

New opening to the Left in Europe

Socialist victory in French presidential election

by Peter Mallory

The May 11 victory of Francois Mitterrand, leader of the Socialist Party, over Giscard d'Estaing, for the post of President of France by over a million votes was celebrated in the streets at the Bastille, symbol of revolutionary France ever since the great French Revolution. Whether the present little revolution in electioneering will develop into any such great revolution is to be doubted. But, compared to the reactionary antics of the Reagan-Haig Administration here and that of Thatcher in Britain, the Socialist victory in France does create a new opening to the Left.

Mitterrand campaigned on the platform of a 35-hour week, a 10 percent increase in the minimum wage, a 20 percent increase in aid to the elderly and 50 percent increase in rent assistance for the poor. He called for nationalization of all banks and certain sectors of industry. With unemployment officially reaching 1.66 mil-

lion people and inflation at 14 percent, his victory was not a great surprise.

WHAT ABOUT THE COMMUNISTS?

Mitterrand's victory came with the help of the 500,000 member Communist Party, which has been steadily losing influence among French workers. Over the last year they have lost 100,000 members and their vote declined by 25 percent. They still control the largest trade union in France, the General Labor Confederation (CGT), with its two million members. However, there is no reason to give the Communists the two million membership. Quite the contrary. Just as May, 1968 revealed how deep were the divisions between the Communist leadership and the rank-and-file so that they forced the CP to join the near-uprising of the students, so, presently, the CP members have just showed in union elections that many thousands of them voted for the Socialists.

A look back into history will show that the Communists, like the Socialists, run back to capitalist embrace when the masses really hunger for workers' power.

In 1936 the Popular Front government under Leon Blum had a clear mandate from the workers, a clear majority in parliament, the backing of a general strike and a wave of sit-down strikes, the first in French history. Clearly the question of workers' power was high on the agenda.

That was the last thing that the leadership of the Socialist and Communist Parties wanted. The Communists refused support except on specific issues; Blum vacillated and the opportunity was lost. Fascist power consolidated in Germany. Stalin signed the Hitler-Stalin Pact, which was supported by the French Communist Party. Germany occupied France, ended the Popular Front government, and produced the Vichy regime, the French government that served their German fascist masters.

Closer to our day, the election seven years ago showed a solid block of workers' votes for Mitterrand, when Giscard won by a scant half-million votes. That election was lost due to the betrayal of the Communists and the pusillanimity of the Socialist leadership.

What remains great, and gives cause for optimism, is that a solid block of 50 percent of the electorate is fed up with the status quo and is ready for a change.

The French capitalists and the Reagan-Haig Administration are quite alarmed that a Socialist is assuming power. Mitterrand promises to nationalize all banking. French banking is now 60 percent nationalized and seems to survive. He has also promised to nationalize some segments of French industry. Twelve percent of French industry is not nationalized and if the industries that Mitterrand has indicated are due for nationalization are consummated, it will bring the grand total of French nationalization to only 17 percent of industrial capacity.

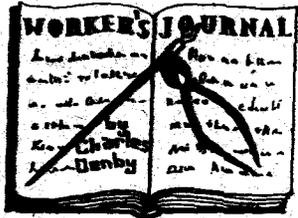
Government ownership of industry is not, by itself, the solution to the problems of any country. Without workers' control of the factories, the same exploitation of the worker continues with the state in the role of the exploiter in place of the individual capitalist. Stalinist Russia, Maoist China and the string of their so-called Communist satellites bear witness to these facts of life. Nationalization, without workers' control, can only strengthen and reinforce state-capitalism, not build socialism.

LEFT OPENING IN ITALY AND GERMANY?

Immediately following the French elections came the referendum on abortion in Italy. There, an overwhelming majority of the workers voted to retain the liberal abortion-law. The bill to abolish abortion was backed by the Pope who was loudest, all the Catholic hierarchy and the neo-fascists. One woman when interviewed said, "Abortion is a matter too important for a mere man, not even the Pope to decide." And the woman was a Catholic! There is no doubt whatever that the Women's Liberation Movement is a force in Italy.

In Germany, Helmut Schmidt is in deep trouble. Smarting from his defeat in the Berlin municipal elections, he sent a telegram of congratulations to Mitterrand, but placed a personal phone call to his old friend Giscard to offer condolences. He might as well have offered it to himself since what hurt deepest wasn't the loss to the right-wing Christian Democrats, but the fact that it was the Left that gained. It is the left-wing Alternative List — who strongly oppose NATO and who have been brought into the parliament in West Berlin for the

(Continued on Page 10)



World view of 'Indignant Heart'

I have asked the Editor, Charles Denby, to allow me to use this column to show the world view of Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal — Raya Dunayevskaya.

In Germany



German title:

In the Richest Country in the World

published by Rotbuch Verlag, Berlin
available from News & Letters

In America

Throughout the book Denby wants to show how the Blacks were suppressed both in the North and in the South. In the South it was done openly, whereas in the North it was more sophisticated.

Denby returned to the auto factory again in Detroit in 1943, and by this time the auto industry had unions. The unions were controlled to a large extent by the bureaucrats. The unions were geared only to help the whites. The Blacks never got a fair deal. The Black workers had

(Continued on Page 10)

In Great Britain

Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Testament, by Charles Denby (London: Pluto Press, 1980)

In this extremely moving book, a Black worker, formerly known as Matthew Ward, recounts his life from lowly beginnings in the semi-slavery of the U.S. South to the hurly-burly of the giant motor firms at Detroit in the North. The book is a vivid account of the racism and exploitation he suffers and witnesses. Against this sombre background it is not without humor, and one finds it difficult not to laugh at many of the incidents he recalls when the situation he is in is enough to bring tears to your eyes.

While Denby has every reason for feeling bitter about his experience, he is not without hope. He was involved in many successful struggles of workers against the motor bosses and union bureaucrats. Particularly interesting is his account of the civil rights movement and such things as the Montgomery Bus Boycott and other campaigns in the 1950s, and the massive civil rights march on Washington in 1963.

Denby's optimism is reflected in his editorship of the American-Marxist Humanist paper News & Letters, while treating their everyday subject matter in quite a theoretical way, he never loses touch with everyday experiences of ordinary workers. To British readers the sections on the various political groups in the book, such as the Communists, Trotskyists, etc. are very similar to the situation over here where these groups are constantly jostling for power in the union and other movements, often trampling over the interests of the shop floor workers engaged in day to day struggles against management and union bureaucracy.

We cannot recommend this book too highly. It is available in a British edition from Pluto Press; unfortunately the title has been changed to A Black Worker's Testament and not Journal.

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WOMAN AS REASON

by Diane Lee

This year marks 20 years since the death of Frantz Fanon. One of the greatest aspects of Fanon was his ability to capture the revolutionary subjectivity of the African masses, including that of the African woman.

In *A Dying Colonialism*, Fanon wrote on the Algerian woman: "In the mountains, women helped the guerilla during halts or when convalescing after a wound or a case of typhoid contracted in the djebel. But deciding to incorporate women as essential elements, to have the revolution depend on their presence and their action in this or that sector was obviously a . . . revolutionary step. To have the revolution rest at any point on their activity was an important choice."

In this particular chapter, "Algeria Unveiled," Fanon had traced what process the woman goes through in the liberation struggle for Algeria as not separate from her own liberation struggle. Fanon beautifully explains the gradual process of an Algerian woman's fight through weakening the traditions of that male-dominated society, especially of the family.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION AS CATEGORY

And yet, as great a revolutionary as Fanon was, he was still not able to completely grasp the fullness of what it means to make women's liberation a category of revolution. When Fanon began to see how the French colonizer was attempting to use the issue of women's liberation to drive a wedge into the struggle against French colonialism, he retreated by denying the male chauvinism of the Algerian man, and went back to the Algerian "tradition" in opposition to French rule.

My point here is not to open a debate on Fanon's

Fanon and women's liberation

work. It is rather to say that 20 years later it is evident that the concept of women's liberation is now so deep that we must never separate the concept of woman as revolutionary, from that of woman as reason. No separation between her activity within the revolution, her liberation as a woman, and her creativity as a thinker in working out the direction for a new society, can any longer be tolerated.

It is this grasping of woman as revolutionary subject and reason that I as a Black woman feel is particularly crucial. Black women, nationally and internationally, historically and today, have continually represented this unity of thought and activity, of reason and revolution.

What sharply brought this to my mind recently was the experience I had in giving a presentation and listening to the discussion in a sociology class in New York, attended by 15 working women, Black and white, who are interested in the Women's Liberation Movement. Part of the discussion centered on Black women in Africa and America. The white women asked several questions — one of them being: "Why do we discuss Black women's struggles? There are many women who struggle. This includes Native Americans, Hispanics and poor white women."

BLACK WOMEN'S EXPERIENCE

One Black woman responded by saying, "That is definitely true, but I would like to talk about my own experience on how Black and white women are separated. I joined the army for economic reasons. Yet, when I entered, the jobs weren't any better for Black women than anywhere else. White women were always upgraded and given the lightest duties in clerical work. But the Black women who had the clerical jobs, were also forced to do more menial tasks — even something as trivial as picking leaves off of fences!"

Everyone agreed that this was an important example. Still, a white woman, who earlier raised the question of getting a career, asked, "But isn't it true that all Black and white women are sisters?" One young Black woman heatedly responded by asking, "If that is so true — why don't you go down to 116th street, knock on someone's door and say 'We are sisters'. And then, try to live in her place for one week!" But another white woman said, "You can't concentrate on the separation. Aren't we talking about women as thinkers?"

This exchange brought into focus that there are specific conditions that Black women are forced to live under and these issues have to be confronted. If we do not talk about these specific conditions, we will never know how Black women have fought historically, and are today fighting, to overcome their oppression. And, more importantly, there will only be an abstract unity or a false unity of Black and white women's liberationists; not a unity that can help to overcome the racist, sexist, class-ridden reality we all face.

The idea of women's liberation is beginning to be discussed today by women, Black as well as white, who see it as concrete in their lives. Women's liberation is an idea whose time has come. This discussion by many women who relate the history and the todayness of Black women as revolutionary will move that idea forward towards its full social realization.

International Women's Day

March 8, 1981

Dedicated especially to the working women of South East Asia

Missing now, the shouts and cries of a subordinate consciousness, Breaking through the tears and braces of a long-felt dream of same-ness/ we could have been molded together as leaves cling together when they have fallen, and are trampled in the cold, dark snow.

Vivid pictures of the past stream by— pictures of heroism, of dignity are women's realm because no sooner do the banners lie, than women clean and iron them to spy a better vision of the world.

Gather together the ungrateful threads of this uncertain future, Press the needle to the lies that bind our lives, convince the other that we do not leave a tomb unturned, and with fretful insistence and a coarse, unyielding eye, we say,

the future is within us.

Teru Ibuki

women-worldwide



On April 30, one of the largest human rights demonstrations in Argentina since the military seized power five years ago—nearly 1,000 people—commemorated the fourth anniversary of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, who have marched in the plaza every Thursday to demand a government accounting of their missing relatives and the more than 6,000 people who have disappeared. Joined by many fathers and other supporters, one elderly mother said, "We are not alone, there are many of us."



Hundreds of women rallied at the state capitol in Lansing, Mich., on May 20 to protest national and state government attempts to eliminate public funding for Medicaid abortions, even in cases of rape and incest.

In Bombay, India, the Forum Against Rape is calling for the boycott of the film, "Red Rose," which gives a sympathetic portrayal of a rapist and a negative image of women. While propaganda that could incite violence against other groups is banned by Indian law, films which excuse violence against women are not.

(Big Mama Rag)

The first feminist group in Warsaw, Poland wants to exchange ideas, in the form of books, magazines, films, etc., with the women's movement in other countries. The group was formed by 100 women in November, 1980 to discuss demands relating to women in the workplace and in Solidarity. Contact Krystyna Kowalewska, c/o Uniwersytet Warszawski, Klub Sigma, 4. Krakowski Przedmiescie 24, 00-325 Warszawa.

(Courage, West Berlin)

NY protest links feminist, anti-militarist struggles

New York, N.Y.—On May 16, a day designated International Day of Action for Reproductive Rights by numerous women's organizations, over a thousand people marched and rallied, expressing their support for the struggle of women to control their lives, and showing their opposition to all of the vicious attacks against human beings perpetrated by the Reagan regime.

Although the rally's participants were mostly white, middle-class women, and very few high school students, the speakers—Black women, Latina women, gay women—did not limit themselves to focusing on a single issue. Their refusal to separate the issue of self-determination for women from other struggles for liberation brought a depth and special spirit to the gathering.

The mother of one of the children murdered in Atlanta spoke about the connections between the presence of the U.S. in El Salvador, budget cuts at home, and the racist attacks against Black people in this country, and said that racism and militarism must be fought on all these fronts. A woman from the Women's Pentagon Action said, "The dynamic of events in El Salvador cannot be considered separately from what takes place in the U.S. We cannot buy phony divisions between issues. There is only one viable option — resistance." A young El Salvadoran woman talked about the fact that the money that is being taken away from poor people here in the U.S. is being used to kill the poor in El Salvador, underscoring the pervasiveness of the crisis that we all face, but also emphasizing the massive opposition to war that has arisen in the U.S. and all over the world.

The determination to confront the immoral minority on every level was expressed in a very moving way by a friend from El Salvador, who, upon hearing the chanting and seeing the banners outside his window, while he was at work, punched out and joined the marchers.



WRITE ON!

Open to the Sun: A Bilingual Anthology of Latin American Women Poets, ed. Nora Jacquez Wieser (Van Nuys, Perivale Press, 1979, 279 pp., \$8.50).

If Ms. Wieser did not intend this to be a revolutionary feminist anthology, the poets themselves have subverted her editorial plan. From 1910 to today their one continuous theme is revolt: and though sometimes forced to camouflage their meaning with symbols, they do not separate their protest and critique of an oppressive society from their own specific oppression as women.

I hope that this beautiful book—the first such published here since 1945—will be followed soon by others. In the words of Uruguayan Nancy Barcelo, the poets "call and there is no time to lose/they turn and there is no time to lose/they take our pulse/they measure us/they demand our conscience/and there is no time/no time more time to lose." —D.W.

Selma, Lord Selma: Girlhood Memories of the Civil Rights Days, by Sheyann Webb and Rachel West Nelson as told to Frank Sikora (The University of Alabama Press, University, Alabama, 1980, \$9.95).

Sheyann Webb was 8 years old and Rachel West Nelson 9 when they fought for their freedom in Selma, Alabama in the 1965 voting rights drive. In interviews pieced together by Frank Sikora, Webb and Nelson speak of how they felt compelled to be a part of the movement, of their remembrances of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., of the freedom songs which they helped lead, of the marches and the police beatings and jailings, of fear of death and the actual death of friends and freedom fighters.

What this wonderful book shows so clearly is how the passion to be free is a dimension of the population as a whole—men, women and children. In relation to their own families, these two girls were the leaders—inspiring their parents to join the movement. This book shows concretely how much the freedom movement owes to the genius of young children. —T.M.

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Second Class Postage Paid at Detroit, Michigan

Seattle postal workers talk national strike

Seattle, Wash.—Here at the Terminal Annex, the main mail distribution point for the city, there has been a lot of national strike talk as the expiration of the contract in July draws near. But what many of us, especially those classified as "part-time flexes," are thinking about is the daily dehumanization we face that seems to be beyond remedy by anything the union might do with contract bargaining.

Strikes against the post office are illegal. Added to this is the fact that perhaps as many as 40-50 percent of the workers here are non-citizens, mostly Koreans and Filipinos. The general uneasiness and tension is terrible. One Chinese woman, who speaks little English, is very worried about her job because she has heard that if there was a strike all the non-citizens would be the first laid-off, or worse, deported. I asked a shop steward about this and he said that the problem would be less the non-citizenship and more the job classification.

'WE HAVE NO RIGHTS'

"Part-time flexes," such as myself, are on the bottom of this scale. As far as I can see after a few months working here, we have no rights. We are "guaranteed" only four hours work per day. But we can be forced to work ten days in a row, ten hours per day, without a day off. They can change your shift with only one day's notice, making it impossible for workers who have to arrange childcare. We are not encouraged to join the union by even the union itself.

UMW rank-and-file force better contract

Uniontown, Pa.—"This new contract wasn't negotiated by President Sam Church," said a rank-and-file coal miner following the UMWA District 5 contract information meeting held Tuesday, June 2, in New Stanton, Pa. "We threw out the Church contract, just like we threw out the national negotiating committeemen who approved Church's first contract. We wasted a lot of time and money to get back what Church gave away in the first contract."

Church's first contract was rejected by a two to one vote during the end of March. In subsequent UMWA district elections, miners threw out virtually every national negotiation committeeman who had supported the first contract, which miners considered to be a sellout and betrayal of all they stood for. Their actions gave notice to both Church and the operators that they would not accept a step backward in their conditions of work or standard of living.

The new contract, tentatively agreed to by President Church and the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) on Thursday, May 28, was approved unanimously by the UMWA National Negotiating Committee. This is in sharp contrast to the first contract, which had been narrowly approved by a 19-14 vote.

Almost all of the major provisions in the first contract opposed by the miners have been eliminated, as shown in the following comparison.

FIRST CHURCH CONTRACT

- Permit union coal operators to buy and process non-union coal without paying \$1.90 per ton for health and pension benefits.
- Allow coal operators to sub-contract work to non-union workers.
- Anti-union National Review Board to have 90 days after contract ratification to pass on precedent-setting grievances.
- Accept 45-day probationary period for new miners.
- Allow operators to close mine down and re-open in two years as non-union.

THE NEW CONTRACT

- All non-union coal processed by union coal operators requires payment of \$2.23 per ton for miner benefits.
- Non-union sub-contracting permitted only when union workers are not available.
- National Review Board jurisdiction ends on date strike began, March 27, 1981.
- Eliminated — new miners have full union protection from first day of work.
- Eliminated.

While most miners indicated that they could live with the new contract, a strong undercurrent of opposition to UMWA President still remains.

The last time, in 1978, the rank-and-file rejected two contracts negotiated by then President Arnold Miller. They have had to do it once again in 1981, proving beyond any doubt that they know much more, and are willing to fight much more, than their so-called leaders.

Until you are a "regular," which can be anywhere from three months to three years, management has a free hand. They take regular workers from the floor and appoint them as trainee supervisors, or "watchdogs" as we call them. They don't get paid much more, and it takes a long time to become a full supervisor.

They wear crepe-soled shoes and sneak up from behind while you are talking with a co-worker and scream, "Hey!" or something to startle you. If they want you to change job locations they point with their thumb or snap their fingers. They do these things to humiliate and dehumanize the ones with the least means to fight back. This is to fit you into their production, which they are very big on.

60 LETTERS A MINUTE

I'm a machine operator. They want 60 letters a minute. Once you sit down at the machine you are not to budge for 30 minutes. Even five seconds loses them five pieces.

Believe me, all of this makes you sick, but if you need to go home they make you see a nurse. If you don't have a temperature you must stay. We have heard of two people dying of heart attacks after claiming sickness, and yet being told to continue working.

—Working woman

No safety from NY transit

New York, N. Y.—The recent fire under a train on 53rd Street where 23 people were hurt was terrible, but not surprising. The problem is the garbage on the tracks which the Transit Authority (TA) does nothing about. When the wires under the cars are worn, a fire can start. When anything burns in an enclosed area like that, the smoke can be very dangerous.

Another thing that came up recently is these ridiculous complaints in the media and by the politicians that there will be no air conditioning on the buses this summer, supposedly because the repair workers will all be on vacation. The truth is that we have to take our vacations when the city gives the O.K. We have to pick a time they want.

I believe it's all a maneuver to get a subcontractor to do the work at great expense to the city. They only subcontract the easy jobs like air conditioning for buses and subway cars. The dangerous, dirty jobs, where you can get killed, where you play with your life 100 times a day, are the ones we have to do ourselves.

Most of these subcontractors are companies you never heard of. There's always a kick-back to TA officials. That type of corruption is a common thing. Nobody ever looks into these things. You never hear the TA or the press or the politicians complaining about how much they pay to the subcontractors, but only about how much they pay the workers. It probably goes all the way to Albany.

—Transit maintenance worker, 207th Street

Factory planners try to program us like robots

by Felix Martin, West Coast Editor

In the six weeks since we have been back to work at GM under auto's new stage of production—unimation—I can see that these robots have really changed the thinking of the workers. They see that management has been trying to program them for all these years, just like the robots.

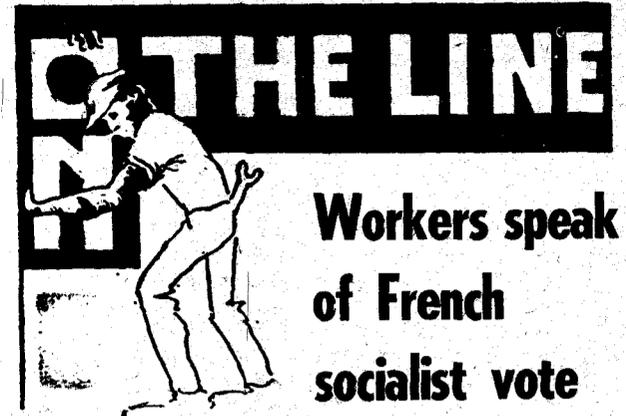
Management has always told workers what to do and when to do it. That is exactly why robots were introduced into the plant. The workers see that they are being replaced by a near image of themselves, by capitalism's new dead labor — the unimated robot.

EVERYONE PROGRAMMED

In talking to one worker I could see that programming is part of this whole society. This worker told me how his son came home from school one day pointing up to the sky and talking about God. The next day this worker went to his son's school and told his teacher that he didn't want his son being programmed with this teacher's God; that if his son was interested in God he'd find out for himself.

The factory tries to program and control every part of a worker's life, even when he leaves the plant. Some workers were saying how they have nightmares about this darn plant. A worker told me that he dreamed all night about grinding and metal finishing. By the time he had to go to work, he was already too tired because he had metal finished all night in his sleep.

Some workers in my plant have now figured out that it takes only about \$277 in labor costs to build an automobile and that just the putty to fill the cracks in the car is more than \$300 alone. By labor cost they mean everything from the mining and steel production to the plant assembly; in other words, the whole labor process that goes into the production of a car.



by John Marcotte

There was a lot of talk in my shop about Socialist President Mitterrand's election in France. A Dominican worker was telling me, "I'm real happy he won. The people there want a change from the unemployment and inflation, like here. But I don't really expect him to do what he promised."

"Look at President Antonio Guzman of the Dominican Republic—a Social-Democrat. We elected him to really change things, to bring land reform to the peasants and a different life for workers. But what has he done in his three years? He's only made himself rich and given positions to his followers. Now he's even let the military shoot down protesters, like in the days of Balaguer's dictatorship."

Workers felt that if Mitterrand really introduces a 35-hour week and no overtime to French industry, that would be the biggest change. The nationalizations would not really change that much, though we laughed to see how scared the big businessmen were. But a shorter work week is what we really need here too. First of all, factory work can be very tiring and often unhealthy, and eight hours is too much. Let alone, as a worker pointed out, in heavy industries like auto and steel no one works only 40 hours—this after over 100 years of fighting for the eight-hour day.

A shorter week would also create jobs for a lot of unemployed brothers and sisters. There are many in my shop who always refuse all overtime on principle, though we all need the money. And every contract negotiation, some workers raise the demand of a shorter week.

But as my Dominican friend pointed out about politicians like Guzman and Mitterrand, "They always use the poor to get into power, and then turn to the monied class. In a way they have to; because that class holds the economic and military power and can overthrow or assassinate them. We can't forget the experience of Allende in Chile."

We all agreed that it's very hard to get any real change in society simply through elections. Only where the whole mass of workers and poor are out in the street day after day, when the whole country goes on strike like in Nicaragua and makes a revolution, then there is a chance for real change.

The \$100,000 robots cost the company \$6 an hour to operate. Along with management, these robots don't produce any of the value of the car. That is why workers have begun referring to both the robots and management as "dead wood." When GM finally put the sales price on its new cars it blew the workers' minds. All of them said that they would rather stick to their old cars than buy one of these "small gas-guzzlers" for \$10,000. Only politicians and bureaucrats can afford them.

WHOLE SHOP ON OVERTIME

With all this "dead wood," the company nevertheless does recognize, in its own perverse way, that it is not those robots but the workers who produce the real value of the automobile. The company first asked a few workers to work overtime but none of them volunteered — even those who usually put in overtime. So the company worked the whole shop overtime.

And now nine hours is the "norm" with the union going along with it because of a clause they say is in the contract. All this overtime is going on while the whole second shift is still out on lay-off. On top of all this, Reagan wants to extend the retirement age of workers.

A few years ago workers wouldn't have said that the only way this system was going to change is with a revolution because the radicals always connected it to that totalitarian monstrosity, Russia. But now, a worker in my plant told me that the only way he sees any change coming to this country is through a revolution.

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ESSAY ARTICLE Middle East women: liberation and social revolution

by Neda Azad

Much has been said about the numerous obstacles Middle Eastern women face in their journey through three prisons: the father's house, the segregated school, and the husband's confine. But there are times—revolutionary times—when Middle Eastern women crack these threefold prisons. They begin to break the walls of illiteracy, total economic dependence, hunger and multiple religious and sexist laws such as "honor" killings as well as physical and mental abuses towards "daughter-producing" women.

It is these historic periods—when in the struggle for national liberation the woman also raises the banner of her liberation—that we want to discuss, taking up at one and the same time three movements as representative: Palestinian, Iranian, and Algerian women. We as well want to see how the struggles of these women relate to the Women's Liberation Movement internationally. This is particularly pivotal because we are within what even the United Nations has been forced to designate as the International Women's Decade.

Women and the Palestinian Movement: living contradiction?

Perhaps nowhere more sharply than with the Palestinian question, do we find the necessity of penetrating the conflicting currents and necessary interrelationships of competing nationalisms, of class, and of woman as revolutionary force.

Last July's Copenhagen conference—the U.N. mid-decade conference on women — will throw some illumination on these conflicts. There, the delegation of women sent by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), far from raising issues of women in the Middle East, especially within the liberation struggle for a Palestinian nation, confined itself to presenting that old resolution on "Zionism is racism" which was then ratified by the conference.

They allowed themselves to tail-end that male-dictated resolution which in no way solves any of the issues facing today's Women's Liberation Movement, instead of allowing the universal demands of that Movement to help pose a way out of the Middle East maze by asking themselves: "Where do we begin now that every one of us is oppressed as a woman — whether we are in a liberation movement or live in a 'liberated country'?" "How do we as feminists pose a new alternative which will encompass the liberation of all, including the Palestinian women?"

Indeed this became clear when the same delegation of women vehemently denied that the right of the Palestinian woman to control her own body was even an issue. Leila Khalid, a member of the PLO delegation, spoke as follows: "It is not a priority to speak about abortion . . . every society has its own priorities. We don't think it matters to think about feminist problems."

But there are Palestinian women who are raising questions other than "anti-Israel." Raymonda Tawil, a Palestinian journalist, participant and organizer of numerous strikes and sit-ins against the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, was very bitter about the Copenhagen conference, which she said had nothing to say on the oppressions of women. In her book, *My Home My Prison*,² after speaking of the oppressions of Arab women, she questions whether there will be the liberation of Palestinian women after the independence of Palestinians, saying, "What (is) the point of striving for freedom for my people if our struggle did not bring freedom to women, indeed to every individual." She never forgets that, "I am fighting a double battle against repression: I (am) fighting for the freedom of my people and simultaneously for my emancipation as a woman."

Tawil has no illusions about the alleged equality of men and women in Israeli society and points to the sexual division of labor in that country, asking why the Israeli woman soldier, this symbol of equality, is the one sweeping the offices? Unfortunately, however, she does not also question the class contradictions within the Palestinian society.

We cannot here follow the decades-long conflicts and similarities between Jewish and Palestinian nationalisms in the post WWII world, including Israel's role as an occupier nation since the 1967 war.³ Instead we want to concentrate on Palestinian women who not only suffer from a national discrimination between Jews and Arabs, but also face an inferior and underprivileged status within their own people.

Today Palestinian women have become in a sense "proletarianized" through the occupation process.⁴ They

form a labor force in textile and food processing industries, and in agriculture. Becoming a wage laborer has meant a certain economic independence, and the beginning of the breakdown of the Hamoulah—the extended family. It has also meant that the women of the West Bank and Gaza have both demonstrated against the occupation, and have begun to speak of the sexism in the Palestinian Movement.

The high birth rate is considered to be a weapon against "Zionism," and while Palestinian women have been allowed to enter the struggle for national liberation, their speaking out for new man/woman relations and against the traditional roles of women is often attacked as "misguiding the movement from the struggles against 'Zionism,'" or even itself labelled "Zionist."

As one Algerian woman active in the Palestinian resistance movement writes, "For them (the men) the only worthwhile issue is the Palestinian struggle against Israel and they are unwilling to put any effort into the liberation of Palestinian women. Why? . . . Without this struggle Palestinian women could end up in the same condition as Algerian women. Today Algerian women are still in their homes, just like my mother, like my grandmother."⁵ This is really the crux of the matter, not only for the Palestinian women, but, as we shall see, in Iran as well.



Iranian women demonstrate March 8, 1979. "In the dawn of freedom there is no freedom."

Iran: Women in the Crucible of Revolution and Under the Whip of Counter-Revolution

None can doubt the great revolutionary achievements of the Iranian women, whether we look at the 1906-11 revolution where the women formed their own secret Anjumans (soviets), and founded a weekly newspaper for women called *Danesh* (knowledge), or whether we look at the 1979 revolution and the overthrow of the Shah, where numerous women's committees and publications for women sprang out in opposition to the suffocation imposed during the Shah's time.

But against this we must face soberly the truth that by the second anniversary of this most recent revolution, women have been confronted not only with the symbolic subjugation of the chador (forced veil), but with their actual subjugation as well. Lowering of the marriage age to 13 for girls, institution of the one-sided divorce, as well as official legalization of polygamy and elimination of integrated schools, are only some of the many laws which have been instituted to attempt to push women back some 1,400 years.

Now, under the anti-imperialist banner of the hostage crisis—which was in reality a power struggle between the clergy and the civilians, rather than against either capitalism or U.S. imperialism — the women watched the imposition of the new reactionary Constitution.

It is a constitution which calls the "primary task of women raising of children," includes a set of laws which to a great extent deny a woman the custody of her children in case of a divorce, and literally regards her as "half a man" in every legal and religious principle.⁶

However the shock has not only been these coun-

ter-revolutionary moves of the government, but also, and even above all, the attitude of most of the Left which has increased its distance from the women's movement as the reactionary government has tightened its grip.⁷ Some of the Left, including the Fedayeen organization, somewhat supported the March 8, 1979 demonstration when, for five days the women came to the streets, and chanted "We didn't make a revolution, to march backwards."

But in November, 1979 the majority of the Left ignored the first Iranian women's convention. The Fedayeen even arranged a competing rally. And finally, the July, 1980, spontaneous demonstrations of the women against the enforcement of the head scarf for government workers, were attacked by most of the Left, which called them "bourgeois" and "reactionary" as well as "chaotic," since they were not led by a party.

The truth is that far from being reactionary, the women—from very young high school women to workers, students and mothers — have been involved in numerous demonstrations, strikes and sit-ins which have continued to this date.

The Kurdish women, who have formed their own organization (The League of Revolutionary Women of Kurdistan), have not only been in the forefront of the fight against the Iran and Iraq aggressions, but have

also continued to challenge the sexism of the Kurdish movement which tries to limit their participation in the struggle.⁸

That the Left should have such a sexist attitude tells much of the bankruptcy of thought which passes for Marxism in these organizations, including their "relation to women's liberation."

In a series of articles recently published by one Left Iranian group, *Peykar*, the leadership advises readers not to organize women either as an autonomous women's group or around concepts such as women's oppressions and other feminist issues, but rather to concentrate only on the issues of fighting imperialism and abolition of class society. Indeed, the party paper discourages its membership from agitating around illiterate mothers (housewives) as it argues that they are most concerned with their oppressions as women, and do not wish to postpone a discussion of these demands, as the vanguard party wants, until the day after the socialist revolution!

As if Marxism and feminism are sitting on two different poles, every party finds its utmost task to set itself up as a mediator to make sure "too much" feminism does not get in the way of "Marxism." This is true not only of the Left organizations which reduce women's liberation to point seven or eight on the agenda, but also of many different independent women's organizations.

In Iran, under the title "theoretic questions on women's liberation," Lenin's dialogue with Clara Zetkin after the 1917 revolution is printed and reprinted as evidence that questions of sexuality and new man/woman relationships may not be brought up by the women's committees and that instead, the emphasis should be on the class struggle and at best, striving for equality of men

(Continued on Page 5)

1 See "The UN Resolution on Zionism" in the *Political-Philosophic Letters* by Raya Dunayevskaya, Volume I, News and Letters, 1976

2 *My Home My Prison*, Raymonda Tawil, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979

3 For a full discussion of the Arab-Israeli conflict from the 1976 war to the annexation of East Jerusalem, see the series of articles *War, Peace or Revolution: Shifting Alliances in the Middle East*, by Raya Dunayevskaya. See also *Israel and the Arabs* (1969) by Maxime Rodinson.

4 See "Proletarianization of Palestinian Women" in *MERIP* No. 50. *MERIP* has the most comprehensive reporting on the Middle East. See also the journal *Khamsin* No. 6

5 See *Off Our Backs*, December, 1978, "Women in the Palestinian Resistance Movement."

6 For a discussion of the activities of women in the Iranian revolution see my articles in *News & Letters*, April, 1980 and Jan.-Feb., 1980. For analysis of the Iranian revolution from the overthrow of the Shah through the hostage crisis, see Raya Dunayevskaya's *Political Philosophic Letters*, Volume II, especially "Why Philosophy? Why Revolution?"

7 See "The Women's Struggle in Iran" by AZ, an Iranian woman residing in Iran, in *Monthly Review*, vol. 32, No. 10, (March 8, 1981), for material on the Left organizations' relation to women's liberation. "Most of the Left reduces everything to the meaning of women's oppressions or the substantial role played by culture and ideology. Thus they do not acknowledge the validity of women's struggle for liberation."

8 See *Courage*, (Germany), July 1980, "Kurdistan."

THEORY / PRACTICE

by Raya Dunayevskaya
Author of **PHILOSOPHY AND REVOLUTION**
and **Marxism and Freedom**

May 5, 1981

Dear CD:

I'd like to discuss with you the reason for my beginning the part of the book¹ on Marx in 1841 rather than 1843. The latter is the usual starting point for analyzing Marxism since that is the year Marx broke from bourgeois society. I find the year 1841 especially exciting because there we see Marx as a revolutionary before ever he developed a totally new body of ideas — a whole new continent of thought and of revolution we know as Marx's Marxism. We become witness to him speaking to himself so to speak. In preparing his doctoral thesis on ancient Greek philosophy, specifically Epicurus and Democritus, we become witness to the fact that, despite his erudition and concentration on Greek philosophy, what preoccupies him is the reality of Germany, 1840, the great irresolvable contradiction between Hegel's Absolute Idea and Prussian reality.

TO THE EXTENT to which 1841 was mentioned at all by Marxists, it was simply to show that, even in the realm of thought and even when Marx himself was still a Hegelian, he "deviated" from Hegel's analysis of those Greek philosophers. What, however, is of the essence, as his Notebooks rather than just the thesis show, is truly phenomenal: Marx is actually probing heretofore unprobed depths of consciousness as well as of reality:

"While philosophy has sealed itself off to form a consummate, total world . . . The world confronting a philosophy total in itself is therefore a world torn apart . . . He who does not acknowledge this historical necessity must be consistent and deny that men can live at all after a total philosophy." (p.491)²

Naturally, it isn't Epicurus and Democritus that interests us, but how Marx, in writing on that, was having his eyes fixed on and opposing the German reality of his day. As a young Hegelian he is asking himself: where is humanity heading? And it is this which leads him to the conclusion to break with the bourgeoisie as he begins his struggle against Prussian censorship, and feels the urgency to oppose the status quo. He starts to

¹ Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* is still in manuscript form, but should be off the press next year.
² Both the Notebooks and the doctoral thesis on Epicurus and Democritus are quoted from Karl Marx, Frederick Engels: *Collected Works, Volume I*, International Publishers, 1975. The disparity in the pages referred to above in these two works is due to the fact that, whereas the thesis, pp.25-108, appears in Sec. 1, the Preparatory Materials, i.e., Notebooks (pp. 403-515) do not appear till the end of the volume.

ESSAY ARTICLE

(Continued from Page 4)

and women after the revolution. Alexandra Kollontai, the Russian revolutionary, is praised because in spite of her devotion to feminism she followed the party line and emphasized the necessity for reproduction among Russian women in 1921.

Rather than taking the dialogue between Zetkin and Lenin as the point of departure for today, we need to recreate the dialectics of liberation with women's liberation as an integral part of it for our time, just as Lenin did for his time when he singled out the movements of the national minorities for self-determination. We need to realize that in our decade, "genuine Marxism has feminism within it and genuine feminism finds its most critical, that is revolutionary, expression within Marxism."⁹

One way of seeing what happens when you subordinate women's liberation to the struggle as a whole, stands out glaringly in the still unfinished revolution in Algeria.

Algeria: Unveiled and Re-veiled

As against the beautiful descriptions by Frantz Fanon in *A Dying Colonialism* of the revolutionary transformation which took place in the life of Algerian women when they became participants in the national liberation movement and began to include demands for their liberation as well, the Front for National Liberation (FLN)—which was neither grounded in a full revolutionary theory that would include woman as a revolutionary force, nor had any clear vision as to what type of a society it wished to create once the colonizer was overthrown—made "national heroines" out of women, yet asked them to limit their participation in the struggle "within the context of traditional Islamic family life."

In contrast there have been Algerian women who raise the question of extending the revolution beyond narrow nationalism.

⁹ See "Marx's Concept of Woman" by Eugene Walker, *News and Letters*. Also the collection of writings *Woman as Force and as Reason* issued in Farsi for March 8, 1980 with an introduction by myself. English and Farsi editions available from *News and Letters*.

A 1981 view of Marx's 1841 dialectic

engage in "Ruthless criticism of all that exists, ruthless in the sense that the criticism is neither afraid of its own results nor of confronting the powers that be."

Clearly, what is tugging at the young Marx in reality and in thought is something in the air — revolution. The key word for the young Marx is history. The contemporary history which was pulling at the student Marx was in his thesis stated as if it were only the history of thought, but the non-muted form in which it was expressed in his so-called Notebooks makes it clear that it was actual history — the crisis in contemporary Germany in reality as well as in thought. And because that was so, it was both Hegel and the Left Hegelians (of whom he was one) that Marx was breaking from. His point was that it is insufficient simply to show that the master (Hegel) had accommodated himself to reactionary reality. One must analyze the accommodation not merely to expose it, but in order thereby to discover the inadequacy of the philosophical principle which compelled that accommodation. Only in that way could the critique produce an advance in knowledge which would create the possibility of a new beginning.

MARX HELD THAT because Hegel's philosophy wasn't the unity of reason and reality which it claimed to be — the present period of crisis revealed the total diremption of the two separate totalities. Reality and Reason confronted each other hostilely: "This duality of philosophical self-consciousness appears finally as a double trend, each side utterly opposed to the other." (p. 86)

Discerning the inadequacy in both Hegel and the Young Hegelians, Marx was heading, his Notebooks reveal, toward both attacking philosophy and opposing reality. He turned first to a search for what he called a new "energizing principle," as he wrote: "It is a psychological law that theoretical mind once liberated in itself turned to practical energy . . . but the practice of philosophy is itself theoretical. It is the critique that measures the individual existence by the essence, the particular reality vs. the idea." (p. 85)

The question that Marx kept asking himself is: where and how to begin anew both in philosophy and in trying to transform reality. The new beginning that Marx had worked out over the next two to three years was *nothing short of a whole new continent of thought and of revolution*. For, as he left the academic world and became a journalist, a revolutionary journalist, he was at once engaged both in battles with Prussian censorship and the legal system, specifically the laws on wood theft, taking, instead, the part of the rebellious peasants. Just as revolutionary journalism led to a break with the

bourgeoisie and its state, so the Philosophic-Economic Essays led in 1844 to a new world view — "a new Humanism" — and a new concept of revolution — proletarian revolution.

WHAT I FOUND most exciting about that year, 1841, is to see the idea while it is germinating rather than when it is already a conclusion. The process of breaking, moreover, is what shows, at one and the same time, what is old and what is new-born, not as just "influences," but discontinuous with old: the great divide in historic age. And what sets off one age from another both as birth-time of history and of philosophy are those breaking-points of departure from old which point to the direction forward.

It is true that Marx would not work out that new beginning until he had broken with bourgeois society as he had already in 1841 broken with religion and Prussian censorship, and until he discerned the working class as Subject. But, philosophically, there is no doubt where he was headed, as he contrasted practice to theory and developed his most original interpretation of praxis. That was to remain his unique category for breaking both with "idealism" and "materialism."

Finally, can I confide in you something that may sound fantastic: may I ask you whether you see any relationship between the questions that preoccupied Marx in 1841 to what has been happening in our age in the early years of the 1950s? You remember, I am sure, two very different events in the early 1950s that would disclose, at one and the same time, the new stage of production — Automation — and a new stage of cognition, whether that be the break I saw in the Absolute Idea as reflecting not just a movement from theory, but a movement from practice that was itself a form of theory, or something as seemingly simple as your own life's story which you called *Indignant Heart* and which actually was pointing to a new stage of Black consciousness that was soon to be revealed in the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Well, it happened that in this year's lecture tour, when I spoke on the book and on the year, 1841, I was asked by Iranian and Latin American revolutionaries about those early 1950s when, on the one hand, U.S. imperialism was acting in a most brutal imperialist way by bringing back the Shah in Iran, and causing a counter-revolution in Guatemala; and, on the other hand, there was a second, revolutionary USA, which today's revolutionaries wished to get a feeling about.

Let's discuss that when we begin the pre-plenary discussions next month, O.K.?

Yours,
Raya

Middle Eastern women: liberation and social revolution

Fadela M'rabet, an Algerian feminist who comes from a family of Ulama (elders of Islam) and is a writer who had a program on Radio Algiers for women,¹⁰ is among the many women who bitterly attack the narrow religious concept of women's development and strive to extend the unfinished revolution of Algeria by emphasizing that just as Algeria was once a colony for the French, so women remain a colony which exists for the good of men.

M'rabet points out that, "The bourgeoisie in pretending to maintain the oppression of women seek in reality to perpetuate the oppression of other men." All of which, she adds, "takes place under the cloak of Islam or its variants, 'sacred tradition,' 'glorious past' . . ."

In her quest for a theory of revolution, she rejects the concept of "evolution" of women's role in the context of the Islamic society, "which one has never taken the trouble to define, but has on the contrary tried to obscure . . ."

Rather than relegating the struggle for women's liberation to the day after the socialist revolution, or speaking of a narrow feminism within the bourgeois context which strives for the advance of women without at the same time pushing to change society as a whole, she speaks of a revolutionary feminism, saying, "Women's liberation is not a problem which can be viewed in isolation. It is part of the whole in which it is implicated and which in turn conditions that whole."

The stopping of the revolution and the re-veiling of Algerian women, opened a new chapter in women's struggles for liberation. In 1965 more than 15,000 women demonstrated against the enforcement of the veil. A spirit was kept alive, whether we look at the large mobilization of women who organized sit-ins in universities to protest the adoption of the retrogressive family codes in 1972, or today, as women continue to

participate in public demonstrations and strikes to protest both class exploitation and sexism.

In a leaflet which was distributed at the University of Algiers, and which was addressed to the Iranian women who were challenging the enforcement of the veil on March 8, 1979, the Algerian women wrote, "We are disturbed by what is being done to Iranian women. These women raised their voices in revolt, but now the new government is trying to silence them. Algerian women also fought: as guerrillas in the streets, in the fire of the colonial army. After independence and for the past 17 years the patriarchal power has been working to silence them. This is being done in the name of the thousand-year-old religious principles, in the name of the so-called priorities of a developing nation . . . in the name of revolution!!! Algerian women join their voices to the cries of Iranian women, who refuse the fascist utilization of an Islamism that is trying to suffocate them . . ."

The Women's Liberation Movement in the Middle East has reached a most critical point, whether we are dealing with the women of Iran or Algeria who have experienced a revolution and have a land of their own, or whether we look at the Palestinian Movement where, as we witnessed at the Copenhagen conference, the whole women's liberation question was completely evaded.

It is precisely because revolutionary feminism is not fooled by a change in leadership, or forms of property ownership—whether private or nationalized—but rather, seeks new human relationships, this essence of Marx's Marxism, where the development of each is the necessary precondition for the development of all, that we must fight in the battle for our own freedom, the day before, the day of, and the day after the revolution.

Indeed we would not only not achieve our liberation, but would in fact leave the whole revolution unfinished, were we not to insist on the liberation of women in the very struggle for national liberation. Our struggle must continue.

¹¹ Please refer to *Second Class, Working Class*, publication of Peoples Translation Service, Nov. 1979.

¹⁰ The two most recent books *Middle Eastern Muslim Women Speak*, by Elizabeth Warnock Fernia and Basima Qattan Bezirgan, and *Women in the Muslim World*, by Lois Beck and Nikki Keddie include several articles on Algerian women during and after the revolution as well as an article on women in the 1906-11 revolution in Iran. See also MERIP No. 95 which includes a review of these two books.

U.S. LABOR BATTLES: COAL MINES TO GARMENT SHOPS

The television media has recently been able to pinpoint dozens of garment sweatshops in the New York City and New Jersey areas, complete with interviews with the immigrant women who labor there. They are not just non-union shops, but shops run as the sweatshops were back in 1911, when the Triangle fire killed 134 women who had been locked in by their employer. These shops are not hidden out in far-away places, but in the heart of the garment district, with members of the Teamsters Union carting off their products.

These women work in lofts that are locked, at wages of \$1.50 an hour, threatened with deportation if they complain, in conditions that amount to slavery.

In this day and age, with the powerful International Ladies Garment Workers Union and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union on the scene, why are they unable or unwilling to do anything about it?

Disgusted
Boston

The miners have been on strike for over two months now, and the coal users have stockpiled three to four months of supplies in order to starve these workers who have produced this stockpile in the first place to accept a contract that they can't live with.

Why do the unions allow these capitalists to stockpile before the contract expires? The workers not only produce all of the wealth and enjoy it the least for themselves, but these thieves are allowed to use the workers production against them while they are forced out on strike.

Another contradiction in a union contract is allowing the corporations to raise the prices on the commodities

produced under this contract. The capitalists shouldn't be allowed to raise prices until the contract expires.

Young worker
Los Angeles

When I read the story about the coal strike and all that the miners are facing, I couldn't help but remember the old song: "You load 16 tons and what do you get? Another day older and deeper in debt." Is that what will be happening to UMW members again?

Black worker
Chicago

The Mobilization for Local Sovereign Rights is asking people to gather at Peabody Coal's headquarters in St. Louis, Missouri, on June 27 to demand a moratorium on energy development of Indian Lands. Peabody wants to expand stripmining operations on the Dine (Navajo)-Hopi reservation at Big Mountain, Arizona. The Feds are putting up fences and trying to relocate another 8,000 natives to the cities. Some local people are cutting down the fences and resisting, but need outside support. Call Harold Iron Shield at (314) 874-7712, for more information.

Supporter of Native American rights
Chicago

What really hits you looking at the coal strike after two months, is all the non-union coal that is still being produced in Kentucky, Tennessee and the whole Rocky Mountains area. In the last 20 years coal production in this country has gone from 95 percent union to about 47 percent union. How can you win a strike like that? What is needed is a whole new organizing campaign, and to have one that works, what is

after March 1, 1976) are treated as ordinary criminals by the same government.

In spite of this anomalous situation, the press continues to present Thatcher as one devoted to a dear and sacred principle that precludes negotiating with "terrorists." And as far as Thatcher's "iron will" goes, the miners in England seem far less convinced than the international press, after they beat her soundly in a confrontation last year . . .

Donal Malone
Bronx, N.Y.

The news of Bobby Sands' death reached me in a most distressing way. I arrived at work to hear people saying that he was a terrorist thug who got what he deserved, and if Britain hadn't abolished hanging there would be no problem with hunger strikes. British public opinion is pretty clearly in support of withdrawal from Northern Ireland, but this is overwhelmingly frustration at an unwinnable war, and very few are sympathetic to the Irish liberation movement.

I got a fairly heated and irrational reaction when I argued that the real problem in Northern Ireland was Orange sectarianism upheld by British troops. One guy even rolled up his trousers, pointed to a bandaged leg, and said "I got that fighting for my country in WWII." In other words, the general attitude is emotional and unreasoning chauvinism, but also pessimism.

However great the changes in Ireland since Marx's time, his views are still powerfully relevant. Today we still face the task "to awaken the consciousness in the English worker that for them the national emancipation of Ireland is no

Readers' View

really needed is a whole new type of union that miners can believe in.

Strike supporter
Michigan

REAGAN'S 'NEW BEGINNING'?

Older workers in my shop had a lot to say when Reagan called for cutting those who retire at 62 to 55 percent of their Social Security benefits. Here are a few samples:

"He wants to pay just for our funeral."
"Sure, If I was a banker or a president I wouldn't want to retire either."

"There are 45 of us in this plant who could retire in this coming year. This means we won't be able to afford to. But if we keep working how can we make room for the youth? This will mean more drugs and violence for unemployed youth."

Metal shop worker
New York

The single most disgusting thing about Reagan's economic plan is that he dares to call it a "New Beginning." To me, a new beginning would have to be grounded in the idea of freedom, in new and positive relations between human beings, black and white, men and women, worker and intellectual, Arab and Jew. What Reagan calls new is a retreat to the days of unrestrained robber barons; what he calls a beginning is the clearest dead-end.

Marxist-Humanist
Chicago

question of abstract justice or humanitarian sentiment, but the first condition of their own social emancipation."

For one thing, this means that as we participate in the struggle against nuclear weapons — which is a vigorous and popular movement — we must insist on breaking down the separation from opposition to the Irish war. Britain's atrocities in Ulster have done much to further militarization of the mind. At the same time, a rigorous critique of Irish Republicanism is necessary. Support for the Irish freedom struggle does not equal uncritical acceptance of its presently dominant ideological and organizational forms. The question of the border is not what is paramount. A war of assassinations does not point the way to a new society . . .

Dick Abernethy
Oxford, England

I was saddened and angered by the death of Bobby Sands but I was infuriated by TV news interviews with residents of South Boston the night after he died. Each one deplored the violation of human rights in Ireland, but not one mention was made by the reporter that South Boston was the area in which buses carrying Black school children were stoned by Catholic residents who did not want their neighborhood "violated" by forced busing.

Why is it so easy to see violations of human rights thousands of miles away and not in your own backyard? We had all better stop "deploring" the deaths of freedom fighters and learn to live our lives as freedom fighters in our own countries.

Irish-American feminist
Missouri

YOUTH IN THE 1980s

I enjoyed the essay on Youth in the May issue of N&L. I haven't seen anywhere else where you see youth as revolutionary in the 1970s developed, instead of just the 1960s. And it's not just seeing youth as revolutionary, but spelling out two movements from that period — Soweto and Iran — that we can still do something with.

Youth of the 1980s
Los Angeles



Youth sparked anti-nuke movement.

Youth in the 1980s — are they accepting this system? The answer is NO! No way will we go along with the no jobs, no money, no rights, no education way of life. Do you get my point? We will find our own way out, whether adults like it or not. You saw what happened in Jackson, and in Marquette Prison, when the prisoners were pushed to the point where they had nowhere to go. They held a little riot. That is what will happen with the youth unless things change.

High school student
Detroit

DISCUSSION FROM OUR READERS ON IRISH FREEDOM MOVEMENT: MARCHES, BOYCOTTS AND DEBATES

Despite the election of Bobby Sands to their parliament, the British government refused to offer any concessions whatsoever to the hunger strikers, even when they were under pressure from the European Human Rights Commission. As I write, on the day of his funeral — one of the largest Ireland has ever seen — international reaction continues in Europe and beyond. Today the International Longshoremen's Association (USA) is boycotting all British-owned ships and goods. Tension is high. Economic and political pressures on the Thatcher government must be increased.

Bernadette Devlin McAliskey, who has made a remarkable recovery from the attempt on her life, is now back working with the broad-based H Blocks/Armagh Committee. Although there may have been a dichotomy a few years ago between mass action and a war of liberation, now it is increasingly recognized that, unfortunately, both are necessary in the Northern Ireland situation. Ms. McAliskey spares no effort in her work for the (mostly IRA) prisoners' struggle, although she herself is not a member of the Irish Republican Movement. That movement has, in turn, become far more politically sophisticated and socialist as the struggle continues.

Eibhlín Ní Sheidhir
Dublin

Prime Minister Thatcher continues to refuse to negotiate with the hunger strikers in a public posture that belies certain political realities. For example, we are faced with the spectacle of some 170 men and women in the prisons of Northeast Ireland having "special category" status granted them by the British in recognition of their "political" crimes while their comrades (those sentenced

About 300 people assembled outside New York's St. Patrick's Cathedral May 5th to show solidarity with Bobby Sands, who starved to death a day before in Maze prison. Paul O'Dwyer showed the connection between the aspirations of the Irish masses for freedom, the struggle in El Salvador, and Black America's fight to be free. When he mentioned that he was in Washington for the May 3rd demonstration in behalf of El Salvadoran self-determination, he was greeted with applause. To me, this was significant because the crowd was basically from New York's large Irish-American communities.

After singing "We Shall Overcome" there was a march to the Irish consulate, led by the sponsoring organization, the N.Y. H Block/Armagh Committee. On the march all radical tendencies felt free to give out their leaflets. The march fed into a demonstration of 3,000 people at the British Embassy. The overall impression of the day was that the ugly, claw of British imperialism is awakening people who might have been stifled by clerical parochialism, involving them in the universal need for human exchanges of ideas which can free everybody.

P.K.
New York City

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**LATIN AMERICA:
MORE DISCUSSION . . .**

I wanted to comment a bit on Eugene Walker's article "Latin America: revolution and theory" (Jan-Feb, N&L). I am in agreement with a number of crucial things he says, such as his remarks against the "indiscriminate unity" of the Left in Bolivia in 1952, and on the import of what is happening now in Bolivia as a response to Nicaragua. Furthermore, I think Walker hits it right on the head in an overview article such as this to single out the themes of focism, Trotskyism and the CP in Chile . . .

Two points, however: What does the "concretization" of the historic-philosophic-theoretic roots of revolution mean? I think he is getting at fears of the failure of vanguard parties to be really effective against the state apparatus. But simply to hint that vanguard parties are not the answer and state in effect that all you need to do is philosophize strikes me as overly simplistic . . .

Also, it needs to be pointed out that in Chile today both the vanguard parties and the mass movement are alive, if not so well. Resistance is a daily reality in Chile today.

Chilean anti-fascist activist
New York

Your recent coverage of Latin America has been excellent. It is a joy to see North American revolutionaries who have a genuine interest in what is happening in the world south of the U.S. border. And it is not common to find those whose knowledge of Marxism is helpful to our own situation today. Continue your writing and know that even in English we are interested in your ideas . . .

Dominican-in-exile
New York

... AND AN APPEAL

I just received an appeal for financial help from NACLA (the North American Congress on Latin America). I feel that all the readers of N&L should know about the work they have been doing for 15 years to report on the Latin American struggle, beginning with opposition to the U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965. Their book on Guatemala, which came out in 1975, did a lot to tell the truth about the U.S. involvement in the oppression of that land.

Now they are faced with attacks by the Heritage Foundation and Sen. Orrin

Hatch, proposing that they be investigated by the Senate Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism. It is clear why they are targets for this plan. If you can help out, please subscribe to their magazine, *Report on the Americas*, with an extra donation. Send it to:

NACLA
151 W. 19th St. (9th Fl.)
New York, N.Y. 10011

**WHAT IS BLACK
CONSCIOUSNESS?**

The article from Nigel Quinten on the Brixton rebellion last month was very informative, as was the Editorial you called "Europe's Black Dimension." It is about time that American Black intellectuals had their horizons opened and considered the whole world as a place to learn from. To tell the truth, I don't think we ever really absorbed the lessons of the South African movement of 1976. We still speak as if the Black consciousness that was able to set off the revolt then was only an echo of our own slogan, "Black is beautiful," rather than trying to figure out what new insight was reached in political science. Maybe now is the time to regroup.

Black student
Wayne State University

**AMERICAN BLACK WOMEN:
IN STORIES, IN STRUGGLES**

I liked the two reviews in the last issue of N&L about books by Black women, because it shows we have reached a new consciousness about ourselves. There is a lot that we have to revolt about, and you can see that in poems, essays and stories by Black women writers. But what a lot of people like Adrienne Rich can't understand is that it is because we are revolutionary that makes us beautiful.

Black woman
California

Anna Small, a 48-year-old Black woman in Cincinnati, is facing voluntary manslaughter charges for defending herself against racist and sexist attacks. She is charged with shooting her next-door neighbor, Clyde Henson, after 10 years of harassment by mostly white neighbors in the Fairmount section of the city. Henson's house was used as a KKK meeting place (complete with robes), and Henson had poured gasoline around her house and driven nails into her tires.

On Jan. 25, after gasoline had been poured again around Ms. Small's house, Henson and several other white men cursed her. Henson came into her house, lunging at her with karate moves. She shot him. To contact the defense coalition, write to:

Anna Small Defense Fund
P.O. Box 29334
Cincinnati, OH 45229



**WOMEN'S POWER
STUNS ITALY'S
POLITICIANS**

In a stunning upset victory over the ruling Christian Democrats and the Catholic Church, Italian voters defeated an anti-abortion law in a national referendum, 68 percent to 32 percent. The terrorist attack on Pope John Paul II, who had campaigned personally and actively against abortion, had led to "certainty" in the press that abortion would be repealed.

As stunning as the size of the pro-abortion vote was its geographic distribution — almost as much in the rural South as in the industrialized North of the country. Italian feminists have for years waged a militant campaign against sexism both on the Left and in the larger society, winning in 1978 the legalization of abortion. The present law allows abortion only in a hospital for women over 18 in the first 90 days of pregnancy.

In terms of Italian politics, the vote on abortion was as great an earthquake as the French elections. Women and youth, surged by the thousands into the streets of Rome and other cities to celebrate when the results of the vote were announced, many of them carrying red flags.

Observer
Paris

JAPANESE NUCLEAR CRISIS

One of the greatest Japanese political crises since the Lockheed scandal, if not since the 1960s, is now brewing. Most shocking to the Japanese people was the revelation in May that U.S. nuclear weapons had been transported across Japanese territory for decades as part of a secret understanding. So opposed are the Japanese masses to nuclear weapons after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, that even the conservative governments in power since the 1950s have never dared openly to allow U.S. nuclear weapons on Japanese soil.

Japanese public opinion was already furious over another incident with U.S.

nuclear weapons on April 9 — the way in which the 6,000-ton George Washington nuclear submarine rammed a Japanese fishing boat, surfaced to observe the damage, and then disappeared beneath the waves without stopping to help drowning fishermen.

In addition, a Japanese "Three Mile Island" is possible at the Tsuruga nuclear power plant, one of 21 nuke plants already in operation. An accident on March 9 contaminated at least 56 workers.

Anti-nuke activist
New York

FROM READERS OLD AND NEW

I am most interested in the articles in N&L about women and struggles, and what divides old/young, middle class/working class women. Also, I appreciate the international dimension of your content. The U.S. press is woefully remiss in this regard! I especially love "Women Worldwide". And congratulations for taking the viewpoints and problems of young people seriously. I am enclosing \$2.50 for a year's renewal of my sub.

Reader
Manhattan, New York

We find your publication valuable because our patrons, the staff, faculty and students of this school, find it to be a useful and informative source of information and editorial viewpoints not found in the conventional press.

Librarian
Sacramento, Calif.

I first came across N&L in the International Directory of Little Magazines and Small Presses. I would be very happy to correspond with you on what is going down in Oregon. You should understand that, on the whole, Oregonians are very conservative. However, many communities have a substantial concentration of "hippies." In Portland, there is a large and vocal gay community. I am sure there are some Marxist-Humanists, although I have not met any yet.

New reader
The Dalles, Oregon

Please enter a one-year subscription for me. I have been reading your paper on-and-off for a few years now, picking one up whenever I could. I have also read Raya Dunayevskaya's book *Philosophy and Revolution*, and feel that it, and your paper, provide a much-needed perspective. Keep it up!

New subscriber
Battle Creek, Mich.

PUBLICATIONS OF NEWS & LETTERS COMMITTEES

- American Civilization on Trial, Black Masses as Vanguard
Statement of the National Editorial Board. Includes "Black Caucuses in the Unions," by Charles Denby . . . 75c per copy
- Marx's Capital and Today's Global Crisis
By Raya Dunayevskaya . . . \$2 per copy
- Working Women for Freedom
By Angela Terrano, Marie Dignan and Mary Holmes . . . \$1 per copy
- Workers Battle Automation
Edited by Charles Denby . . . 50c per copy
- New Essays
On Hegel, Marx, Post-Mao China, Trotsky
By Raya Dunayevskaya . . . \$2 per copy
- Frantz Fanon, Soweto and American Black Thought
By Lou Turner and John Alan . . . \$1 per copy
- La Lucha Latina Para la Libertad y la Filosofia Marxista-Humanista de Liberacion . . . \$1 per copy
- Dialectics of Liberation
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- Women as Reason and as Force of Revolution
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Vol. I includes Portugal, Post-Mao China, Lebanon, Euro-communism . . . \$2 per copy
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First English translation of article by Rosa Luxemburg . . . \$2 per copy
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By Charles Denby . . . \$4.80 per copy

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EDITORIAL**'Indignant Heart'—25 years of freedom movement**

This May marked the 20th anniversary of the Freedom Rides, which riveted the world's eyes in 1961 on the bravery of Black and white freedom fighters out to uproot racism in South USA. The coincidence that this May, Charles Denby, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, was introduced to the German-speaking world in a stunning edition of his life's story, published by Rotbuch Verlag, provides an opportunity to view how tightly inter-twined Denby's life has been with the Black freedom movement.

With the appearance of this edition, titled in German, *In the Richest Country in the World*, comes a fresh opening in the new stage of Black consciousness worldwide that has reached West-Europe from Africa and America. At the same time, it conveys a deep historic continuity with this paper, *News & Letters*, of which Charles Denby is Editor, and which remains to this day the only Marxist paper in the world edited by a Black production worker.

DENBY AS EDITOR

This new stage was first given full expression in 1978, when *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal* was brought up to the present and published by South End Press. Part Two of the book begins where Denby's life story originally had ended in 1952, in the period before the birth of *News & Letters*, and its unmistakable stamp is the rich, world-embracing developments of the Black freedom movement the past 25 years as inseparable from *News and Letters Committees*.

Denby has shown this interconnection from the beginning of Part Two in 1956, when the Montgomery Bus Boycott erupted, signalling the start of the Freedom

Now movement; through the continuous wildcats of Black workers against capitalist automated production and the stifling racist union bureaucracy; to the new extensions of the two-way road between the African and American revolutions, and the affinity of ideas with the Black Consciousness Movement of South Africa as expressed by Steve Biko.

Throughout this entire period, Denby's activity as Editor of *News & Letters* has been integral to his full participation in every facet of the Black freedom struggle. Perhaps the greatest relationship to ongoing activity was developed during the Freedom Rides 20 years ago.

FREEDOM RIDES, 1961

When in May, 1961, Black and white freedom riders boarded buses in the North, to head South and to begin to break down all forms of segregation and racism, what Denby singled out was not alone their boldness and determination, but the ideas for freedom that came out of that period. These were recorded in the *News and Letters pamphlet, Freedom Riders Speak For Themselves*, published in 1961.

They extended from discussing how the new stage was rooted in the Abolitionists and Black struggles a century before which Marx had singled out, to activity like the still-unrecognized organization, *Woman Power Unlimited*, formed by Black women to aid the Freedom Riders in and out of the brutal southern jails, and how the freedom rides and sit-ins were part of a new worldwide freedom struggle, initiated by the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Hungarian Revolution in 1956, and bursting out anew all over Africa.

The year before the Freedom Rides, in 1960, Charles Denby had edited *Workers Battle Automation*, published by *News and Letters*. His own break with the trade union bureaucracy and total participation in all rank-and-file workers' actions up to that time were summed up, and further expanded to embrace other workers battling the monster of Automation—in the mines, steel mills, and small production shops—and especially the youth, employed and unemployed, and their vision of a new free society.

When the Black revolt moved directly into the factories in the late 1960s, Denby showed this new stage of "Black Caucuses in the Unions," in a new section added to *American Civilization on Trial*. It was this fundamental work of *News and Letters Committees* that showed Black masses as vanguard to be the touchstone at every turning point in American history.

INTERNATIONAL IMPACT

It is not only American civilization that has been found brutally wanting by the Black freedom movement. The international impact of Denby's life story, as part of the Black Dimension as a world category, reaches back to the Japanese workers, who showed the identity they felt with American workers' ideas by translating his *Workers Battle Automation*.

And in 1981, it reaches forward in this new German edition to the world nature of today's Black consciousness movement, from the shock waves of struggle in Southern Africa, to the Black revolt in West Europe itself, and helps this movement for total freedom gain a new understanding of itself.

BLACK-RED VIEW**The revolutionary journalism of Steve Biko**

(I have asked Lou Turner, with whom I co-authored *Frantz Fanon, Soweto, and American Black Thought*, to contribute the following book review to my column — John Alan)

Steve Biko—I Write What I Like. A selection of his writings, edited with a personal memoir by Aelred Stubbs, Harper & Row, 1978, \$8.95.

On this, the fifth anniversary of the June 16, 1976 Soweto Rebellion against the apartheid state of South Africa, a look at the writings of Steve Biko, the leader of the Black Consciousness Movement, becomes more than a review of a new book, but a journey over a whole new dimension of revolutionary thought and activity.

It is through the journalism of Steve Biko that one sees the development of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM). From the first articulation of the Black students' break with the traditional liberal organizations to form SASO (South African Student Organization), to his final writings and interview before being killed by the South African police, Biko or Frank Talk, as his pen name indicated, not only wanted his readers to face the stifling reality of apartheid, but sought to call forth a new Black consciousness from within the ranks of the Black students in South Africa.

The book picks up Steve Biko in December, 1969 giving his inaugural address upon being elected president of SASO, a post he turned down for a second term so that new voices could be heard in the leadership and also that he might concentrate on publishing the SASO Newsletter. This was the beginning of his column "I

Write What I Like," signed "Frank Talk." In that first address in 1969, Biko not only outlined SASO as a new kind of organization, but articulated a new organization of thought — the theory of Black Consciousness.

Because Black Consciousness came out of the collective search by Black students to find a philosophy of Black liberation, Biko reported after touring most of South Africa's Black campuses in the early 1970s: "One found wherever he went the question being asked repeatedly 'where do we go from here?' " To this Biko observed that "there is growing awareness of the role the black students may be called upon to play in the emancipation of their community. The students realize that the isolation of the black intelligentsia from the rest of the black society is a disadvantage to black people as a whole." (p. 18).

Taking Fanon's concept of Black self-consciousness and concretizing it in the context of South Africa, Biko proclaims SASO's call — "Black man, you are on your own!"

In tracing Biko's journalism, one can't escape the internationalism of the period of 1968. Throughout his early writings, he speaks of the contribution of Black



Consciousness being a new society "with a human face," which is reminiscent of the Czech student movement in the same period calling for "socialism with a human face" against Russian state-capitalism masquerading as Marxism. Indeed, so international are the impulses revealed in Biko's journalism that he voices Marx's conception of a new society "where man is nothing else but man for his own sake" (p. 21).

THE SOWETO REVOLT

Before the Soweto revolt we see in Biko's journalism how the question of overcoming fear was a central part of the Black Consciousness theory. After Soweto Black intellectuals and activists like Biko recognized how objective was the transcendence of that fear. They also immediately moved to avoid pitfalls of so many other national liberation movements by declaring the independence of the Black Consciousness movement from the East as well as from the West.

Steve Biko had no taste for vulgar communism calling itself Marxism. But it wasn't, as the editor of this collection, Father Aelred Stubbs, tried to express in his "personal memoir" afterward, because Biko has some Christianized conception of the BCM. Through his attempted Christianization of the BCM, Fr. Stubbs reveals not only his anti-Marxism, but his inability to comprehend the subject of his book—Steve Biko himself.

As against Stubbs' so-called Christian interpretation of Black consciousness as a retreat into the self having achieved an abstract moral superiority over its oppressors, Biko articulates the actual, i.e., revolutionary relationship of the consciousness of self to the transformation of reality.

"By Black Consciousness I mean the cultural and political revival of an oppressed people. Thus it must be related to the emancipation of the entire continent of Africa since the Second World War. Africa has experienced the death of white invincibility. . . .

"Where is the evidence of support among the younger generation of BPC (Black People's Convention)? In one word: Soweto! the boldness, dedication, sense of purpose, and clarity of analysis of the situation — all of these things are definitely a result of Black consciousness ideas among the young generation in Soweto and elsewhere. Indeed, this is not quantitatively analyzable. For the power of a movement lies in the fact that it can indeed change the habits of people. This change is not the result of force but of dedication, of moral persuasion. That is what has gotten through to the young people. They realize that we are not dealing with mere bread and butter issues. . . ."

It certainly cannot be an accident that the above, and indeed all of Steve Biko's post-Soweto writings, were excluded in Fr. Stubbs' edited edition. It is Soweto which demonstrated that the unity of Black thought/Black reality resides in the living battle to uproot the exploitative reality. It is far, far away from any question of abstract Christianization.

In conclusion, it is necessary to stress that this collection of Biko's writings is not the whole but a selection of his journalism. Nevertheless, its great value lies in having Biko speak for himself.

Atlanta mothers' demonstrate in Washington D.C.

Washington, D.C. — A "Rendezvous for Life's Sake," called by the Atlanta mothers' Committee to Stop Children's Murders, brought out 5,000 on Memorial Day, this on a blistering hot day and with a virtual boycott of any publicity in advance by the white press and media. The overwhelmingly Black crowd, with some whites too, came from unions such as Local 1199 of the Hospital Workers, the ILGWU, District 65-UAW, AFSCME and the Shipbuilders' Industrial Union.

Various Black nationalist, and Left groups were represented, as well as church and community groups with participants coming from Atlanta, Virginia and Maryland, Detroit, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, New York, and Utah. There was a long list of speakers and musicians at the rally, from Camille Bell, mother of one of the murdered children, Yusef Bell, and founder of the mothers' committee in Atlanta, to established Black leaders such as Jesse Jackson and Dick Gregory.

Some speakers, to the cheers of the crowd, stressed that the issue was not only the Black children of Atlanta but all children, especially Blacks, being murdered and brutalized everywhere and in every form by a sick American society 17 of whose states now imprison youths down to the age of thirteen as adults and even plan to execute them with a restored death penalty.

Other speakers referred to the range of racist attacks on Blacks, from Philadelphia, where a letter re-

ceived by a Black newspaper from the KKK threatened to make Philadelphia "another Atlanta," to Chattanooga, to the growth of the KKK generally.

A young activist working in Atlanta with the Committee to Stop Children's Murders in Atlanta said the boycott by the news media was nearly total there: "Only a Black mayor and chief of police could try to get away with saying outright that they refuse to investigate the Klan or any other racist organization because they don't see racism as any motive in the murders.

"We know all the victims are Black, and we know of the Klan's paramilitary training camps. I came out on a bus with a school friend of the young Yusef Bell, one of the murdered children. He says he and his friends all believe the police and the Klan are the ones doing it. That's what the Atlanta community feels.

"Yet the FBI openly slurs the murdered children, calling them hustlers and so on, who brought it on themselves. Then they tried to accuse the parents themselves of the murders!"

Commenting on the size of the turnout, a Black woman said: "Most people may not have chosen this time and place to respond to Atlanta. But the youth especially are going to break out. This can't continue much longer."

—New York News and Letters Committee participants

Iran: the struggle continues**Interview with young Kurdish revolutionary**

(Editor's Note: Below we print excerpts from an interview with a Kurdish revolutionary.)

Today the hatred of the people of Kurdistan towards the ruling regime has increased, and the Kurdish masses have also rejected the compromising tendencies within the Kurdish movement. Meanwhile, the suppression of the Kurdish movement continues to be at the top of the agenda of the Islamic Republic. Tehran will keep talking about peace, and they send commissions, representative commissions. In their actions, they are continuing their vicious attacks.

There was a heavy clash just a few weeks ago. Even the war between Iran and Iraq has not changed the quantity of the suppression by the regime. After the war started, the regime sent even more forces to Kurdistan. On the same day that the armed forces of Iraq were bombing Abadan, the Iranian regime was bombing Mahabad. The army of the Islamic Republic, while it had rationed the use of armaments in the war between Iran and Iraq, was showering Mahabad with 13 shrapnels every minute.

THIS WAR HAS NOT had any effect on the policies of the revolutionary forces of Kurdistan toward the government of Iran. The Kurdish Democrat Party announced that if the government accepts our six points we would be willing to fight alongside the Iranian Army against Iraq. The people of Kurdistan have experienced the crimes of the Baath regime, the government of Iraq, and this war could not make any changes in their view of the government of Iraq. The murderous acts of the Iraqi army in Kurdistan have shown the true face of the Baath regime to the Kurdish masses more than before.

The slogan of the Kurdish people has always been self-determination for Kurdistan and democracy for Iran. This means that self-determination for Kurdistan cannot be separated from democracy for Iran, and we cannot say that in one part of Iran self-determination should be made and in the upper parts of Iran, people should live under this kind of dictatorship. Of course, if this question stays on the level of a single slogan and people do not do any activity around it, this will eventually lead the struggle astray.

In other words, without the cooperation of the Iranian masses, the struggles in Kurdistan will be limited and will lead to demands of separatism. Kurdistan cannot wait for the rest of Iran to start its own struggle. In the place where the conditions are ready, people will start the struggle. This is our duty, the duty of the revolutionary organizations to be sure the demands of these struggles do not stay within the confines of that movement.

WHAT WE SHOULD struggle for today is self-determination in every area in every region of the area, from self-determination in every country to revolution in the Kurdish area. Let us not forget that today's struggle for self-determination in Kurdistan cannot be limited to that.

In other words, the people of Kurdistan should have the right to choose whether they want to be a part of Iran or not. You cannot force self-determination in Iran

on these people. Making the decision under the conditions of oppression is not truly making a decision.

Immediately after the toppling of the Shah's regime, the peasants expropriated the land of the big landowners and in many areas, peasant councils were created. The government also suppressed these peasants and started arming the landowners.

I should say that the revolutionary organizations in Iran and other revolutionary organizations do not understand nationalism. The Kurdish nationalism is not Pan-Iranism that wants to bring all these national minorities under its own roof and suppress the rights of others. The Kurdish nationalism arises from a revolutionary point. That is because the Kurdish people have always been under suppression and have always been so repressed by their central government.

As I said before, self-determination in Kurdistan is not separated from the freedom of Iran or Iraq or Turkey. This is very much felt by the people of Kurdistan.

An Iranian metal worker

(Editor's Note: The following story is from a young metal worker who labors in a factory outside Tehran, Iran.)

One of the big problems in the factory concerns our production rights. It was decided that as production goes up—i.e., when workers produce more surplus, as the speed of the line intensifies—we the workers would receive something extra. But the management did not want to give us this. When the workers finally forced them to give it, it was not divided up equally.

Some workers got more, some less. The management then decided to introduce a double shift and hire a few more workers. We got into a fight with the engineer. We gathered other workers to go and talk to him. The engineer then came and said, "This factory is in debt. You have to work double shifts to solve this problem."

We objected and raised 14 demands, some of which were safety measures. The manager came down and said we're not allowed to say anything else. I interrupted him and said, "He doesn't let us speak." It was then that they said they would give us our production rights in full.

One other problem is that the factory has become like the "thousand family" (a reference to the Shah's family that controlled everything). Because our elected council has allied itself with the managerial board, they do whatever they want and we have no say.

For example, they can hire whomever they wish. Last month they hired someone with a high school diploma. In a month his wage was raised from 30,000 rials to 34,000, while I, with four years seniority, get only 32,000 rials. This shows that matters are not under our control. This council is not beneficial to us, and all the workers know it. They say that it doesn't do any good, and is full of people just trying to work their way up. The council collaborates with the bosses and has gained a privileged position—it doesn't defend our rights anymore. Now what is at stake is creating a second power to defend us.

Polish Solidarity activists speak of struggle

(Editor's Note: Below we print excerpts from an interview News & Letters conducted with two Polish intellectuals who are representatives from the trade union Solidarity in Lodz.)

People now expect no less than a national renewal from Solidarity. It is the only organization that people trust. We have had 40 years of mismanagement by the government. We are told we are the co-owners of the country, but it doesn't feel that way.

We are not out to overthrow the party or government. We would like them to make reforms. For example, we have our own ideas of economic progress and measure the government's decisions by our own internal estimates.

Some authorities in each region are afraid of us and seek to break our union. They pretend there are no problems, black out the official press, and force us to take strike action. Only when we strike do they negotiate. They wish to make it appear that we are the cause of the bad economic situation.

We know the government is split. The events in Bydgoszcz proved this. There were many non-members who came to our support over the issue of the beatings of Solidarity leaders. The TV journalists, who are the most conformist, came out for us. It was so exciting! During the warning strike, the TV broadcasted: "Solidarity—we will strike!"

The government tries to divide workers by fostering

inequality with pay raises. We fought them with the strike in the Lodz textile factories. In fact, we are organized horizontally, which means that we do not strike on narrow craft or professional lines but rather with the interests of the workers of the whole region in mind. Hence, factory workers strike over conditions for university teachers, or doctors and nurses.

In our organization we do not separate worker and intellectual. We need each other. The intellectuals are asked to give lectures in the factories on Polish history and economics. Workers are also learning how to print their own leaflets. Solidarity tries to tell the workers everything. We print daily leaflets and a newspaper to get the truth out.

Solidarity, as an organization of factory workers, is organized from below. There is a presidium, and a "Meeting of the Delegates" who are representatives from the different factories. There is one delegate per 500 workers. It is this group which makes the most general decisions for Solidarity. What we are seeing is that Marx was right. In the end it is the workers who determine everything.

Finally, it is the new freedom that the movement has created which is giving rise to all sorts of new beginnings. The arts have started anew and so has the press. We are still amazed that we were first able to read important Polish documents published by N&L here in the USA. The censorship has been very great.

Dominican protests continue

April's rebellions in the Dominican Republic over the U.S. warships' visit are not over yet. In Mao, where the police had killed the student Angela Guzman in those protests, striking students demanding an investigation of her death were machine-gunned by the police, wounding 12.

On April 24, the 16th anniversary of the U.S. Marine invasion, a march of hundreds of high school students was stopped by police from going to the cemetery to place flowers on the graves of those killed in that rebellion 16 years ago.

Meanwhile, in San Cristobal, more than 100 landless peasants, organized as the New Hope Peasants' Association, have been arrested for occupying lands belonging to the National University. The peasants said the land was being used to raise cattle while they didn't even have a piece of land to raise their children. They said they will fight to the death for this land, which former dictator Trujillo had seized from their parents and grandparents.

After the arrests, the wives and children of the peasants occupied the church of San Cristobal, demanding both their release and the return of the lands. The students of Juan P. Pina High School also marched in support of the peasants.

Workers' Bookshelf**'Slave Trade Today'**

Slave Trade Today by Sasha G. Lewis, Beacon Press, Boston, 1979.

"We lost half the committee when the Border Patrol arrived. So we had to change tactics. We've been having strikes where there have been no pickets. Everyone just stays in the field and doesn't work."

This remark by a strike organizer was recorded during the 1977-78 fight of grapefruit pickers against the huge Arrowhead Ranch in Arizona, which finally secured a contract for better pay, working conditions and health insurance for the undocumented workers who began it.

OPPRESSION AND REVOLT

Needless to say this is an exceptional instance in the experience of illegal immigrants in this country, yet one cannot miss the greatness of the examples of revolt, coming as they do in the middle of Sasha G. Lewis' study of their conditions of life here and the oppressive measures under which the most exploited layer of the U.S. workforce is kept hidden and silent.

She based her book on lengthy interviews, accounts from the daily press, government documents and her own experience as a farmworker in the Southwest, and goes a long way toward presenting a clear picture of immigrant labor.

We are accustomed to the scare tactics which right-wing groups, union bureaucrats and the government use to confuse public opinion, turning out racist legislation, and transforming the Mexican border into a veritable war zone complete with heat sensory devices and air patrol. Yet, few realize the extent of this country's vast appetite for slave labor.

The trade routes crisscross the U.S. map, delivering the desperate not only to farm fields and garment sweatshops but wheat fields in the Midwest, irrigation projects in Idaho, assembly lines in Chicago, construction sites on the East Coast and many untold points in between.

RACIST POLICIES OF I.N.S.

Between the impoverished homelands and the jobs here are the smugglers, racketeers, document forgers and profiteering suppliers of food and shelter—a vicious big business fostered in part by the racist and arbitrary policies of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

Contrary to its title—Immigration—the chief function of this branch of the so-called Justice Department is not that, but deportation. Lewis documents the collaboration between the Immigration Service and the company bosses, whether it be acting as strikebreakers or showing up for a raid on pay day.

Indeed "slave labor" is the only term that fits the kind of work undocumented immigrants are forced to perform, whether you consider the physical confinement of restaurant and domestic workers, or life in the sweatshop where sickness or injury means getting fired and the first signs of resistance are met with the threat of deportation.

Lewis also makes a convincing argument against the community leaders who pit the poor in this country against the undocumented immigrants in these times of soaring unemployment and social spending cuts. When cheap and unresisting labor cannot be replaced, the practice of U.S. business is not to create jobs with decent pay, but to mechanize or move their capital elsewhere. She concludes "in fact, we are all, legal and illegal alike, losers to institutions much greater than those we control."

French presidential election victory

(Continued from Page 1)

first time with eight percent of the vote. It is this which so scared Helmut Schmidt that he made a mad dash for Washington, D.C. to beg for support from the Reagan-Haig team.

At the end of the visit in which he bowed completely to the Reagan Administration, from whom he is also carrying a "private letter" to Mitterrand, Schmidt announced "100 percent agreement."

Schmidt may agree with Reagan, but Reagan doesn't agree with Schmidt, as was at once clear as Reagan-Haig continued with their rampage of anti-Communism" (read: ceaseless militarization). Schmidt kept saying the Reagan Administration would start talks with Brezhnev for "cutting" nuclear armaments. In fact, it is only an excuse for allowing U.S. imperialism to use Germany for keeping nuclear weapons there.

At home, Schmidt is faced with strong opposition from youth and labor on nuclear policies, lack of housing and of jobs. It is not only that his days as German leader may be numbered, it is that there is an alternative there too. Anyone who underestimates the youth movement as well as the anti-nuclear and Women's Liberation Movements has blinded himself to the actual forces in this period of economic and political crisis in decadent capitalism.

BACK TO FRANCE: ITS CONTRADICTIONS

This is no time for illusions, be it in West Germany where the Social Democrats have lost in some elections or France where the Socialists won. Thus, though there is an opening to the Left and there is stress on the fact that Mitterrand will have a very different policy in relationship to the Third World, let us not forget Mitterrand's past. He played a most reactionary role in 1954 when the Algerian Revolution started and he opposed it and held, like all the reactionaries who opposed self-determination, that Algeria was "French." It is true that by 1957 he shifted his position and in 1958 opposed De Gaulle's coming to power and declared himself for the "autonomy of Algeria."

The cabinet he has now appointed clearly shows that there will be no "leap to collectivism." Mitterrand leans heavily to the right in his own party, especially when it comes to naming people to the sensitive posts of defense and economy. For the latter he named the former governor of the Bank of France, Jacques Delors. Nor should anyone hold his breath if they think Mitterrand will immediately initiate a 35-hour week or 10 percent rise in minimum wage. By the time he is finished talking to the union leaders "and the employers," little will be left of his promises. All the more reason for the masses who voted Socialist not to let it mean "leaders" but make sure of keeping the power in the hands of the masses.

'Indignant Heart' review

(Continued from Page 1)

to fight the system. They didn't always know how the unions and the industries worked, but they fought for their rights within the system.

In the South, the Blacks formed a union among themselves. They fought together for their rights. Only during the civil rights revolution, in the '50s and '60s, did things start improving for the Blacks. But then leaders appeared who started fighting among themselves for control.

Although there were radical changes in the '30s and '40s for the workers that Denby describes, in my opinion the unions accomplished very little in terms of progress for the workers. Even today when rank-and-file Black workers would call for affirmative action in industries, the unions would not side with the workers.

Not so long ago, in the local where I work, there was a fight between some of my colleagues and the guards over a \$1 parking fee. One of my co-workers was thrown in jail for 12 hours. The department wanted to fire the worker. That prompted us to threaten a "green out" (wildcat) on a Friday if something wasn't done. The union sent their representative to the "barns" telling us it was illegal to pull a wildcat, because it was not sanctioned by them. However, the department held off firing our co-worker, and the "green out" was called off.

In my opinion, the union leaders and bureaucrats and the Black leaders were, and still are, doing very little in the way of progress. They are the first to oppose what the mass of Blacks are doing, and the first to take credit when the Blacks win. We know that changes aren't made by unions and leaders. They are made by ordinary people, like you and me. The unions and leaders are only figureheads.

—Young Black worker

Despite economic crisis, despite world crisis, despite pressure from NATO and Reagan-Haig, a new stage is opening up, a new solidarity between the French masses, the workers of Europe, the second America, as well as the Third World. There is no doubt that there will not be those outright Giscardian imperial attacks like the rush to Zaire, or the uninhibited selling of nuclear reactors. That surely forebodes, despite France's adherence to NATO, many points of division between France and the Reagan Administration which is running helter-skelter to all neo-fascisms from the military junta in El Salvador to South African apartheid.

Taken as a whole, the present victory of Mitterrand does show that the spirit that pervaded France in 1968, when the workers and students took to the streets, is not dead. It survives in both the anti-nuclear demonstrations and in the growing Women's Liberation Movement. With them and with French labor, the U.S. masses express their solidarity.

Handicapped oppose Reagan

Chicago, Ill.—On May 7, about 400 people, a majority of whom were handicapped, attended a demonstration against Reagan's budget, which was to be voted on that day. By passing the budget the Congress showed the same insensitivity to the disabled as Reagan.

A Black man in a wheelchair said: "I came out here to protest the cuts. Those cuts are going to hide quite a lot—especially us handicapped people they are going to hide. There will be more cuts next year. The man we got likes to cut, cut, cut to the bone. They are going to spend all this money getting weapons. I keep on fighting, though. I don't give up."

A Mexican-American, also in a wheelchair, talked about how much more it will cost to have people institutionalized now that many services will be cut. "We have a lot of physical barriers—enough to deal with already; and then to deal with the financial part of it. Why have to beg, borrow and steal to survive, to pay your rent, pay a few bills?"

"Guns will never be controlled if the budget cuts go through. Why? There will be more people out to get a gun in order to sustain a family. If I have to carry a gun to stick up somebody in order to feed a family, what kind of society are we living in?"

"I am very much against U.S. aid to El Salvador. We need the money here. Today is D-day for us. Today they are taking a vote on what will happen to humanity."

What excited me was the clear opposition to Reaganism just at the time when the all-out attack by the right has disoriented so many activists. Yet the opposition is there and is almost total with demonstrations like this and ones being held by the Gray Panthers against the Social Security cuts; textile workers against the abandonment of the safety regulations dealing with brown-lung; railroad workers against the wholesale cutback which will cost them their jobs, and numerous demonstrations against U.S. involvement in El Salvador and South Korea (on the anniversary of the Kwangju revolt), all occurred within barely two weeks.

—Marxist-Humanist participant

Gay liberation movement: from Holocaust to today

Two books*, one exposing the little-known mass persecution and murder of homosexuals in Nazi Germany and bringing forth the forms of resistance, the other exploring relationships between gay liberation and Marxist theory, contribute a much needed perspective.

The Men With the Pink Triangles is a simple, moving, first-person tale by the survivor of a concentration camp for gay men. "What had I done to be sent off in this way? I had loved a friend of mine, a grown man of 24, not a child . . . What does it say about the world we live in, if an adult man is told how and whom he should love?" (p. 27). Humanism comes through strongly, and this survivor includes in his critique today: ". . . the contempt of our fellow-humans . . . is the same as it was 30 or 50 years ago . . . Scarcely a word has been written on the fact that hundreds of thousands of people were sadistically tortured to death simply for having homosexual feelings." (p. 115)

Translator David Fernbach's introduction documents today's continuing discrimination and world-wide silence on the Holocaust against gays. However, he fails to include a description of the extensive gay movement in Germany during the twenties, which, along with the socialist and women's movements, the Nazis were so anxious to erase from history.

The 14 essays of **Pink Triangles: Radical Perspectives on Gay Liberation** are divided into three sections: I) Gay and lesbian culture as "seeds of our liberation." II) Radical theory and gay liberation. III) Gay Left activists' ideas on building a new society.

Most of the authors seriously seek to unite "traditional Marxism" with gay liberation; all are influenced by the Women's Liberation Movement and its "critique of socialism"; most feel that the vanguard parties are inadequate to varying degrees. The Gay Left Collective in an article entitled "Why Marxism?" concludes, "What we need is both theoretical clarification and the constant testing of theories in practice."

David Fernbach in his essay points out the limitations of Engels' concept of the sexual division of labor: "Engels regarded the sexual division of labor as only 'natural' and did not see its effect on the historical process."

Fernbach sees "a far more intimate connection between the oppressive dimensions of class and gender than is allowed by traditional Marxism." He is aware that "what happens after" a revolution is a crucial question, and critiques the new system of domination that so rapidly crystallized in Russia and China. But he argues that "violent revolution places a premium on the masculine virtues," as a way of helping explain a revolution's transformation into opposite.

As solution Fernbach calls for a "feminine culture of empathy" rather than the "masculine culture of violence." But does gender get to the heart of the new system of domination? Or instead shouldn't we look at the re-emergence of capitalism as state-capitalism and the vulgarization of Marxism?

"Traditional Marxism" is not the Marxism of Marx. Rather it is its vulgarization after Marx by state powers and would-be vanguard powers. The vision of new human relations of Marx's Marxism, his new Humanism, can help to provide gay liberation with a full vision, not limited to culture, but encompassing it as integral to a total transformation.

—Susan Van Gelder

***Pink Triangles: Radical Perspectives on Gay Liberation**, ed. Pam Mitchell, Alyson Publications, Inc., Boston 1980. \$4.95
The Men with the Pink Triangles, Heinz Heger, Alyson Publications, Inc., 1980. \$4.95

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees, an organization of Marxist-Humanists, stand 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. **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**, is the editor of the paper. Raya Dunayevskaya, National Chairwoman of the Committees, is the author of **Marxism and Freedom and Philosophy and Revolution**, which spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally as **American Civilization on Trial** concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcats against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signalled a new movement from practice which was itself a form of theory. Vol. 1, No. 1, came off the press on the second anniversary of the June 17, 1953 East German revolt against Russian state-capitalism masquerading as

Communism, in order to express our solidarity with freedom fighters abroad as well as at home. Because 1953 was also the year when we worked out the revolutionary dialectics of Marxism in its original form of "a new Humanism," as well as individuality "purified of all that interferes with its universalism, i.e., with freedom itself," we organized ourselves in Committees rather than any elitist party "to lead."

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.

YOUTH

Anti-draft movement: what is anti-imperialism?

by Peter Wermuth

Many youth today are discussing a recent development in the anti-draft movement, where many who last year were marching against registration are now protesting against U.S. intervention in El Salvador. As the May 3 demonstration of over 50,000 in Washington, D.C. showed, many youth drawn into the movement over the threatened draft are now extending their horizons into opposing the very wars they are intended to serve.

With so promising a development in action, one would expect to be pleased to see one anti-draft group initiate a theoretical discussion on how to deepen the connection between the current U.S. anti-draft struggle and support for anti-imperialist movements overseas. Yet a recently-published pamphlet by the Committee to Resist the Draft (RTD)* has all the marks of the kind of "theory" the anti-war movement will have to studiously combat if the struggle is to move forward.

ANTI-IMPERIALIST, ANTI-DRAFT

The authors of this attempt to "provide an anti-imperialist perspective for the anti-draft movement" begin their pamphlet by showing how the effort to revive the draft is inseparable from U.S. imperialism reasserting its might overseas. "Therefore," they write, "the struggle against the draft becomes a critical focus in the struggle against imperialism at this historical moment."

But it very quickly becomes clear that the authors have a limited idea of what this "struggle against imperialism" means. For them, the question is simply seeing to it that anti-draft youth support national liberation struggles overseas — as if that needed work of solidarity can be separated from the effort of fully uprooting imperialism by making a social revolution here at home!

The authors write that "the final defeat of U.S. imperial forces must be accompanied by the popular movements against which these forces are arrayed." This is only half true, for history has shown that it is the combined might of movements for national liberation and struggles for social revolution inside the imperialist behemoth that brings such systems down.

When Lenin looked to the anti-imperialist revolts like the Irish as bacilli for proletarian revolution, was he not trying to deepen the movement for freedom in Tsarist Russia? And yet there is not one word in this pamphlet about the need to lay ground for revolution here at home to stay the hand of U.S. imperialism abroad.

*Resist the Draft: Working Papers on the Draft, War, and Imperialism, by the Committee to Resist the Draft (Los Angeles).

Woman escapes Navy 'alive and sane'

I am a woman receiving a Bad-Conduct discharge from the Navy. A Bad-Conduct discharge (BCD) is one step above a dishonorable discharge. And I had to fight to get it.

The only way you can get a BCD is by a special court-martial. I was court-martialed for refusing to stand at attention at a correctional custody unit (CCU). There have been at least two recent deaths in correctional custody, due to physical abuse. I have no doubt that many more murders have occurred, but were successfully covered up. I was sentenced to 30 days in CCU by the captain of my ship at captain's mast for possession of about a joint's worth of marijuana.

Almost any infraction of Navy regulations is punishable at captain's mast, also known as non-judicial punishment. It's a gathering of the captain, the executive officer, any witnesses, and the accused. You are guilty unless proven innocent, and since your word is not worth as much as anyone who ranks higher than you, even if he or she is a pathological liar, it's virtually impossible to prove your innocence.

Even if you are found guilty, what are you guilty of? I was once found guilty of wearing my hair in braids! Punishments can range from a simple suspended sentence to 45 days restriction to the ship, 45 days extra work for two hours a day every day but Sunday, reduction in rank, and a forfeiture of pay up to two-thirds per month for a certain number of months, all for one broken regulation. Possession of one seed of marijuana, one disrespectful comment, or a few hours late to work can merit these punishments.

TRYING FOR DISCHARGE

Within my first six months in the Navy, I started my search for a discharge. Within a year I qualified for a discharge as an administrative burden because I'd been to captain's mast twice. But just because I qualified didn't mean I was going to be granted a discharge. The regulations state that a person may be discharged after two captain's masts. If this were enforced, the Navy would lose at least half of its first term enlistees. Once they find out what the "adventure" is really like, they want no part of it!

You can be worked all night and day at the slightest whim of your superior. For a three-month period of

The problem is not that the authors do not "believe" in revolution. On the contrary, they assert that only the destruction of capitalism holds any hope for humanity. The trouble is that they separate this "belief" from their concept of anti-imperialism. Rather than raising the question of anti-imperialism as a needed way to deepen and broaden the concerns of the anti-draft struggle so it can be a participant in the effort to create a new, human society, RTD wants to tie the anti-draft youth into uncritical support for any regime as long as it "opposes" U.S. imperialism, even if that regime is totalitarian Russia!

NARROWNESS HINDERS REVOLUTION

The narrowness of such "anti-imperialism" hinders the effort to develop a revolutionary banner for the anti-war movement from within. RTD writes of the need to connect anti-draft youth to other forces of revolt, correctly insisting that opposition to the draft that already exists—the poverty draft—is essential for reaching out to working youth and minorities. And they point to the need to combat sexism in the movement to ensure greater participation of women. But because they are so far from understanding genuine anti-imperialism as inseparable from making social revolution at home, they make no attempt to actually elicit the revolutionary sentiments of those youth who refused to register, so such unity can concretely unfold.

Instead, their "multi-issue" approach ends up as one more strategy, to be administered from above, with no



Four women dressed as blood-covered nuns were among 300 demonstrators, including some also costumed as bloodied Salvadoran peasants, who protested U.S. policy in El Salvador by opposing Secretary of State Alexander Haig's appearance at Syracuse University on May 9.

time I worked every single day, without one day off, because the chief in charge of me thought I was a "punk."

If you want a discharge, expect no help from anyone. Every time I was brought to captain's mast I'd read a statement concerning the injustice and oppression of the military and how it all went against my beliefs. No one gave me any help.

Well, for me it was either get out of the military or go nuts, I had no choice. I couldn't follow orders of corrupt, incompetent superiors, and I was slowly realizing that I was part of an organization whose duty was to kill. I was sick of being humiliated and felt I had a right to speak out without being censored or punished. I've witnessed three people lose their minds because of Navy policies.

BARRED FROM SPEAKING

A group of high-ranking women from Washington, D.C. had visited the ship and I'd voiced some of my opinions at a conference with them. As a result, I was barred from speaking with any more public officials visiting the ship.

At last when I was sentenced to CCU for "rehabilitation," I was ordered to stand outside the building at attention, on a square foot block. I stood there for two hours in November, while five or six military persons took turns harassing me about my attitude and why I wasn't standing at a rigid enough attention. They threatened me about what would happen if I kept refusing to cooperate. Finally I told them that I was sick of all the crap.

After choosing a court-martial over staying at CCU, I was returned to my ship for about 30 days of pre-trial restraint. The morning of my court-martial, the assistant master-at-arms told me he would gladly shoot me if he had a chance, because he felt I was such a bad influence on the military. He only epitomized the system for me.

So I finally got a chance to request a discharge, and to my relief, it was granted. I was also sentenced to 30 days confinement, which I served at the city jail. Most people receive sentences of three to six months. I got off easy, I'm out of the military, alive and sane.

—Ex-sailor, Michigan

effort made to make explicit the element common in struggles of youth, women, workers, minorities, that could unite us all—the passion for new human relations, total change, that is social revolution.

The anti-draft youth have surely reached a most crucial juncture, now that the struggle to stop draft registration has spilled over into support work for the El Salvadoran freedom fighters. We can by no means afford to separate our struggle against Reaganism at home, from supporting the struggle of the El Salvadoran people.

We can continue this effort by clearing our heads of any narrow concept of anti-imperialism that would divert from the labor of raising a banner of a new human society as the heart and soul of today's youth protests.

Notre Dame anti-Reagan demo

Chicago, Ill.—Reagan's first live public performance since his injury was to accept an honorary degree from Notre Dame University and address the graduating class on May 17. Many religious people were outraged that this university, a symbol of Catholicism, would sell out its Christian principles to honor a man who steals from the needy and gives to the greedy—even though Duarte, the president of El Salvador, got his B.A. from Notre Dame.

The Chicago Religious Task Force on El Salvador, a coalition of 45 groups, initiated a demonstration at Notre Dame to demand the U.S. get out of El Salvador, and restoration of funding to human needs. Up to 3,000 people came from five states, exceeding the task force's expectations.

We marched through the university chanting and carrying picket signs, coffins and crosses that were later formed into a graveyard on campus. A mime group performed mourning and rage. We gathered to listen to music and speeches by Salvadoran and other activists. A group of alumni told us that 150 of them had petitioned the university in protest.

—Participant

Anti-MX missile protest

Salt Lake City, Utah — On May 2, 2,500 people gathered at the State Capitol and marched to the Federal Building to protest the construction of the MX missile system in Utah. It was the largest protest rally in Salt Lake City since the one Martin Luther King led. There are good reasons for protesting:

- MX is a deadly accurate, massively destructive, first strike weapon making 75 percent of the Russian nuclear force vulnerable. It escalates the arms race.

- MX promises to be a construction effort unparalleled in modern times. It is to cover 40,000 square miles (almost the size of the National Park System), at a cost of at least 56 billion dollars. It's not needed.

- It will seriously disrupt the regional economy. Water, nonrenewable resources, endangered wildlife and aquatic species, and air will all be adversely affected.

- The most serious effect of this missile-on-wheels is that it will bring nuclear war one step closer to reality.

A Mormon woman activist spoke at the rally. She said: "This is the place to stop MX because the MX promises war not peace, fear not security, and in the name of superiority it truly binds us to the insatiable appetite for more and more." A speaker from the Utah chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility described how 96 percent of the population would die.

Many community groups were present from the YMCA to Citizens' Call (an organization concerned with the effects of nuclear testing in southern Nevada). The Western Shoshone Sacred Lands Association spoke out against MX and the attempted U.S. land grab. MX is a weapon that shows the arms race and human race cannot co-exist.

—Student

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OUR LIFE AND TIMES

Irish masses raise new questions for independence movement

by Peter Mallory and Kevin A. Barry

Throughout the month of May, the attention of the whole world has been riveted on Northern Ireland, exposing in all its starkness the contrast between the mass outpourings for Irish freedom and the array of military technology and fascist thuggery that Britain's Prime Minister Thatcher has at her disposal. The death May 5 of Bobby Sands, after 66 days on hunger strike in Maze Prison's "H-Blocks," was followed not only by youth throwing petrol bombs at British troops, but by a Belfast funeral procession of some 100,000 — one of largest demonstrations in Irish history.

The sickening attempt by Ulster police ten days later to "kidnap" the body of a second IRA hunger striker, Francis Hughes, was shown on TV worldwide. In their attempt to prevent another massive show of opposition to the Ulster police state, police thus insured the turnout of 20,000 in Hughes' hometown in rural South Derry. Similar huge crowds accompanied hunger strikers Raymond McCreesh and Patsy O'Hara to their graves in Armagh and Derry City.

In Derry City youth did take to the streets in a general attack on Ulster police and British troops,

shouting their protests over the brutal murder of two Derry youths on Easter Sunday. In what was officially termed a "traffic accident," two Army landrovers plowed into a group of youths at high speed, then stopped and reversed over the injured, killing two and injuring at least four others.

The mass mobilization of Ulster's Catholic population, while intended to support the demands of the hunger strikers for political prisoner status, has now encompassed far more than that issue alone. As the demonstrations mounted, so have the demands for an end to all the features of the artificial state created by British imperialism in 1921, from its notorious job and housing segregation, through its ceaseless unemployment and minimum wage jobs, to the fantastic court system now called the "Northern Ireland Emergency Powers Act."

Nothing better gives the lie to Prime Minister Thatcher's contention that Irish Republicans are "common criminals" than the provisions of that Act. In Ulster and Ulster alone, offenses with "political motiva-

tion" are set off from all others and heard in non-jury courts under special rules of evidence. The burden of proof is shifted from the prosecution to the defense; the right to remain silent is removed; a conviction is acceptable on the basis of a disputed confession alone. In fact, 85 percent of convictions in the special courts have been obtained on the basis of such "confessions," often after torture. In this manner were the "H-Blocks" of the Maze Prison and the Women's Prison in Armagh filled.

The stonewall of intransigence erected by British Labor and Tory governments alike, and supported by the Irish government in Dublin, is now beginning to show serious cracks. A poll sponsored by the Labor Party revealed 59 percent of the British in favor of troop withdrawal. Only 29 percent felt that Britain should keep control of Northern Ireland. In Dublin, Prime Minister Haughey was forced to call elections for June 11. Whether the new openings will develop toward not only Irish independence, but toward a genuinely new society in both Britain and Ireland remains an unanswered question.

Chile

Five weeks after Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet was inaugurated President under a new fascist "constitution" on March 11, the Chilean working class formulated its own answer to this document which dares to claim there will be no democracy until the year 2011!

On April 22, 9,800 miners struck and closed down the El Teniente mine, the world's largest underground copper mine. They had been offered a two percent raise over two years. The 11,000 miners at the even larger Chuquicamata open-pit mine sent messages of solidarity but were forbidden by fascist labor laws from joining the strike. After 30 days, the law allows Pinochet to hire strikebreakers "temporarily" and after 60 days, to fire the strikers. No one, least of all Pinochet, can be sure what the Chilean working class will do.

Since the 1973 Nixon-inspired overthrow of the reformist socialist Allende government, the new rulers have murdered over 50,000 and imprisoned and often tortured another 500,000 Chileans.

As a Chile solidarity activist said: "People are still disappearing every day. News hardly ever gets out about this. Official unemployment is listed at 10 percent, which is absurd. In fact, the majority are unemployed. Everywhere in the working class districts you see children on the street with bloated bellies, in the final stages of malnutrition. Chile is not the most topical issue in the U.S. now. That's sad because I see the struggle in Latin America as one. I realize that El Salvador is important now, like Nicaragua, but there should also be a stronger solidarity movement around Chile."

Resistance has continued throughout the seven years of military rule, dubbed an "economic miracle" by world capitalism, which has watched the Chilean "experiment" closely. In addition to strikes, there have been actions by underground leftists, such as the seizure of the central radio station in Santiago for six minutes on May Day. Women have been especially active in using neighborhood cultural groups and child care centers in working class areas as centers of political resistance.

China

Government officials have revealed recently that 130 million people in nine northern provinces are facing food shortages and possible starvation. The cause is officially attributed to floods and drought, but even this came as a shock to bourgeois and Left commentators who had come to view Chinese state-capitalism as a model for the Third World.

Students of Chinese revolutionary history will recall that it was in these very regions that Mao's guerrilla army established its first permanent bases after the Long March. Peasants in the area, then as now faced with starvation, flocked to join the Red Army, leading ultimately to the Communist victory in 1949.

While starvation today has not reached the terrible levels of the 1930s when millions died, it shows that China is far from "solving" the problem of feeding the masses, fully 32 years after the revolution.

In addition, Chinese workers have continued to engage in strikes, as admitted recently by the official unions. These included a two-day work stoppage by young workers in Liaoning Province at the huge Anshan steel complex which is the nation's largest, and another strike at a small glass-works in Shanghai. "Discussion" also

took place at the steel mills in Taiyuan in Shanxi between angry young workers and officials.

Grievances include especially the Maoist practice — still in effect for millions of people — of assigning jobs in such a way as to separate families and even spouses by thousands of miles. The government has responded by increasing from 20 to 30 days a year the amount of time a married couple can spend together if their jobs separate them.

Intellectuals and writers have also continued to be outspoken, most notably in the recent film "Unrequited Lives" by Bai Hui, which truthfully and bitterly portrays the persecutions of intellectuals during the Cultural Revolution, while refusing to add a "happy ending." When the army newspaper attacked the film — which has still not been shown publicly — students at Peking

University put up wall posters in defense of Bai Hua.

While the government has been forced to give in on some issues, its main response has been to jail its critics, especially workers. One of them, Fu Shangqi, dared to run for office in his factory late in 1980, obtaining several hundred votes. He was also involved in the opposition journal, *Duty*, founded last September in Canton by the newly-formed China National Unofficial Publication Association. He was arrested in April.

Most shocking of all was the rearrest of the world-famous Marxist critic Wang Xizhe from the group Li Yizhe, which had dared to challenge the whole political "system" in a huge Canton wall poster in 1974. The three young workers in the Li Yizhe group were "rehabilitated" by Deng Xiaoping early in 1979. Wang Xizhe refused to rally to the Dengists after his release and continued his criticisms. These activities included support of the Peking Spring and his recent work around a new journal, *Xueyou Tongxin* (Letter from Comrades in Study).

Lebanon

The remains of what was Lebanon are daily being devoured by a spectrum of powers ranging from neo-fascist to narrow nationalist, from religious zealots to occupying countries. While the small factions and two regional powers — Syria and Israel — direct the decimation, the super powers — the United States and Russia — stand ready to enter.

Israel, not satisfied with a UN buffer zone, has installed the Haddad militia on the Lebanese side of the border, supplying it with arms and aid. It carries out murderous air strikes into what it terms Palestinian guerrilla bases, causing the deaths of women and children as well.

Syria, with a force of 22,000 inside Lebanon, has in the past spent much of its time disciplining Palestinians, including an attack on the Tal Zaatar Palestinian refugee camp during the 1976 civil war. Its installation of SAM-6 missiles into the Bekaa Valley continues its policy of making sure any struggle within Lebanon is diverted to anti-Israeli.

What unites these two enemies, Israel and Syria, is their determination not to allow any genuine self-determination for the Lebanese people. For them, and especially for the super-powers, it is as if Lebanon was indeed a carcass in the midst of dismemberment. As well, both the Israeli and Syrian rulers face opposition within their own countries, which they wish to divert.

But the Lebanon of the civil war of 1975-76, far from regarding itself as only the booty of war, did seek to move toward genuine social revolution. It was that civil war which all the powers, small and super, wished to destroy. That civil war was as well the testing ground for all the Left, the PLO included.

What is new now, when not only Syria and Israel have transformed Lebanon into nothing but a battleground—a no-man's land, is that the Reagan administration is expanding its imperialist tentacles into the Gulf region. Toward that end, it has at one and the same time, encouraged the reactionary Begin government into its imperialist ambition to become the "guarantor" of U.S. imperialism in the Gulf, and Saudi Arabia to become that "guarantor." These insane games are challenged by Russia who is equally ambitious. If there is any way to avoid an outright Middle East war, those powers are not the ones looking for it.

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