hired in. I had my pick — Chevy, Jeep, Sun Oil. It's a different time; unemployment has changed the picture.

This strike has gotten way out of control. The only thing we can do is shut the place down. Every time I see people from other plants they say, "When are we going back over there?" like in May. —AP Parts striker

Hospital workers protest

Detroit, Mich.—In the past few months working conditions for nurses at Northwest Detroit General Hospital have gotten even worse than they were before (See "Detroit: Hospital assembly line," N&L June, 1984.) In May they laid off all the nurses' aides. The patient load has gotten heavier, and there's not time to do the work. Each of us is supposed to get 4-5 patients, but we actually are getting 7-8 now to care for by ourselves. A lot of us are working our days off.

We get a lot of alcoholics and drug abusers, many of whom are brought in by the police or Emergency Medical Service. Usually they are going through the DTs. You can't strap down a 180-pound man by yourself, but you can't ask anyone else for help because they're so busy too. It's dangerous. I come home so tired I can't do anything.

One woman, a 30-year-old alcoholic, stopped breathing one night, and nobody knew for how long. They brought her back, but now she is permanently brain damaged. She had to have been under a long time for brain damage like that. I can't really say, but if we had had enough staff, we might have been able to help her.

They said if they call any nurses' aides back they will begin to lay off Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs). This is not just happening here, but all over. Almost all the hospitals have laid off their nurses' aides, and they eventually want to require all LPNs to have a four-year degree to keep their jobs. That will put even more people out of work.

Health care has changed. That is why the strikes in Minneapolis and New York are so militant. Most of the nurses I work with don't like the workload, and we have asked to speak to the Director of Nurses. The union, Local 1199, isn't doing anything to help. We are not robots to be turned on and off. I feel it's time for us to stop talking and do something about this problem.

—Black woman hospital worker

Macy's tries union-busting

San Francisco, Cal.—Hundreds of pickets have jammed the sidewalks in front of Macy's and Emporium-Capwells in a series of weekend rallies to support the members of Department Store Employees Union 1100 on strike at Macy's and those union members who were locked out at The Emporium.

Local 1100 struck Macy's department store on July 7 when Macy's final contract offer was nothing more than cuts and give-backs. Macy's proposed a two-tier system that eliminates double time for Sundays and holidays and premium pay for new-hires working nights. They "offered" 20¢ an hour increase this year and 15¢ an hour for each of the next two years, while at the same time reducing health benefits and increasing the employee contribution by over \$300 per year.

One woman employed at Macy's for nine years had this to say: "I've never been on strike before and have never been on a picket line, but this two-tier proposal would undermine my job forever. If they can start new-hires at less pay with fewer benefits, then Macy's is sure to find a way to try and get rid of me. It would make any future contract bargaining impossible because the workers would be split against each other. They really just want to bust our union."

While Macy's claims it needs the concessions to remain "competitive", clearly the name of the game is "union-busting". Macy's has racked up record profits nationwide, and this Union Square store is one of their best money-makers. Additionally, Emporium-Capwells, Macy's so-called "rival" locked out its employees simultaneously with the strike at Macy's even though the two stores are covered by different contracts. Both stores were able to get court injunctions that severely limited picketing outside the stores. Thus far the union has relied on strike supporters as a way to get around the injunction on weekends.

—Strike supporter

British miners must win

Oxford, England—Many workers at British Leyland (B.L.) are determined that the coal miners must win their struggle for the survival and security of their jobs. We are aware that the outcome of this strike will affect not only the miners but all workers. Early in the strike, about 4 weeks after it started, about 12 miners from South Wales visited the Cowley, Oxford plant. It had to be kept secret from the company so we brought them in through different gates in ones and twos to get by the security men.

They met shop stewards and some rank-and-file workers in the canteen to ask for our support in what they knew would be a prolonged struggle. We promised to collect money in the plant and also to organize food parcels to be sent to strikers' families. We've collected over 3,000 pounds since the strike began, and a load of canned food is sent to Wales by van every week.

More recently I was invited to meet some miners who were staying at Ruskin College, a trade union college in Oxford, to raise support for the strike. I met about 20 miners from several areas: Wales, Yorkshire, Kent, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. Some had just arrived, others were about to return home. They told me they were very concerned for the younger generation in their communities, who would never find jobs if the Coal Board's program of pit closures went ahead. They told how hardship is biting their families. As well as the loss of wages, many have fines to pay after being arrested on the picket lines.

The Welsh miners explained that it was now necessary to send cash or food, not cheques, because the bank account of their region of the union had just been frozen by the courts. This was because the union was refusing to pay a 50,000 pound fine imposed for "unlawful picketing". The frozen account includes a lot of the money collected by supporters all over the country. In spite of this, workers at B.L. are still giving money to support striking miners and their families.

The miners I spoke to explained that as the strike developed they had come to see it as a political struggle as well as an industrial one. They knew about police dressed as miners infiltrating the picket lines. They were aware how the government is directing the actions of the Coal Board, while claiming not to be involved.

Before leaving, I presented them with the *News and Letters* pamphlet, *The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50*. The miners need the widest possible support to make sure that they win.

—Shop steward at British Leyland, Cowley

Unions need national unity

Chicago, Ill.—The unions are getting weaker from what Reagan did to PATCO. It's getting so you almost can't strike anymore. You have no rights to do any fighting now to get what you need.

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) is fighting the workers by trying to hire a majority of part-time people. People from the outside should respect us as workers and not take our jobs and lower our wages.

The companies should be trying to control other costs besides your wages. They keep trying to get production out for no cost. They are trying to put us back twenty years. The utilities today are killing us. They are higher than the house note, than the food bill.

Meanwhile the unions are losing their ability to fight. The union is really the workers, 100%. It is true we have to stand behind the leaders, but the leaders have to back us up. There has to be unity on a national level of the unions. That is the only way to go about winning. But the leaders of many of the unions are not about trying to do this.

—CTA worker

WORKSHOP TALKS

(continued from page 1)

work. Her husband works in a textile shop and even with food stamps they cannot survive on his wages alone. She worries to leave the children, it was a hard decision but she has no family here and cannot pay childcare out of the \$95 she clears after taxes and transportation. Reagan wraps himself in religion and the family but he must be talking about rich families because he sure has it in for poor families.

Reagan talks about a powerful America. At work in his America we don't even have the power to get the union to back us up on getting the windows to open. There is a whole wall of windows in the plating room but since they covered them up with "energy-saving" windows only a few will open. Workers are breathing in acid fumes and bathed in steam and sweat. The boss said it's "technically impossible" to do anything about the heat and ventilation, then he turned around and spent \$4,000 on a new air conditioning system for four skilled tool room employees.

Now Reagan's hired gun, Postmaster General William Bolger, wants to unilaterally cut wages 20 percent for new hires, despite a record Postal Service profit of \$1.6 billion over the past two and a half years. He is trying to provoke the workers so he can fire "wildcatters and those who oppose our government," as he said. Nine hundred Merck pharmaceutical workers are locked out in Rahway, NJ over a similar management demand for cutting new hires by \$3.18 an hour. The heart of Reaganism is to lower all workers to the wages we get in sweatshops.

Reaganism wants to rule by fear and firing, just like our bosses always have. The owners in my shop boast, "I don't give a damn what the union says, I'm the boss." If they tell you to punch your card and leave, that's it. The union never gets anyone their job back, they were bought off years ago. Things are so feudal here, that where the contract calls for work shirts, the bosses got some of their discarded shirts and gave them out, saying here are your work shirts. Workers refused to wear them. They said, "He's not my father that I should wear his cast-offs." They never did get work shirts.

There may be no money for a pair of socks or a shirt for the workers, but there's always been plenty of money here for new machinery to get the production out faster and cheaper. Our lunchroom was taken over and filled up with machinery. Now we eat at our machines in the grease and dirt. That's what's at the heart of Reaganism: more and more production, absolute rule over the workers, and abysmal conditions of life and labor for the workers. That is the secret behind Reagan's "economic recovery." Where I work that has always been called the sweatshop.

The first Automation strike in American history

"...miners voted to establish a committee of miners to go to the rank-and-file of other unions to ask for help... The point was how to do away not only with mere 'charity' donations but with dependence on union leaders. Approving this motion signified establishing labor solidarity from below."

A 1980's View

The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.

\$2.00

Order from: News & Letters, 59 East Van Buren, Room 707
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CONDITION OF WORKING CLASS IN U.S., 1984

I am sorry to be writing to you with such bad news. I would like to say something good, but U.S. Auto Radiator is getting so bad that it isn't possible. A maintenance man was working on a light at the time he was electrocuted. Workers stopped working to wait for the ambulance. The bosses said, "Go back to work." They just did not care. Just one week before, a woman lost three of her fingers. A friend of mine went to see her in the hospital. She said that the woman is now learning to eat with one hand. It is hard but this is the only way she can eat without help.

Two other workers in my department went to see the maintenance man. He is in a coma now. He was a very good person who liked everyone for who they were, whether they were Black or white.

After I've told you these horrors, I feel compelled to quote you a song, sung by 1,500 striking women workers in Lowell, Mass. in 1836. They walked out after a wage cut, singing: "Oh, isn't it a pity that a pretty girl as I should be sent into a factory to pine away and die/Oh, I cannot be a slave, I will not be a slave/ For I'm so fond of liberty that I cannot be a slave."

To me, 1836 is the same as 1984 for the factory woman.

**U.S. Auto Radiator worker
Detroit**

The state of today's unions: Bruce Foster, Black international VP of the Amalgamated Transit Workers Union (remember the Greyhound strike, Reaganism and union-busting?) declared his support for Reagan, saying the worker has "a friend in the White House." Sick!

**Factory worker
New York**

Instead of a UAW Local 600 General Council meeting, the local recently had a consulting firm out of New York called Corporate Campaign, Inc. make a presentation to the members. Their idea was, rather than go after the scabs on the picket line, to picket the banks and other institutions that finance the company you're fighting, because of union pension funds tied up in Metropolitan Life for example.

The way I look at it, the union brought in a consulting firm before they hitched the mules up to their own wagon. They don't even invite the membership to General Council meetings, and they haven't yet informed us about contract negotiations, but they do invite us to a meeting like this.

Bieber just announced a poll that showed 82% of the people support the UAW stance in bargaining with GM and Ford. How can he brag about that, when not even the membership knows what their negotiating stance is?

**Ford Rouge steel worker
Detroit**

Diane Lee's article on "Inner City Health Care" (June N&L) deals with part of my past as a worker at a nursery school, where we got nothing but the minimum wage and no benefits at all. I remember getting letters from Henry Ford Hospital then for payment because I had gone to emergency because I couldn't get any doctor to see me. No doctor wants to see you when you haven't got any money. Whatever happened to the Hippocratic Oath? They should change it to "I will do my best to care for one kind of person, the rich. I don't care about the poor because they don't have any money."

**Factory worker
Detroit**

BATTLE GOES ON AT AP

There was a rally Aug. 18 at Ford Rouge UAW Local 600 to support AP Parts workers who've been on strike in Toledo since May. About 300 people turned out. During the rally a Black AP Parts worker told me that when AP announces they have jobs available, Ohio Social Services sends people on welfare who are told they will lose their benefits if they don't cross the picket line. Before the strike the workforce at AP was maybe 40% minority. Now with the strike it is almost all Black and Latino. There is no doubt that not only AP Parts, but also the state of Ohio are trying to use the historic weapon of racism to exact the concessions, if not break the strike.

**UAW member
Detroit**

I have 25 years seniority at AP parts. My daughter works at a fast food res-

taurant, and when the strike first started people she worked with wanted to know why her father didn't go back to work. They said things couldn't be that bad at AP. She told them it affects them too. If AP workers get cut back to \$5 or \$6 an hour, and they have a union, what are the fast food workers going to be working for? That's why people in Toledo are supporting us.

Since the real truth about what's happening at AP has come out, Toledo public opinion has changed. Before they said, "why don't you go back to work?" Now they're saying, "why don't you tear the building down?"

**Striking AP worker
Toledo, Ohio**

SUMMER GAMES...

Like virtually all the Black people I have spoken with in the last month, I was shocked and furious at how the press and establishment used the Olympics for venting patriotism and racism. They are using the fact that many of the U.S. athletes are Black to pretend to the rest of the world that we have somehow become "equal." But the TV cameras didn't show the neighborhoods surrounding the events, where Black people are living in squalor. I am sure that the patriotism whipped up by these Olympics will be used against Black people very soon. I used to love to watch these sports events, but everything in this country now is being used to fan Reaganism.

**Black student
Los Angeles**

Over 100 million dollars was spent on security for the Olympic games, to further harass the poor people of Los Angeles. Right in the heart of downtown LA, only a few yards from the Police Department headquarters, hundreds of poor people and derelicts sleep on the street each night. For the Olympics, the police rounded up many of these people, took away all their belongings and threw them in the trash. And all of this, right under the eyes of the TV cameras.

I have been in prison so I know how this system works. But it is not every day that you see them file people up like this. What concerns me, is what will the police do with all their new, expensive equipment once the games leave town?

**Black worker
Los Angeles**

...AND OTHER CALIF. EVENTS

Hundreds of thousands of people took advantage of the week-long Democratic Convention to air their protests against the Reagan administration in daily rallies and demonstrations. The largest demonstrations were the Labor and Gay/Lesbian Marches on July 15 which drew over 150,000 demonstrators each. The Labor March had teachers, waiters, printers and airline stewards. The farmworkers were there with their new grape boycott, and FLOC was boycotting Campbells. The PATCO banner drew constant cheers of support, as did signs supporting the Arizona copper mines strike. "No U.S. Intervention in Central America" placards were in evidence throughout the entire march.

San Francisco was like an armed camp with thousands of police everywhere. Police brutally beat demonstrators and by-standers at an anti-Moral Majority rally, and arrested members of the Livermore Action Group who had organized a "die-in" in the financial district.

**Participant
San Francisco**

When I first heard about the selection of Geraldine Ferraro as the Vice-Presidential nominee, I was thrilled, because I considered it a real victory for the Women's Liberation Movement. I still do. But Ferraro as the candidate, on tour, in press conferences, has infuriated me. Why does she feel she has to mimic Reagan's warped view of family, church and home every time she speaks? Why does she constantly have to assure every man in America that she's the kind of woman who's "no threat?" And then top it all off with stories about murder cases she prosecuted which "deserved the death penalty?"

Ferraro owes her nomination to us; we owe nothing to her!

**Disgusted
Chicago**

Readers' Views

YOUTH RIGHTS, BLIND RIGHTS

In the April issue of N&L you referred to a police raid on a junior high school to seize student records. Now the Reagan administration has asked the New Jersey supreme court to nullify the Fourth Amendment rights of students against "unreasonable search and seizure" by teachers "because teachers just like parents" are not covered by such a law. As if our parents have the right to deny us our freedom in the first place. This is a most dangerous attack against youth in this country.

**Youth
Chicago**

I went to the Convention for the National Federation of the Blind in July. It appears as if we're giving in to the Reagan way of dealing with us—"Don't expect anything from the government because you won't get it." We decided to give out more scholarships and small business loans and are planning to establish a model rehabilitation center. It's all beneficial, but it's limited, helpful to only a few. It deflects from the reality of what this system is doing to us.

But many of the members have decided that since the FAA won't help us in our struggle with the airlines to keep our canes on flights and have the same travelling rights as everyone, we're going to picket one of the major airlines enough to shut their services down. This reflects more of the spirit of the body of the NFB.

**Blind activist
Detroit**



**STOP THE
IRAQ-
IRAN
WAR**

I found the editorial on the Iraq/Iran War (June N&L) a magnificent piece of political analysis. It not only captured the dynamics of a very complex situation, but also anticipated the events that have most recently occurred in the Middle East. Did you see the State Department spokesman get up in Congress and declare that "Syria is a force promoting peace in the Middle East and Lebanon," even though just months earlier he was calling the Syrians "terrorists"?

A lot of people must be confused by this change of view, but your editorial showed it is no change at all. After all, if you recall that the U.S. and Israel both agreed to Syria's invasion of Lebanon back in 1976 when it took that to put down a social revolution, why should they be shy about supporting Syria now when it tries to do the same? A deal between Syria and the U.S. over the Iraq/Iran War can't be discounted. Bringing everything back to what the Left learned, or better yet, didn't learn, from that 1975-76 Lebanese Civil War, is what is needed to grasp the complexities of the entire Middle Eastern situation today.

**Long-time reader
Los Angeles**

There are new facts about the situation in the Gulf War. Rafsanjani has asked the U.S. to re-look at the Iranian situation. He is one of the big landlords in Kerman province where there has been revolt by the peasants. The way I see it, none of the state-powers are what they seem to be. Syria joined in the Tel Al Zatar massacre, and Iraq bombed the Kurds. Today we have war between Baath Iraq and "anti-imperialist" Iran.

At the same time, the Iranian army is confronted with "morale problems." Pleas from the army couldn't stop the strike by cigarette workers. What all this proves to me is that the masses are the determinant in the Middle East today.

**Iranian exile
in the USA**

MARX'S WORK ON RUSSIA

I very much appreciated the "Theory/Practice" column by Michael Connolly—"Marx's last writings on Russia"

new paths to revolution and philosophic continuity" (June N&L). Even though I had not read the book Teodor Shanin edited, I felt that there was a full presentation of all the topics and all the tendencies of thought. This thorough examination is what is essential to make the reader of the article feel a participant in the subsequent critique.

When Connolly comes to the critique, "Marx's view of women; authors' disregard of philosophy," it is very quietly stated and very profound. In my opinion it is important to remember that while the authors of this book ignore Marx's view of women in the period of the Paris Commune and after, Raya Dunayevskaya's work singles it out. The difference between her view of Marx's last writings and these authors' is clear. But because their work is an important contribution, you have presented the contrasting views in a way which allows discussion and debate to continue...

**Susan Van Gelder
Detroit**



**WHO ARE
THE REAL
MAKERS OF
BLACK
HISTORY?**

In high school, we learned about the 1954 Brown vs. Board of Ed. decision. But it was presented like the Supreme Court guaranteed democracy in America. John Alan's column last month was the first time I had ever read how that decision happened. The Supreme Court was forced into it by decades of Black struggle. There is a message in that conclusion for us. Don't sit back and expect the "law" to protect your rights. You have to fight for them yourself.

**Black worker
Chicago**

I have just finished reading Frantz Fanon, Soweto and American Black Thought and what hit me in reading it was how revolutionary the high school youth in Soweto and the rest of Black South Africa have become. When I was in high school we read George Jackson's Letters from Prison as if it opened up a new world; but since then the Black movement does not seem to have produced that many new thinkers. What they found in Fanon a lot of us just passed over when we read him a few years back. Whatever happens tomorrow in Black liberation, I am sure it is going to come from the youth.

**Black worker
Los Angeles**

APPEAL FROM BISHOP FOUNDATION IN GRENADA

Readers of N&L should know about the formation of "The Maurice Bishop and Oct. 19, 1983 Martyrs Foundation" in Grenada. This foundation has been established to honour and preserve the memory of the late Prime Minister of the People's Revolutionary Government, Maurice Bishop. It will also honour the memory of the Ministers of Government, trade union leaders, workers and students murdered on Oct. 19, 1983 at Fort Rupert.

These martyrs and heroes of the working people fell victim to the coup d'etat led by Bernard Coard against the People's Revolutionary Government. When 25,000 assembled and freed Maurice Bishop from house arrest, the Coard clique moved to silence the people and ordered the army to open fire on the masses...

The Foundation's objectives include collecting funds for building a physical monument in honour of the martyrs; building and operating a centre for literature about the life and work of the martyrs and about Grenadian people's history; setting up a fund to help persons in need as a result of Oct. 19.

To get in touch with the Foundation and offer help, write:

**PO Box 167, Grenville Street
St. George's
Grenada**

TODAY'S MINERS' STRIKES AND 1949-50 GENERAL STRIKE PAMPHLET

The new pamphlet on the 1949-50 Miners General Strike is beautiful-looking. Andy Phillips' description of the mines and miners struck me. How real and hard-hitting his story is! It burns with the power and thought that's lodged in every worker and kept suppressed by capital. I hadn't felt so moved by a report of activity since I read Denby's *Indignant Heart*. Then Raya's article in the pamphlet opened up for me in a new way the birth of Marxist-Humanism. It is not just a path either from practice to theory or from theory to practice, but is both at the same time—a philosophy born of struggle. This is where all theories are born, tested and re-born, or they end up as sterile "think tanks"...

Carpenter
Cincinnati, Ohio

When I visited the Phelps Dodge miners' strike this summer, the first thing I noticed was how workers in a man, woman and child are involved in the strike. Since many of the miners had to go out and look for temporary work, the women and children are running the picket lines. In school one of these children refused to pledge allegiance to the flag, saying that it was a lie that that flag stood for "freedom." The school called the parents in, and the miners told the teacher that the child was right.

The second thing I noticed was that the local union leadership is not opposing the miners' actions, as so many bureaucrats do when workers start to struggle. Workers also told me that Phelps-Dodge is losing money on the mine, but they don't want to demand wage concessions from the scabs, because they are afraid they might join with the strikers.

I came into town just as workers were organizing for a demonstration in front of the people's clinic. The police attacked their demonstration and jailed several of the strikers. But they are still continuing their efforts to keep the scabs out.

Former GM worker
Visiting in Arizona

Reading the pamphlet on the Miners' General Strike called to mind the wave of strikes in Jamaica in the mid-1970s. They were not always for money. More than 3/4 of the strikes involved relationships at work, and defining a new sense of self at the workplace. For ex-

ample, workers would be out for weeks to demand a certain supervisor apologize to a worker. And this without strike benefit money like here.

The question of Automation raised in the pamphlet also touches on the Third World. We have had technology in the Third World but it has been destructive in terms of displacement of population. It has created a focus on urbanization as opposed to peripatetic development and served to perpetuate class divisions, displacing so many and including only a few. In those Jamaican strikes people would at times burn the machines and the factories, for example shoe machines that had replaced a lot of workers. You cannot look at automation as an abstraction.

Jumoke
Jamaican in New York

The Thatcher gang are becoming more vicious with the miners who have been on strike for 19 weeks. She has got clear of the dockers (the strike was never complete), but the support by many workers has been amazing. The railway workers have given good support. Thatcher is now talking about calling for emergency powers. She is describing the miners as "the enemy within." She describes the fight of the miners as an attack on democracy and is trying to starve them out. She will not succeed.

Harry McShane
Glasgow, Scotland

The discussion on our new pamphlet made me recall coal strikes I heard about in my youth, in the World War II period. The miners were demanding "portal to portal pay." Until then they had only been paid from the time they reached the coal face. They confronted the government and said: "Let the senators dig coal."

What the pamphlet expresses is that workers aren't what they appear to be, that the quest for freedom is at the heart of each. In this pamphlet you can go further—you see how the strike played an important part in the birth of Marxist-Humanism. The miners knew that automation wasn't just a labor-saving device, but a "man-killer." For Marxist-Humanists it meant a new way of thinking about history and theory was emerging.

Yes, automation transformed major industries and impoverished Appalachia. Yet that stage had to be grasped as

cognition as well, a process that is still going on...

Robert Ellery
New York

UPDATE ON MANITOBA

Here's an update on the story I wrote last month about the Manitoba Indian boy jailed in the U.S. after he killed his "adoptive" white father in self-defense against child abuse. Manitoba Indians have succeeded in getting him moved to a prison in Canada, where they can look after him better. Now they are trying to get the case re-opened and the verdict reversed.

Shainape Sheapwe
Michigan

SOLIDARIDAD



I'm speechless about the Simpson-Mazzoli Bill. This is the furthest racism has exposed itself in the U.S. But I'm not giving up. I can't see my friends being forced to return to Mexico. I have to show my documents everytime I go out on the streets and immigration stops me. At home it is no better. The situation with my parents does not change and I'm not conforming to it. I'm just waiting for the right moment to "declare my independence" and the same thing goes for my brothers and sisters.

Latina youth
Los Angeles

On my recent trip to Chile I found a lot of fever—demonstrations against the government every day in Santiago, and people eager to talk in the streets everywhere. I would stop to talk to strangers at a soup kitchen in the street and find myself in the middle of a meeting. It seemed dangerous to me, how open the opposition is.

The main organized force now is the students, who are fighting the police every day in Santiago's streets. In Concepcion, persons unknown burned down the secret police building. But Pinochet has a lot of support in the country outside Santiago. The dictator's continuous propaganda on TV and gimmicks such as giving away a few houses to the poor every day, have an effect.

Pinochet's announcement that he will not give an inch in response to the mass movement for democratization, means the lines are more clearly drawn now. He has rejected even the calls from within the dictatorship for elections and a congress. After over a year of daily demonstrations, people are losing their fear. Chilean political exile
In the USA

PHILOSOPHY & REVOLUTION

Having been in political groups throughout the spectrum I have had to confront mechanistic "Marxist-Leninist" attitudes on many occasions. So I am glad to see the creative dynamic of Marx's dialectic alive and well in N&L. The way Marx's views are highlighted and elaborated for today is important as we move to our philosophy for change. I have been thinking of ongoing events in the Caribbean and in the Third World as a whole—the economic crisis in Jamaica and the growing religiosity of the youth, which I consider a retreat.

I appreciate the way Marxist-Humanism has made theory concrete, especially in the centrality of women and youth to its perspective. Many groups see them as part of the periphery. You also have a greater recognition of the race issue, as in your treatment of Garvey and Fanon.

Caribbean friend
New York City

When I read *Philosophy and Revolution* I got an understanding of the dialectics of liberation. I wanted to read Hegel, but there still remained in my mind a fear that he was beyond my understanding. But finally I began to read *Phenomenology of Mind* at night at the public library. I'm still in the preface, but two quotes from Hegel have opened my mind in new ways. One reads: "For the real subject-matter is not exhausted in its purpose, but in working the matter out; nor is the mere result attained in the concrete whole itself, but the result along with the process of arriving at it." And here is the other: "In my view... everything depends on grasping and expressing the ultimate truth not as Substance but as Subject as well."

They say to me that the goal is not all there is; there is also the process. Freedom is the goal we live for, but to gain it we have to realize that freedom is also and always the method. Very helpful...

Young thinker
Cincinnati, Ohio

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- American Civilization on Trial, Black Masses as Vanguard**
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BLACK-RED VIEW

by John Alan

Jesse Jackson's dramatic "unity speech" before the Democratic National Convention last July may have brought "tears of emotion to the eyes of friend and foe alike"; it failed utterly to move Walter Mondale and the forces that controlled the convention to take one meaningful step for to make one positive statement in the interest of Black American equality. This was a major set-back for the Rainbow Coalition that had vowed, in Jackson's words to be "...challenging for changes...to shake the foundation of American politics." Instead, every issue that Jackson and the Coalition held to be vital for change went down to defeat in committee; whether it was for a strong statement in the party's program for affirmative action, the ending of runoff primaries in the South, quotas for Blacks and other racial minorities and youth in the convention or the cutting of the military budget by 20-25% and the use of those funds to rehabilitate the cities, etc.

This defeat may have been a serious set-back for the Rainbow Coalition that will cause a great deal of self evaluation. But in no way has it been a set-back to the Black movement for freedom or for the American Black masses who gave to the Rainbow Coalition its main, crucial impetus and power. To them the defeat has objectively shown, once again, the limitations that capitalist liberal politics imposes upon the idea and the practice of freedom.

Even before the convening of the convention many Blacks were aware of what to expect. This columnist was struck by the considerable amount of doubt that the Black Jackson delegates and supporters expressed about really accomplishing anything at the convention. At the symposiums and rallies for Jackson that I attended, the main concern was not with the convention, but what they would do after the convention. No one was naive enough to believe that there was going to be a floor fight over any of the issues. It was known that all procedures would show a maximum of party unity. As one Jackson delegate put it: "I came to support Jackson and was given a Mondale unity leaflet to pass out".

As a Jackson supporter pointed out, the issues his campaign raised would certainly divide the general convention and provide for disunity and chaos, thereby conjuring up memories of the Chicago convention in 1968.

Azania schools revolt



Student protests such as this one at the University of Western Cape to oppose the election of a new parliament for mixed race and Indians, have been spreading across Azania (South Africa). Thousands of high school and college students have boycotted classes in protests over the new constitution's attempt to divide Indians and "coloreds" from other Blacks. At the University of Transkei students boycotted classes after six students were detained for distributing pamphlets charging the school with corruption. In the Black township of Daveyton, several hundred high school youth marched in protest of racist school admissions policies.

Protest police killing

Albany, NY—It has been one month now since four white Albany, NY policemen shot and killed Jesse Davis, an unarmed 35-year-old Black man, who was considered to be emotionally disturbed. Four bullets struck him down. Earlier this year, in neighboring Rensselaer, a white man took a gun from a policeman, and he was disarmed without deadly force.

Following the Clinton Ave. shooting there were a series of spontaneous demonstrations and meetings in the Black community, with many whites participating. The police and government have tried to bury the incident, but now the protest continues to widen. When a group of clergy met yesterday to call for answers, a "candid public disclosure" of the facts, one pastor stated, "We are called to intervene in domestic quarrels all the time and we don't carry guns."

With the rising protest, many questions are being asked in the many discussions and meetings. People are firstly talking about the racism in the Albany area which this shooting reflected. But they are also talking about the role of the police, about proportionate representation for Blacks and other minorities in the government and the police, especially in the Black community, about attitudes toward emotionally disturbed people, about how to break down the lack of communication among different groups in the community, and other questions. One high-school woman expressed what so many others feel: "We can't let this ever happen again, not ever!"

—M. H. Albany, NY

Black experience at Dems convention

The above statement puts the finger on the dialectical differences that exist between the aims of a party that wants to get elected and an oppressed people that want to concretize the idea of freedom. There too, we have the ground for the duality that exists in many Black politicians who often confuse party interest with those of Black masses.

One of the things that came in the wake of the Democratic National Convention was the alarming amount of rhetoric that was generated against "liberal white women feminists" as the cause for the set-back of the Rainbow Coalition. This rhetoric was very prevalent at the symposium that was held on the Berkeley campus of the University of California. There was the feeling that the selection of Geraldine Ferraro to be the vice presidential candidate was another example of how white women have reaped the benefits of affirmative action.

The trouble with this argument is that it ignores the fact that women's liberation is an historical movement whose time has come, and its universality can't be particularized to a group of articulate white women who have narrowed women's liberation to the lifelits of careerism.

erism.

Of course Mondale found it to be far easier to "whiten" the power of women's liberation in his selection of Ferraro and in his calculated failure to interview Black women for the office of vice president. But the road block in the road of Black liberation is not women's liberation; it is the system of capitalism, as in the case of affirmative action, that reduces all human freedom to competition, i.e., Blacks vs white women. This is the limits of capitalist freedom, wherein people do not see their freedom in other people but as a limitation of their own freedom.

Once the sound and fury of capitalist politics are ignored there still remains the unambiguous reality that Black masses supported Jesse Jackson overwhelmingly because they wanted a new beginning in the fight against racism, poverty, sexism and war. They supported Jackson not because they believed that he had a good chance to become president but as an expression of how deep their opposition is both to Reaganism and the liberalism of the Democratic Party. They were saying that they want neither of the two capitalist parties but a transformation of the American society.



Demonstrations continued in Waynesboro, Ga. after several days of Black rebellion erupted following the death of 32-year-old Larry Gardner while being held in police custody. One local Black leader sent in to calm the situation was confronted by angry Black demonstrators demanding explanations for Gardner's death.

Cincinnati's revolutionary Black history

The Black Brigade of Cincinnati by Peter Humphries Clark, Arno Press and The New York Times.

This pamphlet, originally published in 1864 while the Civil War raged, is once more proof of the Black dimension which has been at the lead of every step forward in U.S. history. Not unusually, the events reported in this short account are covered up and hidden from view; nowhere is this more true than in the very home of the Black Brigade, Cincinnati.

Peter Clark wrote the report and gathered together the documents included in the pamphlet at the urging of many of the Brigade's members. Clark was an important figure in the movements for Black public education and socialism. In 1877 when he joined the Workingman's Party he became the first Black socialist in the U.S.*

The events covered in the pamphlet happened in 1862 when the outlook for the Cincinnati area was dire indeed in the face of the Confederate army advancing through Kentucky. Cincinnati was a pro-slavery and a commercial city. Clark begins his account of these events by describing the history of the question of slavery in Cincinnati and past attempts at organizing a company of Black "Home Guards." He describes the situation thusly: "Abolition buyers from the North and slaveholding buyers from the South jostle each other in her streets; hence the influential classes maintained free speech to conciliate Abolition customers, while the rabble were permitted to mob colored people to placate slaveholders. Even this balance was broken when the traitor Yancey spoke for disunion in a thronged house, and without interruption, while Wendell Phillips, speaking for the Union, was driven from the same platform by mob violence, and halls were closed, lest a lecture by Henry Ward Beecher should provoke a riot." (pg. 4)

When Sumter fell and the whole North rushed to arms the Black citizens of Cincinnati were no exception. They held a meeting to organize "Home Guards" to protect their city should it become necessary. They were stopped from holding their second meeting and their recruiting station was forced to remove an American flag raised above the door. They told them "We want you damned N---ers to keep out of this; this is a white man's war."

With an invasion pending on September 2, 1862, Mayor George Hatch, who had disbanded the earlier "Home Guards," called on all men, "citizen or alien," to report to their normal place of voting to participate in the organization of the city's defense. This proclamation to volunteer was not extended to the Black population. While their aid was required, it was not voluntary. A guard was established not to ask Blacks to volunteer, which they would have done willingly, but to collect all for duty.

They were brought together roughly and forced into pens. They were brought across the river to fortify the city. Clark points out that had the Confederate army seized the city, the Black population would not have been treated any worse.

This situation lasted through the 4th when Judge

*See Then and Now: On the 100th Anniversary of the First General Strike in the U.S., a News & Letters publication 1977, especially pp. 40-41.

William Dickson took command of the Black forces. He immediately let them go home to their families and prepare for camp life. When they returned later that day, not only those originally forced to come but also many more who had hidden so as not to be dragged off came. Four hundred men left — seven hundred returned.

This same day the Black Brigade of Cincinnati was declared with the presentation of an American flag so inscribed. With this the account describes the duties and services in defending against the siege of Cincinnati. They were carried out brilliantly and bravely. The Brigade was disbanded on September 20, 1862 having carried out its purpose to defend the city.

While the content of the actions struck this reader, what really struck me about these events was not in the pamphlet. It is the total disregard by most radical groups of American history. Cincinnati is an area rich in Black and working class struggles. Here there were large locals of the Workingman's Party and, later, the Socialist Party. The IWW national office was downtown for a short time. August Willich published the Zinzinnati Republikaner here. The Left for the most part, has forgotten these and others. It is a shame, it shows their utter disregard of the revolutionary nature of American working-class history.

—Gary Clark

Soweto Day talk

Washington, D.C.—Over 100 people commemorated the 1976 Soweto uprising at Howard University at a meeting organized by the "Committee for a June 16 Commemoration". The main sponsoring group was the Support Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (BCMA, Box 13038, Washington, D.C. 20009).

The main speaker was Imram Moosa, a BCMA leader from within Azania, active in the Azanian Peoples' Organization (AZAPO). Moosa made a very sharp critique of the ANC (African National Congress) and of white Left groups such as the South African CP.

He considered the Black working class the "vanguard" of the coming revolution. He traced the origin of the BCMA to the formation of the South African Students' Organization (SASO) in the late 1960s. SASO and especially its leader Steve Biko represented a break with the "textbook" Marxism of the ANC and the Left.

The Marxist-Humanist speaker, Raymond McKay of the New York News & Letters Committees, spoke on "Parallels of the Struggle in Azania and the U.S." He stated: "The June 16, 1976 Soweto revolt reverberated throughout the world. Just as some American struggles sparked revolts in Azania and other parts of Africa, so too the African revolutions and the Azanian revolts had an impact here."

He also pointed to "a crisis in Black Liberation" where "the 1980s have shown that obstacles to freedom come not only from state powers, such as Reagan and Botha, but also from retrogression within the revolutionary movement itself. We have only to look at Grenada to see this." The meeting not only contributed to breaking the conspiracy of silence around the Black Consciousness Movement in the Left and Black press, but also offered a type of serious debate around fundamental questions found all too rarely in solidarity movements.

—Kevin A Barry

Reagan's wars vs. revolutions in theory and practice

(continued from page 1)

and exiled in 1972. It is not true that he represents the people of El Salvador. Upon his return, he became part of the five-man "Revolutionary Government Junta." It was the period when the Archbishop of San Salvador was murdered and his funeral became the occasion for D'Aubisson and his death squad to enact another mass killing. Duarte continued to talk nonsense—and he knew it—about "controlling the Army." It was the period of the murderous weeks at the end of 1980 when the four nuns were raped and murdered and two American agrarian reform experts working for the AFL-CIO and U.S. Embassy were shot to death. This still failed to satisfy those death squads and the Army that aided in the cover-up. On the contrary, the murders—indeed, the massacres—continued by the hundreds.

THE PEASANTS WHO were slaughtered were those who were supposed to get the land due them through the Land Reform Act. Indeed, there is an ongoing civil war still. While it's true that Duarte, by comparison with D'Aubisson, can be considered very nearly a moderate, the more important fact is that he is actually only reorganizing the National Guard that he is supposedly disbanding. Thus far only the five who were directly responsible for the murder of the nuns have come to trial and been sentenced. But the Army that participated in the cover-up is doing so to this day on all other assassinations and massacres. Surely we cannot forget that the very person who was the head of the Army that had jurisdiction over these death squads—Carlos Eugenio Vides Casanova—is right now Duarte's Minister General of Defense.

Duarte himself was the ranking civilian member of the same government as Vides Casanova when the land reform was supposed to have been instituted back in 1980 and the only thing coming out in 1981 was the account of the massacre around the village of Mozote, where hundreds of peasants were murdered.*

Duarte is keeping away from getting directly involved in the question of Nicaragua. Honduras, too, had removed the direct stooge for U.S. imperialism, and right now is trying to draw a line between U.S. imperialist designs on Nicaragua and itself, though this may be merely a ploy to exact something more from the U.S. than the previous head of government, who danced all too joyfully to Reagan's every tune.

While Reagan is trying to make us think a new day has dawned since his rhetoric openly declared Russia the "evil empire," and named Nicaragua "its" surrogate, the truth is that though—and that even before the Allies pressured him to change his tone on the question of Russia—he had sent Shultz to visit Nicaragua, he did not stop for a moment in his arming and financing of the counter-revolutionary army of mercenaries in Honduras, directly on Nicaragua's border, with the aim of overthrowing the sovereign state of Nicaragua.

Towards that end, Reagan had assigned Henry Kissinger to head a special, so-called "bipartisan commission" to report on all of Central America. Kissinger was glad to comply. His commission has prepared its report which will further continue the old policy of treating not only Central America but also the Caribbean as if it were an American Lake. Kissinger may be under the illusion that he can do to Nicaragua what he did to Allende in Chile when he helped engineer the installation of a most reactionary, brutal, militaristic, neo-fascist regime of Pinochet. But this is 1984 and such ideological fetishisms aren't fooling even the Allies, much less the actual people in the respective countries, whether it be in the Philippines or Chile, where tremendous mass movements have burst out and are continuing despite the reactionary, brutal repressions.

Reagan has no intention of making peace with Nicaragua that, by revolution, rid itself of the brutal, savage, corrupt U.S. stooge, Somoza, to establish a government free of U.S. imperialist tentacles. What he is doing is looking for ways to avoid such a fiasco as he had in Lebanon, to see whether he can find some less corrupt stooges, either through the Church or through newspapers like *La Prensa*, who have decided to stop publica-

tion altogether rather than undergo such drastic censorship. Reagan is so involved in so many covert operations which are known to all, that he seems to have lost any ability to invent a new fetish that could be acceptable for open action....

OR LOOK AT ANOTHER FLASHPOINT. What has happened to Grenada after the U.S. imperialist invasion of it? Kissinger may be ready to use the invasion of Grenada as "proof" that Western powers have no right to criticize the U.S.; Great Britain has certainly muted its criticism now that it has been handed back that "commonwealth" country with only a few strings attached, like knowing who really is boss: the U.S. That is the exact opposite, however, of what the Grenadians think of it all; they have no intention whatever of becoming a colony all over again, be it British or American. And what the new boss has revealed is that it considers not only Grenada but both Central America and the whole Caribbean its Lake.

We are back to where we started: Central America and the Caribbean as if that were an American Lake and the center of the world's crises which suddenly makes it integral to the U.S.'s "national interests"....

Not by Practice Alone:

The Movement from Theory

The Absolute Method—The Unchained Dialectic

"...our epoch is a birthtime, and a period of transition..."

Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, p. 75

The body of ideas comprising Marxist-Humanism is rooted in the new post-war movements both from practice and from theory. **Marxism and Freedom**, structured on the movement from practice, and **Philosophy and Revolution**, tracing the movement from theory, were not only worked out while deeply participating in all movements of the new age of revolutions, be it the 1950s or 1960s and 1970s, but were equally rooted in the past, i.e. history. In a word, the period was the whole expanse of the modern world that began with the industrial revolution—indeed, we called the very first part of **Marxism and Freedom** the Age of Revolutions—industrial, political, economic, intellectual.

With **Philosophy and Revolution**, we had a new situation. It is not alone all the new passions and forces of the 1960s with which the book ends, but the fact that the philosophic predominates over the historic, the theory over the practice; indeed, the very fact that the structure is the exact opposite of what **Marxism and Freedom** was—that is, not the movement from practice, but the movement from theory—gave the whole question of Hegelian dialectics "in and for itself" a totally new meaning, in the sense that it demanded detailing not only the movement from practice but that from theory. That movement from theory becomes the uniqueness of Marxist-Humanist philosophy and our original contribution to Marx's Marxism. That happens to be exactly where Marx left off in his critique of Hegel's **Philosophy of Mind**, once he discovered his new continent of thought and of revolution. The totality of the crises of our age compelled us to rediscover the rest of the **Philosophy of Mind**, especially the final three paragraphs, where, suddenly, as Hegel reached what was supposed to be the final syllogism, the sequence is broken. What would have been Nature-Logic-Mind, which would have meant Logic the mediation, is Logic replaced with the Self-Thinking Idea. But even when the absolutely Universal becomes mediation, it is no beyond, no abstraction, but it is concrete and everywhere, and Absolute Method which is simultaneously objective and subjective. Such a vision, precisely, is what has made Hegel a contemporary of the 1960s and 1970s. And it is such a method that Marx worked at in his final decade, as he worked out a new relationship of the pre-capitalist societies to his age. "Why Hegel? Why Now?" is exactly what gave **Philosophy and Revolution**: from Hegel to Sartre, and from Marx to Mao, its structure.

Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution did more than merely permit us to refer to our major theoretical works as the "trilogy of revolution." With the availability of Marx's **Ethnological Notebooks** and, in general, "new moments" Marx discovered in his last decade, making it possible finally to view Marx's Marxism as a totality, it was clear also that our own contributions to Marx's Marxism helped articulate Marxism for our age. Surely,

the trail to the 1980s that Marx left us in the new moments in his last decade is not something one "picks up" en route to somewhere else. It requires labor, hard labor, to work out, and the work is never done until, once and for all, we're done with capitalism and have achieved new human relations. The dialectics of revolution keep re-emerging in ever newer appearances, as new forces and new passions are born anew. And yet the dialectic principle of second negativity never changes. Take the trail to the 1980s that Marx left us from the 1880s.

WE HAVE BEEN tracing this ever since Marx first uttered the phrase, when he broke with capitalism in 1843, and worked at its special-significance when he reiterated "revolution in permanence" in the 1850 **Address to the Communist League**, after the 1848-49 Revolutions were defeated. He wrote it to his organization, the first time he had an organization—the Communist League.

What makes 1875 so crucial a year in Marx's life is that, at one and the same time, he completed the definitive French edition of **Capital**, Vol. I, and the **Critique of the Gotha Program**, and that these two set the methodological foundation for absorbing all the new he began seeing in anthropological empiric studies. That illuminated for him what had been only a "vision" of the Man/Woman relationship he had developed when he first discovered his continent of thought and of revolution. Human development was, indeed, an "absolute movement of becoming."

This is what makes imperative that, to work out the new relationship of practice to theory, and theory to practice, we do not stop with Hegel's Absolutes—Knowledge, Idea, Mind—but recreate, as did Marx, Absolute Method—the unchained dialectic. In challenging post-Marx Marxists, we are articulating Marx's Marxism for our age.

The Absolute Method works out a correct Notion (Concept) from the very start, even "just" the immediate, or "just" organization, seeing everything in that conceptual fabric. The point is that EACH—both the concrete and the universal; both the organizational and the philosophic-theoretical—moves. There is one dialectic for the objective and the subjective. Listen to how concretely Gramsci envisioned the Absolute as "Absolute humanism": (p. 193 of **Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution**)

It has been forgotten that in the case of a very common expression (historical materialism) one should put the accent on the first term—'historical'—and not on the second which is of metaphysical origin. The philosophy of praxis is absolute 'historicism,' the absolute humanism of history. It is along this line that one must trace the thread of the new conception of the world.

Absolute humanism is surely the articulation needed to sum up a classless, non-racist, non-sexist society, where truly new human relations self-develop. Gramsci, however, like Lenin, didn't shed the concept of the vanguard party. Which is why I didn't for a second let go of Marx's **Critique of the Gotha Program**.

What has brought us to reunion with Marx's Marxism is the trilogy of revolution to back up our activities as they flow from Absolute Method, whether that is expressed in our view of the 1905 Russian Revolution or 1952 Bolivian Revolution or the philosophic encounter with Silvio Frondizi in Argentina or 1982 "simple" activities in Latin American or African solidarity movements, or 1984-85 Perspectives...

Organizational Tasks

...Of all the concrete organizational tasks we are setting for ourselves, none, I believe, will have the impact of the new type of classes on Perspectives. I am referring to all other tasks — from the activities in solidarity support committees with other revolutionary groups to a sub drive for **News & Letters**; from the sales and reviews of books and pamphlets and getting reviews of our works published, to our three new pamphlets — all of which are especially central to the new home of Marxist-Humanism in Chicago.

Chicago will gain a new dimension. I say this, not because I am not aware of what it has been historically in class struggles, Black Dimension, Woman's Liberation, youth developments — as well as what it says of historic connection with Marx or, for that matter, further into the history, from the Civil War through the last decade of Marx's life which got rooted here in the person of Eleanor Marx. Rather, I say this because dialectical philosophy had been missing, though Eleanor Marx did seriously practice the philosophy of Marx in his "new moments" and was the first to go "deeper and lower" into the ranks of labor as well as into women's liberation, to which she added, that is to say, practiced, literature and revolution, not alone in Europe but in America, Chicago especially. There her speech connected directly the Haymarket tribune to Marx's Marxism. Just as even the **Chicago Martyrs** ran an interview with Marx — and that directly related to his opposition to any "cult of personality" — so the direct presence of Eleanor Marx speaks of Chicago as home of Marx's Marxism.

Thus, projection there of Marxist-Humanism as organization, as paper, as international category for this home gives us more than just new "elbow room"; it means seeing our whole goal with new eyes...

Our Perspectives projection this year is, at one and the same time, a test of us, a test of what we have been concretizing for 30 long years...

—July 7, 1984

* See "Saving Salvador," a review of six books in the NY Review of Books (June 14, 1984) by Christopher Dickey. He is no radical, having once been the Washington Post head for Mexico and Central America and a member at the Council on Foreign Relations, 1983-84.

Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, 1984-85

Report to the 1984 Convention of News and Letters Committees
by Raya Dunayevskaya, National Chairwoman, July 7, 1984

The movements from theory as well as from practice vs. the great artificer, Ronald Reagan, for whom the whole world is a stage—on which he rolls back the clock of history on the Black Dimension, Labor, Women and Youth, as he drives for world war

- I. The impotence of the summits, the intensity of new labor struggles, as the Black dimension looms ever higher
- II. From Managua to Grenada, from El Salvador to Berlin, from Africa to Asia—U.S. imperialism's tentacles (and those of its Allies from Great Britain and France to Japan) extend to the Pacific as well as the Atlantic.
- III. Not by Practice alone: The Movement from Theory
 1. The New Sense of Objectivity: The Theory of State-Capitalism and New Forms of Workers' Revolts
 2. What Was Marx's Dialectics of Revolution to the Post-Marx Marxists of the Second International?
 3. The Absolute Method—The Unchained Dialectic
 4. On The Threshold, 1950-53: The Relationship of Abstract/Concrete

IV. Organizational Tasks

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As Others See Us

Italian review of Dunayevskaya's work

Editor's Note—Below we print translated excerpts from a review of the Italian edition of *Philosophy and Revolution* and the American edition of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* written by Valeria E. Russo which appeared in *Dimensioni* No. 30, 1984.

With its publication in the early 1970s, *Philosophy and Revolution* represents a most significant example of research on Hegel outside of academic Marxism...

"Why Hegel, Why Now?" is the question Dunayevskaya poses that will open in 1973 the initial chapter...where the actual relevance of Hegel for today is perceived in the centrality of his concept of the Absolute and in the possibility of utilizing the moment of the "negation of the negation" as a powerful instrument for the interrelation of the revolutionary processes of the present...

THIS READING OF HEGEL, which emphasizes on the one hand the humanistic interpretation given it by Marx, and on the other hand the political revolutionary interpretation given it by Lenin, tends to reaffirm that philosophy does not posit itself as a simple external reflection of reality but is already internal to the reality itself. What constitutes the theoretic novelty of this book is its emphasis on the essentiality of Lenin's interpretation of Hegel's philosophy (in *Philosophical Notebooks*) and particularly in the identification of the Absolute Idea with the movement "from practice to theory." Another point that seems important to remember is the consideration of philosophy as phenomenology of "new passions and new forces," that is, as phenomenology of new Subjects that begin to present themselves starting from the sixties...

The author...emphasizes as well that Hegel's impact is really shattering when once the vertex of Absolute is reached and what is heard is absolute negativity itself.

The Hegel represented by Dunayevskaya and the re-reading itself of Marx, Lenin, Mao, Sartre, and Trotsky are heavily affected by the attention that the author poses for an original formulation both of the concept of

political (and of revolution as a real movement and dialectic pole with respect to the philosophy), and on the concept of Subject which emerges from radical movements of our epoch (Black, Students, Women, Youth) as well as from the liberation struggles of African people and from the revolts of Eastern countries. These movements are the object of the third and last part of this book, which is often provocative yet offers interesting elements of reflection about important questions of contemporary political and philosophic thought...

IN HER LATEST BOOK, dedicated to Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, she accomplishes on the one hand the precise recognition of the "feminist dimension" of Rosa Luxemburg's work (until now neglected by both Marxist and non-Marxist scholars) and on the other hand she has thrown light on the importance of the analysis of the role of women to Marx's late works. Dunayevskaya highlights in those decades a problem that is still present in the Women's Liberation Movement, that is, the problem of "spontaneity" and its connection with the party form or what is indicated in "the question of autonomy..."

Another interesting aspect of this book is the re-evaluation of Marxist work that contests the validity of the dichotomy between the young Marx and the mature Marx. The author starts her reconstruction considering some of the themes already present in her various works: the transformation of Hegel's revolution in philosophy into the philosophy of revolution of Marx, the most important aspect of the Marxist "new Humanism" reached on the basis of a recent transcription of Marx's *Ethnological Notebooks*, reconsiders the role that the question brought about by the anthropology and ethnology of the second half of the 19th century had on the development of Marx's thought...

In opposition to the attempt of these last years to find in the Marxist text the presence of several Marxes, Dunayevskaya restates the unified character, throughout Marx's works, though it is characterized by a richness of multi-dimensional articulation. The *Ethnological Notebooks* represent for the author not only an important moment of mature production but they contribute also to "cast light on Marx's works as a totality"...

Indians fight on own terms

Detroit, Mich.—Recently I had some experiences with the Indian Health Care Services of Detroit (IHC) that were not very good. They made me think about how different their approach to the Indian movement is from my own. They say that you won't get anywhere unless you play the white man's game and beat him at it. I went there to get help from them because of Medicaid cuts, but the Center is so busy with government bureaucracy that it doesn't have time for participation from its clients.

When I talked to the Assistant Director about the possibility of getting clients together to discuss ways of dealing with diabetes and related problems, he said they didn't have the time or money. But diabetes is one of the leading health problems among Indians, along with alcoholism. I felt his attitude was patronizing. The IHC would rather deal with the bureaucracy than encourage us to find new ways to help ourselves, like workshops on nutrition, or working out car pools.

This kind of thinking seems to be part of many urban Indian service agencies. It exists in our movement and can't be ignored. The Assistant Director and I also disagreed on another point. He downgraded the fishing rights struggle of the Indian people of Northern Michigan. He felt that they'd taken so long to achieve so little because they hadn't learned to beat the white man at his own game.

But the truth is that Indian fishermen did win exclusive unrestricted fishing rights in spite of years of harassment by white "sport" fishermen. (See N&L, Jan-Feb 1982). The state has been forced to help them purchase new equipment. There have also been small businesses opened to sell the fish. It has taken a long time, but Indian fishermen have much of what they wanted because they were willing to fight for the right to do what they wanted — and not because they worked within the system. They fought hard to make the government live up to treaty rights. They have a right to be proud of their struggle. It was no small victory.

I hope this article will show that we have a lot of differences not just within the system that we're living under now, but within our movement. Because of the ever more oppressive system that we live under, some of these harmful attitudes are understandable. We have a lot to learn from other movements in their struggles for freedom. Maybe we can do this by talking to and learning from each other, rather than by spending our time "playing the white man's game". —Shainape Shcapwe

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three works by Raya Dunayevskaya

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In Brief...

Bolivia—The militant Bolivian Labor Confederation has once again pushed the Zuazo government to the Left. New strikes organized by the Bolivian Confederation of Workers forced suspension of all payments to the IMF, a freeze in prices of basic commodities, and a pay raise. At the same time, the workers came out to defend the very man their strikes opposed, President Zuazo, when rightist officers attempted a coup and kidnapped him. The military plotters had been trained by U.S. imperialism to fight the drug traffic.

Portugal—Raids in June on Left groups and individuals resulted in 40 arrests, including that of an important revolutionary military officer during the 1974-75 revolution, Otelo de Carvalho who, even after the revolution was defeated, polled 16% of the vote in the 1976 presidential elections. Otelo and many others are being held on "terrorism" charges without any evidence having been presented. The right-wing Socialist Party government of Mario Soares ordered the arrests ostensibly to break up a terrorist group, but the arrests occurred on the eve of a vote in Parliament to establish a new political police. The new law may, however, be vetoed by President Eanes, since the Portuguese masses made sure in their post-revolutionary Constitution that there would be no new political police to replace the notorious fascist police, the PIDE, which the revolution had dismantled as one of its first acts.

Thailand—Twenty-one poor people were killed and 42 wounded in Bangkok on July 30, when a crowd of 4000 hungry people trampled some of their own number as they surged forward to get small relief packages being distributed by a Buddhist association. The bourgeois press applauded the collapse of the Communist-led guerrilla movement last year, but largely ignores the social conditions which are surely developing a new generation of revolutionaries. Recently there have been new stirrings among the urban workers despite severe government repression in this U.S. imperialist bastion.

Haiti—The U.S. Coast Guard has been stopping boat people at sea and returning them to Haiti. They operate near Haiti with the full permission of the Duvalier dictatorship. In June, 7 Haitians were killed when the Coast Guard sank their boat while boarding it to check for U.S. immigration. The survivors and the bodies were returned to Haiti, where people had to pay bribes even to receive the dead bodies of their relatives from the Haitian government. Boats are routinely stopped and burned and refugees returned. Reverend Jean-Juste of the Haitian Refugee Center in Miami hit the nail on the head when he called the American government "the pirate of the Caribbean Sea."

Black women writers today

(continued from page 1)

years.

Thus, what is new when a woman presents a point of view on a question instead of a man can be seen in the kind of natural grasp of form with which she compresses history and experience. Listen to how different Paule Marshall's recent critique of William Styron's *Confession of Nat Turner* is than the lengthy responses of the all-male symposium of Black writers and scholars assembled in 1968 for the purpose of answering Styron's slanderous work: *First of all, there was the blatant racism of the thing. Nat Turner, the prophet, the visionary, the great 19th century religious rebel, the revolutionary, Nat the Marcus Garvey, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. of his time, had been reduced in Mr. Styron's fictionalized account to a cowardly, irreligious, neurasthenic celibate obsessed with the thought of white female flesh. A portrayal in clear contradiction to established historical fact. I saw blood. Then there was the matter of art. Mr. Styron's Nat Turner speaks in the voice of an Emersonian schoolmaster. And the writing throughout...has the formal tone of an essay rather than the excitement and sense of lived experience of fiction.*

AFRICA AND AMERICA

History, oral and written, as well as anthropology, come together with the lived experience of the Nigerian woman in Buchi Emecheta's *The Slave Girl*. The struggle of Ojebeta, a young Ibo woman, to cling to the individuality she had derived from her family and village life before being sold into African slavery by her brother is not made a metaphor for Western slavery and colonialism. Instead, set in the early decades of the 20th century (including an account of the 1929 Aba Women's War), *Slave Girl* confronts the reader with a profound critique of African society in transition. For Emecheta, the African woman is the key to this critique. Though nearly every aspect of African society is brought in, from the workings of the market economy (including slavery) to the social division between town and countryside, the subjectivity of the African woman, her reason, remains the author's focus.

Not even the "mushroom of freedom" that Ojebeta is allowed to eat when she returns home to her village and gains the right to enter into a marriage of her own choosing, is seen as anything other than another form of slavery. For as Emecheta concludes of Ojebeta's marriage to Jacob who is both traditional and modern: *One does not ask whether they loved and cared for each other ever after; those words make no sense in a situation like this. There was certainly a kind of eternal bond between husband and wife, a bond produced maybe by centuries of tradition, taboos and latterly, Christian dogma. Slave obey your master. Wife, honour your husband, who is your father, your head, your heart, your soul. So there was little room for Ojebeta to exercise her own individuality, her own feelings, for those were entwined in Jacob's.*

It is in the works of Alice Walker, especially her *Colored Purple*, that we meet not only the Black woman in the act of exercising "her own individuality" but encounter the political power of her imagination which is

at once tragic and, above all, displays the critical self-consciousness of humor. Here the literary form itself raises the question of the inseparability of the personal and political in man/woman relations. Alice Walker's appropriation of the letter as the form in which to trace the Black woman in the process of becoming, of gaining a mind of her own, is profoundly moving.

The letter is transformed from a vehicle of reflection into the method by which the women characters recreate themselves before the mind's eye of the author and the reader. Though written by two quite different Black women who are blood-sisters, Celie in the rural South and Nettie in Africa, the letters nevertheless reveal that the passion to communicate, to think their own thoughts, remains their common bond.

In the African, as well as the African-American experience, Walker's characters show us that woman is nothing to herself or to another woman except insofar as she is something to a man. In Africa and America, the painful reciprocity between man and woman is not, however, locked into absolute indifference but exists at the level of a passionate struggle for new, truly human relations.

WOMAN'S STORY OF STRUGGLE

Even in the barren wastes of South Africa's rural reserves, the Black South African writer Phyllis Ntantala shows that the Black woman is, in the words of the great revolutionary Rosa Luxemburg, "a land of boundless possibilities." While not fiction, as such, Ntantala's collection, *An African Tragedy*, contains the narrative of lived experience from which fiction is recreated.

Life for the "widows of the reserves" seems only to be an interminable waiting for the disappeared, the exiled and the enslaved. Ntantala writes that though this infertile land of waiting is located "in back of beyond", it, nevertheless, contains the "human story that tells of a noble band of women, who, with fortitude and courage, have refused to allow themselves to be overcome by their condition."

We read, for instance, of a young African woman doctor, Margaret Mncadi, who was asked to present the grievances of the women of the reserves in a letter to the government. Then *with over a thousand women from the countryside, she came to the Native Commissioner's Office at Port Shepstone to deliver the letter they had written, the letter that set out the things that these semi-literate and illiterate women of the reserves felt the Government ought to know about their hardships.*

However, when the government responded with arrests and ordered the doctor from the area *the anger of the women knew no bounds. They filled the dipping tanks with stones, set the farms on fire, burnt down the cane fields and the whole of Natal south coast went up in flames.*

What we have learned from the new and specific dimension of today's Black women's literature, that we began with, is how in fictional form it comes natural for these original writers to show political principles about freedom in such personal terms that the readers can draw their own conclusions.

YOUTH

From a Third World shop in U.S.

Oakland, Ca.—As a Middle Eastern student who was forced to quit school, working in a factory was new to me, but I didn't know that the conditions would be so similar to what I've seen in my country.

I work in an electromechanical company where we produce transformers and hospital equipment. We work a mandatory 10 hours a day with only a half hour lunch break which is deducted out of our small pay check. The majority of the workers are Latinos and the company makes it very clear from the very beginning that a union is illegal. This also means that we do not get any raises unless the boss feels like giving it to us. I know workers who haven't had a raise for five years now.

When I first began to work, we were 100 but in a three month period, 50 quit because the work is so heavy and the working conditions are so horrendous. For those of us who have remained, the work load has been doubled, which means mandatory overtime and speed up. After work everybody just vanishes and does not want to get anywhere near that place until the next morning.

We have no safety equipment and even after we pushed for safety shoes because a worker lost part of his foot in an accident, the company made us pay for it ourselves.

The first day I began to work, I worked very hard so the next day the foreman made me work faster and faster. I realized that the faster I work the more they'll expect from me. Other workers had tried to tell me that the first minute but it took me a day to understand it. Many of us can not quit because of the threat of unemployment but we resist in other ways by deliberately working slower to bring down production, or destroying machines to stop the assembly line. Or we help a fellow worker get a raise by pretending that we need his help in doing our job.

There is a very strong solidarity among men and women workers especially Latino and Black. For example, the company tells us to call a more experienced worker our "boss" but we have no such words. Instead, we call each other by name. The one Black worker in our factory has got the worst job which exposes him to chemicals all day long. He is always ordered to do the more difficult jobs of the white workers so we gave an ultimatum to the white workers against this type of discrimination. This not only created a feeling of trust between the Latino and Black workers but also with some of the white workers who realized it is not the boss who defends their interest.

The women workers are all kept in the wrapping sec-

Youth in Revolt



Students from Chicago's only bilingual college, mostly young Hispanic women, took over the office of the Illinois State Scholarship Commission August 6 and shut it down. They were protesting discrimination after an audit charged 500 students with improper citizenship or residency requirements.

If you ever signed up for free ice cream on your birthday, Big Brother may be watching you. Public outrage forced the Selective Service to return a birthday list it had bought from Farrell's and used to find draft resisters. If not through birthday parties, Uncle Sam wants to get you through the rising costs of college and high youth unemployment, which, together with decreased student and faculty opposition to campus militarization, have meant more than a doubling of ROTC enrollment since 1974, to 72,823.

"We're no different from the way American soldiers were in Vietnam," said Alexei Peresleni, one of four 19- and 20-year-old Soviet soldiers who deserted in Afghanistan. The four held a news conference in August in which they detailed massacres of whole villages and rapes of Afghan women.

At the same time, they told of their opposition to what they called the immoral war on Afghanistan and of young draftees' grenade attacks on the officers who abused them. Within the Afghan army itself, large numbers of soldiers have mutinied, fighting their officers and joining the guerrilla opposition.

Demonstrations in several countries marked the 39th anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. In Hiroshima, over 50,000 protested August 5 and 6 demanding an immediate end to nuclear weapons deployment and transport.

And while Reagan celebrated the week with his "joke" about bombing Russia "in five minutes," the Other America, not forgetting who dropped the bomb, demonstrated from Los Angeles to Offutt Air Base in Nebraska, to the Seneca Army Depot in New York.

tion which is the lowest job. They are not only put in front of the manager's office so he can constantly watch them, but are sexually harassed and always told to do the cleanup. I got so furious about this that a few times I took the broom from them and started sweeping the floors after work even though the boss looked at me in a threatening way. But these women resist by deliberately wrapping the machines incorrectly so the product is taken apart all over again, which lowers the output.

All of this has created a feeling of real trust among us so when the boss orders us around, we have a discussion and share ideas on how to resist. I call this a battle of ideas. And it is what the company is most afraid of, so they try hard to break up our discussions. For example a few weeks ago we were talking about the instruction sheets that we have to follow in assembling the machines. A lot of times we find mistakes in them and use our own minds to assemble a part. Almost always we turn out to be right and the instruction sheet is wrong. Nevertheless the boss yells at us for not asking him first. We asked ourselves, why is it that we are treated as stupid and can't use our own creativity. All were saying: "What kind of work is this?" So when I raised the struggles of coal miners in 1949-50 who were fighting against their own union bureaucracy and asking the question "what kind of labor should man do, why should there be a division between mental and manual labor," they all felt this expressed what was in their minds.

Another time we were discussing how hard it is to get a raise and that even when we do get it, we are still being robbed by the company. I told a fellow worker that Karl Marx talks about that in Capital but he said he didn't want to have anything to do with Marx. A few days later, the boss yelled at him for making a very small mistake and as soon as the boss left, he started breaking a machine. This time I talked to him about Silesian weavers who back in 1844 had resisted by breaking machines and burning the company deeds. This was especially relevant to me because contrary to those who consider this act backward, Marx hailed it as very mature and revolutionary. This worker's attitude toward me changed. The next day he came up to me and asked if I had heard the latest news on the radio about war in the Middle East. He went on to say how much he despises the way leaders just treat us as mindless objects to fight wars or tell us what to do in the factory.

This type of battle of ideas is very important because it reveals all these ways that we resist which seem small but are forms of revolt and can become massive. I realize that even when we are just asking for a raise, our concern goes far beyond wages and involves the very conditions of labor and of self-determination.

Internationalist Marxist-Humanist Youth

by Jim Mills

The gathering of the Internationalist Marxist-Humanist Youth this year was the fifth time we've met since 1979 when we adopted that name. Young activists from the Middle East, Britain, Latin America and the U.S. participated in the meeting.

It was that internationalist dimension in the discussions we were having with young activists, in the kind of articles being carried on the youth page of News & Letters which helped give us our name in the 1970s. Then our youth page carried reports by Latino students from Hostos College in New York opposing educational cuts; by British students occupying buildings against tuition increases and exclusion of foreign students; by young Iranian freedom fighters; and on the all-important high school youth leading the Black Consciousness Movement in Azania.

Here in the United States there had as well been a resurgence of youth revolutionary activity: in student demands for university divestiture from South African companies; in high school student actions against ID badges and discipline; in new expressions from unemployed and working, exploited youth against the restructured economy of the 1970s.

As we met in 1984 our Internationalist Marxist-Humanist Youth had a letter from Raya Dunayevskaya entitled, "On Listening to Marx Think as Challengers to all Post-Marx Marxists." In the first part of the letter Raya writes of why youth as a revolutionary force was singled out by Marxist-Humanists in the mid-1950s, where so many others had concentrated on calling youth the "beat generation."

The second part of the letter moves from the 1950s to the 1980s to ask us what is new in the 1980s whereby Marxist-Humanism would create the category of post-Marx Marxism.

Thus the letter was helping to present the method whereby revolutionaries single out categories—youth or post-Marx Marxism—as a way of summing up a new stage. In this case it was the emergence of a new revolutionary force, youth, and it was the recognition of revolutionaries who were not the full continuators of Marx's Marxism.

The third section of Raya's letter entitled, "The 1970s: Return to the Philosophic Source," discussed how youth become challengers not only of this society but of those who do wish to uphold it, yet whose thought has not dived deeply enough into what is necessary for revolutionary transformation. Here the challenge to the youth became how to find the philosophic source, in Hegel and Marx, as well as source as human subjects of revolution; so that a full uprooting of capitalist class society could finally take place. With this letter as our ground, the Internationalist Marxist-Humanist Youth undertook discussion of perspectives and tasks.

Black youth in Chicago

Chicago, Ill.—This summer the state spent three times more money on youth job programs for rich suburbs than for the city of Chicago itself, which has the highest number of teenagers nationwide along with a high Black youth unemployment.

Thousands of teenagers stood in line for hours in May to apply for the city summer youth jobs program, but now they find that the city spent most of its money in the suburbs where it had to run an advertising campaign to attract teenagers to the programs.

Even when Black youth do find employment, these are no more than poverty jobs with Third World conditions of labor as well as racist and sexist harassment. Last year many youth turned to CETA jobs which were a dead end. This year Reagan has banned the CETA program and replaced it with a training program for the few. Chicago's youth federal funding has already been cut in half.

The high rate of Black youth unemployment now reaching 60% has never been counted in the official unemployment rate, which is supposed to have improved. But now Reagan is using it as an excuse to break up the minimum wage structure and offer us a sub-minimum wage.

—Ida Fuller

Working in Olympics

I have been working as an escort for the Olympic athletes the past three weeks, and I think the world should know how myself and my fellow workers have been treated.

First, we were told we could not take any food, drink or reading material on the buses that we sit in all day escorting the Olympic athletes to the Coliseum. Then we were told we couldn't play cards, listen to the radio, or talk to each other.

That is only the beginning. After four weeks of work, many of us have yet to get paid. How can someone go four weeks without a paycheck? Especially when we make only \$5.50 an hour?

The thing that really got me was when we were briefed about what to do in the event of someone planting a bomb on the buses. We were told that we must stay on the bus until after security police arrive, no matter what. That means that if someone plants a bomb, we have to escort the athletes off the bus, and then wait on the bus until the bomb goes off!

A lot of us, especially in the Black community, took these jobs as it looked like good pay for easy work. But there seems to be no such thing. Working for the Olympics is as much an illusion as the Olympics themselves.

—Black youth

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