

Theory/ Practice NEWS & LETTERS

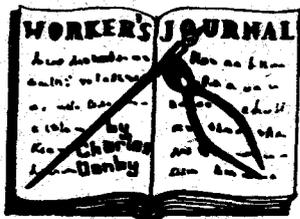
'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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Today's UAW pale shadow of yesterday's

by Charles Denby, Editor

Author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*

Recently I was reading about this being the 100th anniversary of the founding of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and that the UAW Executive Board had met and decided to rejoin the AFL-CIO. It made me think about the type of union movement we have today, particularly in the UAW, compared to the kind of a union the UAW was in the late 1930s and 1940s when I joined it.

Anyone can see that the AFL has been around much longer than the UAW and the CIO. The UAW was organized in 1936, some 45 years ago, and at that time it did not have anything in common with the AFL. We were told by many of the older leaders in the UAW that the AFL had not been interested in organizing production workers. They were only interested in skilled workers, and practically all of them were white workers.

UAW IN THE EARLY DAYS

I have discussed with many younger workers what the UAW meant to workers, and what the workers meant to the UAW back in the early days. The younger workers cannot believe that we ever had those kind of working conditions where we really had some control of production. They compare it with today's conditions and ask, if it was true, then how do you explain this turn around in the UAW to what it has become today?

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Protest Agent Orange, lack of treatment

Vietnam veterans stage hunger strike

Los Angeles, Cal. — On the same day Ronald Reagan was at West Point calling an end to the "temporary aberration" — his phrase for this country's alleged neglect toward war preparation in the post-Vietnam period — hunger-striking war veterans were entering a second week of protest against the government's disregard for the health and sanity of Vietnam-era survivors.

On May 20, veterans gathered at the Wadsworth VA hospital had independently begun two protests — a wait-in staged in the hospital lobby and a hunger strike on the front lawn. The two groups quickly issued a statement of unity and soon were receiving messages of solidarity from all corners of the country.

SUICIDE OF VET

The action followed the suicide of James Hopkins who, on March 14, had driven a jeep into the hospital lobby to protest the administration's refusal to treat Agent Orange sickness and post-Vietnam stress syndrome. The veterans are demanding a full review of Hopkins' case, an independent investigation of the VA hospital system, full and serious research of the effects of toxic herbicides on humans, implementation of a delayed re-entry program for all veterans wanting medical screening for disabilities related to military service, and an in-person meeting with Reagan.

By the middle of the second week, the occupation on the lawn had grown to include several dozen tents. The camp organized committees to maintain the group's cool under the hawkish surveillance of local authorities. A welcoming committee greeted those who had come to join or express support and an information board was erected which displayed newspaper clippings on veteran health problems as well as telegrams of solidarity.

One vet explained why he had driven out as soon as he had heard about the protest: "I served as a medic in 1966 and went up in the helicopters spraying chemicals. After I got out I was getting sick on and off and was depressed a lot. Later I started having trouble with my hearing. I used to play the guitar but by 1971 I

A Marxist-Humanist eyewitness report on England, France



Participants in March for Jobs, which began May 1 in Liverpool and ended in rally of 150,000 in London.

Labor, Women, Blacks on the move

by Olga Domanski

National Organizer, News and Letters Committees

Trafalgar Square was already full as we waited to greet the March for Jobs, when the 500 unemployed men and women who had started out from Liverpool on May Day arrived in London exactly one month later, singing with

clenched fists held high, followed by 150,000 more determined marchers holding banners from almost every union and every part of Britain. Nothing better told the mood of Britain, 1981, than this massive demonstration, the most widely backed the trades union movement had held since World War II.

Nothing, however, better tells the permanence of the unemployed army they represent than the Thatcher government's prediction on June 24, less than a month later, that unemployment, which has now risen to 11.1 percent—pushing the 2,680,977 now unemployed to a 50 year high since 1931—will rise to over three million by the end of the year. Nor does anyone believe that even these official figures are a real measure of the depth of the crisis. The statistics, rather, hide the truth: whole families are out of work, but only one "breadwinner" is counted for the unemployment doles; and over 100,000 jobless new school graduates do not appear on the rolls because they cannot claim benefits until September.

Little wonder that the marchers were met with the same kind of solidarity and support that had greeted the Jarrow Hunger Marchers in 1931. While the North, Wales, and Scotland suffer the worst levels of unemployment, the rate of increase has been greater in the Midlands and London. And all are aware that the twin crises of unemployment and inflation that are now a worldwide phenomenon of capitalism cannot be blamed, in Britain, on any "oil crisis"; Britain is now self-sufficient, with North Sea oil. The crises are integral to capitalism itself.

Thus, despite the rhetoric of many of the speeches at Trafalgar Square, and despite the determination of the marchers that the Tories must go, few seem to believe that a mere shift back to the Labour Party is any answer. One marcher with the Postal Workers' contingent called the march, for all its enthusiasm, "ritualized" and far "too contained" to suit him. Another, marching with no particular contingent, argued that you can't "contain" what 150,000 represent, and exulted in the "spirit" of the throng surrounding us.

Still another, a 24 year old unemployed youth from the North, said that of all those he knew who had left school at 16 to take apprenticeship training (which once

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WOMAN AS REASON

by Terry Moon

What is so great about the internationalism of the Women's Liberation Movement is that it reveals how truly universal is women's fight for freedom.

One example of the internationalism I am talking about is the struggle of women in India. I first heard of their activities in 1974, when poor women in the state of Maharashtra forced merchants to lower food prices, destroyed bootleg liquor shops and led the growing peasant union movement. What impressed me most was their slogan "We need land—and revolution!"

It is in struggling for that revolution against so many oppressions — class, caste, and a patriarchal culture that spawns widespread rape of poor women by government officials and police, dowry marriages, sati (the custom of throwing a woman on her husband's funeral pyre) — that an independent Women's Liberation Movement has developed.

One manifestation of the Indian Women's Movement is a magazine started in 1979, *Manushi*.^{*} Its pages are filled with news, articles, letters, poems, fiction and reviews of books and films. The editors, aware of being middle class, make a real effort to report news of all of India's women — particularly poor and working women. Thus they solicit articles and urge reporters "to use a tape recorder as much as possible," not only because India is a country "where the majority of women are not able to write," but also "to ensure that those of us who can write do not end up putting our words in their mouths."

While it is impossible here to give a complete review, there are a few things that jumped off the page at me. One is that the Indian women's movement has an affinity to the Black movement here. In one article, a demonstrator tells how 14 women confronted a procession honoring a princess who had committed sati. They made the procession go around in circles by running in front of it and sitting down. They "hadn't dis-

^{*}*Manushi* needs support to survive. They publish in both English and Hindi and are requesting regular monthly pledges. A subscription is \$15/yr. but send more if you can. They prefer payment by money order, postal order, or bank draft. Make payable to *Manushi* Trust and send to: *Manushi*, C 1/202 Lajpat Nagar, New Delhi-110024.

Rally to 'Take Back the Night'

Detroit, Mich.—On Saturday night, June 6, over 400 women, men and children gathered in Richard Park to participate in the second Detroit "Take Back the Night" rally and march. Our chants of "Women unite, take back the night!" and for total freedom in all our lives rang out as we marched through the neighborhood.

At the rally prior to the march, the lead-off speaker, Suzanne Casey from Women's Liberation-News and Letters, pointed to the continuity of this year's march not only with the Detroit action last year, but with Take Back The Night's beginnings by our German sisters in 1977, and with today's women's freedom struggles worldwide. A Black unemployed auto worker, Pat Williams, described her fight in the shop against sexual harassment, and other speakers took up issues such as rape and abortion.

The desire to have this year's activity start something new for the Women's Liberation Movement in Detroit was one reason we decided to plan a conference the following day with the theme, "Women, Take Back Our Lives."

Women's Liberation-N&L was part of the coalition which sponsored the weekend's events, and we organized a workshop on community organizing that brought together Helen Moore, from Detroit Black Parents for Quality Education, and Marti Bombyk from Ann Arbor, Mich., who spoke about the creative actions by feminists there against rape.

For many women, the whole idea of holding the conference was to develop a direction for the Women's Liberation Movement in Detroit, which we hoped to discuss at one of the final workshops on theory. (All three workshops given by socialists were relegated to the last time period.) Instead of developing a direction, what became evident during the discussion on theory was two conflicting ideas of women's liberation. One presented by Tommie Hope, a Marxist-Humanist, presented Marx's Marxism as a philosophy for total liberation. The other, by a radical feminist, insisted that fighting "white male dominance", that is patriarchy, should be our focus.

The poor attendance at that workshop, while many flocked to a movie on rape scheduled at the same time, showed how many feminists still live in isolation from women's liberation as a total freedom struggle. While two issue-oriented groups did emerge from the weekend, the relationship of specific issues to a serious concern with ideas and with revolution is one which remains to be developed in the coming year with those we met at the conference.

—Marxist-Humanist Women's Liberationist

'Manushi': women's creativity, revolt in India

cussed what slogans would be appropriate so (they) had to improvise. We also sang songs such as 'We Shall Overcome' in Hindi." And in the letter section, a woman writing against dowry marriage writes of "that feeling: 'We will not be sold.'"

From *Manushi* I learned that just as in the U.S., just as in Iran, just as in Portugal, the Indian women have to battle the male chauvinism of the vanguardist Left. In an article on "The New Rape Bill" we find that Left men oppose the Bill's provision that would put the burden of proof on the man rather than the woman, because "false cases of rape can be invented to discredit male political activists."! Even more horrifying is the author's account of a woman told to keep quiet about being raped by a "comrade" to preserve the "larger interests" of the party.

The fight of Indian women against the sexism in the Left is important because it reveals their deep critique not only of its male chauvinism, but of its ideas. To these women, the Left's idea of revolution is simply too narrow. A woman reviewing a supposedly radical film writes, "There are also the problems of women—remember, they're the ones that occur way down in every party manifesto?" And in the letter section, "I find that even men who call themselves communists consider it a sin to involve the women of their family in the movement."

OUTLAWING ABORTION IS
NOT ANTI-WOMAN—
IT'S PRO-FAMILY

SUCH LEGISLATION WILL
ONCE AGAIN MAKE
MOTHERHOOD...



RESPECTED, CHERISHED,
HONORED...

AND MANDATORY



Stop Family Protection Bill!

Detroit, Mich. — American feminists — those, that is, who have even heard about it — have been outraged by the introduction of the 1981 Family Protection Bill to the U.S. Congress on June 17 by three right-wing Republicans. Many U.S. newspapers did not even report on the bill's introduction and the *New York Times* devoted approximately two inches to the story.

The bill would deny birth control information to teenagers without parental consent, ban federal funds for schools books that "denigrate" women's "historical" role as mother and homemaker and prohibit government appointed lawyers for poor people in cases of abortion, homosexual rights or desegregation. It would exempt church and private schools from all federal regulations, including those on fair labor practices, and would also provide a bonus tax credit for married couples in each year in which a child is born or adopted.

If this sounds familiar, perhaps it is because it smacks so strongly of the "Kinder, Kirche, Küche" (Children, Church, Kitchen) slogan used by the Nazis to destroy the tremendous German women's movement organized by Clara Zetkin. Or perhaps it sounds like Russia, where the falling birth rate has forced the government in the name of "socialism" to ban women from certain "heavy" jobs, to change its tune on unwed mothers, and to award the title "Hero Mother" to those women with six or more children!

And lest we blame this bill on "patriarchy," Wanda Harding of the Moral Majority appeared at the press conference with the bill's sponsors, saying that it represented everything her group stood for. How RIGHT she is! It is anti-woman, anti-minority, anti-labor and anti-human.

Exactly whose family will be protected by a bill which bans government intervention in cases of spouse or child abuse? It is obviously the family of American capitalism with Reagan as Big Daddy, which needs to be protected from the women's liberation, civil rights, gay rights and labor movements which are threatening the continuance of just such inhuman relations and which must fight to keep this bill from being passed!

—Suzanne Casey

Manushi not only shows the creativity Indian women have developed in fighting their oppression, it is itself one form of that revolt. In *Manushi* we learn of the Chipko movement, dating back to the 19th century, in which women would embrace (chipko) the trees to prevent their being felled by government contractors. The trees are "sources of community life" — fuel, fodder and water — and when they are cut, soil erodes and villages become even more impoverished.

We also learn of "gherao," which means "to surround," and is a way Indian women created to force a factory owner, for example, to give in to their demands. They will literally surround him — even if he is in a car — and keep him there for days until he gives in.

As for Indira Gandhi, one woman from the dalit caste (the so-called "untouchables") put it this way: "It makes no difference to us which party comes to power — not one of them is bothered about us." It is clear that whereas Gandhi is spending billions on nuclear weapons and putting a satellite into space while millions live in the most abject poverty, the real human solutions to the problems of the Indian people — "We need land — and revolution!" — are being brought forward by masses of Indian women who refuse to subordinate their fight for freedom until the day after a revolution.

'What about nurses' needs?'

Los Angeles, Cal. — The newspapers have recently carried articles on the nursing shortage in California. However, my own experience as a nurse has given me a very different view of the working conditions of nurses.

To begin with, nursing is handicapped by its status as a woman's profession, since that traditionally means very low salaries, regardless of the work performed.

I work in a convalescent hospital. The staff on my station of 32 patients, of which about half are total care, consists of myself and two nursing assistants. I was actually told by my supervisor one day that I had too much help because my aides had time to stand in the hall and talk to the patients — as though talking to the patients was a waste of time! These aides had given up their break time in order to have time to talk to the patients. These are elderly patients, who have a real need for someone to talk to them and listen.

Nurses are supposed to be aware of people's needs. But what about the nurses' needs? We are being cruelly used and exploited for the enrichment of businesses connected with the hospitals, nursing homes, and the lordly M.D.s. The nursing hierarchy helps hospital management by inventing ways to get the most work out of the least number of nurses for the same token pay.

What kind of society are we living in when a nurse, who is responsible for the care of a human being, is paid so little and not treated as a human being herself? This system must be changed and made to work for the good of all people.

—Licensed Vocational Nurse



women- worldwide

Rita Silk-Nauni, a Native American sentenced to 150 years in prison in the accidental shooting of an airport policeman while protecting her ten-year old son from being "arrested" for littering, was released on appeal bond on April 30. She was originally released on March 27 but returned to prison a week later when the judge who presided over her trial and sentencing revoked her bail on a technicality. He has since been overruled and disqualified from the case. Funds needed for her appeal can be sent to: Rita Silk-Nauni Defense Fund, c/o Fidelity Bank, Act. #10 7738, Oklahoma City, OK, 73123.

Hundreds of feminists in Bilbao, Spain last week clashed with policemen who were sent to stop their demonstration in demand of changes in the abortion law and in support of 11 women on trial for having had an abortion.

Thousands of people from more than 100 cities and towns in West Germany participated in the action week, "Women Against War and Militarism, Women Against Atomic Power and the Destruction of the Environment," during the first week of March. From Flensburg to Munich and from Freiburg to Saarbrücken, there were rallies and informational fairs, theatrical performances, draft resistance actions, and demonstrations. The week culminated with more than 3,000 marching on the gigantic NATO Ramstein base on March 8, International Women's Day.

(Information from Courage, West Berlin)

Miners go back but plan to remove Church

Morgantown, W. Va. — "This isn't any new contract, this is the old one warmed over," yelled a rank-and-file miner at his local union meeting scheduled to review the terms of the "new" contract negotiated between UMWA President Sam Church and the Bituminous Coal Operators Association. "What we've got to do is get rid of Church and the whole damn national negotiating committee that approved this mess," the miner continued. "That's the only way we can get the message through that their job is to represent us and what we want, and they sure didn't do it."

A point that especially angered the miners was that the "new" contract was a package "take it or leave it" deal from the operators, and the week-and-a-half the UMW national negotiating committee spent in Washington, D.C. centered on Church and the BCOA pressuring the committee to get a unanimous vote.

BEAT COMMITTEE INTO LINE

As one union officer described it, there was no give-and-take involved in the negotiating committee discussion at all. When a negotiating committee member asked questions about any provision, he was told that was the way the operators wanted it. In fact, the negotiating committee didn't have a thing to do with the new contract, they were in Washington, D.C. just to be beaten into line to get a unanimous vote.

In one local union meeting, the rank-and-file became so disgusted that instead of discussing the contract, they began to ask questions about how long it would be before new elections could be held to replace the negotiating committee. The fact that the miners did vote to accept the new contract clearly resulted more from frustration rather than support for the contract.

It is true that several of the most objectionable provisions of the first contract were removed in the second one. However, many other points the miners opposed were kept in the second contract. Among the most important were the retention of the UMW-BCOA committee to review turning over the UMW pension plan to private insurers; keeping loopholes for operators to hire scab labor; making it more difficult for miners to protect themselves against unsafe conditions; putting more limits on job transfers, and maintaining provisions for operators to open non-union mines.

'FISH HOOKS' IN CONTRACT

As one miner said when the contract had been examined, "Every one of those new provisions is a big fish hook put in by the coal operators for a reason, and every miner in this room is going to be snagged by one or more of them." Especially galling to the miners is the fact that they have consistently taken steps — at

Schwinn post-strike troubles

(Editor's Note: The following article is excerpted from the bilingual — Spanish-English — News & Letters Special Schwinn Supplement published in Chicago. For copies of the full supplement write to: News & Letters, 220 S. State, Rm. 1326, Chicago, Ill. 60604).

Chicago, Ill. — We're working under a lot of pressure, and a lot of people are getting fed up. You can be half dead and they don't want to hear it. Everybody dreads going into Schwinn now.

Women are being told now if their machine is down to work on another one. They have speed on the machine they're on now but don't have speed on the other one. It's more for a man and making rate isn't easy.

That's nonsense about there being no women's jobs and men's jobs anymore. I heard about a woman who was laid off because she wouldn't push the heavy tubs of metal parts around but instead called for a jeep driver.

Some of the people who voted to end the strike are still not back. If they can get the work they're getting from the people they have now, those people will never come back. Whatever the problem, the company says "blame it on the union."

But they flat out refuse every grievance. We had a power failure at plant 4. I got one of those 1:30 a.m. phone calls. But some of the people didn't, so they came in and are supposed to get some pay. The company just says no, they will not pay them.

A lot of mothers come in off maternity and can't work those hours all week and still come in on Saturday, because they have to spend some time with their families. After nine hours a day, five days a week, I shouldn't have to give you six hours on Saturday, because Saturday and Sunday are my days.

The union says it is in the contract. First of all, I have to get a contract so that I know where my rights lie. The union will say it is OK to do something and Schwinn will say it is not. We really don't know what they signed. You have positive thoughts about the union one minute and negative thoughts the next. If you don't know what your rights are, you can't stand up for them.

—Woman worker, Schwinn

UMWA conventions as well as in district elections — to strengthen the hand of Church in negotiations with the coal operators. Instead of strength, the miners got weakness, and enraged at the betrayal of the first contract, overwhelmingly rejected it.

Church admitted he had "mis-read" the mood of the miners in the first contract. If Church thinks his second contract is a correct "reading" of the mood of the miners, he is in for more than a few surprises.

It is clear from the reactions of the rank-and-file miners, as well as a number of union officials, that steps are already underway to change not only the top leadership of the UMWA in the November, 1982 national union election, but also the composition of the national negotiating committee. There appears to be little doubt that the "fish hooks" in the present contract will continue to remind the miners of this need.

Optical factory bosses push more work at minimum wage

New York, N.Y.—I work in an optical factory. We are 70 percent Haitian, the rest mostly Dominican and South American. Our starting pay is minimum wage for specialized work that demands high concentration, and they are always pushing us to work faster. When you get older and are earning more, they try to find a pretext to get rid of you.

This industry is in a tremendous recession in New York. Many factories have closed, and others have moved to Trinidad, Antigua, Puerto Rico or Alabama, making it hard for us to find another job. Now, they have a new machine that cuts both lenses simultaneously. Where they have been demanding a minimum of 500 lenses a day per worker, they will want 1,000 to 1,200, further reducing our jobs.

When the bell rings, they expect you to have your machine running, with a lens being cut even before the bell has finished ringing! We used to go to wash up 10 or 15 minutes before the end, but then they announced that any workers leaving their machines more than five minutes before the bell would have their cards punched by the foreman.

That's how they fire you. They punch your card, stamp it "terminated," and put it up over the time clock for everyone to see.

The other day a Haitian woman who had worked here three years was fired. Her machine broke down, and since her foreman was not around she sat down and waited. Another foreman came, fixed the machine, and she went back to work. But later the big boss came up, shut off her machine and fired her for sitting down before. The woman knows no English and could not defend herself. We are waiting to see what the union will do.

Our United Optical Workers Union takes out too much dues—\$13 to \$19 a month—for such low pay. Then they "assess" us half a day's wages twice a year! If you miss a union meeting they fine you \$10, and often take the fine out twice. When you complain they say they'll put it towards your next dues, but it's a lie. At the meetings they try to get you to give to the union's blood bank. I told them, "After all the blood the bosses suck from me, and all the blood the union sucks from me, you think I'm going to give blood too?"

—Latino worker

Overtime, speed-up are 'capital punishment' to GM workers

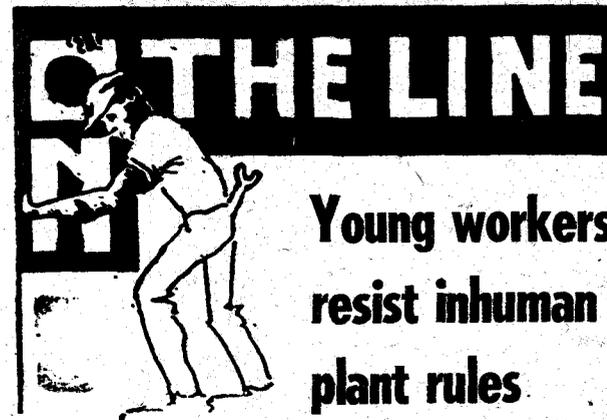
by Felix Martin, West Coast Editor

Since the GM South Gate plant started up again on March 30, plant manager Harden set the line speed at 55 jobs per hour — then he said we were going to build a quality car. Since then the foremen have been running wild up and down the line cussing out workers or calling them up to show them what had been missed. Of course, this practice by the foremen is the cause of so much being missed, along with the line speed itself.

We all hear and read in the news about the crime and violence in the streets, but no one reports on the real violence and crime that goes on each day in the factories, at the point of production.

While on my way to clock out the other day after nine hours of "capital punishment," we met one of the metal finishers all bent over to one side. Immediately six or seven workers gathered around him, and we all understood the pain he was suffering because it has happened to all of us, too. One worker told him "tomorrow will be even worse," and another gave him a card with the address of a doctor. The injured worker took the card and said that the company doctor we have doesn't know anything.

The other day some of the section foremen asked each of the workers individually to work ten hours for two days. Another foreman asked the metal finishers to



by John Marcotte

There is a daily struggle in the factory between labor and management that never gets reported until it flares up into big strikes.

At my plant, a young Black worker got a written warning for "low productivity," but everyone said it was discrimination. The foreman had been on his case ever since day one. He filed a grievance and when he went to the office with the union the next day, they fired him — they say for his attendance, we say for fighting the unjust warning. And the union organizer told him, "If I were your boss, I would fire you too for your attendance."

We petitioned the union about his case, so they took it to arbitration. But we knew he would never win. About the only times a worker has been fired and taken back are when the whole plant wildcats over it.

Once you punch that clock there are dozens of rules you are probably breaking at any time if you are a human being and not a machine. The bell rings and you're supposed to be at your machine and working every time. When you need to go to the bathroom you are supposed to ask your foreman. If you stay more than ten minutes, you will have to answer for it. The foremen can drink coffee anytime, but you have to wait for the break.

All this is very demeaning. You are constantly being shown that you are not supposed to be equal. How can a grown man or woman have to ask to go to the bathroom, or have to sneak around just to get a swallow of coffee or say a few words to a friend? Some workers call it prison. This is what young workers react against most. Many of them get fired because they just can't see going along with these relations of boss and worker.

The other week, while we are doing all the work and getting hot and dirty, the time study man comes up. He stands two feet away, staring at you working and doesn't say a word, doesn't even see you — just your hands working. Some workers tried to ignore him. Others slowed down. Some young ones stopped and stared him down. "He's studying every move to see how they can squeeze more work out of us," we said.

It is this constant struggle that makes many factory workers in New York feel a natural sympathy for the workers of Poland, Ireland and El Salvador in their struggles, as often comes out in our daily conversations. The struggle continues.

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work two ten-hour days and had them sign a paper that they were doing so voluntarily. Other workers were asked the same thing.

Until GM catches up with the 100,000 orders they are behind this is what they are going to do. The workers really see this as GM's attempt to get them to work ten-hour shifts so that the company won't have to bring back the second shift which is scheduled to start here in July or August.

The fact is that GM can't make us work over nine hours unless we vote to renegotiate the contract. The latest development is that after working the nine hours, the foreman came around and told the workers to attend a meeting in the cafeteria. There we had to listen to the plant manager try and brainwash us into working ten. But even that meeting itself was a violation of the contract, as we had to stay an extra hour over the nine.

Recently, an article appeared in the LA Times praising the close relationship of management and the union leadership in putting out quality cars at South Gate. Harden, however, forgot to mention in the article that in our recent election the membership voted out every one of the team that had all these good relations with the company. The membership also warned the new bureaucrats that they would get rid of them as soon as they begin to get too close to management.

THEORY / PRACTICE

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

(Editor's Note: A first draft of this talk was presented at Cal. State University at Los Angeles, April, 1981. The talk was jointly sponsored by the Latin American Studies Center and the News and Letters youth group on campus. Below are excerpts.)

Today, when we are witness to the genocidal war in El Salvador that U.S. imperialism is inspiring the El Salvadoran oligarchy to conduct, complete with a so-called "White Paper" that spreads the Big Lie about what is really going on in that civil war, we must practice a double vision. That is to say, we must, in fighting against the Reagan Administration and solidary with the Salvadoran revolutionaries, not close our eyes about the unfinished state of the Latin American revolutions. It is most urgent that the revolution not be separated from a philosophy of revolution. Too many revolutions, and not only in Latin America, have soured and been transformed into their opposite—still another form of exploitative capitalism. Therefore, let us begin with the immediate post-World War II period when many thought that the end of fascism would mean a truly new human world.

SURELY, PRESIDENT REAGAN and his militaristic Secretary of State, Haig, weren't the first to tell the Big Lie against a genuine civil war of the working masses against their oligarchic rulers, "Los Catorce." This two percent of the population and its neo-fascistic military, propped up by U.S. imperialism, that controls 70 percent of the arable land, had actually emerged when it first, way back in 1932, put down the great peasant revolution in a most genocidal war. It was exactly at that time when U.S. imperialism felt safe. It had plenty of freedom to move against the whole of Latin America, except that it was impossible in the Depression not to pay attention to its own rebellious masses at home. And thus it happened that in this period, Mexico was able to nationalize its oil and move away from U.S. imperialism. As well, many mass movements began in Latin America, with every conceivable Marxist movement finding its roots there.

1981 EL SALVADOR REMEMBERS 1952 BOLIVIAN REVOLUTION AND 1954 U.S. COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN GUATEMALA

But it was in the post-World War II period that U.S. imperialism got its worst scare. It was then when the Bolivian Revolution of 1952 succeeded. It succeeded both among the industrial workers—the miners—and the peasants. It was not, however, a workers' state that arose, but a so-called Popular Front government, where the Trotskyists, the largest of the Left then, functioned as part of the new nationalistic-capitalistic government.

U.S. imperialism began its counter-revolutionary plots not only there, but throughout Latin America, especially in Guatemala, which likewise had thrown out its militaristic government and established a Popular Front, but with no substantial Left in it. Forget Reagan and think of the then president, Eisenhower; and for Haig substitute Dulles—none was worse; and for the Reagan-Haig immoral minority that has the gall to call itself the "Moral Majority," don't forget to think of the infamous McCarthy of the 1950s. And thus you have the U.S.-engineered counter-revolution in Guatemala in 1954.

We must not let them repeat today what they achieved in 1954, and from which to this day we suffer. Nor must we allow them to forget the true opposite—workers against capitalists—and have them say that the two opposites are Russia and the U.S.

The U.S. and Russia are only two varieties of the same exploitative society—one private capitalist and the other state-capitalist. It is true, however, that insofar as Latin America is concerned, the direct imperialist is the U.S., not Russia. Latin America has been the preserve of American imperialism since first

El Salvador: Reagan's genocidal war and the unfinished Latin American revolutions

it was born. The first time that the U.S. intervened on a large scale, way back at the end of the 19th century—the Spanish-American War when the Cuban people were fighting for freedom from Spain—we told them they were going to have a great big beautiful island, all free. Except we simply threw out Spain so that the U.S. alone could rule the roost.



Young freedom fighters in El Salvador

The ones who smelled the rat of expansionism at once were the American Blacks. They were the first ones to establish an Anti-Imperialist League which said: When we had finished the Civil War and were supposedly getting our freedom, we found that there was the KKK. We saw the retrogression in the way in which the Reconstruction period was ended. Now, in the 1890s, the fact that America is trying to go out on a color binge, really means a new imperialism even though now it is going to be directed against Latin America rather than being against us, the American Blacks.

FROM THE VERY BEGINNING you had this sense that U.S. imperialism was connected both with the racism in this country and with the imperialism throughout the world.

I will return both to the 1952-54 period of revolution/counter-revolution, as well as to what I call Marxist-Humanism in all periods of liberation struggles. Here I pointed to this period only to make sure that, while looking at today's actual struggles, we neither forget the past nor the ideas of freedom which inspire the present.

Take the new period of revolt that started in Guatemala in 1978. Here we have altogether new elements: for the first time a woman was a leader of the Indian movement; and there was a new philosophy of revolution, a sense and appreciation of their own culture. Just as in El Salvador you had the "Catorce," so in Guatemala you have a portion of the Ladino community who have made it in society as against the Indians. The new culture, this new Indian consciousness, emerged in 1978. In bringing this out we see that the question is not alone the fact that you have imperialism, and that once again the U.S. is pretending that it is a Russia-U.S. struggle instead of the U.S. struggling against the Latin American masses as well as against the U.S. masses. It is that at the same time a movement poses its new forms of struggle, new forces of revolution, new forms of organization, new forms for what happens after the revolution.

Of course, we do not stop the struggle against U.S. capitalism-imperialism. But neither can we consent to go only half-way, only the overthrow of the old, as Cuba did.

BACK TO EL SALVADOR AND THE NEW MOVEMENT FROM PRACTICE

The reason that I went into the unfinished state of the Latin American revolutions, the Cuban included, was not so much to stress their unfinished state. Rather, it was to point to the fact that a new world stage had started in the 1950s, that which I called the movement from practice. With respect to ourselves as revolutionaries in the U.S., we had seen that, with the stage of a new form of production, Automation, and the workers revolts against it in their wildcats, what was really involved was far from being only a question of philosophy in the abstract. "Cognition" was also a movement from practice, that was itself a form of theory. Now it was easy to see that clearly when in East Europe, you had the movement from practice of the East Europeans' fight against Communist totalitarianism, which also meant the bringing onto the historic stage Marx's Humanist Essays. It was not easy to see that that was also exactly what was involved in the 1952 Bolivian Revolution.

But the counter-revolution—U.S. imperialism—saw the threat of Bolivia clearly. Because they did, they immediately embarked on counter-revolutions, and not only in Bolivia. "Never again" for U.S. imperialism,

meant Guatemala as well, and thus the counter-revolution of 1954. And for our age—and herein is the urgency for El Salvador — it meant that when they saw the revolution succeed in Nicaragua, their "never again" meant they wouldn't even take any chances with any type of ever so mild reform as the civilian junta had originally proposed. So the counter-revolution in El Salvador is assuming outright genocide.

IN TRYING TO SEE what can we do now, naturally first on the agenda is to oppose Reagan's counter-revolution there; to oppose Reagan's support of the military; to expose all the lies and fabrications that have now been concocted; and to solidarize with the El Salvadoran people's fight for their own liberation. But having witnessed the last 25 years of unfinished revolutions, we cannot leave it at the fact of solidarity, or exposure of the two percent—the aristocracy—that controls almost all the arable land, or all the unemployment. All these facts are there for anybody to see. We have to present them, but that simply is not enough.

Let us return again to the question of a philosophy of revolution. We have to look at the theoretic void. Take the Trotskyists. They make Cuba the rampart of world revolution, and, of course, to them, Russia is the rampart of ramparts, despite all these years as a monstrosity, including carrying out the murder of Trotsky. They have nothing to criticize Castro today for except that he was in their word "empiric" on the question of Stalinism. But this is no ideological question, empiric or otherwise. This is a class question, and the oppressive class is the state-capitalism of Russia calling itself Communism.

Instead of all the rush to attach oneself to one or another state power, be it Russian or U.S. imperialism, or China, de-Maoized or otherwise, we must catch the historic link to Marx's Marxism as, in fact, our own post-World War II age did when it brought back the Humanist Essays onto the historic stage within the East



"WHEN THE GOVERNMENT SAID AGRARIAN REFORM WOULD MEAN A PLOT OF LAND FOR EACH OF US, SOMEHOW I DIDN'T PICTURE THIS..."

European Revolts. It is as well true in Latin America, in Africa and in Asia, and in the United States, as the history of 25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S. has summed up. What El Salvador has made so absolutely urgent is that, if we are really going to have a total revolution, an absolute revolution from under absolute tyranny, it cannot only oppose feudalism and oligarchy, or capitalist-imperialism. It has to show what it is for.

WHAT MARX SHOWED back when he discovered a whole new continent of thought and of revolution, was first that you have to oppose not only capitalism, but also what he called "vulgar communism." The vulgar communists were those who thought all you have to do is abolish private property and you have a new society. Marx's point was that in place of either the profit motive of capitalism, or the vulgar communist idea of state property, you had to have totally new human relations, beginning at the point of production. Secondly, you had to recognize other revolutionary forces such as that which Marx called a "second edition of the Peasants' War" to assure proletarian victory. Or women. Nowhere as clearly as in Nicaragua and El Salvador has the new revolutionary force of women's liberation been expressed more sharply as in their constituting no less than 30 percent of the revolutionary guerrilla force.

Naturally I do not mean that after catching the historic link with Marx's Marxism, there is nothing else for us to do. Quite the contrary. Our work first then begins. After all, what makes it possible to catch the link to Marx is exactly the new that has happened in our age, for the last three decades, with its movement from practice. There must be a living interrelation of today's movement from practice and Marx's revolutionary visions.

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EDITORIAL Azanian movement shakes Botha regime, exposes Reagan policy

Two very different South African anniversaries, coming within weeks of each other—the 20th anniversary of the South African "Republic" and the fifth anniversary of the start of the Soweto Rebellion—both starkly revealed the absolute oppositions within that land, and forced the Reagan administration's policy on Southern Africa out into the open.

For months the apartheid government of South Africa planned celebrations of the 20th anniversary of its formal break with the British Commonwealth, scheduling lavish festivities in an assertion of "national unity." Instead, the last week in May saw the beginnings of a new stage in the liberation struggle against that racist police state. A week-long protest against the celebrations swept the Black townships and so-called "colored" (mixed-race) ghettos.

When police stormed into a Johannesburg high school May 29, breaking up a protest hunger strike by students who had barricaded themselves inside, and arresting 31 "ringleaders," they unleashed a storm. Thousands of students—Black, mixed-race, and even including a few whites—took to the streets to demand the release of Aziz Jardine and other student leaders. So widespread were the demonstrations that government officials openly feared "1976 all over again."

BLACK UNIONS GROWING

It was not alone the bravery of the high school students that had the government worried. It was also the explosive growth in size and militancy of the Black union movement in areas as widely separated as Port Elizabeth, Pretoria and Boksburg. For the last several months, Black workers at many of the largest plants of the multi-nationals have been flocking into new unions. Not even the sweeping arrests of 60 Black union leaders in the last month have been able to stop it.

After members of the Motor Assembly and Components Workers Union were fired at a Firestone tire plant for protesting government changes in their pension plan, solidarity strikes broke out at Ford and General Motors plants. Over 5,000 workers were involved at one time, and the union, organized less than a year ago, leaped from a handful at Firestone to nearly 100 percent signed-up. And no sooner did the strikes in auto and tire plants end, than Black workers at Colgate-Palmolive's Boksburg plant, wearing "Boycott Colgate-Palmolive" stickers on their overalls, announced plans for a strike there.



South African police tear-gassed a memorial meeting in Soweto held on the fifth anniversary of the start of the Soweto student-worker uprising.

By June 16, on the fifth anniversary of the start of the Soweto rebellion, all the resources of the Botha government had been mobilized to repress another outburst. Arrests of Black students and trade unionists multiplied. When 5,000 gathered at Soweto's Regina Mundi church to commemorate the uprising, the police response was one of tear gas and whips. But they were powerless to stop the massive stay-at-home action that day by over 50 percent of Soweto's workers.

What the workers' actions underlined was the powerful challenge they pose to the heart of the South African system—its industrial and mining super-profits, extracted by not only South Africa's ruling class, but by corporate power centers in the USA, Britain and Germany.

Thus, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State William Clark's meetings in Pretoria with South Africa's Prime Minister Botha just five days before the Soweto commemoration could not be viewed as any routine diplo-

matic visit. Under the facade of U.S. support for Namibian independence, what the Reagan administration has now undertaken is a campaign to "end South Africa's polecat status in the world"—whether or not they ever allow Namibians the "free elections" South Africa is continually postponing in that colony.

NAMIBIA BETRAYED

Indeed, so far to the ultra-right has Reagan's Southern Africa policy taken him, that the administration is now moving at one and the same time toward revival of the military alliance with South Africa and the linking of Namibian independence to imposition of a U.S.-approved "coalition government" in Angola. If only Angola sends all Cuban troops home, and accepts South African and Jesse Helms-backed Jonas Savimbi into the government, then, Reagan declares, South Africa will agree to those "free elections" in Namibia.

So completely has the Reagan administration meshed its support for South African apartheid with its assault on Black America at home, that Reagan's nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, was an outright racist, Ernest Lefever. And while it is true that revelations that Lefever believes Blacks to be "genetically inferior" finally forced the right-wing U.S. Senate to back away from his appointment, Sen. Jesse Helms had more than a grain of truth in his statement that attacks on Lefever's politics were really attacks on Reagan.

Reagan and his advisers have planned their "Southern strategy" carefully—in South Africa and in the USA. They know full well that the cuts in social programs are no "evenly shared burden"; that they are aimed most directly at Black America. But such plans, like those of Botha and his regime for their 20th anniversary commemorations, have a way of being upset by history.

In taking to the streets this month, Azanian liberationists had a far different 20th anniversary in mind, one that linked the struggle against the pass laws in South Africa with the struggle against segregation in South USA. They have thus demonstrated that the real outsiders of this world are the planners of those hollow celebrations; those who rule this racist, sexist, capitalistic system. The demonstrations and strikes by the Azanian masses point instead to the true shapers of history and its process, whether in Africa or America—the fighters and thinkers for human liberation.

LABOR REVOLT 1981: STRUGGLES AND QUESTIONS

Did you hear about the wildcat walk-out at Chrysler's Belvidere, Illinois plant June 12? Finally all the phony deals worked out by the UAW at Solidarity House and the officers of Chrysler broke down. For the last two years all we have heard has been "we have to get Chrysler back on its feet, so don't make trouble." Meanwhile, they have been allowed to run all over Chrysler workers on pay, benefits, overtime, speed-up and everything else.

Now that might be starting to change, I think. The workers at Belvidere have been working overtime for nearly a year, nine hours a day, six days a week, to make the Omni and Horizon. When they heard that they would not get their COLA checks, they called in sick for two shifts. After all, why shouldn't they get COLA when Iacocca is again drawing his fat salary? The UAW said that they "did not endorse the walkout." They never do, so I guess we will have to take care of things ourselves.

**Laid-off Chrysler worker
Detroit**

What everyone is talking about in my plant is why is it that they spend \$60 million to re-tool the plant with robots over changeover and we still have to work with tools that pre-date World War II.

**Autoworker
Los Angeles**

What a surprise to see the postal worker's article from Seattle in N&L! When I used to work in the Post Office things were already going downhill, but now the conditions are far, far worse. I bet that before the year is out there will really be a blow-up in the postal service nationally. There could be another strike like 1970.

**Ex-postal worker
Florida**

We were on lunch break when a Maoist came over with a real hard sell on their paper and May Day rally. When she left this is what my friends had to say: "She was rapping to us, Nobody likes to be rapped to like that. After a while they sound just like what they say they're against." "She was talking too fast. A salesman shouldn't talk so fast you can't understand them."

I said, that's their politics. They don't want to listen to what workers have to say.

**Factory worker
New York**

Even though we are back at work here at South Gate, they have yet to bring the second shift back, and there are still thousands of steel, rubber, and auto workers still on lay-off all through Southern California. This week Governor Brown came out with his 'solution' to this problem of thousands of unem-

ployed workers — he said he wants to increase taxes in order to build more jails! What does this system have to offer us except worse working conditions, more police, and more jails?

What makes me so damn mad, is that it is always the workers who produce everything who are the ones who do all the suffering. Reagan has forced the Japanese auto companies to cut back on imports in this country, which will mean more unemployment. It is just to cut out competition against General Motors, so they can raise prices on their newest gas guzzlers.

**South Gate worker
California**

I sold a copy of N&L to a Middle Eastern worker at the GM Fleetwood plant. He started reading the story on Mitterrand's election in France, because it surprised him that the Socialists finally won there. But he didn't think it would mean a big change. "Unemployment and inflation, that's what they will always have," he said. When I asked why he thought so he said he had worked in a government-owned Renault plant in France, and now in a GM plant in the U.S. "I can't tell you which one is better — they are all the same, same kind of foremen, same speed-up. Only the name on the front of the building is different."

**N&L distributor
Detroit**

Along with my sub renewal, I'd like to report that 1981 has been a good year so far in terms of class activity here in British Columbia. Some of the highlights: In the recent telephone strike most facilities were occupied and put under workers control for about a week. There was a great deal of public support and many cars also had "Nationalize B.C. Tel" bumper stickers. There were several general strikes in some towns in support of the telephone workers. In this long strike workers obtained significant wage increases, and were able to stop the company from victimizing militants.

Railway workers wildcatted over worker victimizations and shut down the major rail lines east for about a week. This action was extremely unpopular with the union bosses. Municipal workers in the Vancouver area were out for months in a bitter strike as well.

The end of the militancy is not yet in sight, as the woodworkers contract is up. It is interesting to note that one of Vancouver's daily papers stated that workers in B.C. were the only ones in Canada to actually gain in wages when contrasted to the inflation rate. This might be a lesson to workers everywhere that the "austerity" programs can be beaten.

**Leon G.
Vancouver, Canada**

MIDDLE EAST WOMEN: WHICH ROAD TO 'LIBERATION AND REVOLUTION'?

The essay article by Neda Azad on "Middle East women: liberation and social revolution" made many different impressions on me. I appreciated what was said about the interrelationships between revolutionary struggles. I think of the impact the revolutions in Africa had on Portugal. And then I try to anticipate what a great effect the liberation struggle in Palestine could have on the entire Middle East if activists who want to build a new society don't limit themselves to tactical questions, but take up a philosophy with a total vision of new human relations.

**Iranian woman
California**

The material that you presented on Middle East women was very interesting to me, and I took down all the footnotes to look up the articles your writer cites for myself. But I can't agree that what she says proves that Marxism is the answer for women. On the contrary, it

seems to me that the male-dominated, Left is incurable. They will always put off women's freedom until they are forced to deal with the issue by women. We have only ourselves to count on, not the Marxists.

**Women's liberationist
New York**

As an American feminist, I greatly appreciated Neda Azad's essay, as a concrete theoretical challenge to the Women's Liberation Movement here. The tendencies in the movement still engage in abstract theoretic debate about the oppressions of patriarchy and/or capitalism, without looking at actual revolutions as both activity and thought. The question is: what has emerged from the mass movements of women fighting both class and colonial oppression and sexism — including the sexism of the Left?

While incisively critical of the Left, Neda Azad hasn't passively accepted their interpretations of Marxism.

Readers' View

RACISM'S 'PROFESSIONALS'

The racism of this country is just beyond all belief. I was watching on TV the arrest of Wayne Williams in Atlanta for the murders of the children there, and listening to the commentators. They couldn't stop saying how wonderful it was that the FBI and the Atlanta police and the Task Force had all gotten together to "solve" this case. They kept referring to the community workers as amateurs, whereas this was a job for "professionals."

Where were all these professionals during the past year of horrors in Atlanta, Buffalo, Salt Lake City, Mobile and all the other places Blacks are being murdered? Where is the man who tried to murder Vernon Jordan? I feel like they aren't trying much harder now than they were back in the days when the Birmingham Church was bombed and the little girls killed there.

**Black worker
Detroit**



CHICAGO WOMEN 'DEFEND OUR RIGHT TO CHOOSE'

On June 7, around 200 women held a conference in Chicago called "Defend Our Right To Choose." We, Marxist-feminists, don't want to fight on the ground of the right wing "When does human life begin," but on the ground of the Women's Liberation Movement, projecting the idea that controlling our bodies and minds is more than free abortion on demand. After all, they have free abortion in Russia and, as the Russian feminists have shown, it does not mean women's freedom. You can also look at the minority women here who have to fight forced sterilization. Women's Liberation means to transform all of this society into a totally new human one.

This view was in fact needed and appreciated by many women who came, since the presence of the right wing there threatened to center all of the conference around their ideas and not the development of our challenge to them.

**Marxist-feminist
Chicago**

APPEAL FROM BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT

Solidarity, the official organ of the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania, has been banned in South Africa, making it more difficult than ever to infiltrate it and reach those to whom it is directed: the working people inside South Africa. Our overseas readers can help us defeat the banning order, either by taking out an annual subscription (Britain L3, Abroad \$10), or by sending a monthly contribution to Solidarity Account No. 0078916, Lloyds Bank Ltd., 88 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0EO.

**Solidarity
42 Danbury Street
London N1 8JU, England**

PHILOSOPHY AND REVOLUTION

I was fascinated with the "Theory/Practice" column by Raya Dunayevskaya on Marx's critique of Hegel in 1841 (June N&L). I can understand now how Marx first came to question Hegel, when he asked himself: how can one achieve a unity of both theory and practice when Hegel is dealing with only theory and not practice? Marx was saying that Hegel's concept of totality was not really total.

I thought about it in relation to the way I have always heard about how Denby and Dunayevskaya were working in the early 1950s. He was writing *Indignant Heart* and she was working out the Absolute Idea. But it wasn't left as theory. The Absolute Idea meant the founding of News and Letters Committees, and 25 years of trying to establish the relationship of theory and practice.

**Bus Driver and Marxist-Humanist
Detroit**

Last month I went to the Western Socialist Social Science Conference. It was very disappointing in many ways. My own talk was the only mention of Marx and our vision of the new society. One speaker from NAM even said that we should forget the revolution, that the best we could hope for was some form of "modified-alienation." I was left wondering where "social science" is going if these are the best and most radical elements in it.

**Deborah Morris
Berkeley, Calif.**

I have been re-thinking the article on the "Peasant dimension in Latin America" (April N&L). The important part of the title now seems to me to be "the relation of theory to organization." In Bolivia, what did it mean for the Trotskyists to have a theory about the peasantry and how did it affect their organization? The Trotskyist program in 1946 did call for peasants and workers together, and they were able to build an organization that had both. But what becomes of their theory and organization after the 1952 revolution, when they are supporting the government and the peasants begin instituting their own direct "land reform"?

The answer is that the Trotskyists try to contain the movement, and the government's official land reform is directed to that end. So it isn't just a question of having the "correct program" at one moment. You need a philosophy that will help you see what is involved when the revolution has moved to a new stage. Latin America's struggles today are making us, as U.S. revolutionaries, re-think a lot of questions—and not just questions on Latin America.

**Activist
San Francisco**

THE ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT

Thank you for printing that magnificent story by the woman ex-sailor in the last issue of N&L. I was a draft resister during the Vietnam War, and heard many stories of the conditions inside the military then, but rarely with the kind of perspective in this article. You can see that the entry of women into the Navy has changed a lot of things — not only the signs on the bathrooms. I wish more people would get a chance to hear about the continuing struggle inside the armed forces today, even when we don't have an official draft.

Anti-war activist
Grand Rapids, Mich.

For what it's worth to you, I thought you would like to know about the action the First Unitarian Church in Los Angeles took to dramatize its objection to the war preparations of our government. Reagan's brigands have put it more blatantly than it has been done since the last war. Since the church doesn't pay income taxes, it couldn't do what a few brave members have done—refuse to pay the war part of their personal income tax. So they have done the next best thing: refusing to pay the Federal Excise Tax on the church's monthly telephone bill. That tax goes directly for war. Every little bit helps! And that's why I'm enclosing a small contribution to help with the postage on future issues of N&L.

New reader
Los Angeles, Calif.



**POLAND:
BALANCING
ACT OR
WORKERS'
DEVELOPMENT?**

The media focuses on the latest events in Poland as though the only determinate of the development in Poland was some sort of a balancing act between "Solidarity," the Polish Party, and Russia. That is what the latest reports on the Russian threats to the Polish leadership and Kania's promises to Moscow that "counter-revolution will not succeed" on one hand, and promises to Solidarity on the other, are meant to project.

What this view completely misses is that central to the development of events in Poland is the self-development of the workers. Time after time they have accomplished "the impossible." One of the theories that was disproven by the movement was exactly the a-historical nature of the Party. The party itself is undergoing a revolution not anticipated by the movement leaders. As all things are so fluid in Poland what is needed more than

ever is a philosophy that focuses on self-development of the Subject. Only such a view will enable one not to get caught up in the "balancing" act.

Urszula Wislanka
Chicago

Right now things are very quiet over there in Poland. I smell a sellout. They're being sold out by the big powers. Maybe some people think Poland is already free with their new union, but eventually they'll try and cut them down. They'll get the leaders of Solidarnosc especially. It may be a bit like when Mao said to "let 100 flowers bloom" and then he got them all once they came out into the open. The Party and Russia are watching and waiting, getting ready to pounce. I say this on the basis of having lived in Hungary during the Revolution and the Russian invasion of 1956.

Rank-and-file worker
New York

Ztangi Press announces the publication of **The Polish August**, a collection of documents from the beginnings of the Polish workers' rebellion. Almost half of this previously unavailable material comes from the strike at the Lenin Shipyards in Gdansk. The remainder of the book contains statements from farmers, intellectuals and dissidents, interviews with strike leaders and a chronicle of the events in Poland from July, 1980 to May, 1981.

The book is published as a not-for-profit endeavor. We hope to develop a network of translators for future material from Poland. Copies of the book cost \$6.00 and can be obtained from:

Ztangi Press
55 Sutter Street
San Francisco, CA 94104

READING 'INDIGNANT HEART'

In the last week I have spent most of my time reading **Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal**. It is the most important book I have ever read. I say that because I have seen a lot of trouble and struggle in my life, but I want Charles Denby to know that he is the only one who has told the truth and told it fully. The union officers will never lead us out of the hell we are in, and neither will the little Left groups. I guess I have seen all of them, in one way or another. When Denby got to the 1970s, and the feeling he has for Africa and America, fighting together, I had to ask myself why we were not organizing something to make that connection real today.

New reader and friend
New York

**FREEDOM FIGHTS CONTINUE
IN CHINA, IN TAIWAN . . .**

A very important new publication on the struggle for freedom in both mainland China and Taiwan has just appeared. It is issue number 10 of **SPEARhead** (P.O. Box 1212, NY, NY 10025), which contains Part I of the transcript of the 1979 trial of Wei Jing sheng, editor of **Exploration** magazine, as well as reports from Taiwanese prisoners of conscience Ch'en Chu and Chang Ch'un-nam.

Listen to what Wei Jing sheng told the court: "The Marxism I have opposed is in no way the Marxism of Marx and Engels. Marxism's fate has been similar to that suffered by a number of religions. With the passage of time, the revolutionary substance is quietly abandoned, while the doctrines are selectively adapted by those in power as tools to deceive and enslave. China's struggle for democracy is bound to provoke resistance, but I am prepared to make any necessary sacrifice." Wei Jingsheng is now serving a 15-year sentence in Beijing Prison No. 1.

Whether or not we would agree with all of Wei Jing sheng's ideas, the struggle to free him is one that will shed light on the real events inside China today. I hope many people will read this document.

Concerned
Michigan

. . . AND IN GUATEMALA

The State Department recently announced that it is considering the resumption of military aid to the Guatemalan government of General Romeo Lucas Garcia. Vernon A. Walters, former deputy director of the CIA and senior advisor to Secretary of State Haig, visited Guatemala in May. The Guatemalan government has not officially asked for aid, although it has expressed interest in spare parts for its American-built helicopters. These Huey helicopters are being used as part of the Army's destruction of entire villages and indiscriminate massacring of the rural population.

Please contact U.S. Congresspeople urging them to oppose all military assistance to the Lucas regime. Urge them to support the Guatemala Resolution, H.R. 101, which would continue the arms embargo and stop economic assistance to Gen. Lucas Garcia.

Guatemala News and Information Bureau
P.O. Box 4126
Berkeley, Calif. 94704

MORE DISCUSSION ON IRELAND

I'm enclosing an account of the latest news at the moment (see p. 10). Peter Mallory and Kevin A. Barry's articles on Ireland are good. But why do they have to keep using British imperialist terminology of "the Maze," which the British renamed Long Kesh to make it appear a criminal prison rather than the prisoner of war camp which Long Kesh was and is. It may seem like a small point but it's all part of the propaganda war . . .

Eibhlín Ní Sheidhir
Dublin, Ireland

Congratulations on the new, fine issue of N&L, received today. And especially to Neda, whose essay is sure to provoke debate within the "anti-imperialist" groups as well as amongst feminists. However, in the true British empiricist nit-picking fashion, I would like to make a few comments on your coverage of Ireland.

I feel that it is a mistake to describe the six-county Northern Ireland as Ulster. As I'm sure you know, Ulster is the nine-county region in the North, traditionally named. To call Northern Ireland "Ulster" gives it historical justification which a puppet statelet designed purely to create a majority for religious reaction does not deserve.

Neither can I agree that the border question is not paramount. It is a part, but still a vital part, of the struggle for socialism in Ireland. Compare it with the abolition of private property as a vital part of socialist revolution. Furthermore, all wars are wars of assassinations. Those killed are all in the security forces . . . The Republican armies' campaigns are a great advance on the pub bombings of some years ago. Never before has the IRA been involved at all in real mobilizations of the Republican populace.

Jon Murphy
Manchester, England

I read all the letters and your article on Ireland very closely. It is not a subject that one can easily work out a full position on. Rather I think that both the Left and the national movement needs to do some studying on how Marx worked out his philosophy of revolution on Ireland, and what the events of the years since 1968 have meant in relation to that philosophy of revolution. Can we have more discussion on that?

Long-time reader
New York

Ed. note: Readers may order our new discussion bulletin, "Ireland: Revolution and Theory," by Michael Connolly, from N&L for 50¢.

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Essay-Discussion Article: *Economic, political crises in Italy*

by Margaret Ellingham

Milan, Italy—The Italian economic crisis that has been accompanied by a political void—one might better say political decadence of both the traditional right and left parties that have governed in Italy for more than 30 years—is just one example of the new stage of capitalist decadence that the 1980s is ushering in on an international scale.

Many of the problems that Italy is dealing with are obviously unique to the Italian society, but they cannot be separated from the country's political and economic relations. Thus, an analysis of the process that has almost forced Italy into the modern worldwide crisis can be very useful for understanding those questions that have become a challenge to all of the people of the world.

POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

During the 1970s the government managed to maintain its power only by making "decrees" because the parliament was so divided that, when and if it did vote on a pertinent law, the government fell because it did not receive a majority vote. Since 1977-78 there has been an almost total political void. The only law which has received the approval of all of the parties is the anti-constitutional "Anti-terrorist Act", while the juridical branch of the government, with the police force as its law makers, has more or less taken over the government. One might compare this to a juridical, rather than military, coup d'etat.

The leading party—the Christian Democratic Party—is so divided into factions that it can rarely agree on a new Decree Law. The same party has revealed itself as so corrupt, that it is difficult for anyone to consider credible that the proposals of the leaders could possibly be in the interests of the people. It is a party that gives favors in exchange for favors and most of the persons involved in this corruption are the leaders of the government, national and international managers of industry, bank directors, government functionaries and the Mafia or persons that behave like leaders of the Mafia.

The most recent scandal that has come out is that some of Italy's leading politicians, bankers, industrialists and the director of Italy's most known and widely-distributed newspaper have been blackmailed by a group that professed to be a Masonic religious society. As yet it is not at all clear who are the blackmailed and who are the blackmailers, but international capital is involved.*

The archaic social and economic programs of the party have been supported by the capitalist class and the Catholic Church. Their electoral majority comes from a middle and upper-middle class that identifies itself with the Catholic Church and thus sees the Christian Democrats as the only democratic party for which to vote.

The second major party—the Communist Party—is by now losing ever more votes both at the national and regional level, because it has lost a large part of its working class support. Already in the 1960s the CP proposed a policy of social reformism and an alliance with the Catholic Church in order to have the support of the middle class, creating a profound division among those who had supported the Communist Party during and immediately after the war. It left Stalinism—no special loss there—in order to make its "historical compromise" with the Catholic Church and the state, but this led it to the acceptance of capitalist, vulgar bourgeois materialist values rather than the historical materialism of Marx.

Working class solidarity was replaced by class compromise and a gradual change to "real socialism" rather than communism. By now it is hard to understand what the CP is aiming at, but certainly their labor policy and the misunderstanding of the dramatic social transformation, ushered in by modern industrial society in this age of technical and scientific capitalism, has alienated the youth from the party.

The small Socialist Party, which gets even less than 10 percent of the votes, has a determining role between the two major parties. Neither of the two parties gain a real majority—that is, a 50 percent or more majority—so they compete with each other for an alliance with the Socialist Party and its relations with other smaller parties, in order to have a majority in the parliament and in the regions. For this reason the actual prime minister is a socialist.

THE MARXIST LEFT

The anti-Communist Marxist Left in Italy is on the defensive. The state's authoritarian and oppressive

measures, as well as the inability of the Left to cope with the economic and social reality that the 1970s was bringing into being, has brought the Left to a sort of stop for the moment. With many of its leaders in jail (officially there are 3,000 political prisoners in Italy), the most pressing problem in the last years has been prison conditions and the attempt to free those prisoners that have often been falsely accused. As we have already seen, the government has almost ceased to exist, but the magistrature with its judges and police force have increased their power enormously using the means they have at hand—mass arrests and police state terror.

By 1970 the Left in Italy had divided itself into two different currents. One supported the spontaneous



In March thousands of women took to the streets in Rome to demonstrate against a referendum that would have prevented legalized abortions.

self-activity of the masses, never denying the need for armed struggle in a final revolutionary contest. It became known as *autonomia operaia*. The other current was made up of Marxist-Leninist groups that accepted Maoism and "third worldism" as their ideological base, and also the theory that Eastern Europe was dominated by real socialism instead of state-capitalism.

This led to a political line of chauvinist reformism that sought to unite the proletariat in the West in order to "aid" the "third world" in its revolutionary struggles and at the same time to form an *avantgarde* to lead the masses. (The masses are evidently considered a *retrogarde*) in the struggle that was taking place in Italy and in the "first world." Both currents contained within themselves many theoretical and practical contradictions that it is worth the trouble to criticize in order to avoid a recurrence of similar errors and to decide on new solutions in the future.

The spontaneity of the autonomous groups—which grew like mushrooms in the forest during the 1970s and which represented the spontaneous revolts of the workers in the factory (wildcats, sabotage on the assembly line, etc.), of the youth, of many feminist movements, and all of the social groups that protested against the inhuman conditions of the capitalist system—was not capable of creating the fundamental political structures essential to the construction of new forces that could take the place of the social and economic decadence of capitalist society.

THE FORM of the autonomous struggles was very similar to that of the actual "disaffected movement" (see article by Peter Wermuth, N&L, March, 1981) in Germany and Switzerland. The difference between the two movements is that it is only now that the Italian youth and Left are beginning to understand what "police state terror" and the social-psychological control of the mass-media means in an advanced industrialized country. It is only during the '70s that the Italian capitalist class began to use these means of semi-McCarthyism, semi-Stalinism, semi-German Social Democracy to control the thought and the action of the masses.

The theoreticians of *autonomia operaia* (there has been no lack of first class Marxist theoreticians and intellectuals in the movement) have for the most part ignored the question of the internationalism of the class struggle. They tended to base their analysis on the social and economic struggles that were taking place in northern, industrialized Italy while the rest of the world, and even unindustrialized, Mafia-controlled southern Italy, were left to make their own struggles with the hope that one day or another all

of the people of the world would meet together in a new harmonious land.

The Marxist-Leninist groups proposed strongly-organized, *avant-gardism*, presuming that only a small elite should and could lead the proletarian revolution. Generally, Lenin's theory of democratic centralism was accepted as the basis for political organization, and Mao's "cultural revolution" was adopted as the ideal for social struggles. Stalinist and Maoist nationalism has also had a strong effect on the line of the Marxist-Leninists.

The Italian working class was supposed to have as its duty, that of supporting the poor of the "third world," since industrialized Italy, along with the working class, was earning its bread exploiting the poor of

the underdeveloped countries. As the economic crisis became an ever more pressing problem within the country, the Marxist-Leninists were forced to support the demands of the Italian working class and the social struggles—forming their own feminist and youth movements.

OTHER THAN theoretical errors, there were serious defects in the organizational strategy of the currents. The autonomous movement offered a great deal of theory but very few practical ideas or structures for a revolutionary contest. In the Marxist-Leninist groups theory was almost ignored, while the detachment of the leadership from the masses and the personalism in organizational practice led to an excess of control by a small elite. This brought many to believe that only clandestine terrorism, that is semi-military organizations, could defeat the capitalist system.

Thus terrorist groups calling for a proletarian armed revolution grew in Italy. At first they concentrated on the industrialized, urban centers of the North, but now they are trying to find support in southern, earthquake-shaken Naples. The terrorist groups seemed to have a large following for a certain period, but real mass support for their movement was impossible just because the isolation that clandestine terrorism enforces on its members, and above all its leadership, results in a political line which is almost always completely detached from the social and economic reality in which the vast majority of people live.

When the terrorists began their activity, they analyzed that the judicial branch of government was the weakest link of the state—and probably this was true ten years ago—but it was just this attack that put the magistrature on the defensive. The reaction was to give increasing power to law courts. In the meantime the parliamentary and executive branches of government showed themselves to be so weak, and so corrupt, that there was no longer a countervailing power that could control the magistrature. This has led to the arrest en masse of persons that are not accused necessarily of anything except that they think that the people have the right "to overthrow the government with force and violence" (an old McCarthyite story), and because of the recent anti-terrorist law that gives huge powers to the magistrature.

Despite the depressing picture painted above, the struggles that the Left has realized in the last few years have not been fought in vain. The recent referendum on the abortion law is an example of this, and it is also an example of how these struggles have entered into the consciousness of the people. The Radical

(Continued on Page 9)

*On May 26, 1981 the government dismissed itself because many of its members belong to the P2 Masonic Lodge. In fact the Magistrature of Rome has denounced the Lodge as an Association of Delinquents. By now a few bankers have been arrested, and it remains to be seen how many of the suspected 1,700 members will be arrested. It would seem that the P2 Lodge has been working in Italy since the beginning of the '70s and has had as its aim that of controlling government, industry, TV and the press.

Eyewitness report on England, France: Labor, Women, Blacks on the move

(Continued from Page 1)

was supposed to guarantee you a job upon completion) not a single one is working — and concluded: "We should take a lesson from Brixton—200 burning down a block get more attention than 200,000 marching in orderly fashion in the streets."

BRIXTON'S DEFENCE CAMPAIGN

The Brixton revolt is called the April Uprising by the Black community, and it is far from over. The day before the Trafalgar Square rally, a Rock for Jobs benefit was held at the local park in Brixton, and leaflets were circulated there calling for a public meeting of the Brixton Defence Campaign, organized by 13 all-Black community groups for the following Sunday. The Campaign, headed by Monica Morris, a leader of the Black Women's Group, is demanding: "First and foremost an end to lawless police practices; decent jobs; decent housing; a proper education; an end to racist attacks; and proper recreational facilities."

They want all charges dropped against the over-300 who were arrested, some of whom are still in police custody. What has worried the government the most is that, so sure is the Black community that the government's "enquiry into the riots" headed by Lord Scarman will be a total white-wash and cover up, that they are urging a boycott of the inquiry. "These injustices have been going on for years. Thatcher knows it, Scarman must know it. Who are they trying to fool with a public enquiry?" they demanded to know.

"Brixton was not one outbreak," said the chairwoman to the rally. "It has to be seen nationally and internationally." And she related the Brixton events to the events not only in Coventry and Bristol and New Cross, but to Black conditions and Black revolt from Zimbabwe to Atlanta, Georgia. None would be allowed to pretend it was "only the racism of some ultra-rightists" that had to be fought. It was "the state repression, seen in such horrors as the Nationality Bill, which denies people their humanity, and the racism of the police, which the state fosters" that the rally made clear it was determined to end.

MITTERRAND AND "LEFT OF THE LEFT"

If it was the determination to end Thatcherism, as spelled out both in the March for Jobs and the Brixton Defence Campaign, that described London, Spring 1981, it was a "wait and see" (what Mitterrand will really do) attitude that characterized many I spoke to in Paris. But there was no such willingness to just "wait and see" on the part of the women, who are being referred to by many as "the left of the Left".

Thus, in the interval between the election of Mitterrand and the election of the French parliament, a special "bread and roses" meeting of women was called at La Mutualite—and several hundred women showed up to discuss what new "structure" they might need at this point in their movement to put pressure on Mitterrand now that there was, at least, an opening to the Left. The Commission on Women's Conditions had already been changed to a Commission on Women's Rights, and there was considerable discussion about what other commissions should be demanded.

All were concerned that special attention be paid to the fact that some 60 percent of the unemployed in France are women. In talking about socialism and feminism none equated a Socialist Party in power with the existence of socialism; some were worried about the autonomy of the movement; others recalled that it was mass actions, not discussions, that had won any gains thus far.

But what was more impressive than the often volatile discussion was the diversity represented by the women in the room: some were well-known activists since the beginning, others had never been to a women's meeting in their lives; some were already in Mitterrand's ministries, others came from the country and had never spoken in public before, but came to report that they were organizing to elect women candidates in their districts and aimed to get 50 percent of the posts. And there were a very small number of Black women, one of whom took the microphone to say she was disappointed that the questions were being posed "only in the French context". "The question of our liberation," she said, "goes far beyond being a specifically French question."

NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

The women's dimension was, indeed, seen everywhere, and especially the Black women's dimension. In London, it was not only the OWAAD (Organization of Women of African and Asian Descent) who had been the vanguard at the 6,000-strong demonstration to protest the racist murders of the 13 Black teenagers at New Cross, linking arms at the head of the march so that if one were attacked, the others could pull her back. It was

also seen at the Fifth Anniversary Meeting of the Soweto Uprising, where Black women revolutionaries were present in force and as Reason. The meeting at Africa Centre had been organized by the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania, who invited both PAC (Pan-Africanist Congress) and ANC (African National Congress) as well as a Marxist-Humanist from America as speakers, and welcomed solidarity messages from all; and two of the most passionate greetings to the meeting were delivered by very young Black women.

The weeks before the anniversary had seen the eruption of new protests in South Africa (see Editorial, p. 5), and the call for this meeting had emphasized that "June 16 is not merely a day of mourning but also a re-affirmation of our commitment to the struggle for total liberation." The internationalism of that struggle was never more clear than when the struggle to free Azania was linked from the platform not only to such struggles as those going on in Poland's Solidarity movement, and to the struggles in Brixton and in the U. S.—but when the Marxist-Humanists of Britain and the U. S. were asked to share the platform.

Never were the words of Frantz Fanon which had been restated by Steve Biko, more ringingly powerful to me than when I was able to read them on that platform from our own pamphlet, *Frantz Fanon, Soweto, and American Black Thought*: "The consciousness of the self is not the closing of the door to communication . . . National consciousness which is not nationalism is the only thing that will give us an international dimension."

THE 'OTHER AMERICA'

It was not only these revolutionaries who recognized the uniqueness of Marx's Marxism — which has been spelled out in our age as Marxist-Humanism. Although

Essay-Discussion Article: political crises in Italy

(Continued from Page 8)

Party proposed the referendum in order to make some mild reforms in the actual abortion law. The Catholic Church and the Christian Democratic Party counter-attacked by proposing a "right-to-life" referendum which would make abortion illegal. The results of the vote surprised even the most optimistic of those fighting to keep the law.

IN THE so-called "backward South" more than 60 percent voted for abortion. In the industrialized cities of the North more than 70 percent of the population showed that the right to live in freedom was believed to be more important than the right to a life quite possibly destined to misery and social decadence. In all of the regions of Italy the vote of the people was more than 50 percent for abortion. Considering that Italy is one of the most Catholic countries in the world, one couldn't hope for better results. If this can happen in Italy, one can presume that the people of the U.S. will also reject Reagan's proposal for a "right-to-life."

The Marxist Left has not completely failed in Italy, but any positive analysis or practical activity must be based on present social and economic reality and not that of 10, 50 or 100 years ago. The genius of Marx's philosophy lies in its historical and dialectical materialism, the understanding that one can change the society only by analyzing the present, comparing it to the past and in basing practical activity on the actual economic

no others embraced that philosophy as warmly as these Africans involved in an actual revolution, the interest in the distinctiveness of Marxist-Humanism marked the discussions with all the many different audiences we met. Whether it was the socialist-feminists in Hackney, Leyland auto worker and university student alike in Oxford, young revolutionaries in Manchester and Newcastle, unemployed youth in London, or those in France with whom we discussed the possibilities of a French edition of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, it was the challenge to our age to grasp the totality of Marx's "revolution-in-permanence" — the depth of the uprooting needed, the breadth of the forces of revolution anxious to create the new — that was the focus of our presentation of the "Other America." For it is the force of philosophy that was vital to discuss, along with all the revolutionary forces in the United States, labor, Black, women, youth, who are fighting Reaganism.

The hatred of Reaganism and of U.S. imperialism is clear everywhere. Thus June was a month when:

- 10,000 gathered in Glasgow for the largest Scottish peace demonstration ever, to protest the threatened seven-fold land expansion for the Trident Missile system;

- 100,000 demonstrated in West Germany against stationing "medium range" nuclear weapons there;

- The Pentagon grabbed front-page headlines, and all Europe recoiled at the insanity of the Pentagon canvass of U.S. hospitals for 100,000 beds for "decontaminated" casualties of a future nuclear attack in Europe!

At such a moment the presentation of a revolutionary anti-Reaganism like Marxist-Humanism has become critical.

forces that find their expression in the division of society into classes.

Any serious Marxist analysis of the actual situation must take into consideration that the capitalist economic crisis in the 1980s is a result of new political and economic formations, and that by now the capitalist economy is controlled by international capital—be it capital of the state or the private capital of huge multi-national firms. It must face the fact that the scientific and technological revolution is enforcing the marginalization or alienation of large sectors of the human society through automation and unemployment among all salaried workers—production workers, office employees and intellectuals—and is causing revolutionary changes in many of the fundamental social structures—the family and male-female relations being the most fundamental.

The technology used by the mass-media and the corruption of the social sciences will always be used to integrate the masses and obliterate the class struggle, and this can only be countered with a struggle that will develop these sciences in a way that they can offer every individual the possibility to create a new, human self-consciousness that will end the exploitation of one person by another, and of one class by another. It can only be hoped that the Left in Italy can live up to this challenge and that it can give impetus to the international class struggle.

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.

The Black struggle: north, south U.S.; Britain

The 'New South'

New York, N.Y. — My husband and I, believing in those stories about the "New South," moved back to our home state of Georgia a few years back. We soon found out that it was really the same old South we originally came North to escape.

I was making good money as an accounting clerk for the City of New York. In Georgia they wanted me to do the same thing, but for less money. On top of that, I had to train white women who went on to become my supervisors — and this was for the Georgia state government. I told them that I was nobody's fool and left.

Then I was sent by an employment agency to see about another job. It just so happened that the job was in the same building as the agency but on another floor. I went up and as soon as the man saw I was Black, he said the job was filled, and I was only the first applicant the agency had sent up to him. My husband fared no better in his efforts to find a decent job either. So after a few years of working for low wages we moved back to New York. So when you hear about the "New South," you will know that for Black people it is a lie.

—Black woman office worker

British Black youth vs. Nazis

Oxford, England—Local Black youth handed out a well deserved thrashing to members of the British Movement, a blatantly Nazi organization, when the Nazis tried to hold a demonstration here on June 6. The British Movement, who had some weeks previously announced their intention of marching either in Oxford or the nearby town of Abingdon, found an unsympathetic reception waiting for them.

About 25 of them were sighted drinking in a pub near the railway station. A group of about 60 mainly Black youth soon gathered, and proceeded to give the racist thugs a dose of their own medicine. The Nazis left town battered and bruised, and their march never took place. Meanwhile about 300 people took part in a counter-demonstration called by the Anti-Nazi League, and when it became known that two people had been arrested for their part in fighting the fascists, a protest was held outside the police station.

The local newspaper, the Oxford Mail, takes a liberal line on race, and is reasonably sympathetic when Blacks are the victims of racist attacks. This sympathy stops short of Blacks taking the initiative in running racists out of town before they do any harm. The paper condemned those who fought the British Movement as violent thugs. The fact is that by taking strong measures

against the Nazis now, before they get a hold in Oxford, the youth are saving lives in the future. The British Movement now call Oxford a "Red City" and have sworn to return—next time without warning.

Earlier attempts to start fascist organizations in this town, such as the National Front, have been successfully resisted by a combination of the Black and Asian communities, workers, students, women's groups, gay groups and the Left. What is new is that Black, working class youth have placed themselves in the forefront of the struggle against this latest menace. Their determination and combativity give good grounds for hope that the British Movement drive to colonize Oxford will be beaten off, and that this "city of dreaming spires" really is on its way to becoming a "Red City."

—Dick Abernethy

Reagan's war

New York, N.Y. — With these budget cuts President Reagan is planning, he's going to start a war right here in New York City. He's creating the basis for a war whether he knows it or not, because people are not going to take this mess anymore. And I will be right there on the front line because he's hurting me too.

Two women retired at my plant recently, one because she was permanently disabled due to an accident on the job. You know, she will only get \$11 a month from her pension. The other woman retired after years of service, and with all the rising prices she's only going to get \$19 a month from hers. What I want to know is what do we have this union for? It's just one more thing we have to fight, and we will too.

—Black woman electric worker



WORKER'S JOURNAL

(Continued from Page 1)

You have to try and understand what the UAW was in those days, what issues it was formed around. The two main ones were working conditions — workers controlling their own lives at the point of production, and social issues — the right to a job, to dignity. The company called these issues "communist issues." And that was what they called all the active union members. Certainly a majority of the leaders of the UAW were closely sympathetic to the radical movement and radical causes. But this did not stop the workers from supporting the cause of unionism. When the union started, practically every worker rallied to the union cause.

Even the late Walter Reuther was a left-winger at the time, and closely sympathetic to "communist" ideas. He made a statement that any UAW member who "red-baited" (attacked another member by implying he was a communist) would be subject to expulsion by his own personal recommendation to the Executive Board.

What I am saying is that practically every UAW leader was a left winger at that time, and that when the AFL was mentioned nothing but boos came from UAW members. This was especially true if the issue involved had anything to do with the Black question. The UAW had Blacks, but they didn't have any in the leadership. It was another 15 years before there were Blacks in the leadership.

By the late 1950s and early 1960s the UAW under Walter Reuther began to change their position and attitude toward workers. Now red-baiting became part of Reuther's strategy of attacking workers who opposed him. Where workers had been praised for leading a wild-cat strike, they were now called communists and fired by the union.

WORKER LOST PRODUCTION CONTROL

Where workers had control of production, this was now taken away and put into the hands of the company. Automation was introduced into the plants and the workers lost all control of the production process. Where

elections might have meant something, today it is always the same individuals or ones that have just been kicked out, who present themselves for union office.

Why did this happen? To be sure there was the atmosphere of McCarthyism in the country, and Reuther was a smart enough politician to know how to bend with the winds of time. But before he had not been afraid to be a left-winger even when it was unpopular, and his rank-and-file backed him up. Now there was something new — a new stage of production, Automation. And rather than oppose it, especially oppose the inhuman discipline it meant on the production line, Reuther chose to go along with the company, with the introduction of automation as "progress."

It meant that Reuther was giving up the production rights that the union and the workers had first won when the union was formed. By 1954-1955 Reuther was saying and writing into the contract that management had all the rights to production.

Now, instead of the fight being the workers and their union against the company and its drive for production, it became the union disciplining the workers for management. The union leadership helped the company introduce Automation, and separated themselves from their own members.

McCarthyism became one way of allowing Reuther to conveniently turn his back on the old days, but the attitude change was not due so much to the temper of the country as it was due to Reuther's change in attitude to the UAW rank-and-file workers when this new stage of production was introduced and he had to make his choice.

So now when I read about how the auto workers rejoining the AFL-CIO will buttress the liberal wing, promote "union democracy," be the "left-wing" and so forth, I know that it means very little. The days of the UAW as left-wing have gone. It will be up to a new generation of rank-and-file auto workers to turn that around.

Irish-American protest against Prince Charles

New York, N.Y. — "We are here to tell Prince Charles that it is not a crime to be Irish in Northern Ireland." With these words the sisters and brothers of Irish hunger strikers, murdered by Margaret Thatcher and British colonial rule in Northern Ireland, addressed the 5,000 chanting demonstrators, most of them Irish-American, who came out June 17 to greet "Prince of Death" Charles and Nancy Reagan at Lincoln Center.

The speakers movingly called on Americans to support their cause saying, "Northern Ireland is one large British prison for the Irish."

Meurig Parri, leader of the Northern Ireland Veterans Against the War, showed the most insight. He is Welsh and served seven tours with the British Army in Northern Ireland, where he came to the conclusion that "the war in Ireland is a colonial war like any other British war." He said the British people and the British army are "fed up to their back teeth with this war."

He said "Ireland offers cheap labor," then compared it to Vietnam, and expressed his own national aspirations: if Ireland gets its freedom, then so will Scotland and Wales — what the rulers fear as the "domino theory." He hailed the Brixton rebellion and ended:

"All the king's horses and all the king's men won't put Charles' empire together again!"

What marked this demonstration was the freshness and spirit of a new movement. Many of the demonstrators were working-class, and many, whether young or old, had never been at a march or protest before. Of course, many connections remain to be developed, many doors to be opened. Only one banner, from the People's Anti-War Coalition, linked British policy in Ireland to U.S. policy in El Salvador.

—News and Letters Committee participants

H-Block hunger strikers

After the deaths of the four original "H-Blocks" (Long Kesh) hunger strikers, six of their comrades have taken their places, with a new one joining each week. At the time of writing they are: Joe McDonnell, Kieran Doherty, Kevin Lynch, Martin Hurson, Thomas McElwee and Patrick Quinn. McDonnell, the first to go on strike will be in a critical condition by early July.

Popular support for the prisoners, and their struggle to expose the political nature of their imprisonment, is increasing in the South as well as the North of Ireland. This was reflected in the successful intervention of prisoner-candidates in the Southern general election on June 11, with two out of nine elected and others receiving a substantial vote in both rural and urban working class areas.

This was a tremendous achievement since the prisoners' campaign was competing with large wealthy professional establishment party machines and media censorship, together with the fact that those voting for prisoners had to be exceptionally committed to do so on a single-issue "abstentionist" ticket.

The more politically minded of the activists see the election campaign as a base for the beginnings of a new radical political mass movement in Ireland. As Bernadette McAliskey has stated: "As I went through the towns and villages, I kept feeling that we had it in our hands if only there was some way to organise the support into political representation. I found a deep concern — especially among the working class."

The very narrow general election result ensures that the new Dublin government will be under pressure from prisoner-supporters to take a tougher line with the British government than hitherto.

—Eibhlin Ni Sheidhir
Dublin, Ireland

Local News & Letters Committees can be contacted directly in the following areas:

DETROIT: 2832 E. Grand Blvd., Rm. 316
Detroit, Mich. 48211 (873-8969)

SAN FRANCISCO: PO Box 77303, Station E,
San Francisco, Cal. 94107

LOS ANGELES: PO Box 29194
Los Angeles, Cal. 90029

NEW YORK: PO Box 196
New York, N.Y. 10163

CHICAGO: 220 S. State, Rm. 1326
Chicago, IL 60604 (ph: 663-0839)

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Flint, Mich. 48502

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182 Upper Street,
London, N1, England

YOUTH

Black student sees racial division in school survey

Detroit, Mich.—The Free Press recently conducted a survey of 977 high school students both from the city and suburbs, and some very fundamental differences were discovered. It becomes apparent that a greater percentage of city students feel insignificant in comparison to the total workings of things. They feel that they have little control over their lives. This is in direct contrast to suburban students who, for the most part, feel fairly confident about the amount of control they exercise over their lives. Why?

Detroit Schools Superintendent Arthur Jefferson chalks it up to the fact that "children in the city are forced to grow up faster and in turn become 'cynical.'" One Oakland County principal describes it simply as a "case of the haves and have nots." The "have nots" being the city students, of course.

CITY/SUBURBS OR BLACK/WHITE

I find appalling the simplistic and matter-of-fact attitude toward the difference in city and suburban students. Is it simply a case of haves and have nots, or does it go much deeper? Is it testimony to the narrowness that is slowly engulfing our country? Why is it accepted so calmly that city students can be almost traumatized by their government and suburban students feel none of this pressure?

I feel the differences can be attributed not to the fact that there is a geographical difference but a racial one. I think it would be interesting to see what percentage was white/Black in the suburban and city students polled. I feel that I know the answer already. City schools' populations are basically Black and the reverse is true for the suburbs.

The question now becomes Black and white, not

city versus suburbs. One prime example I can cite is my high school. Dominican is within the city; it is a private, Catholic, all girls' school. The Black students make up about 25 percent of the student population. The question was put to me how would the girls at school answer these same questions, considering the fact that a large percentage of the student body lives in the city. After thinking about it for awhile, I came to the conclusion that those fundamental differences would once more be based on white and Black. The white students being much more positive than the Black.

Is it so hard to understand? Consider the fact that the faculty is all white except for one dance teacher. The student governing body is 95 percent white. And in the case of academics and the fine arts it is



New York City teenagers rally in May in defiance of a proposal by Mayor Koch to make the city a zone where the young will earn wages below the minimum wage.

quite a well known fact among faculty that Blacks have had no part in the development of any of this.

The faculty is no big prize either. They fall into two basic categories. The one consists of the older members who came from a period when Blacks didn't exist and the others are "too liberal" to see a race problem.

It would be one thing if this breed of faculty and school curriculum had just come on the scene, but it's been here for years. For years the Black youth's spirit, self-image, and self-concept has been worn away. This almost systematic wearing down has had its effect. It has been so potent that it has torn down what seems to be the last shreds of resistance.

BLACKS: OUTSIDERS LOOKING IN

What I find to be so incredible about Dominican is that they supposedly have a Christian philosophy upon which they operate. Is it possible that all these people who so glibly profess to love one another really don't know what love is?

For years Blacks have felt to be on the outside looking in rather than being an integral part of this country. Is it really a surprise that the Black youth of today feel the same impotence at their hands being tied? I think this survey is very important because it brings forth some realities about today. Is some of the ground that we've so recently gained slowly being taken from us?

This survey serves another useful purpose, one which we can learn from. It's time for us to sit down and redefine our racial relationships.

—Detroit high school student

Why teachers drop out

Chicago, Ill. — The article "Why Students Drop Out" in the May N&L made me think about why I dropped out as a teacher. I taught longest at a Black high school with a bad reputation. There were holes in the walls you could put your arm through. In one room the ceiling fell in. But I liked it better than "good" schools where the department head tells you every move to make and the principal uses the intercom to bug the classrooms.

It seemed like the guards were running this school. They chained the exit doors shut, even though that is illegal. Once someone fired a tear gas gun in the cafeteria. The guards barred the doors so no one could leave until the bell rang — just like in prison.

What I hated most was using junk books — antiques discarded by white schools. When I asked about ordering new books, I found out it takes a year to get an order approved and two years to get it filled. By that time you might be at another school or teaching different classes. So many teachers give up and then they blame the students for losing interest in material they, the teachers, have hated for years — lying to themselves until they can retire.

I soon found that hardly anyone was teaching what they really knew and liked. A woman teacher there was one of the best gospel singers in Chicago. She taught typing. And in the music classes everyone was asleep.

Marx said somewhere that the educators need to be educated. I want to know how we can build a world where students aren't prisoners and teachers aren't trustees. But you won't learn that in school — even if you stay there till you're 65.

—David Wolff

El Salvador revolt continues

Los Angeles, Cal.—The daily battles on the part of the Frente Farabundo Marti for National Liberation (FM-N) continue in El Salvador. In the last few weeks the FM-N has concentrated part of its forces around the hydroelectric dam "5th of November" with the aim of directing another sharp blow to the already weakened genocidal government of Duarte.

Also, on the slopes of the Chinchontepec volcano, near the province of San Vicente, powerful battles have been recorded, despite the government's declarations that the guerrillas have been cleaned out of the zone.

In the U.S. and Europe, acts of solidarity with the Salvadoran people are taking place almost daily. But the government of the U.S. continues its rigid position of supporting the Christian Democratic military junta.

Facing this situation of rigidity on the part of the U.S., the decision of the Democratic Revolutionary Front-FM-N is to continue the struggle for liberation of the Salvadoran people, which means also hope for all the oppressed peoples of Latin America. The revolution in El Salvador will put an end to the exploitative rule on the part of the oligarchy and Yankee imperialism.

We must continue giving our solidarity to the Salvadoran people and continue putting pressure on the government of the U.S. to withdraw all form of aid to the genocidal junta.

—Salvadoran activist

Japanese youth vs. U.S.-Japan nuclear collusion

by Jim Mills

Two worlds clashed in Japan in early June — that of Prime Minister Suzuki's thinly veiled drive towards re-militarization of Japan, with U.S. urging, pitted against that of revolutionary youth determined to transform their country's economic and political crises into a mass drive towards freedom.

Thousands rallied, June 4, in Yokosuka, the home port of the nuclearly-outfitted U.S. Seventh Fleet. Their opposition to the return of the U.S. carrier Midway coalesced quickly when it became known that as a result of the 1960 U.S.-Japan Mutual Security Treaty, ships with nuclear weapons aboard have regularly visited Japanese ports. Motormen on the Tokyo-Yokosuka lines gave the protests a proletarian dimension when they ran the trains behind schedule.

MASS RALLY AGAINST USS MIDWAY

That outpouring and the ones that followed challenged Suzuki, who had disguised the true nature of his visit May 16 with President Reagan in Washington D.C. by firing his Foreign Minister Ito, supposedly for issuing a misleading press release alluding to a new military alliance with the U.S. Although his replacement, Sonoda, thundered against the U.S.'s "right" to rearm Japan, a new face couldn't forestall mass demonstrations against Suzuki's treachery and the hated security treaty.

Even as the Midway headed to Yokosuka, three different march routes brought 90,000 workers and students to a mass rally in Tokyo, June 6. Rally speakers called for a return to the 1946 Japanese constitutional principles banning possession, manufacture and reception of nuclear weapons on Japanese soil. They called for a campaign to abrogate the security treaty that violated those principles. Those demands were punctuated the following day when 3,400 marchers filed past the U.S. embassy and the Japanese foreign ministry in Tokyo, and again in Yokosuka where thousands clamored against the Midway as it arrived.

JAPANESE YOUTH IN 1960s

This is not the first generation of Japanese youth to resist their own militarist rulers. The snaking processions of dancing protesters in 1981 not only expose the true imperialist interests of their home grown capitalists forging alliances with the same imperialist power that tested its doomsday weapon on the Japanese people. They recollect the snake dances in 1960 by the students of the massive Zengakuren, whose open, independent Marxist philosophy brought out hundreds of thousands who not only prevented President Eisenhower from coming to sign that security treaty, but also forced the resignation of Prime Minister Kishi — the same one who had helped launch World War II ending in nuclear tragedy, and who was then ready to thrust Japan into World War III.

The mass youth resistance to the security treaty had a three-fold effect on the Left. First, the New Left intellectuals of Japan translated and published Marx's 1844 Humanist Essays as foundation for transforming Japanese society into subjects creating history rather than

history's victims. At the same time, one of them, Ikutaro Shimizu, warned that, "The fear of nuclear weapons has obscured the understanding that war is rooted in the capitalist system; the wish for peace takes the place of class struggle."

Second, much of the New Left rejected the Communist Party of Japan which would make no such pronouncements, but instead, collaborated with the capitalist rulers to attempt a united front peace movement, going so far as to denounce the Zengakuren's attacks on Japanese "monopoly-capitalism." Unfettered by Stalinism, Zengakuren grew to upwards of 300,000 members.

News & Letters writings on Japanese movement of 1960s

- "Japan's New Left of Intellectuals and Workers, Possibilities of New International Relations," Weekly Political Letter, March 5, 1962
- Author's Special Introduction to the Japanese Edition of *Marxism and Freedom*, August 6, 1963
- "The New Left in Japan: Achievements and Goals," News & Letters, February, 1966

Finally, efforts to unite the class struggle with the Japanese proletariat led to the creation, as well, of relations with revolutionary movements around the world, including with the second, revolutionary America.

A number of Marxist-Humanist works were translated by Japanese revolutionaries, including *Marxism and Freedom*, *Workers Battle Automation* and *Marx's Humanism Today*. A relationship was established between Toyota workers and American auto workers that dealt with the inhuman conditions of automated production, and the bureaucratic union contempt for the rank-and-file that occurs on both sides of the Pacific.

THE 1980s: A NEW BEGINNING.

Just as in 1960 when the anti-nuclear movement spanned the globe from Japan to Europe to America, in 1980 we face the challenge of establishing a vision of creating a nuclear-free world as opposite to class society as today's resurgent, international anti-war movement is massive. Japanese youth, it was said then and can be repeated today, "live in a country with the greatest mass movement against nuclear war and yet they see this movement's limitations unless it will combine this with a movement against capitalism which breeds war." (Raya Dunayevskaya, Weekly Political Letter, 5/5/62.)

This month's youth protests against the Suzuki tilt towards Washington and against the USS Midway, can place Japan's youth in the vanguard of anti-war passions everywhere if their revolt does not stop short at where their predecessors did, but instead includes a comprehensive philosophy of revolution. Such a revolutionary vision is a necessity to unite with today's freedom activities so that the Japanese masses can replace their militarist, capitalist rulers with a new, free society.

OUR LIFE AND TIMES

by Peter Mallory and Kevin A. Barry

The Middle East: Begin's bombs and counter-revolutionary mind . . .

In disregard of all law, in violation of the air spaces of various sovereign nations, Israeli bombers, on command of Begin, rained destruction on Iraq's nuclear reactor installation. This savage act of war in peacetime can find parallel only in the Nazi preemptive strikes for Hitler's demand for "lebensraum" in World War II. Will the people of Israel, a country born out of the blood of the Jews who escaped the Holocaust, allow their leaders to commit such atrocities? For it is on that, that the counterrevolutionary mind of Begin is counting.

Begin's claim that he embarked on that unconscionable act to "prevent another Holocaust" does not stand up to any known fact. While the Iraqi plant was nowhere close to operation as a bomb factory, the Israeli

Knesset election was but a scant few weeks away!

Furthermore, those facts that weren't previously proven about other suspected Israeli attacks are now put in a different light. In 1979 when the core of the reactor being built for Iraq in France was destroyed in a warehouse, Israel was suspected. Again, Israeli agents were suspected in the assassination of the senior Iraq nuclear scientist visiting France. Is Begin becoming a law unto himself?

Because the planes used by Israel were bought from the U.S. under a treaty which prevents their use as offensive weapons, the Reagan Administration went through the motion of condemning Israel and temporarily stopping the delivery of more F-16 planes. They made sure that the world as well as Israel understood

that U.S. imperialism would do no more than give a slap on the wrist. Could it be that Reagan-Haig secretly so admire the "surgical precision" in which the dastardly air raid was carried out that they wish to learn the Israeli "secret"?

The present tensions in the Middle East and U.S. imperialism trying to have both Begin's Israel and royal Saudi Arabia on its side in the world holocaust-to-be, can hardly turn eyes away either from the sharpened Syria-Israeli confrontation in Lebanon, or the fact that all capitalist lands (private and state) as well as the PLO, conspired to destroy the genuine revolutionary civil war in Lebanon in 1975. Whereupon another land that had a revolution and overthrew a Shah — Iran — is likewise turning to counter-revolution.

. . . and Khomeini's turn to full counter-revolution

The Iranian revolution, which has been steadily deteriorating under the religious leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini, is now headed toward a dictatorship of the mullahs who dominate the parliament. Freedom of the press has been abolished for all but government papers.

Bani-Sadr, who was elected by 75 percent of the popular vote, has had his paper banned, been removed as both commander-in-chief of the army and President and is reported to be in hiding, fearful for his very life at the hands of Khomeini's fanatics. Wholesale executions are in full swing against any who dare to disagree with the policies of the Islamic Republic, especially the Left.

The war with Iraq is at a stalemate, the economy

of the country is in ruins, the oil refineries bombed out of existence.

Khomeini's message of Islam has done nothing to provide jobs or to lay the foundation for an Iranian state that will represent the needs of the Iranian people. On the contrary, what is happening is that the move is all against the very masses who made the revolution and paved the road for Khomeini's return. Which all goes to show that religion is hardly a substitute for a true philosophy of revolution that would establish new truly human relations. Quite the contrary.

It is not only against Bani-Sadr that the charade of legalisms now going on in the mullah-controlled parliament is aimed. Backed up by the armed goons, claiming to have a direct line to "God," who are sur-

rounding the President's office and calling for his death, the religious fanatics calling themselves fundamentalists and heading the single totalitarian Party are busy trying to institutionalize premeditated murder.

It is called "Bill of Vengeance," and is most specific in its gory logic. It is being distributed here by Iranian exiles, and Flora Lewis, in her column in the NYT (June 15, 1981) quotes some of its specifics. Evidently no more than two male witnesses are needed to judge something to be a "crime," and execution must be carried out at once.

All this while armed clashes have occurred and food shortages are rampant, as is unemployment. The last word has not been heard from the masses who were the forces of revolution.

Turkey's right-wing terror

The attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II by Turkish fascist Mehmet Ali Agca brought world attention to the cycle of rightist terrorism (sometimes answered feebly from the Left) which has gripped Turkey since 1976. Displaced to a certain extent by the new military government of General Kenan Evren — although there is still one murder per day — the rightist terrorists of the neo-fascist Turkish Nationalist Action Party (NAP) have regrouped in Western Europe, especially in West Germany.

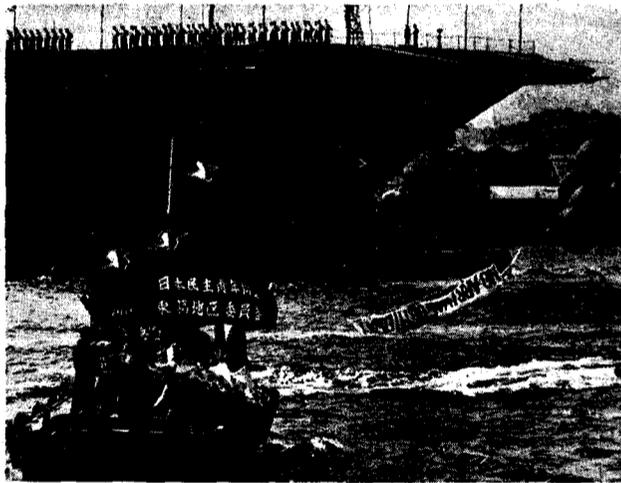
There the Grey Wolves of the NAP terrorize the one million strong Turkish worker community — attempting to control both its politics and its "morals," especially regarding any effort by Turkish women to live an independent life. They are aided in their efforts by conservative groups inside West Germany. For its part, the Turkish working class inside Germany continues its tradition of militant worker activism, both in protesting the rightist military government now in power, and in the class struggle in Germany itself, where they are the most militant section of the working class.

While it is true that the present Turkish military government has arrested and is trying the leaders and over 200 members of the NAP for murder, this trial came only after the NAP's Grey Wolves had been responsible for nearly 5,000 killings of leftist and liberal intellectuals and students, and worker and peasant activists during the period 1976-1980. These rightist murders followed a period of intense student and worker upheaval in the 1960s and early 1970s.

The NAP was no fringe group, but rather an integral part of the Turkish political scene in the 1970s, much like the KKK in the South before the 1960s. Led by retired Army Colonel Alpaslan Turkes, it operated at two levels. Above-ground it took part in several government coalitions led by conservative Suleiman Demirel, during which time the NAP placed many of its people in the police, the civil service, the prisons, the universities and the military. At a clandestine level, its Grey Wolves terrorized the country.

While the Turkish Army may (as is claimed) have crippled the NAP since its September coup, its real target has been the Left and the militant labor union DISK. Even the government admits that of 13,000 arrests since the coup, only 2,000 have been of rightists and the rest leftists or Kurdish nationalists. The leftists in jail include a journalist who "prematurely" called for the banning of the NAP.

The NAP still waits in the wings. While U.S. imperialism and its allies shed tears over the attempts on the Pope, it is clear that any serious probe of the NAP in West Europe would reveal its ties to established conservative and rightist parties such as the Christian Democrats, as well as probably ties to Western intelligence,



Japanese anti-nuclear protesters demonstrate against arrival of U.S. aircraft carrier Midway. See story, page 11.

Mexico

Three words—revolution (counter-revolution), labor, oil—dominated the talks between Mexico's Jose Lopez Portillo and Ronald Reagan when they met last month.

Though Central America, particularly El Salvador and Nicaragua, was said to be the major concern of the two countries before the meeting, it may well have taken a backseat at the meeting to the question of labor. Mexico's huge level of unemployment dovetailed with this pro-business Republican administration's policy of wanting a cheap labor source in the booming anti-union Southwest, the Sunbelt.

The proposal discussed would allow 50,000 Mexicans to enter the U.S. each year as "guest workers." Mexico would like the number to be even higher. In addition, there is a proposal to double the annual limit on legal immigration and provide some type of amnesty for Mexican workers now in the U.S. without papers.

While there is a temporary worldwide oil glut now, there is no doubt that Mexico represents a vast oil reserve from which the U.S. would like to have an assured supply. However, the U.S. cannot afford to be too vocal in its desire. Already strong nationalist pressure from within Mexico forced the ouster of the head of the Mexican oil company, PEMEX, when he decided to lower the price of oil from Mexico on the world market by four dollars a barrel. The price has now been raised again.

Perhaps the strangest tentative agreement between Reagan and Lopez Portillo was on an aid package for the Caribbean and Central America. Reagan's desire is certainly one of stopping any move toward revolution

and supporting counter-revolutionary regimes. Mexico said they would only enter into an agreement with the U.S. on an aid package if it would be free from military aid and would involve economic aid without direct political considerations. It remains to be seen whether that is indeed anything close to what Reagan's anti-revolution crusade will look like in the Caribbean and Central America.

Horn of Africa

By far the largest concentration of political refugees anywhere in the world — the 1.5 million Somali who fled the Ethiopian-dominated Ogaden region in fear of their lives — is located in the Horn of Africa, in Somalia. These people face the threat of immediate starvation as only a 10-day food supply is on hand. What's more, flooding has cut off 144 villages from the roads which are their lifeline. The refugee population continues to grow at the rate of 3,000 per day. Only paltry food aid pledges were made at the International Conference on Aid to Refugees in Africa.

Whereas, in the case of the Cambodian refugees, the Russian and the American power blocs vied with each other in claims of "aid" while the entire world press looked on, a deafening silence has greeted the plight of the starving African refugees in 1981. Even the excuse that aid might end up in the hands of troops rather than starving peasants — used to delay aid shipments to Indochina — does not exist for Somalia. No one has claimed that the Somali government is negligent in trying to aid the refugees, but it is one of the poorest countries on earth, with limited resources.

The problem is not confined to Somalia alone, but also includes groups such as the 500,000 Eritrean refugees in the Sudan, who have also fled the imperialistic Russian-backed Ethiopian regime.

Not surprisingly, Russia has donated nothing to the African refugees, since most have fled the blood-soaked Ethiopian military regime which it supports, as does Cuba. The U.S. has donated a small sum to the refugees, but is reportedly more interested in patching up relations with Ethiopia. The result is that two million Somali and Eritrean refugees are abandoned, while Ethiopia rules over their homelands. As one African paper, the Tanzanian Daily News, commented bitterly: "It is a sad commentary on the world we live in that the tremendous human suffering in Africa should be ignored for political expediency in another part of the world."

The suffering of the Somali and Eritrean people today will not make their claims for the independence of Western Somalia and Eritrea from Ethiopia go away. It may postpone or weaken their fight, but ultimately nothing short of total liberation will satisfy them. Groups such as the Western Somali Liberation Front and the Eritrean Peoples' Liberation Front continue the fight against Ethiopian and Cuban troops.