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Workers join students in protests



by Felix Martin, Labor Editor

It is very exciting to me as a worker to see the student protests against South African apartheid breaking out from New York to California. The fact that 600 longshoremen in San Francisco went to the Berkeley campus to support the students is something new. Labor recognizes the anti-apartheid battle as its own, because the low wages that the multinationals pay to Black labor in South Africa set the ground for union busting and lowering workers' wages everywhere. The Black South African workers have a total view of their struggle to be full human beings. It is that struggle to be full human beings that American students will learn more about as they talk to workers, on their campus and off.

MENTAL AND MANUAL LABOR

This society divides people up into the ones that will be mental laborers and those that will be manual laborers. But that doesn't mean that the manual laborers, the workers, don't think. All my life I have been thinking about this whole system and what causes people to get separated and not be able to develop everything that is inside each individual.

What is happening now, with the workers joining the students in their protest, reminds me of my own experiences in 1970, when the student movement against the Vietnam War was still big. I was working at the GM South Gate plant, and when we went out on strike, we were joined by 40 or 50 students from the UCLA campus. These student activists saw that if students and

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Black World

Bloods: Black Vietnam vets



by Lou Turner

Bloods: An Oral History of the Vietnam War by Black Veterans, Wallace Terry. New York: Random House, 1984.

Ten years ago Saigon fell. It was the end of the war in Vietnam. No one has had to wait ten years to analyze the "vital statistics" of this most unpopular war in order to know that the human toll included the most glaring reflection of the American dilemma—its racism.

When Black youth first raised the anti-war cry, "Hell no, we won't go!" the anti-war movement exposed the fact that Black GIs suffered a vastly disproportionate toll of the frontline casualties (23%) in Vietnam. **Bloods** is the human voice and narrative behind the "vital statistics" of the Black presence in the Vietnam War. And despite the blatant obfuscation of the Vietnam era by today's Reaganite ideologues and liberal apologists, **Bloods** reaffirms from within the war experience itself, the historic Reason that motivated the mass anti-war opposition at home.

A NEW BLACK GI

The years 1968-69, which resonated with such world-historic significance, from Prague to Biafra and from Paris to Chicago, saw the appearance of "a new Black soldier" writes Wallace Terry, former *Time* magazine journalist who compiled the oral histories in **Bloods**. Terry goes on to explain: "The war had used up the professionals...Replacing the careerists were Black draf-

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Two-tier wages, work rule concessions, union-busting

Can working people reverse Reaganism's attacks in the shop?



Eight-hundred striking members of the United Mine Workers union marched in Lobata W. Va. to protest demands by Sprouse Creek Processing Co. for concessions.

by Andy Phillips

"The only good coming out of the concessions that I can perceive is that workers in my own area aren't going out of their way in putting in more than their job requires," a steelworker from the Ford Rouge plant told *News & Letters*. "Management in my area hasn't been pressing too far, probably sensing that the mood of the rank-and-file is leaning toward solidarity." A worker at U.S. Auto Radiator in Detroit added, "With all the things in the contract that favor the company, it's like you've got two enemies, two bosses—the company and the union. Many workers are fed up with this situation, and we're finding out more and more that the only time anything gets done is when we take action ourselves."

In the coal mining region, strikes against concessions have broken out in Kentucky, Virginia and West Virgin-

ia. The longest and most bitter was launched seven months ago against the Massey Coal Co. in West Virginia. Notoriously anti-union, the Massey Coal Co. was set up by Fluor Corporation, the largest construction company in the U.S., and by Royal Dutch Shell of the Netherlands. The strike has been marked by pitched battles, the importation of guard thugs, court injunctions, shootings, support parades and picket lines.

BATTLE IN THE COAL FIELDS

The miners' wives have been at the center of the struggle. One of the women recounted their participation:

"We've marched in the demonstrations, gotten arrested and organized food for all the pickets. When the newspapers were printing nothing but the company's side, we started writing in, and calling in on radio talk shows. We found we had more support than we ever thought we had. People here know that the politicians could make a big difference in how this strike is handled, and we've been calling the legislators and the Secretary of State to do something about these guards that are threatening our children."

So creative have the Massey strikers been — in sharp contrast to the "business unionism" of so many of today's labor bureaucrats — that they travelled to Fluor Corporation's Richmond, Va. office in order to demonstrate in solidarity with Black South African miners at Fluor's coal mines where they are kept in guarded barracks and allowed to see their families only once a year.

While still far from the mass labor movement needed, these statements and actions by workers in Michigan and West Virginia reflect a growing opposition to the anti-labor offensive of the corporate/Reagan administration coalition that has been attempting to ruthlessly

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Political-Philosophic Notes

On Reagan's Visit to Bitburg

by Raya Dunayevskaya

The fact that the most massive, most militant of all the anti-Reagan demonstrations occurred in Spain following the actual eight-minute-studied-averted-look-away-from the SS Nazi officers' graves compels us to look into the great 1937 Spanish Revolution and its absolute opposite, the Franco counter-revolution that the West allowed to win. It was that revolution which pointed a way out of the gory Depression decade which was leading to World War II. Far from "Spanish culture" being the reason for the massive anti-Reagan demonstration, not just on Bitburg, but on his support of counter-revolution in Nicaragua, it was a remembrance of what the Spanish Revolution represented that was the real reason for the massiveness of this outpouring. Nor was it only a question of the past and the U.S. allowing Franco to win. It was Reagan's most recent rewriting of history when he dared to utter: "Most Americans were on Franco's side in the Spanish Civil War."¹ The reaction of the Spanish masses was to burn the American flag.

IN A LETTER to my colleagues of April 30 I exposed not only the Reagan lie as to what type of "reconciliation" we face, with Germany remaining key to Western Civilization, to the international situation, if we follow Reagan and think of his reconciliation as world counter-revolution.² I also pointed out that philosophically and politically, the expression, "the key to the international situation," was used by Lenin to extend the class distinction wrought by the 1917 Russian Revolution to a world Great Divide which was dependent on the 1919 German Revolution for its international ramifications.

Once the predecessors of the Nazis—the Freikorps—

murdered Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, thus beheading the German Revolution, the key to that international situation was thrown away, though many valiant attempts for a so-called Alternative were made. Of these, the greatest was the 1937 Spanish Revolution. The fact is that that great indigenous revolt of the masses for self-liberation in Spain is closer to us than the 1919-23 German period.

THE 1937 SPANISH REVOLUTION

That great revolution in Spain was a national, revolutionary socialist struggle which Franco destroyed. That Stalin's Russia likewise followed only its reactionary national interest, thwarting genuine national revolutionaries—anarchists, Trotskyists, international Marxist brigades from many countries—from achieving victory over Franco, cannot cover up the West's so-called neutrality that led to Franco's victory. As for Reagan, he is busy rewriting history, allowing his communications director Patrick Buchanan to formulate his demagoguery regarding the soldiers buried at Bitburg as follows: "They were victims just as surely as the victims in the concentration camps."³

It is true, as I have pointed out, that Stalin's Russia also used Spain as a pawn in its jockeying for a role in the struggle among the rulers for global dominance. This was glaringly evident once the shocking Hitler-Stalin Pact was signed and, with it, the green light given to World War II. But if Reagan thought that his imperialist concept of Russia as the only "evil empire" would mean that the world, especially the Spanish masses, would forget that when Hitler's guns were turned on Russia, no less than twenty million souls lost their lives in helping to win victory over Nazi Germany, he found quite something else. When Reagan disregarded Russia's role as he celebrated the victory of World War II, when

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1. See Anthony Lewis' "Now We See It," *N.Y. Times*, 5/16/85.

2. For the full letter to my colleagues, write to *News & Letters*, 59 E. Van Buren, Rm. 707, Chicago, Ill. 60605.

3. Anthony Lewis, *N.Y. Times*, 5/16/85.

WOMAN AS REASON

by Terry Moon

Ernesto Cardenal, the Nicaraguan Minister of Culture, spoke at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) on May 10. Though there was little publicity, about 250 of us crowded into a lecture hall to hear him and give our support to the Nicaraguan revolution. He gave a short speech, starting and ending with his poetry. He spoke of what it meant for him to be Minister of Culture, of what his office is responsible for. In ending he said he didn't want to lecture us, but wanted a dialogue and that we could take the floor. I was excited about this unexpected opportunity to have a dialogue about an ongoing revolution.

After a few questions, a woman in the Philosophy Department asked what Cardenal and the Ministry of Culture had done about the historic oppression of women. But Cardenal didn't answer. What he did talk of was women as fighters for the revolution, how they had been generals and taken whole towns, how today they hold high posts in the government and how working out the relationship between men and women is part of the revolutionary process.

But one critique made by the International Women's Liberation Movement is that no revolution to date has freed women. I wanted a more concrete response. I said: "I want to know how it is that five and a half years after revolution, women are still dying from butcher abortions in Nicaragua? What I am really asking is why is it that the fight to control our own bodies is seen as divisive to revolution rather than as deepening it?"

ABORTION NOT AN ISSUE

Cardenal responded that women could get abortions if it was medically necessary; that women are not punished for illegal abortions. He topped that off with the ridiculous statement that working-class Nicaraguan women don't go in for having abortions. But we know that it's working-class and poor women who suffer from illegal abortions in every country. As for no punishment—it is punishment enough to be forced to have an

Supermarket automation: speed up, dehumanization

Chicago, Ill.—I'm a cashier at Super Plus grocery store. I want to talk about automation and its effect on the worker. The autoworkers in the '50's talked about the dehumanization of automation, how men were forced to work at a rate predetermined by the machine, and how working on the machines left them strained and tense. It's the same today, where I work.

We have a productivity requirement — we have to scan \$1100 worth of groceries per hour. Management determines how fast we work. They say that if some people can scan \$1100 worth of groceries per hour then everybody should be able to. They force us to move faster when sometimes we're sick or we just can't do it and we make too many mistakes.

There is also discrimination. My store is located in a largely Hispanic neighborhood so about 75% of our customers are Hispanic. Most of the management is white and the people who work in the office are white or Hispanic.

When they hire you, they write on the application up in the corner whether you're white or Black and if you're a woman. After that, it's pretty much all over. They hire a lot of Black women for cashiers, but they fire them real quick. We've had about 30 cashiers hired and fired within the last month.

As far as automation lightening up the work load, as far as I can see it's made it more difficult because we have to keep an eye on the machine to make sure it's functioning right, an eye on the products we're passing across the scanner and an eye on the customer. It's more like a triple job than a single job.

When I get off work it takes me about two hours to get my head straight enough to talk to people decently because I'm used to dealing with inconsiderate customers and I'm trying to block them out so I block everybody out. When I go home I slam doors and slam things down wishing I could quit but I can't because I need the money for school. Usually it takes a long time by myself before I can deal with anybody.

It's not as hard a job as working in a steel mill or an auto plant but the technology is there that makes you less of a person. It forces you to become a robot so that you can deal with the customers or the management or just the machine and it makes so many errors that it makes you feel like less of a person because you can't handle it. That's where the machine takes you over.

Because we're not able to block out the machine we're forced to realize that no matter how much technology is supposedly benefitting everybody, what it's really doing is taking away your civilness, taking away the goodness within yourself. I feel I'm basically a good person but when I'm at work, I leave my whole personality at the door. I have a scowl on my face until I leave that place. Once when my boyfriend came to pick me up I had this scowl on my face and I had to tell him I was sorry but this job just makes me lose myself.

Feminists question Nicaragua's Cardenal

illegal abortion and risk death and mutilation.

The fact that many in the lecture hall—especially those in the Left—still see women's fight for full freedom as divisive was confirmed when a Latin American woman said what I have been hearing from the Left for almost 20 years: well, yes, women are oppressed, but Latin America is different from the North American women's movement, it's a different culture and the main point is that women's struggle must be seen in terms of the overall view of the class struggle.

What was very disturbing about this meeting was the seemingly total roll-back of what 15 years of Women's Liberation should have established and that the urgency to discuss the deepening of an ongoing revolution—when our age has seen revolution after revolution fail, or be transformed into a new kind of totalitarianism—was not recognized. Listening to the response to our questions was like being transported back to the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Back then the Left lectured the Women's Liberation Movement that we couldn't fight for our freedom because we didn't understand (as if we were stupid) that everything must be viewed in the context of the "larger struggle." Whatever that "larger struggle" was—class, anti-Vietnam war, anti-racism—women were never seen as a part of it and our fight was never viewed as a path to deepen it.

TOTALITY OF REVOLUTION

In Women's Liberation—News and Letters Committees we have said that what was great and unique about today's Women's Liberation Movement was that we saw male chauvinism within the Left itself and were not afraid to meet that challenge as it appeared, everywhere it appeared, anytime it reared its head, under no matter what disguises. That was so because we knew it was no personal question, but one of how total revolution has to be. But what I think has to be faced now is what I wrote about in the March 1985 issue of *News & Letters*: "We may think that if we leave out

philosophy it is because it is abstract. But in fact we are really leaving out is philosophy of revolution and with it the true uniqueness and reality of our age.

Philosophy, when it is Marx's philosophy of revolution, when it is Marxist-Humanism, is not abstract. Partly it is your view, your vision, of what it means to be a whole human being, of what new society would have to be, and of how total and continuous a revolution must become to make real the potentialities we have for being free. There can be no question that overthrowing Somoza and surviving five and a half years under continuous attack from the most powerful country the world is a tremendous revolutionary achievement, and certainly nothing is more exciting than a revolution—even one as fraught with contradictions as that in Nicaragua.

Those who came to hear Cardenal at UIC were certainly those who support the Nicaraguan revolution. Yet missing in the discussion was the urgency of working out the question of how to deepen revolution which it is still ongoing. Cardenal's response to two questions on Women's liberation, perhaps in 1970, could have gone unchallenged. But in 1985, when we have seen revolutions from Africa to Portugal to Iran (where in each women were fighters, leaders, and thinkers in the revolutionary process), what's at stake is not alone Women's Liberation, but developing a revolution that doesn't spend itself in mere anti-imperialism and anti-capitalism, without ever revealing what it is for: a revolution that can become so permanent that every segment of society will be free and that our vision of what it means to be human can at last be realized.

Fired, but still fighting

Detroit, Mich.—The hospital I worked for is closed June 1 for five months of renovation, but not all workers will be called back. The union is already out—members gone, not to be rehired. Laid-off workers cannot transfer to other hospitals because they have many out on the street also.

Early 1984 saw a big change in health care service because of financial pressure caused by decreased inpatient admission of Medicare patients. My hospital was hit hard and we were forced to take days off. Some workers retired early. There were two big lay-offs.

My work became very hard with short staffing. I was glad to see my vacation come. When I returned, nurses' aides were laid off and I had been demoted from nurses' aide to operating room attendant. I had no choice. Less than 30 days into orientation, I was accused of misconduct on the job and unjustly fired.

I am now awaiting arbitration. My benefits run out after 27 weeks, and there is no insurance. I think of the thousands of patients I had taken care of, and I am not eligible for insurance or Medicare benefits.

I hope to get back into the health care field, but pay for my meals I am willing to accept any work program from Social Services. I just finished my union steward's training, and at home I have in my briefcase enough cards to bring however many want to into a union. After I get in 90 days, I will be organizing because I think it's a shame to work me for free.

—Former hospital worker

Argentina

Women demand justice

The individual, horrifying stories of abduction, imprisonment in clandestine jails, torture and death are being told again in Argentina. This time it is testimony from those who survived and they are giving it against the six generals and three admirals who presided over the campaign of terror in the 1970s in which 15,000 people were murdered or disappeared. The maximum sentence the military can get is 25 years.

The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo gathered outside the tribunal building shortly after the trial began April 22. Within earshot of the proceedings, they began to read the names of people representing thousands of petty officials, priests, doctors and others who have been linked to the terror and repression. The Mothers are demanding these "minor" figures be brought to justice along with the generals and admirals. The women intend to come every Thursday to continue reading from the list of names.

As the trial began, fascist vigilantes bombed political headquarters of two parties and stormed Radio Belgrano, a state-owned station run by intellectuals critical of the military, which they likewise blew up. The extreme right, though out of power, is still active in organizing armed groups. The Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo are among those drawing attention to this.

They demonstrated at the Interior Ministry with evidence of the revival of the Triple A (Argentine Anticommunist Alliance), a paramilitary group including many police, which began murdering workers and laborists during the last Peronist government. The Peronist labor leaders called to testify at the trial have not criticized either the reign of terror or the military.



women-
worldwide



In El Salvador, mothers whose children have disappeared held a demonstration on May 12 and carried signs saying "There is no Mother's Day for us." The majority of thousands of disappearances and deaths have been attributed to the military and right-wing death squads. Earlier in May, women demonstrated at the Women's Prison in San Salvador in support of women prisoners who began a hunger strike for the release of political prisoners.

Stree Mukti Yatra, the first multi-media travelling workshop for women's liberation, reached over 200,000 women and 100,000 men in 12 days at 20 towns and villages in Maharashtra state, India. Performances of the play *Mulgi Zali Ho* (A Girl Is Born) as well as posters and slide shows on sexuality and sexual discrimination sparked extensive discussions, and sales of feminist literature.

Information from Outwrite

A 72-year-old Navaho Indian woman from a reservation in Pueblo Pintado, N.M. used a White House honors ceremony, April 26, to ask President Reagan not to cut economic benefits such as Social Security, because "many Native American elderly depend on this support for their only source of income." Mae Chee Castillo was being honored for helping rescue ten children from a burning school bus she was driving, but her efforts to try to save the already meager income of Navaho senior citizens got her quickly hustled out the door by an aide who said, "You weren't supposed to do that."

American workers have their own rich history of struggle

by John Marcotte

"We just had a work stoppage at Clay-Adams. How do you think you feel, when machines you have spent your whole life making are brought in from a non-union shop and you're told you have to inspect them?" That was what a worker had to say about multinational Becton-Dickinson Corporation's decision to shut down its Clay-Adams high-tech medical equipment plant in Parsippany, New Jersey on June 1.

"We've made them millions of dollars for 35 years and now three months ago they decide this is how they're going to pay us back. They're not going out of business. This is much worse. They just want to move our work to their non-union plants down South. They think we are just numbers in an account book. Well, we're going to make them see that those numbers are people—families—children—torn up lives. If we don't stop them here, every union worker's job is in danger!" continued the worker.

UNION IGNORES RANK-AND-FILE

The union, District 65/UAW, has responded with rallies at the state capitol to get the legislature to pass a plant retention law. They are turning to these politicians, the courts, the state AFL-CIO and a "corporate campaign." The union calls this using "every resource at our command."

To workers in my shop this all smells of politics, and that's a dirty word, the politics of Reagan-Mondale. "Our union meetings have more in common with politicians and their promises till they get in office, than with any meeting of workers discussing their problems," say fellow workers. The union leaders don't know what to do to get the rank-and-file to come to their rallies, to vote for their politicians. "The workers are asleep," they say. They are in a real jam, because they don't have the key to unlock the only "resource" that's worth anything—their own rank-and-file's energy, creativity and ideas.

I remember every time we had a work stoppage at Art Steel, it was always the union that came running to tell us we had to go back to work. And when we really needed to fight, when whole shifts were getting laid off, the union would never strike over that because "hiring and firing" and deciding on production was a right they had long ago given up to management.

To young workers on the Art Steel night shift, what use was the union? When what we needed more than anything was to fight for our jobs, the union was no use at all. I remember one time when the day shift stopped work, even the New York police couldn't get them out of the plant—it was the union that finally talked them out.

So American workers aren't buying the unions' limits on their struggles, their politician way of struggle. They have their own rich history which has raised the deepest questions of human freedom. Isn't that what the labor movement is supposed to be about?

QUESTIONS OF HUMAN FREEDOM

In the 1880s the American workers' massive strikes

for the eight-hour day raised the question of human time. In the 1930s the mass movement of sitting down at the machines they had operated all those years not only challenged the corporations' private property but also raised the question of "Who controls production?"

In the 1950s the wildcat strikes against Automation, starting with the 1949-50 Coal Miners' General Strike¹, both raised the question of "What kind of labor should human beings do?" and showed the clear break between the union leadership and the rank-and-file, as the miners rejected John L. Lewis' calls to return to work, and the auto workers voted with their wildcats against Walter Reuther's praise of high-tech Automation as "progress." This "progress" is coming to full fruition in the 1980s with high-tech robots and permanent high unemployment, plant shut-downs and labor concessions.

As a coal miner said under the impact of that 1949-50 strike, "What I want to know is: how and when will the working man—all working men—have such confidence in their own abilities to make a better world that they will not let others do their thinking for them?"² When workers, women as well as men, develop that confidence, we will see what totally original forms of struggle, what new stage of freedom ideas American workers will give to the world.

¹ A 1980's View: The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S. by Andy Phillips and Raya Dunayevskaya, available from News and Letters, see p. 7.

² Chapter XVI, "Automation and the New Humanism," in Marxism and Freedom by Raya Dunayevskaya, available from News and Letters, see p. 7.



On June 17, 1953, East German workers struck against speed-up in the first mass revolt from under totalitarianism. Their demand was "Bread and Freedom." Strikes by workers in the rest of Eastern Europe followed, opening a new epoch of freedom struggles. News & Letters began publication in June, 1955, on the second anniversary of the East German revolt.

Solidarity at Rouge Steel

...in the plant

Dearborn, Mich.—Where I work at Rouge Steel, around the blast furnaces and coke ovens, you don't see much organized opposition to the concessions we were forced to take two years ago under the threat of permanent closure of steel. There is a lot of complaining and occasionally the frustration is brought forth at union meetings. The general hope is that we'll get back some incentive pay, vacation time and holidays when the contract expires in 1986.

Incentive pay, however, can be seen as being divisive. The Rouge River plant divides the steel-making facilities from the iron-making facilities. Those engaged in steel-making have always made more incentive pay than iron and coke workers for reasons that seem unjust to iron and coke workers, because their jobs are more hazardous, and without iron and coke no steel can be made.

The powerhouse workers, who provide the power for iron and steel to be made, have been trying for over ten years to get incentive pay, but those already getting incentive pay for the most part seem uncaring to back the powerhouse workers in their demands. It would seem to be a strong demand and one of solidarity to share the incentive pay equally among steel, iron, coke and powerhouse workers. But the union leadership never strove for this, and with such divisiveness encouraged, solidarity becomes diminished.

—Rouge Steel skilled worker

...with South African workers

At the Ford Rouge Local 600 General Council Meeting on May 11, a big fight broke out when one of the delegates took the floor to discuss a resolution opposing Ford's support of apartheid South Africa. I heard the story from another UAW member who was there, and he said it had been brewing for months, ever since the new council was elected in January.

Many of the delegates have been getting madder and madder because the new council president has a habit of pulling out the microphone plug whenever he's had enough of what someone is saying. Then he plugs it back in for the next person. This time he pulled the plug on the delegate who was talking about the anti-apartheid resolution. An actual fight broke out when another delegate tried to put the plug back in so the man could finish what he was saying about Ford in South Africa.

The tension had also been building for another reason. In March, rank-and-file workers had held a protest at Rouge Steel calling for Ford to stop supplying the South African government with police cars. The General Council just happened to call a meeting for the very same time. These workers have circulated a petition calling for Ford's divestment which hundreds of rank-and-file workers have signed—yet for the past two months, discussion of the resolution has not made it to the floor at the monthly council meeting.

A lot of Ford workers are asking why Owen Bieber, UAW President, went all the way to Washington to get arrested, and right here at home the local leadership won't take a stand on demanding that Ford stop supporting apartheid. After this fight broke out was the first time the issue really got discussion on the floor.

—UAW member

WORKSHOP TALKS

(continued from page 1)

workers could get together in struggle, something big could develop.

We invited one of the student leaders to speak at our first strike meeting. It's too bad, but he still had a lot of the old ideas that come from this society. Instead of saying to us, "Let's join and help each other," he talked to us like he was our teacher. Naturally, most of the workers got turned off.

But some of us, including me, wanted to continue trying to work with the students. Several times I was invited to the campus to speak at student rallies. Both management and the local union leadership were scared to death about what could develop. We were learning how powerful it is when different forces of revolution come together.

That is the newness and greatness that I see in the student movement developing today: that all the forces of revolution are coming together, Black and white, young women in the leadership as well as men, and the beginning of a relationship between students and workers.

NEWS AND LETTERS

There is another experience from 1970 related to the question of mental and manual labor that I would like to share with News & Letters readers, especially since this is the 30th anniversary issue of our paper.

One young worker in the plant then was a former student from the Berkeley campus and worked with a radical newspaper. During the strike I wrote up an article and showed it to him, thinking maybe his paper would print it. He said no, but he knew another group and paper that liked to print what workers said and thought. That was how I met News and Letters, a revolutionary paper and organization that has been practicing a new relationship of worker and intellectual for 30 years.

In News and Letters, breaking down the division between mental and manual labor is part of the process of creating the Marxist-Humanist philosophy of freedom. Both workers and intellectuals become writers and Marxist-Humanist theoreticians. To me, it is the closest one can get to being a full human being in this alienated world.

Soon I will be out on the campuses to talk with the students, trying to break down this division between mental and manual labor. I hope students will write to me at News & Letters to let me know what they think about what I have said and about our whole newspaper News & Letters, which began 30 years ago with a Black autoworker, Charles Denby, as its editor.

"Smoke gets in our eyes"

Detroit, Mich.—On Tuesday, May 14 at U.S. Auto Radiator, there was a protest against the smoke which was blowing around the factory. At 11:30 workers stopped working and stood in their work area and talked or went to the water fountain and talked.

We have a ventilation system, because they took out all the windows, but it hasn't worked many times. This time, instead of blowing the smoke out, the system blew it back in.

After lunch the protest went into other departments. Some workers were yelling, "Get the fire department!" as more and more people stopped work. The company could see as time went on that it wasn't going to get the production it wanted, so they sent everyone home around 1:10 or 1:20 p.m. We won't get paid for the time we lost.

—Plant One worker

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Campus protests on South Africa crisscross the nation

Editor's Note: Below are brief reports from the South African divestment protests occurring on campuses across the country. For a more extensive report of the Columbia blockade and the Berkeley sit-in, see the May N&L.

UCLA: Mandela City

Mandela City, UCLA—"We won't rest 'til they divest" is the message that greets visitors to UCLA's Mandela City (formerly the Schonberg Quad)—called by one Latino resident, "L.A.'s first liberated zone."

On April 24, four thousand students had rallied in the Schonberg Quad demanding that the University of California system divest all its funds from companies doing business in South Africa. The rally became a sit-in at the administration building, Murphy Hall, which lasted until the end of the week when police forced the demonstrators out, arresting 20. The protesters then moved back outside and declared the founding of Mandela City, pledging to stay until the UC system divests and all charges are dropped against those arrested.

Mandela City has 150 residents living in over 70 tents. Signs and banners abound on the tents and trees declaring the diversity of the residents, the majority of whom are women—Blacks, Latinos, Asians, whites, lesbians and gays, artists, Central American solidarity activists.

One resident told me: "We really don't have a leadership. There was the organizing of the original rally at Murphy Hall, but the decision-making at Mandela City rests with our nightly meetings." These nightly meetings discuss not only the day-to-day running of the city and its future activities, but also the newest developments both in South Africa and on other campuses. Students have set up a nationwide computer information network.

The university has said the students will have to leave Mandela City after May 16, but one Black woman student expressed the feeling of many when she told me: "We have no intention of going anywhere until our demands are met."

—Gary Clark

U. of Michigan protest

Ann Arbor, Mich.—Anti-apartheid students at the University of Michigan began a ten-day sit-in on the main university square on April 24, the National Day of Solidarity with South African freedom fighters. Three hundred youth attended a protest rally, and then 30 students spontaneously marched over to the president's office to demand complete divestment by the university. The sit-in was also spontaneous. As one sit-inner said, "It just happened. People hung out after the demonstration. We sat down and decided to stay."

"When people began getting arrested at Berkeley, we started getting really concerned about divestment here. We found out we haven't fully divested. We started this in solidarity with Berkeley and Columbia."

The protesters held nightly informal meetings to talk about why they were there and about South Africa. Several thousand students signed the petition the protesters posted by the makeshift structure in the university square.

While some youth felt the group's function as a white students' group was primarily opposing oppression in South Africa, others wanted to talk about racism in the U.S. as a whole and on their own campus. One woman told us, "Black/white relations have been undercover in the movement for a long time. People tried to pretend racism didn't exist. I am really glad it is getting this consciousness raising now."

—News and Letters Committees participants

U. of Florida sit-in

Gainesville, Fla.—Students at the University of Florida (UF) have been blockading Tiger Mandela Hall for divestment since April 24, the national day of student protest against apartheid. A lot of our inspiration came when we went to the April 20 march on Washington.

We held a rally for divestment on the plaza and 300 came. From there we marched to the Florida Foundation, which is a private institution set up for getting alumni contributions and investing them.

We demanded to see the person in charge of stock investments for the foundation. When he wouldn't see us, we marched to the administration building. That's when the sit-in happened spontaneously, and we renamed the building Tiger Mandela Hall.

The next day, we held another rally and a delegation of four went in to talk with administration officials. They wouldn't listen to us and wouldn't reveal UF investments.

When the administration wouldn't talk with us, we locked the doors and began the blockade. University President Criser ordered arrests, and 25 students, one faculty member and one community person were taken away. But we got a sympathetic Black judge and got out in eight hours. We intend to keep the blockade going until the Florida Foundation meets in June.

I was active in work against U.S. intervention in Central America. I believe in self-determination, that people choose their own government and life, and this movement is part of self-determination.

—U. of Florida student



Columbia students confront trustee on issue of divestment. Students ended their blockade of Columbia with a march to Harlem.

Confront regents at Berkeley

Berkeley, Cal.—South African Nobel Peace Prize winner Desmond Tutu spoke to an overflow crowd of 9,000 at UC Berkeley on May 13. While Tutu could not directly mention the campus divestment movement for fear of being charged with treason in South Africa, he nonetheless managed to make it clear that he brought the support of Black South Africans.

Later that week on May 16 and 17, the UC regents met on the Berkeley campus—determined NOT to take up the issue of divestment despite faculty, student and staff demands. The site for the meeting was Lawrence Hall of Science (LHS), high in the hills above the campus. LHS is difficult to reach; it's built like a fortress and is accessible by only one road. Nevertheless, 2,500 demonstrators marched the 1.5 miles from campus to make sure the regents heard their demands for immediate, full divestment of university funds in South Africa.

An employee at Lawrence Berkeley Labs (LBL) who participated in the demonstrations told us the following story: "For a week there was a continuous police build-up in the area so that by the day of the march there were more than 400 police, several helicopters and even a canine unit. One of our parking lots was fenced in and became a police command post and detention center."

"Many of us, both students and staff, supported the demonstrators and made a banner that said 'We Are LBL Employees for Divestment.' We went outside the gate and gave water to the marchers as they came up the hill."

"Despite the massive police presence and the fact that it was finals week, several hundred demonstrators spent the night at LHS, and the next morning over 600 protesters threatened to barricade the regents if they didn't vote for full divestment. We went up with our banner for a short while before work and could see that there were students from all of the UC campuses."

"This week has been a real education for all of us here. The university did everything possible to make free speech and assembly virtually impossible. We did, however, manage to have an entire week of political discussion on everything from divestment to the Philadelphia bombing."

—Participants

UIC divest coalition

Chicago, Ill.—Students at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) have formed a new organization, Divest Now Coalition, to protest the university's \$5.7 million investments with firms that do business with South Africa. The new group was formed by members of the Black Student Organization For Communication, Student Government, the Circle Organizing Committee on El Salvador and Central America, and others.

On May 8 the new coalition, which included 75 students, held a spirited march through many different campus buildings. The following Wednesday a delegation went to Urbana, Illinois, joining students at the University of Illinois campus there to attend a meeting of the Board of Trustees. After students presented their demand for total divestment, the Board stated that they were awaiting a study (now six months in the making).

The following day a much larger group of students met on the UIC campus. A forum on apartheid was followed by a rally attended by over 200 students. The Board of Trustees meeting was denounced as "totally disgusting."

After the rally, students marched to the chancellor's office and held a sit-down until the chancellor agreed to meet with the students at an open forum the following week.

Many challenges face this new coalition. An editorial in the student paper cautions the coalition to "keep discussion to a minimum and focus on apartheid and the need for the university to divest." Yet it seems clear from even the informal discussion around the campus that many students recognize that this can only damage both the unity of the coalition and its development as the force and Reason of a new student movement on the campus.

A participant

Northwestern arrests

Evanston, Ill.—On Thursday, May 9, the Anti-Apartheid Alliance of Northwestern University held a rally at Rebecca Crown Center, the administration building. About 500 people gathered on the front plaza and renamed it Nelson Mandela Center. Joshua Lazerson took the microphone and delivered a call to civil disobedience to those in attendance. One hundred forty-eight students marched into President Weber's office demanding Northwestern divest itself of all stocks in companies doing business in South Africa.

Weber's response was the same as what we had received in our prior meeting with him: he was not willing to make a stand, nor was he willing to meet any one of our demands. He made it apparent that the university would begin arresting the students sitting in his office at 5 p.m.

An outside support committee quickly mobilized support throughout the campus, and at 4:30 there were about 300 students chanting "Divest Now!" and "What do we want? End to Apartheid! When do we want it? Now!" As the police moved into Rebecca Crown and it became apparent that the students sitting in would be taken out through the parking garage, the outside support rally moved into the driveway and sat in, hoping to block the arrests. Ninety-five of our fellow students emerged handcuffed.

Soon students, released on their own recognizance, began to return. They decided to sleep in at Mandela Hall and hold a protest against the inauguration of President Weber. Weber is a protege of George Shultz and a former labor secretary in the Nixon administration.

On the following Saturday, 300 marched to the site of the inauguration, held up signs for Divestment Now and compelled Mayor Washington, who was part of the ceremony, to wear the red arm band of the Free South Africa Movement. The sit-in is continuing.

—Northwestern participants

Cal. State: 'two-way road'

Los Angeles, Cal.—The national resurgence of student activism over divestiture spilled over to Cal State-L.A. on April 27 when over 350 students gathered for a rally demanding that the school rid itself of stock in companies linked to South Africa.

The Friday afternoon rally's turnout surprised everyone, from the administration to the student organizers, and represented the largest demonstration on campus in many years. Several speakers told the crowd that the time had come to ensure that student fees not be used to prop up apartheid.

It was the speaker from Cal State News and Letters, however who made the strongest impact when he linked solidarity with the South African freedom struggle to the struggle for achieving a total social transformation here at home. Peter Wermuth said, "The struggles nationwide over divestiture are an important beginning, not alone for re-igniting student activism, but as well for pointing the way to new struggles in this country against Reaganism as a whole. But as great as the new protests are, divestiture alone will neither stop apartheid nor sever the racist U.S. - South African government connection. That is because the strings that tie the U.S. to apartheid are very deep, economically, politically, militarily...only a fundamental social transformation of the racist, sexist, class-ridden living conditions in the U.S. as well as in South Africa will fully sever the apartheid link."

He continued, "What has inspired the new stage of student activism today is a new stage of freedom struggle in South Africa, and that is hardly a quantitative question. On the contrary, in battling for a totally new way of life the South African freedom fighters have shown American youth the need to sever the apartheid link here at home. It is the two-way road of freedom struggles and ideas between the U.S. and Africa that we are witnessing today..."

Within weeks of the rally the administration has already shown signs of moving in the direction of divestiture. Thus, the University Foundation has decided to "ask" that the college sell off its stock in several corporations linked to South African apartheid. But the struggle is far from over. More actions are planned to ensure that there is total divestiture, and more thinking will surely accompany it so that the direction of this promising new struggle can be worked out.

—A participant

YOUTH

Has a new generation of revolutionaries been born?

by Ida Fuller, youth columnist

The new spirit of activism arising on the campuses during the past two months has made us all ask: "Has a new generation of revolutionaries been born?" Last month you read in the pages of *News & Letters* in-person reports of events at Columbia University, UC Berkeley, Northwestern University and University of Illinois-Chicago, as well as a review that I had written of Raya Dunayevskaya's new book, *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future*, from the vantage point of youth, because I wanted to assure that a dialogue on the new ideas of Marxist-Humanism would not be separated from the new campus activism.

Since the last issue of *News & Letters* has come off the press, sit-ins and demonstrations have exploded on the cores of campuses nationwide (see page 4). On April 4, students consulting each other through an intercampus system of communication called for a "National Anti-Apartheid Protest Day." Thousands from 90 campuses took over their administration buildings, boycotted classes and held teach-ins, for a Free South Africa and an end to Reagan's CIA backing of the Nicaraguan Contras, and to the nuclear buildup of both super powers.

RACISM IN THE MOVEMENT

It is precisely because of the possibility of new beginnings in this movement that I want to discuss a contradiction which we faced during our participation in a meeting of the University of Chicago Divestment Coalition. At this meeting, a group of 50 students had gathered to discuss the contents of a letter to be written to the university president calling for divestment of university funds, and to plan a rally to air that demand. At this point, two Black members of the Hyde Park community walked in and immediately changed the nature of the meeting by asking that the racism in Hyde Park, specifically police brutality and I.D. checks, become issues raised by the committee and that a vigil be called on that basis, inviting the Black community. Otherwise, they pointed out, it would seem that racism is only a question in South Africa and not one that the Black community faces every day in Hyde Park and on the campus of the University of Chicago.

The response of an organizer of the meeting—a leftist—was quite shocking. He stood up and lectured them on how "our main focus is divestment" and how "the Black community needs to be convinced by you that we are on their side." After five more meetings, the coalition for divestment decided to include the general question of racism at home on its agenda. By then, however, the Black students had boycotted the meeting.

Indeed, if it had not been for the challenge of the Marxist-Humanist participants and the protests of some rank-and-file members of the coalition, the leadership would have just gone ahead with their meeting and ignored the boycott. Instead, the leadership was forced to send a letter of apology to the Black activists, asking them to join the committee, so that together they would decide on the form of protests and the demands presented.

MARX'S MARXISM, THE BLACK DIMENSION

It was this manifestation of racism within a Free South Africa Coalition which made me think of how all of us in the movement need to become conscious both of the two-way road of freedom ideas between Africa and America and of how Marx's conception of the Black Dimension was integral to his philosophy of liberation.

It is not alone that we in America have "heard" and are hearing South Africa speak to us—from the Sharpeville massacre of 1960 to the Soweto rebellion begun by youth in 1976, to mass rebellions which have been occurring this year—much as the South African masses no doubt have "heard" and are hearing us—from the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1956, to the Freedom Riders of the 1960s to the sit-ins on divestment that we are holding on campus upon campus nationwide. It is that our "listening" has to be of a very special kind—one that never separates the actions of fighting for freedom from the ideas that are both implicit in those actions and which must be worked out as full categories of freedom by activist-thinkers in Africa and in America.

Here is where Marx and his conception of humanism and of the Black Dimension can have an impact upon our thought. Marx's concept of revolutionary humanism encompassed all the forces fighting for freedom in his day. Insofar as the America of the 1860s was concerned, he kept his eyes riveted on the Abolitionist struggle, the runaway slaves, the Civil War and the possibility of Negro regiments fighting the South. And he made those actions into categories of revolutionary thought right within the pages of *Capital*: "Labor in the white skin can never be free so long as labor in the black skin is branded." It was not just a slogan; it was manifested in the fight for the eight-hour day which arose after slavery was finally abolished through the Civil War.

Today, we as Marxist-Humanists are laboring to sin-



Anti-apartheid demonstrators marching to Berkeley's Lawrence Hall of Science, where UC regents were meeting.

gle out the revolutionary freedom categories of the Black Dimension in Africa and in America! the "new humanism" of Frantz Fanon, the revolutionary dimen-

Challenge to the youth

On the needed total uprooting of the old and the creation of new human relations

Editor's Note: To continue our discussion of "Youth and the dialectics of revolution" we are publishing excerpts from a letter that Raya Dunayevskaya wrote to the Internationalist Marxist-Humanist Youth Committee in 1983. For a copy of the full letter please send 50¢ to News & Letters, 59 E. Van Buren, Rm. 707, Chicago, Ill. 60605.

"I love all men who dive. Any fish can swim near the surface, but it takes a great whale to go downstairs five miles or more; and if he don't attain the bottom, why all the lead in Galena won't fashion the plummet that will. I'm not talking about Mr. Emerson now—but that whole corps of thought-divers that have been diving and coming up again with bloodshot eyes since the world began."

—Herman Melville, Letter of March 3, 1849

Dear Youth:

Because of my deep confidence in the youth striving to be "thought-divers" (whether or not they are superb swimmers just by being young and strong), I'd like to appeal to you to dive into the battle of challenging post-Marx Marxism. That battle will reveal the much greater maturity of this historic period as against that of the generation of the 1960s. It is true that they were so massively active in that decade that 1968 had reached the threshold of a revolution. The fact, however, that it remained an unfinished act made it clear to the following generation that they had better probe deeply into how the lack of serious theory vitiated activism's goals. The idea that activity, activity, activity would absolve them from the hard labor of recreating Marx's theory of "revolution in permanence" for their age and that theory picked up "en route" would solve the totality of the economic-political-social crises, as well as end U.S. imperialism's war in Vietnam, ended in total failure.

Nevertheless, one of the most famous debates in that period was that between Sartre and Lévi-Strauss (not exactly youth themselves, but accepted as gurus by the youth movement), as the 1960s generation continued to follow new philosophies like Existentialism and Structuralism, instead of trying to find the historic link of continuity with "old" Marxism. While Lévi-Strauss critiqued Sartre's adherence to dialectics, holding that Structuralism required the analytic, empiric, scientific method, Sartre—since he, himself, was enamored with Structuralism and had as ahistorical an outlook as Lévi-Strauss—could hardly win the argument for meaning as against Lévi-Strauss' emphasis on non-meaning. Here is how Lévi-Strauss put it:

In my perspective, meaning is never the primary phenomenon; meaning is always reducible. In other words, behind all meaning there is a non-meaning, while the reverse is not the case. As far as I'm concerned, significance is always phenomenal.

A profound critique of Lévi-Strauss' Structuralism came, not from Existentialism, but from an independent Marxist anthropologist-dialectician, Stanley Diamond:

*The ethnologist is actually saying that he is not interested in meaning (significance), which he regards as merely (and always) phenomenal. For him, the primary phenomenon is not meaning, but the non-meaning which lies behind meaning and to which, he believes, meaning is reducible.**

The point is that the life-blood of the Hegelian dialectic—when it is not diluted by Existentialism but seen in its essence as a ceaseless movement of becoming, disclosing the meaning of history—is exactly what saved Hegel from the Kantian, impenetrable "Thing-in-itself" and its absolute idealism. Though Hegel may have wanted to confine history to history of thought, the single dialectic which characterizes both objectivity and

*See "Anthropology in Question" in Section 6, "The Root is Man: Critical Traditions" in *Reinventing Anthropology* (Vintage Books, Random House, 1974).

sion within Steve Biko's philosophy of Black Consciousness, the dimensions of American Black thought and action which can point a way forward.

In act and in thought, that two-way road between Africa and America, between Marx's revolutionary vision and the necessity to create a philosophy of liberation for our day, is the needed perspective for all of us in the revolutionary movement. It is in this spirit that I would like to invite all of you in the Free South Africa movement to become co-thinkers. Please write to me on your experiences within this freedom movement so we can begin a dialogue on a Marxist-Humanist view of a new human society.

Ida Fuller, c/o News & Letters, 59 E. Van Buren, Rm. 707, Chicago, Ill. 60605

See the 1983 Introduction "A 1980's View of the Two-Way Road Between the U.S. and Africa" and "The Two-Way Road to African Revolutions" in *American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard* (1983) as well as Frantz Fanon, *Soweto and American Black Thought*, by Lou Turner and John Alan.

subjectivity moved Hegel to objective idealism. That single dialectic became the ground for Marx's dialectic of revolution...

IT IS TRUE THAT revolutionaries like Mao also tried to escape confrontation with actual social revolutions aimed against his state-capitalist regime which he called Communist. But the Chinese youth saw how empty was the word "Proletarian" before "Cultural Revolution." At the very height of the Cultural Revolution, the dissident, revolutionary youth in Sheng Wu-lien hit out against their rulers by calling them "the Red capitalist class." They concretized the kind of commune they aimed to have as against what existed in China by calling for one like the Paris Commune of Marx's day: "Let the new bureaucratic bourgeoisie tremble before the true socialist revolution that shakes the world," declared their Manifesto. "What the proletariat can lose in this revolution is only their chains, what they gain will be the whole world!"

Here was Mao, who had declared himself to be a Marxist-Communist and in 1949 led a great national revolution. If he was aware of how deep the uprooting of the old had to be as he openly declared the revolution to be bourgeois-democratic and the society itself to be state-capitalist, he revealed none of it to the masses. He assured them they had nothing to fear from the "Chinese who stood up," a regime that was headed by the Communist Party. By 1966, when he launched the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution," he not only declared his land to be "socialist" but designated it the "storm center of world revolution." The Chinese youth failed to be impressed as they felt his rule to be that of any capitalist (private or state) totalitarian ruler-exploiter.

The revolutionary youth of the Sheng Wu-lien themselves caught the historic link to Marx's Marxism and the Paris Commune of Marx's day as the decentralized political form to work out the economic-political-social emancipation which would keep the power in the hands of the masses.

PERMIT ME HERE to go back to 1953 to re-examine the process of working out, or seeing the emergence of, a new philosophic dimension. It is the year I first broke through on the Absolute Idea, removing its abstract, mystical veil and seeing it as not only a unity of theory and practice, but a totally new relationship of the two because a new historic beginning had been reached with this live movement from practice. This was the period we completely rejected both the designation of the youth as "the beat generation" and the pragmatic view of the epoch itself "as end of ideology."

The breakthrough on the Absolute Idea helped us to perceive a new generation of revolutionaries in that so-called "beat generation" who were rejecting a world they never made; and to see in the revolts in Latin America and Africa the emergence of a Third World. Indeed, toward the end of the 1950s, retrogression and McCarthyism in the U.S. notwithstanding, we declared it to be a totally new epoch: in production (with *Workers Battle Automation*); in political freedom battles, whether that be the new Black Dimension in the Montgomery Bus Boycott or in the East European Freedom Fighters against Russian state-capitalism calling itself Communism; in the new stage of cognition as the Hungarian Revolution highlighted it by bringing Marx's Humanist Essays onto the historic stage. The breakthrough on the Absolute Idea was not only on the movements from practice and from theory but also on ORGANIZATION, as we held that its dialectic would illuminate also the dialectic of the Party, as we had long since rejected "the party to lead" concept. We

(continued on page 11)

PROTESTS BRING OUT FREEDOM IDEAS IN AFRICA, IN U.S.

Even among those active in the divestment protests, very few knew South Africa as it was presented in N&L last month. Lou Turner stated from the beginning that the subject (South African revolt since 1984) would be taken up in the context of dialectics of revolution. I had not realized how different things looked a year ago, with the Nkomati accords and the three-house parliament. But I especially liked the form of the piece, as it traced month by month the "reciprocity of economic and political content" of the revolt. When you put it all together, you see what "dialectics of revolution" means in an ongoing movement.

**Anti-apartheid protester
New York City**

While not totally spontaneous in its inception, the occupation of the steps of Berkeley's Sproul Hall in support of divestment displayed all the fervor of a truly spontaneous action... I, for one, felt more energetic, imaginative, alive than I had ever felt before. What I felt was freedom, a precious feeling I will remember all my days...

But someone had determined that the thrill of genuine democracy would not be stimulus enough to maintain our morale and numbers; that what we really needed was bread and circuses. Every night at nine the entertainment, which was often quite good, would arrive, and we couldn't let our discussions keep the musicians waiting... The established groups need to learn, and we need to teach them, that a movement grows only so long as it is open, only so long as people find in it a means of expression and participation that is less alienated than what they can find elsewhere in their lives.

**Participant
Berkeley, Calif.**

The white students do not deal with the obvious fact that it is racism in America, in Chicago and at University of Chicago that allows U of C President Hannah Gray to oppose divestment. The one is connected to the other. In order to get U of C to divest, we must challenge the whole racist and ethnocentric culture of America. What is so different between a housing project like Cabrini-Green in Chicago where I am a minister, and a bantustan in South Africa? To oppose drawing these types of connections is to be undialectical. I have studied Gramsci and the Frankfurt School of dialectics. That and my own experience have shown me that even white radicals need constantly to be educated, to rethink and overcome their own racism. If that process takes place continuously, then we can have a genuine interracial movement.

**Black divinity student
University of Chicago**

On the TV and in the newspapers there is a real attempt to make you think that the violence in Black South African townships is "tribalism," or just crime. So I liked Lou Turner's view (May N&L) that it is the community's struggle to "purge the townships of collaborators with apartheid." In the Detroit rebellion of 1967, there was something similar. Blacks attacked price-gouging store owners and burned their stores. It didn't matter if they were Black or white — if they ripped off the people they were hit.

**Reader
Detroit**

Bishop Tutu was recently here in Los Angeles, and Mayor Bradley held a press conference with him, saying that the City of Los Angeles will be divesting some of its funds from companies doing business in South Africa. Bradley was acting the real champion of freedom. Then the next day, he sent the police to bulldoze Justiceville, the shantytown homeless people had set up for themselves here in Los Angeles. Eleven people were taken to jail. Bradley sure knows how to talk out of both sides of his mouth!

**Black and angry
Los Angeles**

In the May pre-publication ad for Raya Dunayevskaya's new book, *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution*, there was a powerful quotation about South Africa. It began: "Whatever orgy of violence the white rulers will now indulge in, South Africa will never again be the same." It sounded so much like 1985 and Uitenhage. When I found out that it was written in 1960, I was startled. It seemed like there was a prediction of today's South Africa written 25 years ago.

**Working woman
Chicago**

The April 20 demonstration in Washington, D.C. showed that something new was in the air. The numbers were greater than any demonstration over the last few years, but even more important were the fresh new youth, whether college or younger, who were there very much as part of their movement against apartheid and Reaganism. The N&L literature table was a constant dialogue and on a more serious, more philosophical level than at any demonstration I remember.

I got no argument when saying: we feel our age has seen many revolutions, but none have resulted in a classless society... After apartheid is overthrown, what then? For that we are saying something much more difficult than a party program is needed—a philosophy of freedom. There was plenty of head-nodding. It was easier to talk about philosophy as the concrete need, both because of the maturity of the times, and because I felt more confidence in stating it right out, from what has rubbed off on me from the new stage of Marxist-Humanism Raya is working out this year...

**Marxist-Humanist
New York City**

NEW MISSILES IN UTAH

Once again, the people of Utah are threatened by the prospect of thousands of nuclear missiles being housed within the state. Five years ago, we were successful in preventing the MX missile from finding a home here. We may not be so fortunate in opposing the "midgetman" missile. When the MX missile was thrown out of Utah, 78% of the state opposed basing it here. Currently, only 50% oppose the "midgetman," which would be mobile, very accurate.

While Utah was successful in opposing the MX, that has not been enough to stop Utah from becoming a military dumping ground for new missiles, nuclear waste or biological and chemical weapons. Despite our efforts in Utah, the MX is funded and in production. President Reagan has gained approval for the missile solely through manipulation of the public. Only when people deepen the concept of opposition to a society that fosters militarism will there be any hope of a new society for human development instead of weapons development.

**Philosophy student activist
Salt Lake City, Utah**

YOUTH IN ACTION, IN THOUGHT

In the middle of rush hour in Chicago's Loop, I observed a remarkable demonstration last month by some 200 high school students. They called it "No Business as Usual." At one intersection, the Chicago police who had been shadowing the march moved in with gestapo-style efficiency and brutally arrested students for no apparent reason. Instantly the marchers began to chant, "Let them go!" With paddy wagons screeching into the intersection, and cops bolting from squad cars with their hands poised over gun holsters, or gripping night sticks, the attack was meant to intimidate.

Instead the students made the cops the immediate object of their scathing rejection of American militarism. They chanted: "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust, World War III is really a must" and "Join the army, learn to obey, kill and

Readers' Views

die for the USA!" I didn't feel that these were some youth "rites of spring"; they are the voices of reason in our nuclear age.

**Black activist
Chicago**

What struck me about the May N&L was the presence of the youth dimension throughout. I'm understanding more now what it means that Marxist-Humanism made a category of youth as revolutionary back in the 1950s, when others just saw the "beat generation." Six months ago everyone was saying that today's youth are reactionary or apathetic—but look how the new campus movement has spread.

I was impressed with Ida Fuller's youth column, how she showed that the newest Marxist-Humanist work, *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution*, is on forces of revolution as Reason—not only on women—and speaks to today's youth. The reason this book is so important for youth is not that at every point in Dunayevskaya's articles youth is there. It is that at every point the dialectics of revolution are presented.

**Youth activist
Los Angeles**



**DYING FOR
THE SAKE
OF
PRODUCTION**

Today I went to the Wayne State University Archives and asked to see the Bound Volume of N&L from 1962. What was so interesting to me was that what Charles Denby was saying in 1962 is what we are still fighting for in 1985. Denby was saying that workers have to spend their lives in endless hell under automation. His job on one of these man-killing machines demanded 247 pieces an hour. Each piece weighed 37 pounds. After a half-hour he was soaked wet.

When I read this I thought of when I worked on the oven at U.S. Auto Radiator. I don't know the weights of the radiators; they vary, but they are heavy. It is a hot job in the winter and the summer. You sweat all the time. It was hell, with back pain all the time. When a foreman feels like having a worker moved to a harder, dirtier, faster job, he picks the worker he hates most. We are dying for the sake of production. The only ones who can stop it is ourselves.

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

The government and the economists have pointed to high tech as the area that would take in the unemployed from the declining industries. But now high tech itself has been hit with increasing waves of unemployment. Honeywell, Inc. recently announced monthly phased shutdowns that would affect nearly 5,000 workers, while Computervision and Wang Laboratories planned layoffs that will affect some 7,000. These are all in Massachusetts, along Route 128—touted as the Eastern equivalent of California's famed Silicon Valley, which has also been hit with a wave of shut-downs and layoffs.

**Observer
Detroit**

MARX'S DIALECTIC IN MATH

A Reader's View in the May N&L on *The Fetish of High Tech and Karl Marx's Unknown Mathematical Manuscripts* asserted that, in those Manuscripts, "Marx's interest was primarily in the inner logic of math." It is no accident that, in exploring that "inner logic", Marx used the category of "negation of the negation," the same

Hegelian expression he used in *Capital* for proletarian revolution.

Marx's critique of "the veil of obscurity" in math was implicitly a critique of those who hide from the dialectic under the pretense that human thought can be reduced to formal logic. In my view, he thus anticipated today's fetish of high tech and its total objectification of thought in the form of computers.

Perhaps, as the correspondent states to find in the *Manuscripts* Marx's anticipation of a new direction to the fetish, one has to want to do so very much; one of the greatest failures of the post-Marx Marxists has been a lack of interest in doing the hard intellectual labor of delving into Marx's many unpublished notebooks.

**Franklin Dmitriev
Chicago**

EUROPE, EAST AND WEST

Thanks for printing the "Direct Report from East Europe" on poverty (May N&L). What I always like so much about N&L are the direct links you have to the places where revolt is stirring. No one else carries that kind of report from East Europe; it makes me think of how you had a report from Poland in 1971 and from Czechoslovakia in 1968. The material on Hungary was unknown to me, since the New York Times had given me the impression that Hungary was some sort of an East bloc "boom town" these days.

**Long-time reader
Brooklyn, N.Y.**

City and regional elections will be held in Italy this May. It is the first time that the Greens (ecologists) are presenting themselves in the election and many of their leaders come from the extra-parliamentary groups—Marxist or Marxist-Leninist. Many of them are very well known, thus creating a small movement.

In Germany the Greens, with their slogan "a political party against political parties", have proven themselves to be very reactionary. After being elected they support the political party that maintains the most advanced ecological program, often the most reactionary group on the scene. However, the Communist and Socialist parties here, and think the Social Democrats in Germany, attack them in a stupid way. They say that the really essential problem is unemployment, and thus one has to create conditions for new investment which will mean jobs. Everyone knows that these new investments are going into robotics, which is eliminating jobs.

**Correspondent
Milan, Italy**

IROQUOIS RESIST DRAFT.



The Chiefs of the Six Nations (Iroquois) have initiated communication with the U.S. government regarding the exemption of Iroquois young men from the draft and military service. They cited the Two-row-Wampum treaty signed by the Iroquois nations and the U.S. government, known as the Treaty of Fort Stanwix (1784) and Canandaigua (1794). They affirm the right of each government to exist but not to interfere with the other.

By requiring young Iroquois men to register, the U.S. government is violating the most basic principle of this treaty. The Six Nations have a long history of asserting their right to sovereignty by refusing federal BIA money, granting sanctuary to Dennis Banks and traveling internationally with passports from the Six Nations. For more information on this struggle, write Karen Beetle at:

**Upstate Resistance
PO Box 662
Syracuse, NY 13211**

ADDITION TO THE MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES

The "Theory/Practice" column by Raya on the "Addition to the Marxist-Humanist Archives" was a lot to absorb. I spent a long time reading and re-reading the first paragraph. The way Raya rethinks every historical event, even events in her own life and work, is significant. For example, in that paragraph I feel she is taking her own state-capitalist group of the 1940s to task by saying that "we had not then proclaimed Marxist-Humanism in the U.S. as an important, independent, historic tendency."

Even more unusual was her statement that when *Marxism and Freedom* was published in 1957, she had defined its two aims as the American roots of Marxism and its world humanist dimension, and yet, "we had not singled out...the third characteristic of Marxist-Humanism—the dialectics of revolution," even though that is what permeates the book. Just that one paragraph gives you a new view of what "critique" means.

Friend of N&L
Chicago

Hi! I just got the April N&L. The material on the exhibit about Dunayevskaya in Detroit sounds very interesting. Work and expenses prevent my being there, unfortunately. Good to see your ad for Raya's new book, *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution*. Here is the money for my copy; I hope to see it soon. I'd really love it if you could have her autograph it. I probably won't run into her up here in Alaska. Keep up the good work!

Subscriber
Petersburg, Alaska

One thing that struck me about the new addition to the Marxist-Humanist Archives, 1981-85, is origins and futures. The introductory note begins with Marxist-Humanism's first book, *Marxism and Freedom*, 1957, and ends with its work in press, *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future*. But I don't mean this alone as a chronological sweep. Rather, I am interested in Dunayevskaya's and Marxist-Humanism's methodology whereby the digging into origins is ground for finding a pathway

toward the future.

Thus I was struck that the 1981-85 Archives refers one back 100 years to Marx and his *Ethnological Notebooks*, ignored for almost a century, and as well refers to the 1984 pamphlet on the Coal Miners' General Strike and Marxist-Humanist origins therein. The references to Marx 100-plus years ago and to Marxist-Humanism 35 years ago are not here reminiscences, but form the basis for the new directions Marxist-Humanism is hewing out.

Observer
Chicago

AMERICA'S DECLINING HEALTH

The editorial on "High Tech and the State of Health in America", May N&L, was excellent. As a hospital dietician I am trained to assess the nutritional status of patients, solve the eating problems which accompany illness, and teach diet-disease information to patients, doctors and nurses. The way the system works, I rarely get to do what I am trained to do. The sexism of the mostly male physician staff makes it very difficult to "teach" them anything. The nurses are so overworked, they often don't do accurate nutritional monitoring or careful feeding. With Medicaid funds being cut, patients either go home before I get a chance to teach them about the nutritional aspects of their therapy, or I teach them so soon after surgery that they don't learn because they are still too drugged or scared to be interested. For better health care we need a system where there is time for human relationships.

Clinical dietician
Salt Lake City, Utah

I was not impressed with the health care editorial, for what it didn't say. It was almost liberal. Yes, care is lousy, poor get screwed, big money goes to the military. But as with the question of what kind of labor human beings should do, the truth is that you will still get killed even when you do get health care. I didn't feel there were enough openings toward transformation of it all in the editorial.

Lab technician
Queens, NY

Your Editorial in the May N&L showed how backward the United States is when it comes to human working conditions, no matter how much "advanced" "high tech" we have. When I read about things like farmworkers not being permitted access to toilet facilities, all I can think is that the Reagan Administration sure is insulting our intelligence when it claims to stand for human rights and human beings.

Black worker
Los Angeles



WOMEN'S WORK, WOMEN'S STRUGGLES

Thank you for the article in the May N&L about the crisis with the Los Angeles Feminist Women's Health Center, when a fire "of uncertain origin" destroyed our facilities. Your readers will be glad to know that we have found a new location; nothing is stopping our determination that women have a right to feminist health care and reproductive freedom. We will be holding several fund-raisers and appreciate contributions. Send help to:

Women's Choice Clinic
6221 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 419
Los Angeles, CA 90048

I just finished reading Charles Denby's book, *A Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, and would simply like to thank him for writing one of the most moving books I have read. As a member of one of the most imperialistic countries in the world, I feel very ashamed by what has been done in the name of "white superiority" but as a feminist and trades unionist, I feel very heartened by what concerted grass roots action can achieve.

So much of what Denby writes strikes such familiar chords—left-wing parties which enjoin us to forget sexism and racism because after the revolution they will simply cease to exist, and meanwhile can we please get on, make the tea/do the typing, while our white middle-class male "brothers" define our struggle for us. We are made to feel traitors if we challenge this...

Clare T.
Bristol, England

I've been working as a chambermaid in a hotel. The work is totally exhausting and gives you the most terrible backache. Our supervisor is Polish and is just like Stalin. On the one hand she wants all the rooms done thoroughly to the extent of sweeping the corners with a handbrush and washing the paint-work; and on the other it's a real race against time to finish all the rooms which you are assigned. Often we are short of staff because no one can stand it for more than three months and the wages are disgusting.

Only two of us are English, the rest being Italian, Algerian, Nigerian and Spanish. All the chambermaids are women; all the porters are men. We receive the same wages even though our work is easily twice as hard as theirs...

Myrica Gale
London, England

BOMBING OF PHILADELPHIA

It was inhuman of Wilson Goode to do what he did—dropping a bomb on the MOVE headquarters. And he said he would do it again! The result was all those charred bodies and the homes in the neighborhood destroyed. They could have negotiated instead of dropping the bomb. The Detroit News had two pages of articles, but I had to stop reading them, they made me so sick. People are saying it was like Vietnam or World War II.

Ex-Philadelphian
Detroit

When I read about the city of Los Angeles trying to evict the occupants of Justiceville, a shantytown for the homeless, because of "unsanitary conditions", I immediately thought of what Philadelphia and its cops did to MOVE. I especially appreciated what Eugene Ford said about the many he talked to who "thought it strange that the city would be so concerned about 'sanitation' for homeless people when they organize themselves, but do nothing about far worse conditions of filth in the welfare hotels."

You would almost think that the writer of the "Justiceville, USA" story had the upcoming horror of Philadelphia in mind.

Furious
St. Louis, Mo.

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Ex-Robben Island prisoner speaks

Editor's Note: The following is excerpted from a talk delivered by Sonny Venkatrathkani at a meeting in Los Angeles, sponsored by TransAfrica, in early April.

I am a native South African Indian. I was raised up within South Africa and at an early age I was taught that there is no mixing of the races, that white is superior to all and the African Black is inferior. We were separated in all walks of life—Indian, Asian, "Colored," African—except within public transportation. But never were we allowed to mix with whites.

IT WAS ONLY IN 1955 when I went to Natal University (a warehouse in comparison to the white schools) that I found out racism was not natural. I had the shock of meeting Blacks (Africans), and through this relationship I received my consciousness and we realized our oppression. We began student activity for human rights against the regime. This is also when I realized that America was not the land of bread and honey, because we heard about the Black consciousness movement there, as well, and it gave us encouragement.

I became a teacher when I got out of the university and attempted to talk to my students about equality and freedom and to join the student movement. I was discharged for my activities and was placed under a banning order which forced me to be in my home from 6 PM to 6 AM, which was very oppressive to withstand for five years.

I could not be present where there were more than two people, and I was banned from any educational facility. By 1964 I was forced to become a butcher and work for myself because no one was allowed to hire me.

I CONTINUED my activities as much as possible. I was involved in a unity movement in 1970 and was arrested and detained. In detention I was tortured. I will not discuss this in detail, but will say that this is how and where Biko was killed. I was held there for months, before being sent to Robben Island where I was imprisoned for six years, together with about 30 other political prisoners. We were kept separated away from the main population.

Nelson Mandela was one of the people I was imprisoned with. He is just a simple and sensitive man, as most of us were. The process of imprisonment dehumanizes you and strips you of your human dignity.

At Robben Island I attempted to teach my brothers the alphabet and how to read and write. Education was banned by the prison, and all our privileges were taken away. I was put in solitary confinement for six months. In 1978 I was released from Robben Island, but was kept on a banning order until 1983.

Black health crisis

Chicago, Ill.—From my perspective, working at St. Bernard Hospital on Chicago's South Side, your editorial on "High Tech and the state of health in America" (May N&L) was right on the money. We have a large percentage of welfare and Medicaid patients. We used to have more, but ever since welfare changed its rules and stopped reimbursing the hospital dollar for dollar, the hospital has been trying to limit the number of welfare patients. The president of the hospital told us that they are only getting an average of 63 cents on the dollar from welfare; welfare pays a flat fee per patient.

This whole policy encourages St. Bernard to put welfare patients out of the hospital early and bring them back later for another admission—or not to admit them at all. The worst is the OB/GYN situation. They don't want welfare mothers because their babies are more sickly, more undernourished, and the women are sick themselves. It's all because of the poverty in the community.

Women come to the emergency room in labor, and the hospital says there's no room for them. They send them to Cook County Hospital. The truth is that there is room. In fact the patient census has declined so much we've had to shut one floor. They clump all the welfare patients together on one floor, with nearly all Black nurses. The staff/patient ratio is worse there.

The sickening thing is that three years ago, before the cuts in the welfare payment plan, St. Bernard took in every welfare patient they could get because they were "good business." Now, they are "money losers," so they are turned away or pushed out.

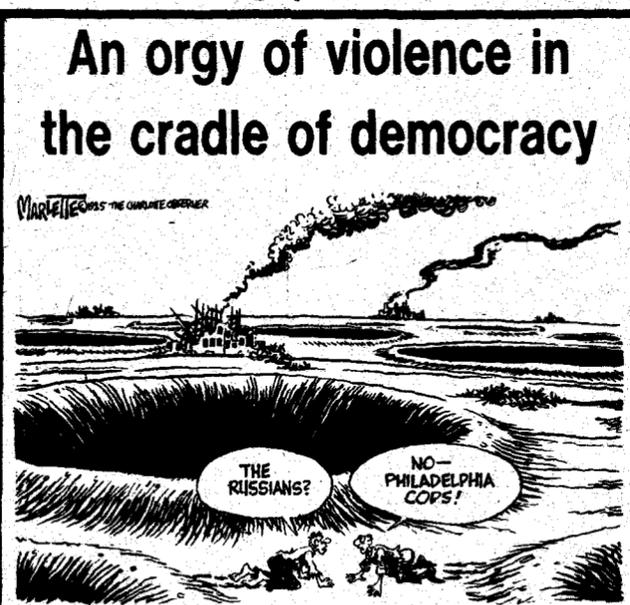
Our hospital got a lot of publicity because they brought Ben Wilson (Simeon H.S. basketball star) here after he was shot. Now his parents are suing the hospital for not preventing his death. I don't think the paramedics should have brought him to St. Bernard. After they had him stabilized in the emergency room, he had to wait an hour and a half to go into surgery because all the operating theaters were in use. They should have taken him to a trauma center, but for the whole South Side there are only two.

Our community has the greatest need for health care, because the general level of health is so poor. Yet the health care is substandard in my opinion. It's depressing. You see the same people come in and out of the hospital. They don't get better; the severely ill just die. We need more than a few dollars; we need a real change in the health and health care of the community.

—St. Bernard Hospital worker

THE STUDENTS RECOGNIZE the oppressive tricks of apartheid. At the age of 12 and every two years after, they are forced to take a test which will determine if they continue their Bantu education. If they fail, the youth are put on the farm and are forced to work. That is why 150,000 youth have been boycotting schools for over one and half years.

We are all Black people of South Africa: the "Colored," Indians, Asians and Africans, because we recognize Black Consciousness as the Idea of Freedom. We are not racists and do not attempt to push anyone into the ocean unless they don't give us what is ours, which is power. We are human beings and we must preach and demand human dignity.



They came into that Black neighborhood some 200 strong, wearing flak jackets and carrying rifles. These men who were white and some Black, and yes, even headed by a Black mayor. House by house people were moved out of their homes, out of their lives, so that the "others" could be gotten to. The others? A baker's dozen or so men, women and children. All living their pained existence amid a little too much garbage and rodents. A violation of health codes; an annoyance to their neighbors. But a capital crime? One deserving of execution?

Water cannon and tear gas and rifle fire were directed against these Black men and women and children, who had at most a few rifles between them. What terror it must have been in that house. A siege of a dozen hours. And then. And then the bomb. This "tactical necessity" became an inferno of death and destruction. Seven adults and four children, yes children, were immolated there. And those 200 men waited and waited as fire destroyed fifty-two other homes in that Black neighborhood, leaving 250 homeless.

Were we in the South Africa of Sharpeville, 1960? Of Soweto, 1976? Of Uitenhage, March, 1985? No, we were in Philadelphia, U.S.A., May, 1985—an orgy of violence in the "cradle of democracy."

Black America had been brought here in chains, worked under the lash, lynched and raped and shot down. And now. And now Black America has been bombed. Where to next, American behemoth?

—E.W.

Youth Awareness in Action

Los Angeles, Cal.—Youth Awareness in Action is a group that high school students got together on our own. We come from various high schools, and now the group also includes college students. We want to make people aware of their history and culture and to uncover the truth. Awareness will motivate people to action, to deal with problems in the community.

Right now we are concentrating on an issue that will be on the June 6 ballot. It is the City of Los Angeles' solution to crime prevention: they want to hire 1,000 more police. We youth are saying: This is not attacking the problem; this is just a superficial solution.

Look at this: the public school system dropout rate is 42%; school playgrounds close at 4:00 p.m., though it doesn't get dark till 8:00; our park and recreational systems are not adequately staffed and equipped. Having more police is not attacking the problem at its roots. Youth need better, more pertinent education, better recreation, jobs, and drug rehabilitation and education programs.

The rate of Black youth unemployment is very high, and now Ronald Reagan wants to lower the minimum wage, which will make matters worse. It will put more youth in the streets. As it is now, cocaine dealers are glorified. They will tell you, "I can make more money in one deal than the working man can make in a lifetime."

We are organizing a youth march for rights, marching from the city's juvenile detention center. We hope to get as many schools and students involved as possible.

—Los Angeles Black youth

Long Live Justiceville

Los Angeles, Cal.—The struggle of the homeless for Justiceville has not been lost, even though this shantytown set up by the homeless themselves, in downtown L.A.'s Skid Row district, has been leveled by a police order. (See May N&L for earlier story on Justiceville.) Homes of 63 people, built of plywood and cardboard, were forcibly uprooted, and 12 homeless resisters were arrested for trespassing.

"We were cited for sanitation problems," one resident said. "We never denied that, but the kind of problems they talked about exist in every alley in Skid Row. If we are illegal, then they might as well pick up all the homeless people and put us in the Coliseum."

The fact is that the state is more afraid of the homeless organizing themselves and offering an alternative to state aid programs, than it is worried about unsanitary living conditions which exist in all the state "welfare hotels."

The idea of Justiceville is a demand for new human relations for the homeless. The entire Black community has a high percentage of unemployed people, only a step away from the reality of homelessness.

—Eugene Ford

BLACK WORLD

(continued from page 1)

tees, many just steps removed from marching in the Civil Rights Movement or rioting in the rebellions that swept the urban ghettos from Harlem to Watts. All were filled with a new sense of Black pride and purpose. They spoke loudest against the discrimination they encountered on the battlefield in decorations, promotion and duty assignments. They chose not to overlook the racial insults, cross-burnings and Confederate flags of their white comrades. They called for unity among Black brothers on the battlefield to protest these indignities and provide mutual support. And they called themselves 'Bloods.'

What the reader experiences in *Bloods* is the plunge into the "heart of darkness" of the Vietnam holocaust. And from nearly every Black vet we hear how the conspiracy of American racism and class society made inevitable that plunge from the Black condition to the battlefield.

"I was twenty when I went to 'Nam. My people was from South Carolina. We was migrants. We picked string beans in New York. Strawberries in Florida..." is how Specialist 4 Charles Strong describes his origins. However, it was not only the Vietnam experience, but the jamming up of that experience with the Black condition, which led to the kind of social consciousness which would resolve to "...never risk my life or limb to protect anybody else's property...this country is not going to tell me to go out again to stop the spread of communism... If another war breaks out and they want me to go, I'd rather die. I'll fight anyone here in America. But if they come and get me to send me... I'm going to have my gun ready for them."

Just as young Black workers formed the Black caucuses in the unions, so too had Black GIs begun to organize in the armed forces at the end of the 1960s and early 1970s. The most telling sign of this was the breakdown of the rank hierarchy.

Specialist 4 Robert Holcomb relates the following: "When I went over to the 101st Airborne, I heard stories that the white guys would stay close to the Black guys in the field because they thought the VC (Viet Cong) and NVA (North Vietnamese Army) didn't shoot at the Blacks as much as the whites. And there were signs the Communists put up in Ashau Valley which told the Black soldier this was not his war. Finally, in the 3rd of the 506th, about 20 Black guys refused to go to the field for a good week. They thought more Blacks were going to the field because Blacks were less likely to get shot. They were confined to quarters and sentenced with Article 15 (court martial)..."

A NEW BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS

But it was not only combatting the racism of the military which produced a new political consciousness among Black GIs. The conjunction of this Black consciousness with the realization that they were being used to defeat the struggle for national self-determination of another subject people resulted in more than Black nationalism. A new social consciousness that did not stop at race, but which saw deep into the class divisions of American society, expresses itself through the "war stories" in *Bloods*.

In post-war America the Black vet finds it natural to think of the Black condition as a state of war. According to Specialist 4 Gene Woodley, "...living in America in the eighties is a war for survival among Black folks. And veterans are being overlooked more than everybody."

Bloods is more than a collection of "war stories." It is an historical narrative documenting the twin hells of the war at home and abroad, as well as the revolutionary coming into being of what Specialist 4 Stephen Howard called "the last generation to believe...in the honor of war. There is no honor in war." As such, *Bloods* is a book for the future, for those young Black men in America's ghettos whose destiny this government wants to fasten to its search for new Vietnams.

Rigoberta Menchu's life

RIGOBERTA MENCHU, An Indian Woman in Guatemala, edited by Elisabeth Burgos-Debray. Verso, 1984.

Rigoberta Menchu has become internationally known as a spokeswoman in exile of Guatemala's revolutionary movement. In this book she tells the story of her own life and the development of her thinking, as one individual within a whole peasant population who have endured exploitation and persecution to the limit and risk in arms to win their freedom.

For the testimony of a young Quiche Indian peasant woman to reach people in the technologically advanced world is something of a revolution in itself. (See also her contribution to *Guatemalan Revolutionaries Speak*, published by N&L.) It opens up a new relationship based on a shared quest for human liberation, in opposition to the one-way flow of coffee, cotton and sugar that links her world to ours in the global capitalist system.

Rigoberta Menchu describes the love and pride, the cooperation, communal decision-making and democratically elected leadership that form the way of life in her remote mountain village and the rituals and ceremonies in which these traditions are expressed.

But her community had been pushed onto marginal land and could not raise enough food from the fields they laboriously cleared from the jungle. Each year they had to make a sickening journey, crammed into the back of a closed truck, down to the Pacific coast to work on one of the big plantations (fincas).

Life on the fincas was sheer hell. At the age of five, she was helping her mother at work in the fields; at night, she was picking coffee for pay. Even so, they were paid so little that her baby brother starved to death.

Rigoberta's father, Vincente Menchu, worked with the peasants' union, the *Comite de Unidad Campesina* (C.U.C.), and in time the whole family became active. By 1978, their village had devised traps and ambushes for defense against the army.

Rigoberta participated in an upsurge of mass protest against oligarchy and military dictatorship that encompassed demonstrations of students and workers in the cities and strikes of both factory and plantation workers, as well as guerrilla resistance. She became increasingly aware of the urgency of greater unity with other Indian ethnic groups and with ladinos (despite her lifelong experience of ladino racism against Indians) and undertook to learn Spanish in order to communicate beyond her own Quiche people.

Among those human forces which are striving for a truly free, classless society, Karl Marx recognized one such force in the traditional peasant village community, which he discussed in the context of Tsarist Russia. As Rigoberta Menchu shows us, it is also a mainspring of revolution in today's Guatemala. —Richard Bunting

Guatemala and Dominican Republic

Workers, women, peasants fight repression

Guatemala—The Mutual Support Group for the Appearance Alive of Our Relatives, organized last year primarily by wives of disappeared or murdered Guatemalan labor activists, held a march in April in which 1,000 participated. The group itself has faced repression from the regime of Gen. Mejía Victores. Two of the six founders have been killed, along with members of their families.

Workers who attempt to organize are fired from their jobs. But many, like the Coca Cola bottling plant workers in Guatemala City in the late 1970s, are murdered. Today the bottling plant workers can claim a victory. The shut down plant they occupied for a year has been reopened with new owners, their union has been recognized and half the original 500 workers have been called back.

The workers had organized the occupation and kept it going in the face of death threats and intimidation to themselves and their families. They also got important support from the International Labor Organization (ILO) and other such organizations which focused international attention on the plant occupation. The workers were able to get their story to a worldwide audience.

The ILO tried to keep the campaign within the confines of narrow "trade union rights." But like the Black trade unions of South Africa, the struggle for union rights is a political as well as economic challenge to the 30 years of military dictatorship in Guatemala. Coca

Cola is a high profile multinational. The workers trying to organize unions in the less well-known enterprises need international solidarity as well.

Dominican Republic—Uprisings over the increase of food prices swept the Dominican Republic last year while land in the countryside stood idle. Now peasants have been taking matters into their own hands. They have been taking state-owned land they say is either left uncultivated or else is given over to big landowners to exploit while the peasants go hungry.

They have staged land invasions and begun to weed and prepare the land for farming in San Francisco de Macoris, Monte Plata and the National District. When 58 men and women were arrested during an occupation in Monte Plata in late April, relatives and members of the local peasant cooperative took over a church to press for their release. The imprisoned peasants, except for seven women leaders of the occupation, were set free on orders of the central government. All told, 250 were arrested at various locations.

The leader of the Independent Peasant Movement announced that 12,000 peasants will march on the National Palace in Santo Domingo in mid-May to demand that the government complete its stated intent to give "land to the tiller." The peasants say they are fed up with political promises and intend to continue the land invasions.

—Mary Holmes

H.S. students vs. military

Chicago, Ill.—On Friday, May 17 I attended the "Armed Forces Day Rally" which was held to protest Chicago's Armed Forces Parade. Most of the people there were youth but there were also many adults and senior citizens who were holding banners and signs. Many of us had participated in another protest we called "No Business As Usual" disruptions on April 29.

Many of the youth at these demonstrations were from the local high schools like Whitney Young, Metro, Lincoln Park and Evanston. At my school we handed out leaflets for these actions. We had to dodge school officials because it's illegal to do that. April 29 was the first time we had ever done this.

At the Armed Forces Parade we did guerrilla theater, die-ins and other disorderlies. Many people dressed up in costumes. I was dressed as the Pope, and when everybody "died" I blessed some and killed others with my M-16.

I have been going to protests for the past few years. Recently I have been going mostly with my own friends as more people my age get involved. I think the reason this is happening is that we want to live a life, grow old, and experience things. We don't want someone like Reagan to decide things for us and maybe blow up the world in the process. As long as we are around, we are going to try to prevent that.

I think that the group of kids I've been involved with on April 29 and May 17 will play an important role in the anti-war and anti-racist movements of the future. We have a great camaraderie with one another. We listen to one another's ideas and those of passers-by too.

I am honored to be a part of the anti-war movement of the 1980s and hope more people—youth in particular—get involved too.

—Student, Whitney Young High School, Chicago

'Peasant of El Salvador'

Detroit Mich.—I recently saw a performance of "A Peasant of El Salvador," a powerfully sympathetic portrayal of the life of the peasant Jesus, written and performed by Gould and Stearns. When they show us the destruction of his family and village through starvation, land theft, murder and disappearances, they bring us far more than a house of horrors. They reach for a hemispheric view to understand these atrocities.

They show how widespread starvation is no random accident. The traditional diet of rice and beans grows more and more expensive as the entire country's system of agriculture is reorganized to meet the needs of the North American market: "coffee, bananas, and strawberries in the winter."

The much-victimized peasant is not shown merely as a victim. Jesus becomes a follower of Archbishop Romero and sums up his experience in a spontaneous speech during the police attack on Romero's funeral, where he is killed. His son and daughter have previously run off to join the guerrillas, at least half of whom are women.

The play is ambivalent on the relationship of peasant and worker to intellectual and leader. First a young student tells Jesus he does not "understand or know" the rich history of peasant revolts. Later, Archbishop Romero says that he has learned "all from the peasants." Romero's ideology is the only one that is revealed to us. We learn nothing about the ideas of the guerrillas.

The very beautiful critique of U.S. capitalist imperialism is weakened because it remains "hemispheric." The global questions of this state-capitalist world with Russia and China claiming to be a genuine alternative to U.S. imperialism are not faced. These shortcomings are the shortcomings of the U.S. movement of solidarity with Latin America.

—Steve Fletcher

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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 scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism. 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 in-

herent 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. 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.

Philosophical - political notes on Reagan's visit to Bitburg

(continued from page 1)

he visited Bitburg where Nazi SS officers' bodies lie buried, the anti-Reagan protests throughout Europe and America spoke loudly and clearly.

Put briefly, all that was originally said in opposition to the trip when it was first announced—whether it was by the masses who were reminding the world of the Nazi Holocaust, or just the American vets reminding Reagan of what World War II meant to them, i.e. fighting Nazism—was true. Everyone opposed any legitimization of Nazi storm troopers buried at Bitburg under the guise of a gesture of "reconciliation," as if the German nation now makes no distinction between the Nazism that caused those atrocities and those who laid their lives down to fight Nazism.

A HISTORIC LOOK AT WEST GERMANY IN THE POST-WORLD WAR II WORLD

The void in Reagan's mind of any serious sense of history would hardly make him conscious of the fact that the post-World War II world has given birth to a totally new movement from practice that is itself a form of theory. It is this movement which over the last three decades has striven for truly new human relations. We will develop this further later.

For the moment it is necessary to deal with what was real for Reagan once De Gaulle came to power in 1958 and which matured by 1963 into the Franco-German Axis. That maturation had its own dialectic, and it is very far away from Reagan's perennial rewrite of history. It is true that, like Kennedy at the time, Reagan considered De Gaulle's idea that France could achieve a global shift in power by this axis, and thus suddenly become a ruling world power, a grand illusion. What is a still greater delusion today is Reagan's idea that his Pax Americana can be imposed upon the masses—counter-revolution on a world scale.

LET'S CONTINUE in the 1960s when Reagan, in terror against the birth of a new generation of revolutionaries, practiced his demagoguery in his nomination speech for Goldwater. The world shaking event at that time which bears the closest parallel to Reagan's present visit to a Nazi cemetery was the fall of Russia's Khrushchev in 1964, occurring almost simultaneously with China's first explosion of an atomic bomb. Khrushchev at that time had planned his first trip to West Germany. The possible shift in global power represented by China's bomb and Khrushchev's fall was seen by all. What none but Marxist-Humanism saw was the fall's relation to Khrushchev's proposed West Germany trip. (See my analysis in N&L, Oct. 1964.)

Let's take a second look at 1963. On Jan. 5, De Gaulle declared the Franco-German Axis to be the new center of Europe. He rushed to make the declaration before Kennedy had a chance to announce what all knew he was planning to announce: a new age was being signaled by "The Atlantic Community." To assure that the feat of the Franco-German Axis was his and his alone, De Gaulle made his declaration even before Adenauer got to Paris to sign the treaty. By that time he waxed enthusiastic for the new axis being the center of not only Europe, but, as he put it, of the "universe." De Gaulle's face was as cynical as that of Hitler when he had declared Nazi Germany to be the center of the world, but the French of the cultured Fuehrer was impeccable.⁴

Reagan persists with his grand illusion that, this being a nuclear world, it assures the twentieth century being "the American century." After all, what else can it be when Reagan plays a Star Wars game and thinks he has West Europe in tow? As I wrote when the Franco-German Pact was signed: "If this is madness, as it is, it is not, however, the madness of an individual egomaniac. It is the madness of the state-capitalist age that has exuded a Mussolini and a Hitler..."

THE POST-WORLD WAR II WORLD: MOVEMENT FROM BELOW, FROM PRACTICE AND FROM THEORY

What really did happen in the post-World War II world which all these European anti-Reagan demonstrations were trying to tell him?

What happened in East Germany this time, on June 17, 1953, was the first movement ever under totalitarian Communism—a mass revolt against what looked like only "work norms," more or less on the same level as the 1950 Miners' General Strike in the U.S. But in East Germany that opposition to speed-up was accompanied by a demand for freedom. The slogan was for both "bread and freedom." The revolt occurred shortly after Stalin's death and was a prelude to revolts all over East Europe.

Indeed, this birth of a new epoch was not confined only to Europe, or to America, or only to economic conditions. It was the birth of a whole new Third World, mainly in Africa where the fight for independence from Western imperialism was a demand for new human relations. What became clear by 1956, when it reached existing Communism and had brought forth Marx's 1844 Essays onto this new historic stage. Like Marx

they also called their philosophy a new humanism, while in Africa it was called the African road to socialism. These movements contained a strong challenge to Marxist theoreticians to grapple with what was new in their age.

THIS CHALLENGE BECAME manifest in a different way with De Gaulle's assuming of power in 1958. A small dissident Marxist movement in America issued a call for an international conference of all those who opposed both poles of world capital, Russia and the United States. I saw the spectre of De Gaulle as a form of neo-fascism. My point was that theoreticians, leaders and ranks, must learn not only to listen to the new mass movements arising from below—those from East Europe opposing totalitarian Communism as well as those of the colonial revolts opposing Western imperialism—but also to work out anew the philosophic dimension. That is, they had to make dialectics of revolution inseparable from dialectics of thought.

The July, 1958 News & Letters carried a picture of the massive May 28 demonstration of 250,000 Parisians against De Gaulle and headlined its front page article, "France at the Cross Roads." That same issue of N&L contained contributions by Jean Malaquais, from the paper Tribune Ouvriere in France and from Battaglia Comunista in Italy. All thought that I had greatly exaggerated the mass opposition to De Gaulle. In fact, these writers were themselves more or less quiescent and felt that the colonial masses were nowhere near as advanced as I said they were.

My "Two Worlds" column in that same issue, "Whither Paris?" summed up what I considered the task of revolutionary Marxists:

Where Marx removed theory from a dispute among intellectuals and made it into a weapon in the class struggle, the modern intellectual reduces theory to a word game reserved for intellectuals. Where the Existentialist intellectual thwarted the proletarian attempt to break away from Communism, the Marxist intellectual let it suffocate for lack of any comprehensive revolutionary theory with which to combat Communism. Where they did not thirst to lead, to sit in the seat of the capitalists and plan "for" the workers, they nevertheless did nothing to face their intellectual responsibility, to put an end to the intellectual sloth that has accumulated in the Marxist movement. Despite all protestations to the contrary, small theoretical groupings who did see Communism for the state-capitalist tyranny it is did nothing to re-establish Marxism in its original form of a new Hu-

manism. It is high time for a serious reappraisal.

The international conference did meet in 1959 and decided to have an international dialogue in three languages—French, English and Italian—which was published in a special section with a distinct color in the journal Prometeo. But so strong was their opposition to philosophy, that this dialogue hardly went further than what was said by Karl Kautsky, head of the Second International, who proclaimed, speaking for the post-Marx Marxists, that Marx's politics meant the end of philosophy.

By the 1960s, we had witnessed not only the East Europeans, who used Marxist language to call for a new Humanism, but as well the Africans,⁵ especially Frantz Fanon's Wretched of the Earth. However, none of this was ever real to these anti-philosophy Marxists. I, on the other hand, had by 1959, following my 1958 Marxism and Freedom, come out with a pamphlet on the Afro-Asian Revolutions. Again they chose to disregard this contribution.

In sum, these Marxists were unable to meet the challenge of the post-World War II age, either as the new movements from practice arising both in state-capitalist countries and in the colonial world, or as the rise of neo-fascism within Europe. Today, two decades later we are still living under the consequences of this continuing theoretic-philosophic void in the Marxist movement. * * *

To get back to the Bitburg ramifications in conclusion: To have Reagan now act as if he had to make that trip because Germany is the key to the "West" only proves how such an opposite as counter-revolution is passed off as if it were revolution, and that as "Western Civilization." All that that Pax Americana aiming for world domination can see, be it in El Salvador or Bitburg, in Nicaragua or South Africa, is Russia. All else of the indigenous mass movement against totalitarian so-called democracy is subsumed under this myopic view.

5. Here is what I wrote in 1962: "Just as the fight for freedom on the part of the Hungarian Revolutionaries (who have been raised on Marxist theory only to be betrayed by its usurpers) has made them the retical Marxist-Humanists, the plunge into freedom has made the African revolutionaries the active Marxist-Humanists of today. The Marxist-Humanists of other countries are ready to listen and, with our help, to establish that new international which will be free from state control and will aspire to reconstruct the world." Presence Africain #48, Paris, 1962.

Coming in our next issue...

Raya Dunayevskaya writes on- 30 years of News & Letters newspaper

This June is the 30th anniversary of News & Letters, born as a Marxist-Humanist newspaper in the era of McCarthyism. Our June, 1955 issue No. 1 came out on the second anniversary of the East German Revolt against the state-capitalism of Russia and its satellites.

June 24, 1955

"As we were preparing to go to press with this, our first issue, I was asked why I had placed so much emphasis on letters to and from news committees as well as to and from workers outside these news committees. The daily press is so well-known for its being the voice, not of the people, but of big business, that we have all but forgotten the part the press played in the making of this nation.

The worker who put the question to me, said: 'All I read the papers for are the sports and the comics.' Were this indifference to all other sections of the paper a mere question of forgetting history, nothing much would be lost. But it is not a question of history. It is a matter of new passions as they are expressed in the daily lives of ordinary people. It is these that need to be heard. When fundamental changes are shaking society to its depths, the need for communication forces its way up, finds all sorts of unique ways of realization. One of these is letter writing..."

—Raya Dunayevskaya, "Letter writing and new passions"

1965

"Maoist theory notwithstanding, wars and revolutions are not synonymous. They are opposites. Wars are the natural outcome of exploitative social orders and only prove that state-capitalism in China differs in no basic way from private capitalism in the United States. Although China has, for the moment, stepped back from expanding the India-Pakistan war into a general Asian war, there is nothing to stop some other incident from unloosing World War III.

On the other hand, a social revolution tears the old exploitative order out, root and branch. Thus the idea of freedom and the struggle for it become indivisible. Such a way of life, and only such a way of life, has no need of wars to assure revolution's victory, and put destiny in the hands of the working people themselves."

—Editorial, "China and the India-Pakistan War"

1975

"Workers consider all labor alien. That is not because they do not know how to do their job, but because the job means nothing to them. It is simply something they must do to earn a living. Because the job means nothing, Marx called it alienated labor. The German philosopher Hegel called it alienated Soul..."

Years ago, when I would leave the factory and that place of alienated labor, and go to a political meeting, I would feel an entirely different spirit and person. But the day comes when you recognize and understand that all political tendency in-fighting is suddenly not that exciting anymore.

I returned to Marx then, when he posed the question of the difference between a trade union and something as great as the Paris Commune. Whether or not that had any roots in what Hegel called Alienated Spirit, the point is that in both cases, it was only through struggle, and not the end, of the real new human relationships."

—Charles Denby, "Worker's Journal"

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4. See my "The New Franco-German Axis," News & Letters, March, 1963.

Can working people reverse Reaganism in the shop?

(continued from page 1)

squeeze the lifeblood out of the union movement in the U.S. At the same time, they also reveal the increasing separation between many rank-and-file workers and the union leadership, when that leadership has failed to mount an effective struggle against anti-worker attacks.

ORGANIZED LABOR IN THE '80s

Throughout the 1980s, the orchestrated attack against organized workers has focused primarily on two target areas: 1) the give-backs, or concessions, of economic and work place gains that had been won over many decades of often brutal struggles against management; and 2) the elimination of those principles that have symbolized the history of unionism, such as brotherhood and sisterhood, seniority, equality of treatment and the concept that an injury to one is an injury to all.

It began with Reagan's successful firing of 16,000 air controllers, and intensified with the series of concessions made by the UAW to "ailing" Chrysler Corporation, supposedly in order to "save the company." The concessionary contracts that quickly swept the country gained impetus from the deep economic depression of the early 1980s, with double-digit unemployment. It continued through the illusory "recovery" of 1984-85. Last year, for the first time since records have been kept, non-union workers won higher wage increases — over 4% — than union workers, whose increases were held down to 2.3%. For many union workers, there was an actual decrease in wages.

Worst of all are the "two-tier" wage agreements, wherein new hires are paid less than established employees for the same work. They have been negotiated not only in grocery chains, offices and department stores, but in the Teamsters union, the UAW, the airlines, construction workers, steel workers, health care employees, lumber and rubber workers. This not only creates a bitter divisiveness between new and older workers, but inevitably results in older workers being fired on every pretext to save employers labor costs by hiring lower paid new workers.

In virtually every new contract negotiated in the past few years, the most serious concessions are in the area

Challenge to youth

(continued from page 5)

were here driven to go also to Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*, and there, as we approached the three final syllogisms in Absolute Mind and tread on ground none had ever walked before, we felt that in place of a "dialectic of the party" we were, with Hegel's Self-Thinking Idea, with the masses' Self-Bringing Forth of Liberty, face to face with a new society. After all, Marx had unchained the dialectic as he had recreated the Absolute Method as a "revolution in permanence."

What has made this appeal to the youth appear so urgent to me is that, at one and the same time, we not only confront the objective situation of a nuclear world filled with economic recession and political retrogression as well as altogether too many aborted, unfinished revolutions turned into their very opposite, but also the fact that Marx's all-encompassing revolution-in-permanence, which desires to become ground also of organization, has, until Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's *Philosophy of Revolution*, been left at the implicit stage...

THE NEW GENERATION of revolutionaries in the U.S. was so preoccupied with decentralization that the fatal contradiction between that and their failure to pay attention to the state-capitalist class nature of the Communist elitist party meant that very nearly everything was subordinated to activism. It wasn't until the 1970s, when the Women's Liberation Movement also kept stressing decentralization and, at the same time, refused to disregard the male chauvinism in the Left, that it became clear that the new form of organization could not be kept in a separate compartment from that of philosophy. It was then that we turned to *Philosophy and Revolution*, beginning with "Why Hegel? Why Now?"—a part which considered the Hegelian dialectic "in and for itself" not separate from both Marx's philosophy of revolution and Lenin's philosophic ambivalence...

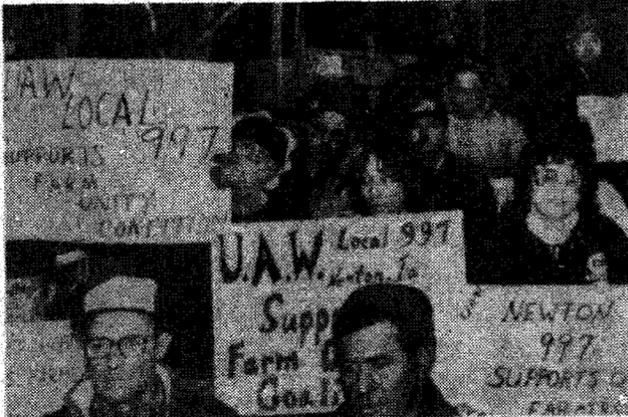
The youth need to grapple with the Promethean vision of the young Marx before he was a Marxist, when he was still a Prometheus Bound, when he was still a young Hegelian (1839-41) just filling in some minor gaps in Hegel's monumental *History of Philosophy*—and asking himself that imperative question: "where to begin." When we talk about "thought-divers" we can see that Marx was the greatest of all.

That's what I'm really appealing to the youth to do. Becoming a thought-diver and an activist in this period demands nothing short of practicing the challenge to all post-Marx Marxists and thereby creating such new ground for organization, such concretization of Marx's revolution in permanence, as to find a new way to let the actual revolution be.

Yours, Raya

of work rules. These changes vary from giving management almost absolute right to do anything it pleases to the workers in terms of job assignments, transfers and hours worked, to the abandonment of the principle of job seniority. Safety provisions are at the heart of many of these concerns, and giving up these gains directly threatens the ability of workers to do their jobs without facing the danger of personal injury.

An increasing concern of more and more workers is the danger associated with toxic substances. This problem has many ramifications for the workers because of the changing nature of job-related illness and injury. When worker injury compensation laws were enacted, a worker hurt on the job knew what the damage and problem were at the time of injury. Now, with the introduction of so many new and potentially dangerous toxic substances into the modern work place, the effects



Farmers and workers unite to disrupt auction of farm machinery from a foreclosed farm in Iowa.

of the exposure may not be known or show up for ten, twenty or more years. Yet the damage is often more serious and deadly than anything experienced in the work place before, since cancer and other organ poisoning take a long time to develop to the point of detection. The result is that workers are more often than not denied any compensation for such exposure, since it is likely to be difficult to prove in court. Nevertheless, there are over 35,000 toxic-substance-related cases pending in the courts, with hundreds of thousands of other afflicted workers waiting to find out what the results will be in the hope that they will be able to file their own cases for legal settlement.

UNION BASHING AT HOME AND ABROAD

All the concessions contracts, whether in the U.S., in Canada, or in Europe, are taking place in the context of permanent mass unemployment. The April, 1985 jobless rate of 7.2% was termed "normal" by economists, who had evidently forgotten that following World War II, 4% unemployment was to be the signal for massive federal assistance programs. (See Readers' Views, p. 6.)

Nor is this high unemployment restricted to the U.S. In Europe it is even higher, with the Netherlands at 15%, Britain 12%, Italy and France 11%, West Germany 8%. All predictions by government economists in Europe show a continuing rise in the number of jobless through 1985. Thus, at the Bonn Economic Summit attended by the Western nations, despite the many differences that precluded any real international economic agreements, in one area there was accord. As Flora Lewis wrote in her NY Times column (May 11), there was an unusual and significant new agreement on basic economic policies. Each country stated its own objective, which turned out all the same: "to break down 'structural rigidities' which is mainly a euphemism for union bashing."

But the Western rulers had no monopoly on this one. In a much-publicized April visit that Russia's new leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, made to a factory, he exhorted the workers to use more "economic incentives, to show creative initiative and to develop independence in solving major technical and organizational problems." East and West, the rulers have the same message for the workers — "more work."

The demand for more and more production in each working day has only intensified with the new stage of capitalist production signaled by high tech and robotics. Millions have been spent by corporations to train workers to work with robotics, not to fully develop the individual worker, but to force the worker into the mold demanded by robotic production. The division between mental and manual labor remains and does not elimi-

nate, but feeds, the unemployment and misery suffered by workers and their families.

As Raya Dunayevskaya pointed out in the first decade of automated production, in her 1957 work *Marxism and Freedom*: "The fundamental problem of true freedom remains: What type of labor can end the division between 'thinkers' and 'doers'? This is the innermost core of Marxism. The transformation of totalitarian society, on totally new beginnings, can have no other foundation than a new material life, a new kind of labor for the producer, the worker."

That question was first posed by American coal miners, fighting against the introduction of automation into the mines in the form of the "man-killer" machine, the continuous miner. In their historic 1949-50 general strike, they not only gave a new meaning to labor solidarity by establishing direct support links among rank-and-file workers in coal, auto, steel and rubber, in defiance of their own labor bureaucracy. Their struggle, when combined with deep philosophic probing on the part of Dunayevskaya (who was active in that strike), led to the birth of Marxist-Humanism.*

MINERS, TEACHERS, PILOTS

Today's labor struggles against a new form of automation, backed up by a vicious corporate/administration coalition, may not have reached the heights of that 1949-50 battle. But the fact remains that the last several months have seen a revolt of increasing scope and depth. The current strike at United Airlines has brought together pilots, flight attendants and other workers in unexpected unity and strength; the more than six-month strike of the workers at Chicago's Danly Machine Corporation; the 18-month strike of lumber workers of the Louisiana-Pacific Corporation in the northwest; the nearly two-year strike at the Phelps Dodge copper mine in Arizona; strikes by coal miners in West Virginia against the Massey Coal Co; and the Yale University workers' strike are but a small token of the total number of large and small workers' actions that break through to challenge the status quo and fight for a higher standard of living.

New and determined militancy is being demonstrated by growing numbers of women in industries that are overwhelmingly female and which had not been in the forefront of labor struggles in the past. The Yale workers represent one example, but others include Latinas in textiles who are now organizing as never before on the West Coast, insurance company clericals, and domestics.

Increasingly, proposed concessions contracts calling for two-tier wage systems, massive work rules changes, and erosion of health and safety protection spark determined battles, fought out under the harsh conditions of America under Reaganism. The critique of capitalist production, and of society as a whole, put forth by the workers in their actions and in their questions, offers a very different—a human—direction, out of what Marx called "the devastation caused by a social anarchy which turns every economical progress into a social calamity." When workers create their own organizations and take destiny in their own hands, then, and only then, will we be on the road that can lead us out of our crisis-ridden society.

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

Youth in Revolt

About 75 South Korean students occupied a U.S. office in Seoul in May, demanding that the U.S. remove its troops and economic influence from South Korea and apologize for its role in the massacre of hundreds of people during the 1980 Kwangju uprising against martial law (see N&L, May and Nov., 1980). Hundreds of students demonstrated at five universities in support of the occupiers.

On the anniversary of the May 4, 1970 shooting of Kent State students during an anti-Vietnam War protest, more than 600 people held a march and vigil in the area where 13 were shot and four killed by the National Guard. June 14 will be the fifteenth anniversary of the police shooting of Black youth at Jackson State University, who had gathered to solidarize with those shot at Kent State (see N&L, June, 1970).

Protesting the trade embargo imposed by President Reagan on Nicaragua, over 1,000 people took part in blockades and sit-ins May 7 and 8 at federal buildings from Seattle to Connecticut. In San Francisco alone, more than 400 blockaders were arrested, while in Boston over 500 people were arrested.

Ben Sasway, convicted three years ago of not registering for the draft, was sent to jail April 29 for a two-and-a-half-year prison term. The order followed the Supreme Court's ruling in March that prosecution of only public draft resisters did not constitute selective prosecution.

A 1980's view

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

by Andy Phillips and Raya Dunayevskaya

\$2

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OUR LIFE AND TIMES

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

Blacks demonstrated 25,000 strong near Johannesburg on May 14 in outrage over the police murder of Black union leader Andries Raditsela and student leader Siphon Mutsi. Raditsela, only 29 years old and a major leader of the nationwide Federation of South African Trade Unions, died of head injuries from beatings in prison. With his death, at least 350 Blacks have been killed in the latest stage of revolt since September, 1984.

Despite murderous assaults by white soldiers and police armed with the latest American technology of destruction, the Black masses—workers and youth, women and men—have sustained and deepened their struggle. Since March, the locus of that fight has been the industrial area surrounding Port Elizabeth.

It took 1,000 soldiers and 20 armored personnel carriers to seal off just one key Black township near Port Elizabeth, Kwanobuhle, on May 5. Since the March 21 Uitenhage massacre, Black youth, often inspired by the philosophy of Black Consciousness, had virtually taken over the Black townships.

The week before, 15,000 defiant Blacks had gathered to bury 23 revolutionary martyrs, cheering the name of imprisoned African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela. They also cheered when United Democratic Front leader Thomas Koheese replied to the latest "liberalization" of the laws governing mixed marriages: "When blood was flowing here, the so-called government of South Africa sat in Parliament to discuss

sex. They wanted to talk about who sleeps with whom."

Only days before, U.S. reporter Nathaniel Sheppard, Jr. captured the new actions by women protesting the Uitenhage massacre and the sadistic arrogance of white power: "About 200 mothers who sought to meet Monday with a court magistrate on alleged police brutality in Black townships were attacked by policemen with whips, according to witnesses. Witnesses said the women, including many who were elderly, were set upon as they waited for an audience with the chief magistrate. More policemen joined in the attack and others looked on with amusement, they said. Women involved in the incident said they had come to see the magistrate because of what they believed was a police and army campaign of terror and killing in Black townships. 'They have killed eight people since Saturday,' said one woman." (Chicago Tribune, 4/23/85)

Black labor actions have continued, both in Port Elizabeth and in the gold mines of the Transvaal. The Anglo-American Corporation fired 17,000 Black gold miners for going on strike, but this was followed by ANC bomb attacks on company headquarters. That and the mass self-activity of the workers forced the company to rehire some of the workers.

New militant trade unions have emerged out of the spontaneous strikes by Black labor, especially in the last year. Together with youth, women's, community and student groups, they constitute the multi-dimensional forms of a living, growing and deepening mass movement. Never before—not in 1960 or even 1976—has the "racial capitalism" of

apartheid South Africa faced the type of sustained mass creativity that it has in 1984-85.

Under Reagan, U.S. capital, far from pulling out, has become more deeply involved than ever. The New York Times buried deep in its business section on April 29 the facts of this obscene increase: While U.S. bank loans to the South African government have decreased since 1981, U.S. loans to private corporations and banks there have instead skyrocketed. This means that, as a whole, U.S. bank loans to South Africa went from \$2 billion in 1981 to \$5 billion in 1984! But American youth are learning how to transform that financial link into a genuine freedom link between youthful rebels in South Africa and Reagan's USA.

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New Zealand protests against apartheid

Youth took to the streets of New Zealand's cities soon after the New Zealand Rugby Union decided on April 17 to send the national team on tour to South Africa. Police had to barricade the Hotel St. George in Wellington where the Rugby Council met. The hotel staff went on strike against the tour decision, and 1,000 demonstrators came there the next day, including 700 Victoria University students.

In Auckland, 30,000 demonstrators marched the next day. Most were youth, including many Maori and Pacific Islander students, from high schools and universities. The anti-apartheid group Halt All Racist Tours set May 3 as a nationwide day of protest. Over 60,000 demonstrators joined the anti-apartheid actions that day.

The government of David Lange deplored the decision of the Rugby Union, but said it was powerless to stop the tour. The anti-nuke movement helped Lange come to power based on his pledge to ban U.S. nuclear ships from New Zealand waters. But the current Rugby Union tour protests are bringing a different dimension of New Zealand society to the fore—the self-determination movement by the indigenous Maori people.

Maoris initiated protest marches several years ago on Waitangi Day, which the state promotes as a marker of nationhood and racial unity. The treaty of 1840 supposedly gave the Maoris the rights of British subjects in return for yielding sovereignty, a word that did not exist in their language or in the Maori version of the treaty.

Maori who did not sign the treaty resisted the British advance in the Waikato Valley in 1863. But ultimately over two million acres of rich farmland were wrested from them and handed over to pakeha (white settlers). The memory and the reality of raupatu, the land expropriations, is still alive.

Young urban Maoris have been the most vocal in rejecting the unemployment, lack of housing, poverty and discrimination which underlines their status in a racist and paternalistic New Zealand.

They have achieved a unity with the tribal activists fighting to preserve Maori life against the "lonely individualism" of pakeha culture. Kotahitanga (Maori Unity Movement) aims to address Maori needs from affirmative action within New Zealand society to the return of stolen tribal land. The activity of the Maoris in the anti-apartheid movement brings the struggle for self-determination back home.

Dutch people forcefully invite Pope to leave



Utrecht demonstrators tell the Pope where to go.

Pope John Paul II finally had the "halo" of international media adulation removed when he came up against the most militant, massive and creative opposition ever from the Dutch people, especially the youth. While the media focused on the violence between police and youthful demonstrators, the opposition to the Pope was not confined to punk and squatter youth, but embraced nearly the whole of society.

It was women, such as liberation theologian Helwig Wasser, who told the Pope to his face that his policies work to "exclude rather than make room for unmarried people living together, divorced people, homosexuals, married priests and women. The good ideas of women are not taken into account."

It was the Jewish community, whose

leaders spurned his invitation for a meeting unless the Pope separated himself from and openly criticized the pro-Nazi and anti-Semitic views and actions of the notorious Pope Pius XII, who backed Hitler and then helped many Nazi fugitives escape through Italy to Latin America and the Middle East.

It was the country's main labor organization, the Catholic/Social Democratic Netherlands Trade Union Movement, which wrote an open letter criticizing his reactionary stances on the Third World, on Nicaragua, on gay rights and on women's liberation.

But most of all, it was thousands of demonstrating Dutch youth who openly shouted "Pope go home!" and who bitterly attacked and ridiculed him.

Secret trials in Poland follow May Day protests

Three leading activists in Solidarnosc and the Committee for Social Self-Defense (KOR) were put on trial behind closed doors on May 23. Wladyslaw Frasnyniuk, Bogdan Lis and Adam Michnik, who all had been rearrested for strike activity in February, face up to five years in prison, but their supporters attempting to attend the trial have been denied entrance and detained.

The major themes in the May Day demonstrations this year were demands to free Frasnyniuk, Lis and Michnik, as well as all prisoners, and opposition to price rises that are drastically lowering the standard of living.

May Day, 1985, in Poland became once again what it had been at its origin in Chicago in 1890: a day of workers' freedom where independent trade unions battled an intransigent anti-labor

government. The Solidarnosc protests of May 1, 1985 drew 15,000 people into the center of Warsaw, in one of the largest mass actions since martial law began in December, 1981. Jacek Kuron, founder of the Committee for Social Self-Defense (KOR), was once again arrested for "instigating" a Polish protest.

Police were more successful in repressing the movement in Gdansk, placing Lech Walesa under preventive arrest. Nonetheless, 2,000 came out, were attacked brutally by police and fought back with stones. In Poznan, several thousand also rallied, but were immediately set upon by club-wielding police.

Never before in the history of Communist totalitarianism has such a deeply proletarian opposition maintained itself so long—outlasting Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko. Will the "young" Gorbachev fare any better?

Mass protest in China

Nearly 500 people sat in on the steps of Beijing's Communist Party headquarters during the last week of April, protesting their being unable to regain residence in Beijing. They were all former Red Guards who had been sent down to the countryside in the province of Shansi in 1968. One demonstrator said they represented the 20,000 still in Shansi out of the 400,000 young people sent from the capital.

The protesters were dispersed after a week. They returned to Shansi with the promise that their residence applications would be considered individually. The protest did illuminate not only the situation of the millions of youth sent down to the countryside during the Cultural Revolution, but also the lack of mobility of the Chinese peasantry in general.

Contrary to some news reports, these youth had not left the cities for farming villages "voluntarily." They had been forced away when the Red Guards which Mao Zedong had mobilized were proving difficult to keep under control—many were especially threatening because they took seriously the Marxist phrases that Mao was using to justify his own agenda and went back to read Marx for themselves.

Although most of those sent to the countryside have managed to make their way back to their home cities in the last decade, and despite attacks Deng Xiaoping has made on so many other aspects of the Cultural Revolution, the decision that sent them to the countryside has never been officially reversed. That may be because Deng distrusts the generation who experienced revolution betrayed.

It may be also because of sizable urban unemployment. But it is in the context of China's residency system which ties the peasants to the land and the urban worker to his assigned job and residence. The peasants in Shansi working alongside these former residents of Beijing have virtually no chance of leaving their village for any city.

Despite new agricultural policies designed to reward families with increased production, and the many stories in the Western press about peasants getting rich, compulsion is still required to keep peasants from leaving the land. In fact, the regime has publicized the corruption of local officials who arrange phony documentation of city residence for their relatives or for a price. (See James Seymour, *China Rights Annals* 1, M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, N.Y. for citations on this and on the situation of dissidents, women and ethnic minorities in particular in China during 1984.)