

Theory/ Practice NEWS & LETTERS

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

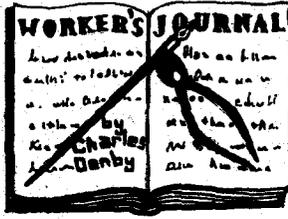
VOL. 28 — No. 5

27 13 Printed in 100 Percent
Union Shop

June, 1983

25c

'American Civilization on Trial'



by Charles Denby, Editor

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

I would like to share with our readers the following letter I wrote to Raya Dunayevskaya.

Dear Raya:

When we decided this spring to come out with a new edition of *American Civilization on Trial* on the 20th anniversary of its publication, I was never so glad for anything in my life. I feel that the crisis in Black freedom today is the most serious one we have faced since the days of the Civil Rights Movement when our pamphlet was published while the Black youth filled the streets of Birmingham, Ala. For the last few weeks I have been thinking about what we should include in the new Introduction, and I would like to make some suggestions.

What kept coming to the front of my mind was the fact that 1983 is also the Marx centenary, which makes it a good time to focus on how inseparable this Marxist-Humanist study of American history we created 20 years ago is from what you have just worked out on Karl Marx's last decade as the "trail to the 1980s." Over the years since *American Civilization on Trial* was printed, many people have asked how we came to see American history as "Black masses as vanguard." That is the expression we used to show the relationship of the Black freedom struggle to both white labor and to Black intellectuals.

The truth is that we had looked long and hard at the American movement and at Marx's life and work before we were able to write the pamphlet. Marx's philosophy of revolution was always at the center of our thinking. This is why I was actually glad in a way that your new book, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* was already locked up in print when you decided to "add" a new paragraph to its conclusion summing up Marx's views on the Black Dimension at your lecture for the Center for Afroamerican and African Studies at the University of Michigan. I felt very strongly that this new paragraph should be the focus of the Introduction to the new edition of *American Civilization on Trial* (ACOT).

What do you think? Just re-read it now and see how it does away with all the attempts to isolate the last 20 years of the Black struggle in the USA. Many times when I hear members of Left parties or narrow nationalists speak about our movement, they act as though it could be torn out of the international context of freedom struggles. But that is exactly opposite to what we showed in ACOT and what Marx did all his life.

You know, Raya, when I went back to study the pamphlet again, I kept seeing how the international context

(Continued on Page 10)

Asian-Americans protest U.S. racist injustice

Detroit, Mich. — Nearly one year after the brutally racist, premeditated murder of a young Chinese-American man, Vincent Chin, and less than two months after Judge Charles Kaufman released his murderers, Ron Ebens and Michael Nitz, on probation — in an equally racist plea bargaining scheme engineered by County Prosecutor William Cahalan — Detroit's (in)justice system found itself on trial at a demonstration in downtown Detroit. Some 500 Asian-Americans and their supporters from the Black community were charging the whole legal system with conspiracy to hide the racist reality behind the Vincent Chin case.

No one at the protest made a distinction between the racism surrounding this single case and the general atmosphere of anti-Asian bigotry generated by the likes of Doug Fraser of the UAW and the auto corporations, with their anti-foreign imports campaign against Japan.

A CONSPIRACY OF INJUSTICE

Ebens, a foreman for Chrysler and Nitz, provoked Vincent Chin that June in a bar when Ebens made the racist slander that it was because of Asians like Chin that "we're out of work." A scuffle ensued. Later outside the bar Ebens got a baseball bat out of his car, waited for Chin to leave the bar, stalked him and beat him to death. It wasn't until March of this year that Judge Kaufman



Demonstrations against Reagan's counter-revolution in Latin America continue throughout the U.S.



In Nicaragua marchers protest murderous activities of U.S. sponsored "contras" (counter-revolutionaries).

U.S. and Central American youth resist Reagan's new war plans

by David Park

"If a war breaks out and they send troops to fight it, who do you think they are going to want to fight? Us! But nobody would go, because everyone in this country would just be fighting themselves. And we won't kill our own people. So nobody would fight. We would rather turn the guns against this country." This was the response of a Black Chicago high school student to Ronald Reagan's murderous declaration of counter-revolution against Nicaragua and escalation of his war against freedom fighters in El Salvador and Guatemala.

Reagan's speech to a joint session of Congress on April 27, far from being the "bold political gamble" depicted in the media, was in fact an act of desperation. His demand for \$600 million in aid to Central American regimes and a continuation of his program of covert military operations against Nicaragua had been preceded by a growing opposition to his policies at home, led mainly by youth, and a rising tide of revolutionary activity throughout Central and South America.

RESISTANCE: IN LATIN AMERICA, IN USA

In Central America, the response to the new Reagan offensive was immediate. The following day forces of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) destroyed six key bridges cutting off the entire northeast portion of El Salvador. In Nicaragua, the Sandinista National Directorate declared that Reagan's speech repre-

sented the pursuit "of a new cold war in the region. We will close ranks to confront it." The declaration was followed by mass demonstrations throughout the country.

As the worldwide economic crisis tightens its grip on Mexico and Central and South America, revolutionary activity has intensified. Freedom movements are not confined to Central America; they have exploded in countries like Chile, Argentina, Brazil and Mexico. (See article, p. 9) In El Salvador, gains by freedom forces have further unnerved the Reagan Administration and his Congressional "opponents."

A Salvadoran exile living in Chicago explains how deep the revolution is in his country. "Nearly 30% of the national territory is controlled by the liberation movement. This is already bringing great changes. People are organizing themselves on a different basis. They are farming collectively so they can support themselves. They are organizing popular militias and health brigades. Schools have been set up to combat the 60% illiteracy rate."

There is also the fact that youth in the USA are showing greater resistance to U.S. militarist policies. On U.S. college campuses, protests are erupting across the country. (See editorial article, April, 1983 N&L). And it is not only the actions of youth but their ideas. Listen to the voices of the students at Latino Youth High School in Chicago. When the Black student quoted above asked his classmates at a high school assembly "who do you think they are going to want to fight?" students shouted out — "Not me!" "Is he crazy?" "I'll never go. I'll go to jail first!"

A young Mexican woman added, "This whole thing doesn't make any sense. It would be like killing our own people. If our economic situation is so bad, just where does he think he is getting the money for all this? He is taking it out of our pockets and telling us we have to use it to kill our own people. He's quite an actor isn't he!"

A Chicana concluded, "These wars are a way people have of liberating themselves. Reagan and the people he represents don't want that. They want to rule these little countries. They don't want the people to rule themselves."

REAGAN'S COUNTER-REVOLUTION

Contrast those ideas with the pitifully weak response from Congressional "opponents" to Reagan policies. Both sides of the aisle rose to give Reagan a standing ovation as he charged that it was the "ultimate hypocrisy" for Nicaragua to charge the U.S. with seeking their overthrow. Yet the ultimate hypocrisy might have been committed by Senator Christopher Dodd as he delivered the

(Continued on Page 8)

ON THE INSIDE

- Raya Dunayevskaya: National tour on Marx centenary p. 4
- Great Britain in ferment: an in-person report p. 5
- Editorial: Summit and economic crisis p. 7

(Continued on Page 9)

WOMAN AS REASON Zimbabwe: women and land

Editor's note: The following are excerpts from a paper delivered by Terry Moon at the Third World Conference in Chicago.

A rural Zimbabwean woman says, "I think we women in this new Zimbabwe want to progress more than men. We want to show men that our heads are the same. We want to consolidate the power that we showed during the war." This determination of Zimbabwean women to continue the revolution is revealed in two different surveys: "We Carry a Heavy Load" — Rural Women in Zimbabwe Speak Out, and the more official document, Report on the Situation of Women in Zimbabwe.

In these reports, the authors insist that "if the policies and programs of an independent Zimbabwe are to reflect the aspirations of these women, they must grow out of an understanding of the actual position of the women, based on information from the women themselves."

Women are saying in the most concrete terms what they expect from the revolution. They reveal a very different view than that of Zimbabwe's President, R.G. Mugabe, particularly in his speech to the Zimbabwe African National Union Women's Seminar of May 1979, where he took up "The Role of Women in Socialist Countries." There, Mugabe ran through the so-called socialist countries — Russia, China, Romania, Yugoslavia, Cuba, Vietnam, Korea — as if these state-capitalist countries where women are most emphatically not free, could be some kind of model for Zimbabwean women. These differences on the direction of Zimbabwe after revolution come out clearly on the question of land.

NO WOMEN NEED APPLY

Zimbabwe's minister for land resettlement, Moven Mahachi, said of the revolution: "People fought for land, they went to jail for land, they died for land." Yet from an ambitious resettlement program with a goal of 162,000 families, by January 1983 only 15,000 families have received property titles. How is the government dealing with land hunger, worldwide depression, and women's demands for full freedom? While initially only the rural poor were to receive land, now the government has decided to allow landed Blacks to take part in the resettlement programs to insure that the land will be used most productively. But in Zimbabwe most women do not own land. Also, only men are permitted to fill out the resettlement application forms — this where 70% of the farms are worked by women!

Along with these barriers is the rule that men who work for a wage will not be allowed to resettle. That means that those women who worked the land alone while husbands worked in the cities, cannot resettle. One woman sums up the feelings expressed in the surveys: "Why is it that only the names of men who have taken courses and have qualifications are being taken for resettlement? We women have also taken some courses, but they are not taking our names. So it means that we women are not wanted in any development activities being undertaken in Zimbabwe. We struggled much to win this Zimbabwe, but it seems that our government has forgotten that and is not interested in women's development and needs."

'We are not slaves!'

Los Angeles, Cal. — A few weeks ago I had a fight with my father. I said, "Women are not slaves any more." My father got mad at me for saying that. His conception of slavery is only one of physical chains.

Men still don't have a clear idea of how women want to be treated. Many Latina women are trapped just like slaves. Latina women still cannot get out of the kitchen, neither can they walk on a street with comfort, when their husbands are waiting, furious and reproaching. The fighting over a woman among men proves we are still some kind of toy that goes to anyone who wins it.

A woman today goes through great difficulty trying to be herself, a human being with new relations and not just a toy to be desired. Young women have to fight both sexism and also parental dominations. Parents don't trust us; they imagine the worst. My friends cannot attend meetings we are interested in, where we discuss ideas, like in News and Letters Committees — "Too late for a young lady to get home."

Young men are urged by their teachers to go to war to serve their country. But when young men have experienced war, they feel the tragedy of a world full of killings.

In school we read the novel Johnny Got His Gun, which led me to think about, Why should we fight if we don't have freedom after the war is over? In the book Joe raises those same questions, asking, How much liberty and what is liberty? Victory goes to the leaders rather than the people who struggle for it. Today many young men are refusing to register for the draft.

Women and men and youth are all heading toward times that must be changed. The American dream was a grand illusion. Together we can make a concept of revolution that is multi-dimensional, with new Man/Woman relations as well as a revolution in all economic and social relations.

— Latina high school student

The government has also recently decreed that most of the next settlers should be organized in collective labor cooperatives. But women are not asking for collective land — they are demanding land of their own: "We want to have our own land so that we can be free to grow anything that we like, even trees." Another woman expressed how to her, the fight for land and for new human relations go together: "We have no land ownership but we need our own lands. We want to work with agricultural demonstrators, and learn to improve our farming methods, but our husbands won't allow us to. If we owned our own land nobody would be able to prevent us."

NO GUARANTEE FOR WOMEN

Zimbabwean women fought against both imperialist apartheid as well as the oppression of women in the native society. They know that in a male-dominated society, cooperative ownership of land is no guarantee of women's freedom. The point is not to go back to private ownership as the answer, but to remember — especially when we are speaking about women — what Marx insisted on in his 1844 Essays, when he cautioned against abstract collectivity: "The individual is the social entity."

Zimbabwe cannot get to full freedom in any way that doesn't draw on the human creativity of the whole people. That is why Marx was so insistent on a revolution that continues to deepen even after the revolutionary seizing of power. Zimbabwean women have a vision of a new society, new human relations. Unlike so many of today's revolutionaries, they have not limited themselves to anti-imperialism alone. They are trying to work out in life what they fought the revolution for. — Terry Moon

Welfare rights in Utah

Salt Lake City, Utah — Women who have independently formed a welfare rights group here in Utah recently appeared at a State Legislative Committee hearing to express their thoughts about their conditions. They were asking that they receive 57% of the estimated so-called "poverty" budget rather than the reduced level of 40% now being projected because of the still depressed economy.

Three of the over 30 women and children there made presentations. One Black woman with three children emphasized that there just weren't jobs for anyone, and yet the 13,500 women on welfare had to support 30,000 children. Another woman with five children talked of her struggle to be self-sufficient and how she was forced to quit a much needed job because of sexual harassment. Now, she is trying to find ways that women can cooperatively, organize to cope with their problems. The third speaker with six children carefully documented just how far her income was from what her full expenses were.

Incredibly, one conservative ideologue insisted that most working people made ends meet, yet earned less than what welfare mothers did. His perverse attitude highlighted that whether you are employed, unemployed, or on welfare, the one thing this so-called "efficient" nuclear "warfare" system can't do is improve the quality of people's lives. I liked the statement by one of the women which expressed a totally opposite philosophy: "I've always had a priority, people over things."

In reflecting back on the day's activities, one of the organizers asked: "What will we accomplish for ourselves as women by appealing to these legislators?"

— Ted Hill

Apex protest continues

Detroit, Mich. — We are not on strike here at Apex Drugstores — we are protesting because we lost our jobs. (That's over 700 people, mostly women workers.) We have been out here all winter long — since July 22, 1983. Cunningham's closed the door on us on July 18. On that same day, after coming back from lunch, they put signs up that said, "Apex." This was the first we heard of it.

When we worked for Cunningham's, we were paid \$6.27 an hour, double time on Sundays, paid holidays, six paid sick days and three personal days. Now all of that is lost. People in there now are working at minimum wage with no benefits and no one is allowed to work more than 20 hours per week.

This way they don't have to pay benefits and can stay a non-union shop. We know that Apex was put in just to oust the union.

Our regular customers have given us a lot of support. One man had been getting his prescription for 20 years at Cunningham's. By not crossing our picketline, he has just found out that he can get his prescription for \$8.20 cheaper at Farmer Jack.

Most of us are still unemployed and our hearing before the National Labor Relations Board has been postponed. Our picketlines are now reduced from three full shifts to one shift between 12 and 4. Management is still refusing to negotiate but then the old Cunningham management was left intact. Only the clerks were forced out.

BOYCOTT APEX!



Urgent letter from Iran

We are turning over our regular column, "Women Worldwide", to the following letter which we have just received and had translated and wish to share with our readers — Ed.

Tehran, Iran — What I wish the whole world would know is the situation of women in Iran. Recently, a new regulation issued by the government declared that any woman leaving home without proper cover would be arrested and sent to Evin prison (the Shah's infamous torture dungeon).

The next day, a group of hoodlums, as is usual with these directives, came to the streets chanting slogans against women and attacking them on the streets. Obviously no one was without the head scarf. They viciously attacked a number of women, and stabbed another, yelling to the passersby, "come and see this woman who stabbed herself to accuse the Hizbollah." (Hizbollah are Muslim vigilantes supporting the Islamic Republic.)

Since that day a group of women have been arrested and taken to prison, and more will follow. Their crimes: Hair showing from under the scarf, thin stockings, wearing make-up, or maybe even the crime of Being A Woman.

What is the destiny awaiting men and women of this country? I ask with anger and amazement: Why has the world shut-up? Why do people accept such brutalities, and not protest? Please give my message to Raya (Dunayevskaya). I wish she could witness the present life of Iranian women. I am sure she has heard and seen what has happened to us. Could she say something? Could she protest to the world? You people (in the West) who know of the rights of women, won't you defend Iranian women, if not as a woman, then as a human being?

I become too emotional, but I am right, am I not? These murderers make you doubt anything, even to doubt your very right to existence. What they cannot destroy is my love for you and for life. For this love I tolerate everything, but I do not accept it!

Keep your spirits, the future belongs to us . . .

Woman rocks the Church

Lansing, Mich. — Agnes Mary Mansour announced on May 11 "with deep regret and limited freedom," that she was resigning from the Religious Sisters of Mercy after 30 years of service, at the demand of the emissary of Pope John Paul II, rather than give up her position as Director of the State of Michigan Department of Social Services (DSS).

The DSS administers Medicaid funding for abortions, and although Mansour has publicly expressed her personal opposition to abortion, she has pledged to uphold state law and refused to condemn Medicaid abortions because she felt to do so would mean denying access to legal abortion only to poor women. Mansour has been described as a feminist who has also urged the Church to sanction and encourage birth control.

The National Assembly of Women Religious and the National Coalition of American Nuns called upon women "to gather in silent prayer and protest on Sunday, May 22 as witness to the arrogant use of power in a male dominated church."

These events climaxed a battle between Mansour and the church hierarchy — six weeks after Mansour was appointed director of DSS (the previous director was a Catholic layman), Archbishop Szoka of Detroit suddenly demanded her resignation. At that time, nuns, lay Catholics and faculty at local Catholic colleges supported her decision to remain in her appointed job.

The controversy shows once more how profoundly revolutionary is the basic demand of the Women's Liberation Movement for "control over our own bodies" and the tremendous impact that the movement is having on the Church. In Latin America the freedom movements have been made concrete by the many nuns and priests who have exercised freedom of conscience and joined the struggles in the form of "liberation theology."

Indeed, what so alarms the Church hierarchy is the new kinds of human relationships that have been created by these movements, whether that be the self-organization of the indigenous Guatemalan peasants, or socialist-feminists in Peru, or the many alternative forms of families which come from the women's movement as a whole.

We can admire the very difficult dilemma of Agnes Mansour and the exciting potential for human society emerging from these freedom movements. But to realize these gains on a world scale will require the most serious international activity and philosophic vision, or they remain isolated experiments. The 1978 commentary by Raya Dunaevskaya, that the appointment of the "Polish Pope" did not represent liberalization, but a move to thwart freedom struggles in East Europe, in Latin America, and on the Woman Question, has never been clearer.

— Susan Van Gelder

Lush auto profits will mean less jobs

by Felix Martin, Co-Editor

Two pieces of news are generating a lot of discussion among workers here on the West Coast — Chrysler's huge profits in the last quarter and the re-opening of auto plants in the Midwest. Workers are saying that these facts, far from spelling "recovery," actually mean the permanent unemployment of the young factory worker.

Last week GM sent a letter to workers with as much as 30 or 35 years seniority who are two or three years too young to retire with social security. The letter says GM will give them the "opportunity" of going to work in the newly re-opened Shreveport, La. plant. A lot of workers say they'll have to go because they're afraid the UAW will sell them out in the next contract and cut their GIS and retirement benefits.

JOBS GONE FOREVER

GM wants to get the older workers to work because it figures with all the new Automation and unimation they are bringing into these plants, they won't need auto workers at all after a few years. Instead of re-hiring younger workers whose unemployment benefits they'll have to pay when they lay them off again in a few years, they figure on hiring the near-retirement workers, sucking the last drop of sweat from them when they've spent half their lives on the line already. They want the older workers to bridge the time until the robots come in.

The same is happening at Chrysler. Lee Iacocca says "recovery is on the way," because profits are up. He doesn't mention that Chrysler did this by going from 56 plants to 18. If this isn't what Marx meant by the concentration and centralization of capital — which always goes along with the growth of the unemployed army — I don't know what is. Any demand for new cars won't mean any new jobs, but just working the workers more through overtime.

OVERWORKED OR STARVED

It adds up to the older worker being worked to death while the younger worker starves. Younger workers won't even have to bother looking for work. This is truest of all

Union vote defies Agar

Chicago, Ill. — Quality control (QC) workers at Agar recently voted to join a new unit of Local P-500 of the United Food and Commercial Workers, the union that already represents production and maintenance employees at the plant.

Before the union election, the company reminded QC workers that many of them had been on lay-off from previous employment when they were hired by Agar, reminded them of the unemployment in their neighborhoods, reminded them of how fortunate they were to be working. Production workers are reminded of this, too, by their supervisors whenever they complain about their conditions.

The company talks as though they are providing us with jobs out of the goodness of their hearts. But don't we work for our wages? And don't they make a profit by our labor? We are supposed to be so grateful just to have jobs that we'll put up with anything.

QC workers obviously weren't too impressed with the company's arguments, because they went ahead and organized themselves. They organized against the favoritism in the department, for higher wages and for improvements in, and some control over, their working conditions.

At about the same time the company told union officials that they had lost a major bacon contract and would need additional concessions from the workers, on top of the \$1.75 cut in pay and higher standards for the boners agreed to last year under the threat that the plant in Chicago would be closed or sold.

Union officials told the company "no" when they were asked to sit down again at the bargaining table. It remains to be seen what those officials will do if and when the company presses its demand for further concessions. It is up to us to resist and to force our union officials to follow our lead.

— Agar worker

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, San Francisco,
Cal. 94107 (658-1448)

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

NEW YORK: PO Box 196
New York, N.Y. 10163 (989-3188)

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

FLINT: PO Box 3384
Flint, Mich. 48502

LONDON: British Marxist-Humanists
c/o 265 Seven Sisters Rd.
London, N4, England

in steel, which is now called the "rust bowl." Even if there is ever a rise in demand for steel, it will be met by multi-nationals shipping it in from overseas.

GM, Chrysler, every industry will meet new resistance from the older and younger workers because of this. One GM South Gate worker being shipped out to Oklahoma told me, "We've had a year off, and that is a lot of time to think. If GM thinks they can rush 70 cars an hour past workers who are in their 50's, they will be in for a ride. The workers who've been laid off know what is happening in this country and they will ignite something."

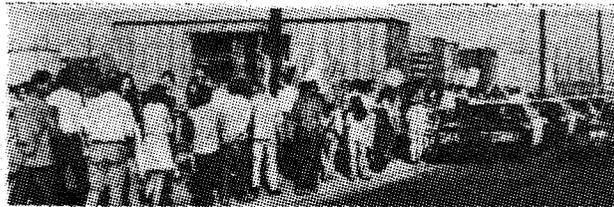
Workers' Bookshelf

Teamsters in rebellion

Teamster Rank and File, by Samuel R. Friedman, Columbia University Press, 1982.

When Jackie Presser was named president of the Teamsters' Union (IBT), replacing Roy Williams who left after exposure of his ties to the mob, it was an open warning to the membership that the bureaucrats would continue to run the union for their own benefit alone. For working Teamsters the most dangerous ties Presser has to organized crime are his links to the mob in the Reagan White House.

This is a timely book then on rank-and-file activity in the IBT, focusing on Local 208 in Los Angeles, a local always under threat of trusteeship. In 1955, drivers first at PIE and then other truck barns took the initiative to choose stewards on their job, when before that there were only appointed business agents. It took another three years to force local officials to accept their existence. Later on at many companies drivers used a "24-hour wildcat," where everyone took his one permitted day off on the same day, to get action on working conditions, safety or pension payments.



Students picket with L.A. Teamsters in 1970.

These forms of rank-and-file organization led up to the wildcats around the 1970 contract, where holdouts in Los Angeles, Detroit and especially Chicago tore up the ratified contract and forced a better one. Los Angeles walked out first for sick leave, and then stayed out six weeks to get back the jobs of 15,000 wildcaters who had been fired.

The excitement in this section of the book is not alone that nothing equals a mass movement, but also from the personal involvement of the author, who was one of hundreds of students who walked picket lines while courts barred workers from the line. This section stands in sharp contrast to the sociological analysis that deadens other sections of the book.

On the picket lines, 15,000 firings were stopped. In a back room, a special panel including trusted Teamster bureaucrats set up to consider the fate of 500 other workers, "Harold Gibbons and Roy Williams stood aside and let the jobs be lost." As Friedman says, one strength of Teamsters for a Democratic Union currently is in airing such back-door maneuverings beyond just one locality.

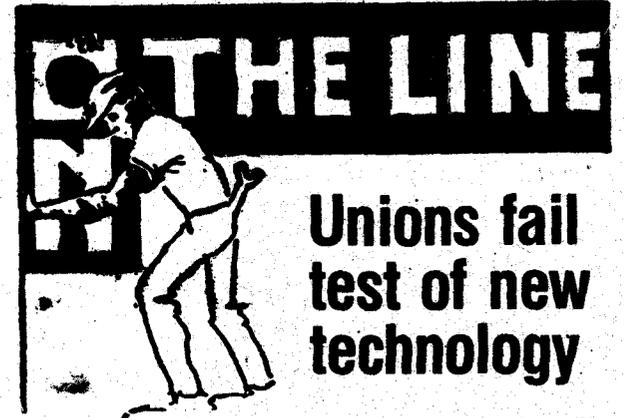
— Bob McGuire

Art Steel workers sit in for answers

Bronx, N.Y. — On Monday, May 16, some 50 angry Art Steel workers held a militant demonstration inside District 65-UAW headquarters. The workers, some employed and some just laid off the previous Friday, traveled from the Bronx to the downtown union office with picket signs and demands. They were among 150 workers left after lay-offs at Art Steel, which once employed 800 workers making furniture in two Bronx plants.

The union had recently cancelled a scheduled shop meeting, saying they were too busy with union elections. The workers responded by refusing to vote until the union took up their grievances. Still, even when there was another two-week shutdown, and 60 more workers were put on lay-off on Friday, May 13, and the company announced it would not pay this year's vacation in full, the union didn't give them any information.

The workers came to the union hall armed with flyers depicting their vice-president Julio Mojica taking money from the company with one hand and passing it on to president David Livingston with the other. They plastered these leaflets all over the walls and left them on the desks of all the organizers. They declared they would stay till they got satisfaction. They left after a meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, May 24, between the company, the union and some rank-and-file representatives. After the



Unions fail test of new technology

by John Marcotte

In my shop a lot of the machinists and tool makers think they're in a class apart from the production workers. They get the air conditioning in the summer, the heat in the winter, and all the raises. When there's an opening in the tool room, the company chooses who they want to get in, and don't follow any seniority or other democratic means.

We had a union meeting not long ago. These skilled workers all sat in the back by themselves. When a Latino steward started to translate into Spanish for the benefit of many of the production workers, some of those skilled workers started shouting him down, yelling "Speak English!" and so on. Now, some of the Latino workers were just getting set to start throwing chairs when one of them got up and answered the racists in English, reminding them that they or their parents were once immigrants too, and that it's in the interest of the whole shop that everyone understand the contract.

ROBOTS IN SKILLED TRADES

These skilled workers have a rude awakening coming down the road at them, just like the PATCO air controllers got. They too had forgotten they were part of the working class, till Reagan destroyed their union. These skilled workers will see that the robots that are replacing production workers across the land are going to be replacing them too. The SMT Machine Company and other companies now make robotic lathes and machine tool makers which can replace six to eight machinists each.

The way the unions respond to this revolution in production, and to the corresponding revolt of the rank-and-file, will determine their very existence in the coming years. Their response so far has been suicidal. The billions of dollars worth of concessions they have granted the companies have given them the very capital they needed to robotize and automate away the jobs of union members.

NO UNION, JUST UNION LABEL

It is just like the workers in my shop say: the unions in this country are just another business, out for their own interests. They are so damn good at adapting themselves to capital's demands they may even survive this robotics revolution in some form. At Chrysler's Detroit trim plant, the UAW and company have a joint plan to "save" the plant which has meant lay-offs and a 28% higher production quota for the women workers. At the Jones and Laughlin Midland, Pa. plant (the old Crucible Steel plant), the United Steel Workers of America "work rule concessions" mean workers have lost all seniority and the company will pick and choose who they will call back — just like in the worst non-union shop.

These unions would preside over an army of slaves working below minimum wage if it meant they could still get their piece of the blood and sweat, their dues dollar and pension and welfare funds. They may survive capital's robotics revolution, but so what? They won't survive their own rank-and-file's revolution.

demonstration the workers issued a statement:

We took our protest right to the seventh floor of the union, where the top leaders are. We are standing up for our rights and will be back to protest if our demands are not satisfied.

The company has been under Chapter 11 bankruptcy for one year and four months (or so they claim). They still owe us half our vacation from 1982, and now they're trying not to pay our full 1983 vacation, knowing very well that our contract expires Nov. 5. We demand that they pay us our vacation as called for in the contract — that is, no later than Sept. 15 — and that they honor the contract till it expires.

We know that Art Steel has done 30 million dollars of business in each of the last five years, and they are trying to hold back on the money that belongs to the workers. We feel that the constant shutdowns in '82 and '83 are also a contract violation, and that seniority was violated in the lay-offs.

The very night of our protest Julio Mojica had to pack his bags and fly back from the UAW Convention in Texas to attend to our situation. When we are united, we don't have to take these abuses, we are strong, even if our phoney leaders think otherwise. When we workers are united, everyone has to hear us, because they know very well that we are the ones who produce all the wealth.

THEORY / PRACTICE

by Raya Dunayevskaya

author of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*

I have just returned from a three-month long national tour on the Marx centenary and the publication of my new work, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*. The most exciting aspect of the discussions around both the centenary and my book revolved around my focus on the last decade of Marx's life as he discovered "New Moments" in human development of what today we call the Third World. Where so-called "orthodox" Marxists spoke of the last decade of Marx's life as a "slow death," the "New Moments" Marx uncovered in the last decade became the centerpoint in the final Part of my work, which I have entitled "Karl Marx — from Critic of Hegel to Author of Capital and Theorist of 'Revolution in Permanence'."

Naturally, the "New Moments" in Marx's revolutionary philosophic-historic concepts were both an extension of and a return to Marx's very first break (1843-44) with both capitalism and what he called "vulgar communism." Then, too, Marx's Promethean vision of truly human relations which suffered no division between mental and manual labor had him integrate, into his new proletarian focus on class struggle, the Man/Woman relationship as a most revealing relationship of Alienation in this exploitative, sexist, racist, capitalistic society. In his final writings — after completing his greatest theoretical work, *Capital*, and as he turned to what was then a "new science," anthropology — he kept working at and concretizing his multilinear view of human development and its continuing struggles for freedom.

Whether that meant introducing fundamental changes in Capital itself, as he prepared its 1872-75 French edition, both on concentration and centralization of capital and in making the final section on "So-called Primitive Accumulation of Capital" integral to Part VII; or whether it was his commentary on Morgan's Ancient Society and the Iroquois women that we find in Marx's Ethnological Notebooks of 1880-82; or whether it was a new view of the primitive agricultural commune in an industrialized world as he expressed it in letters to Vera Zasulich and in commentary on Mikhailovsky's critique of his "Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation" — Marx's point, as he projected the startling possibility of a revolution coming first in backward lands like Russia ahead of the technologically advanced West, was that there was more than one path to revolution.

It was this, just this, that proved to have the most intense interest for today's audiences.

AFRO-AMERICAN AND THIRD WORLD AUDIENCES

Take, for example, those talks that were sponsored by Afro-American Studies programs. The interest of these audiences in "Marx and the Black World" was not limited to Marx's 1867 expression in *Capital* that "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded," but extended to my quotation from the 1881 Ethnological Notebooks, where Marx calls the Australian aborigine "the intelligent black." What some in the audience responded was: "Yes, but how, in today's world, where the Black World is truly global — and none have done more to reshape it than the African revolutions — can we escape being drawn back to capitalism, keep the revolutions from souring, and show that we, the Blacks in the U.S., are not narrowly nationalistic after all?"

Furthermore, both the Black intellectuals and the Black activists wanted to discuss also the origins of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S. I first broke with Trotsky over the Hitler-Stalin Pact, when Trotsky continued to call for the defense of Russia as a "workers' state, though degenerate," and, under the name of Freddie Forest, began my development of the theory of state-capitalism. This led, in 1941, to my association with C.L.R. James, author of *Black Jacobins*, who, under the name of J.R. Johnson, had arrived at the same position. The state-capitalist tendency thus became known as the Johnson-Forest Tendency. But where, to me, the theory of state-capitalism was but a step to the development of the philosophy of Marx-

The national tour on the Marx centenary



Raya Dunayevskaya on tour at the University of Michigan where she spoke on "New Moments in Marx's Last Decade" and on "Marx and the Black World."

ist-Humanism, C.L.R. James failed to move from seeing what we were against, the transformation of Russia as a workers' state into a state-capitalist society, to concretizing what we are for: Marx's Humanism.

Thus, when I was interviewed on video-tape for one Afro-American Studies class in California about the Johnson-Forest Tendency's activities and pioneering studies on the Black dimension through the 1940s, it led to a discussion about the 1953-55 period when there was a split between the founders of the Tendency, and about the development of the unique Marxist-Humanist view of Black masses as vanguard. It was this which I had the opportunity to discuss further that same evening at the taped public lecture on "Marx and the Black World" — which moved the question to today, and included not only the Black dimension in the U.S., but the Black revolutions in Africa and the West Indies, as well as the revolutions in Latin America.

As for the Third World Women's Conference held in Urbana, Ill. — it was truly international, including both "First" and Third Worlds, both Latin America fighting U.S. imperialism and wanting independence also from Russian totalitarianism, both Iranians fighting Khomeini and Iraqis fighting Hussein. The question was how do we, in showing that there are two worlds within each country, build relations that reach across national boundaries? The hunger here for a philosophy of freedom was so pervasive that one very nearly forgot the participants were all activists engaged in ongoing freedom struggles. The way in which there is no separation between the activism they reported on and the philosophy of freedom they wished to work out made it clear that, despite the nuclear-armed imperialist titans and oppressive rulers they faced, none thought that a description of this period as a "birth-time of history" was utopian. Instead, the revolutionaries of each country truly felt themselves to be "a land of boundless possibilities," as Rosa Luxemburg had put it.

CRITIQUE OF POST-MARX MARXISM

It was this feeling that kept us all on the concrete level — and "all" does not mean only at the Third World Women's Conference (though they had the highest attendance, over 500), but the audiences in all 46 talks nationwide, be it in Michigan or West Virginia; in Washington, D.C. or the state of Washington; in New York or Iowa; in Wisconsin or Utah; or, for that matter, in Canada where I was present on International Women's Day. Though these audiences were smaller (ranging from 50 to 200), there was no difference in their concern with both their activism and their absorption in philosophy. Despite the movement to the Right on the part of the rulers, there was serious interest in Marx among audiences everywhere I went — and an awareness that this is where the absolute opposition to the status quo lies. It was because of this that all seemed eager to dig into the challenge to all post-Marx Marxists on which I focused.

This totally new attitude could also be seen in the several appearances I made on mass media outlets — especially where (as on educational radio channels) there was a full hour to develop the category of the last three decades of our age as a movement from practice to theory that is itself a form of theory which challenges the theoretician to rise to the point of philosophy by being rooted as deeply in the movement from practice as in the movement from theory. Bertell Ollman's program on WBAI, "Praxis: Interview with Marxists" gave me that opportunity in prime time.* The subject was Rosa Luxemburg

— as revolutionary as well as in her heretofore unknown feminist dimension; as Marxist taking issue with Marx's theory of accumulation and with Lenin on the question of the relationship of spontaneity to Party organization; as theorist as well as leader in both the 1905 Polish Revolution and the 1919 Spartacist Uprising in Germany. Nevertheless, in that crowded hour, the challenge to post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism was also raised.

It was in New York that I also had the opportunity to develop anew the key historic happening in labor for our age — the 1950 Miners' General Strike. It had been just before coming to New York that I had a most exciting experience in West Virginia, where I had talked of that strike in my lecture and found in the audience participants who had known me through my own activity there during that strike, and who, on their own, had been following my writings since then. At my very final lecture of the tour — the sum-up meeting in California — we had present still others who had participated in that strike and had been led by the event to become Marxist-Humanists and who now poured forth their reminiscences.

What became so clear — 30 years after that historic labor happening — was the way in which it had laid the ground for the 1953 breakthrough on the Absolute Idea as a unity of the movement from theory and from practice. The type of questions the miners had begun asking in 1949-50 about Automation — which was leading to ever-more sharp divisions between mental and manual labor, as they rejected John L. Lewis's order to return to work — had led me to introduce changes in the form of the book on state-capitalism I was then writing. The two new vantage points I saw for that work were: one, the American labor struggles; and two, dialectical philosophy, specifically Lenin's Abstract of Hegel's Science of Logic.

It was immediately after this return to Marxist-Humanism's roots in West Virginia, that I got to New York and found that Tamiment Library at New York University (which has on microfilm the entire Archives I have deposited at Wayne State University)** wished to interview me for the Oral History of the Left precisely on that missing link in the relationship between the stage of cognition and the stage of labor revolt. Indeed, News and Letters Committees are now thinking of producing a pamphlet on the 1950 Miners' General Strike with the eyes of today, by the participants themselves.

Thus it is that the national tour in this Marx centenary year has related both the world historic birth of Marx's "new Humanism" to today's struggles, and the beginnings of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S. in the 1950s to our challenge to all post-Marx Marxists in the 1980s.

* This interview can be heard on June 7 at 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. over radio station WBAI, New York.

** Both the studies on the "Negro Question" in the 1940s and the letters and articles around the 1949-50 Miners' General Strike are included in a new and expanded edition of the "Raya Dunayevskaya Collection: Marxist-Humanism from 1941 to Today," available on microfilm from the WSU Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Detroit, Mich. 48202.

Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution

Part One: Rosa Luxemburg as Theoretician, as Activist, as Internationalist

"Although Luxemburg described concretely how the war between the Boers and the English was fought 'on the backs of the Negroes,' she did not draw any conclusions about the Black Africans being a revolutionary force."

Part Two: The Women's Liberation Movement as Revolutionary Force and Reason

"... the most important thing we must all learn to hear are the voices of the Third World. The real Afro-Asian, Latin American struggles — especially of women — are not heard in the rhetoric at the Tri-Continental Congresses ..."

Part Three: Karl Marx — From a Critic of Hegel to Author of Capital and Theorist of "Revolution in Permanence"

"Even after the highest point of their collaboration ... Marx wrote to Engels (1 August 1856) about a contemporary commentator: 'What is so very strange is to see how he treats the two of us as a singular: "Marx and Engels says" etc.'"

Marx could not possibly have known that precisely such an artificial 'merger' of the two would so characterize the thinking of post-Marx-Marxists, that the new and original of what Marx's Marxism is becomes blurred."

Published by Humanities Press for the Marx Centenary. \$10.95, postage free

News & Letters, 2832 E. Grand Blvd., Detroit, MI 48211.

News & Letters

Vol. 28, No. 5 June, 1983

News & Letters (ISSN 0028-8969) is published ten times a year, monthly except for January-February and August-September, by News & Letters, 2832 E. Grand Blvd., Detroit, Mich. 48211. Telephone: 873-8969. Subscription: \$2.50 a year; single copy 25¢; for bulk order of five or more—15¢ each.

Raya Dunayevskaya, Chairwoman
National Editorial Board

Charles Denby Editor
Felix Martin Co-Editor
O. Domanski Managing Editor

Second Class Postage Paid at Detroit, Michigan

An American Marxist-Humanist in Britain

Peace camps, labor, Black youth confront Thatcher

Ed. Note: Harvester Press has just published a British edition of Raya Dunayevskaya's book, Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution. Last month Anne Jaclard travelled to Britain to help initiate a dialogue around the ideas expressed in the book with activists and thinkers in the freedom movements in Britain. This is her report.

London, England — An American visiting Britain is struck by the similarities to home: unemployment, with no prospect ever of a job for youth, Black or white; vicious attacks on workers and "Marxists" by a government intent on breaking the unions; increasing police surveillance, harassment and outright murder of Black youth.

Reagan's twin, Margaret Thatcher, is dismantling the so-called "welfare state," threatening to abolish liberal local governments, and sabre-rattling about "Britain strong and free." As a magazine cartoon put it, "The welfare state will support you from the cradle to the grave . . . as long as it doesn't take too long." But one is quickly struck by the many liberation struggles as well.

NEW KIND OF PEACE MOVEMENT

The "newest" movement in Britain today is the peace movement, which has been transformed by Reagan's threat to fight a "limited" nuclear war in Europe on the one hand, and a massive feminist response on the other. When 40 women began the first "peace camp" at Greenham Common nearly two years ago, vowing to block with their bodies the installation of U.S. Cruise missiles still scheduled for later this year, they started a movement which questions every aspect of life.

Not for a moment did they separate sexism from militarism, and recently they have made connections with prisoners and Black groups. There are now 10 peace camps in Britain, including three in Scotland, most of them having both women and men and including unemployed youth.

I visited Upper Heyford, where campers have lived outside a huge U.S. Air Force base for 16 months. In the midst of beautiful English countryside, they have pitched tents and trailers against the fence of the base. You can see the F-111 nuclear bombers, the ones on the ground armed with nukes and ready for take-off, and practice ones swooping overhead every five minutes. The camp aims to publicize that it is not just a question of keeping nuclear weapons out of Britain, because they are already there.

Peace campers are aware that not everyone can leave home to live-in by a military base, but they have brought attention to the issue and sparked many mass demonstrations, including the 30,000 women who came together at Greenham Common last Dec. 12.

I asked people what compelled so many women to come out to demonstrate, and most echoed the woman at Greenham who said, "It was the first day that I felt I had any control over my life." Participants told of women no longer able to lead "normal" lives, whose ideas about themselves had so changed when they saw the thousands of other women and the brutality of the police.

The camps have changed the women's movement as well, provoking discussion about what feminist activity is and how it relates to class, and putting front-center the question of what kind of organization is needed to replace the hierarchical ones — including the biggest peace organization, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament — which the women have rejected.

BLACK BRITAIN

The activity of the Black and Asian groups has produced the most exciting resistance to Thatcherism. They are forming organizations in communities all over England, from defense committees to women's groups. Along with British Marxist-Humanists I visited the Broadwater Farm Youth Association and the Colin Roach Family Support Committee in North London, and was invited to speak by Black women's organizations in Birmingham and Brixton.



Colin Roach support demonstration

The meeting in Birmingham was organized by a young Black woman who discovered Marxist-Humanism when someone loaned her a copy of Charles Denby's *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, inspiring her to write to Denby in the USA. They were excited by what I presented from *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, especially the way Black women past and present were shown as Reason of revolution, and I felt they represented what is best in the freedom movement in Britain.

Broadwater Farm is a large public housing complex in London where the police used to go to make trouble, harassing, beating and arresting Black youth. Now the Youth Association has served notice on the police to keep out, and declared that "if they arrest one innocent person, they'll have to take us all."

At the April 25 meeting of their Defence Campaign to aid four youth arrested for asking questions of the police, both youth and adults described their own self-development and their organization's over the past few months of struggle. Speaker after speaker described the deep racism in all aspects of British society — the lack of jobs, and workplace discrimination as well as increased repression and the latest proposed Police Bill.

In nearby Hackney, the Black community has rallied behind the family of Colin Roach, a Black youth who was shot to death while inside a police station in January. The police claim it was suicide. Four demonstrations since have been met by brutal beatings and many arrests. Instead of creating just another "defense campaign" for those arrested, Black groups are demanding an independent inquiry into the death, over and above the coroner's inquest, which they have succeeded in having moved to a large public hall. (For updates on both struggles by participants speaking for themselves, see the latest issue of *British News & Letters*, available from U.S. N&L for 75 cents.)

WILDCATS AND SIT-INS

British labor is also on the barricades. British Leyland auto workers cried halt to the government-owned company's take-backs with their four-week strike in April over working conditions at one Cowley plant. (See N&L April and May, for in-person reports.) Although they were sold out by the national union leadership and returned to work pending further negotiations, the importance of the strike and a recent wildcat in another Cowley plant cannot be lost.

Black workers from BL Cowley and other Black Oxford workers have formed their own organization, and recently won a court case in which BL was ordered to pay each Black worker \$75 for management's racist remarks. Women workers in the production plant have been meeting informally to discuss their special problems, such as pregnancy and responsibility for children.

Meanwhile in Scotland, the workers at Timex in Dundee have been sitting in the plant since the beginning of April to prevent the company from exporting jobs to France. The plant, which makes watches, TV screens, computers and cameras, plans to lay off 1,900 people. 220 were fired in early May for taking part in or supporting the sit-in.

I could not take up in detail here many other movements in the month of May alone, from the May 3 battle in North London between primarily Black youth and the police who protected the fascist National Front's meeting in their neighborhood, to the May 7 "troops out" demonstrations in support of the Northern Irish movement, to the May 24 International Women's Day for Disarmament spearheaded by the peace camps. While Prime Minister Thatcher and the opposition Labour Party campaign for the June national elections, the British people have chosen this spring to demonstrate their disgust with every aspect of British society.

--Anne Jaclard

If you missed Greenham Common, come to Walled Lake

REFUSE THE CRUISE!

Demonstration and human chain around Williams International Corp., maker of Cruise missile engines

2 p.m. Sat. June 11

2280 W. Maple Rd., Walled Lake, Michigan

For information: (313) 873-8969

PUBLICATIONS FROM NEWS & LETTERS COMMITTEES

- American Civilization on Trial, Black Masses as Vanguard**
Statement of the National Editorial Board.
Includes "Black Caucasians in the Unions,"
by Charles Denby 75c per copy
- Marx's Capital and Today's Global Crisis**
By Raya Dunayevskaya \$2 per copy
- Working Women for Freedom**
By Angela Terrano, Marie Dignan and
Mary Holmes \$1 per copy
- Latin America's Revolutions**
Bilingual pamphlet on Marxism & Latin America . . \$1 per copy
- New Essays**
On Hegel, Marx, Post-Mao China, Trotsky
By Raya Dunayevskaya \$2 per copy
- Frantz Fanon, Soweto and American Black Thought**
By Lou Turner and John Alan \$1 per copy
- Guatemalan Revolutionaries Speak**
. 50¢ per copy
- Dialectics of Liberation**
Summaries of Hegel's works and Lenin's Philosophic
Notebooks.
By Raya Dunayevskaya \$2 per copy
- Women as Reason and as Force of Revolution**
By Raya Dunayevskaya \$1.00 per copy
- Theory and Practice**
First English translation of article by Rosa
Luxemburg \$2 per copy

- News & Letters —**
Unique combination of worker and intellectual,
published 10 times a year \$2.50 per year
- The First General Strike in the U.S.**
By Terry Moon and Ron Brokmeyer \$1 per copy
- The Political-Philosophic Letters of
Raya Dunayevskaya**
Vol. I includes Portugal, Post-Mao China, Lebanon,
Euro-communism \$2 per copy
Vol. II includes Iran, Latin America, What is
Philosophy?, Permanent Revolution. . . . \$1.50 per copy
- Outline of Marx's Capital—Vol. I**
By Raya Dunayevskaya \$2.50 per copy
- Revolutionary Feminism**
On history of International Women's Day, on the Paris
Commune and Black Women. 75c per copy
- 25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.**
A History of Worldwide Revolutionary Developments
By Raya Dunayevskaya \$1.50 per copy
- Today's Polish Fight For Freedom**
Bilingual pamphlet of writings from dissident
movement \$1 per copy
- Constitution of News & Letters Committees**
. 15c postage

- Rosa Luxemburg, Women's
Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of
Revolution**
By Raya Dunayevskaya \$10.95 per copy
- Marxism and Freedom**
1982 edition. New introduction by author
By Raya Dunayevskaya \$10.95 per copy
- Philosophy and Revolution**
1982 edition. New introduction by author
By Raya Dunayevskaya \$10.95 per copy
- Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's
Journal**
By Charles Denby \$ 7.50 per copy

MAIL ORDERS TO: 6-83

News & Letters, 2832 East Grand Boulevard
Detroit, Mich. 48211

Enclosed find \$_____ for the literature checked.
Please add 50c to each order for postage.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

LABOR'S CRITIQUE: FROM POLAND TO CHINA TO U.S.A.

From Jan. 1 to Dec. 12, 1981 (when Solidarity was legal) no miners died in the mines. On Dec. 13, 1981 mines were militarized; quitting work became punishable by three years in prison. It could also be treated as desertion and that means the death penalty. Not following supervisor's recommendations became refusal to carry out orders. What were the effects?

On Dec. 17 in "Zabrze" mine a miner died in a cave-in. From Jan. to Sept. 1982, in the first nine months of the state of war, 161 miners and rescuers died in Polish mines.

Urszula Wislanka
San Francisco

The UAW Convention should have been rated "X". I thought it was obscene for Fraser to get up there and listen to everyone say what a "legend" he's been as President. In my shop, he's infamous. All people say about him is how he got on the Chrysler board, and how ever since all we've done is "give-back" everything the union ever won. And Bieber. When was the last time he worked in a shop? If he had to run in a real election, he couldn't become a dogcatcher. He can only win with voters who are wearing gold handcuffs.

GM Fleetwood worker
Detroit

I just loved it when the White House picked eighteenth century Williamsburg as the site for Reagan's gala conference with the leaders of the industrial nations. At last they found a setting to match the era of Reagan's brain! But on second thought, perhaps they should use a Paleolithic excavation site, since he is determined to take us back to the Stone Age.

Amateur historian
New Jersey

The other day I was talking to a friend who is an exile from China. He lived there during the Great Leap Forward and at one time served in Mao's Red Guards. When I asked him if anything is better now in China than when Mao was alive, he answered that at least in a few instances workers can choose which industry to work in, where before you could never question your assignment or where you would work.

I thought about another friend I have, an American, who used to work at an auto plant here in LA until GM told him to move to Oklahoma and work in their plant there, or else lose all his unemployment benefits. It seems that if the decomposition of Communism is forcing them to play around with some "private" capitalism, the decomposition of private capitalism is moving this country a lot closer to totalitarian communism.

Revolutionary
Los Angeles

Why do the working people allow the government to pay miserly benefits to unemployed workers that run out in a year or less, while unemployed presidents get unemployment benefits that never run out? The highest unemployment check for a former president is \$70,000 a year, not counting all the extra benefits. And Presidents never have to stand in an unemployment line. Anyone who thinks this system doesn't need a total uprooting, look a second at these facts and then make up your mind.

Unemployed and angry
Pico Rivera, Calif.

I learned something new from Michael Connolly's article on May Day in Poland and South Africa (May N&L) — namely that when workers are really revolutionary, really on the move, they are out to change both their shops and the whole society. Sometimes that isn't so clear. The union leaders and the newspapers project the image that workers are only interested in their wages and benefits. The Left party members I meet say that individual workers' concerns are "diversary"; only the class counts.

Now I ask myself how we can be sure that a workers' revolution will free women? Will all workers see that racism has to be wiped out? Solidarity in Poland and the Black trade unions of South Africa give me hope that we can create a new world.

Woman activist
Ann Arbor, Mich.



NATIVE AMERICAN RIGHTS IN DANGER

"Save a fish — spear an Indian." Bumper stickers like this are fairly common in Michigan's Upper Peninsula where Chippewa Indians have been fighting a long legal battle to protect their treaty fishing rights in the Great Lakes. Despite threats and abuse, Indian tribes are taking to the courts to reclaim historic rights to resources, to tribal self-government, to our cultural heritage. The Native American Rights Fund is the largest nationwide Indian rights center, representing tribes and Indian groups financially unable to be otherwise represented. More than half our lawyers and 80 percent of our staff are Indians. And our all-Indian steering committee comes from many tribes — Yakima, Tlingit, Klamath, Chippewa, etc.

We need your help in our cases: improving federal Indian housing programs; insuring that federal funds given to Oklahoma for Indian education get used for that purpose; defending Indian inmates' rights at the Iowa state prison. Please send your contribution to:

Native American Rights Fund
1506 Broadway
Boulder, CO 80302

EDUCATION — FOR ILLITERACY, OR FOR REVOLUTION?

When the National Commission on Excellence in Education compared the state of education in the U.S. to "an act of war," I thought of Olga Domanski's analysis of planned illiteracy in the April issue of N&L. As a tutor at the City Colleges of Chicago, I saw the results of planned illiteracy — students who were not unintelligent, but couldn't read, or couldn't add or subtract. Reagan is more interested in teaching them to pray, which is not too different from my public high school in the 1970s.

The commission's recommendations for more and longer school days and more homework, together with the new regulation allowing more working hours for school-age people, and Reagan's wish to lower the minimum wage for teenagers, all combine to increase the pressure on working youth to drop out of school. No wonder a new generation of revolutionaries is ready to tear up the system from the roots!

Public school survivor
Chicago

If we know that the present system of education is wrong, what is the alternative to class education? I feel that even though students are in revolt, the struggle still hasn't begun to break down the division between mental and manual labor. Black Studies departments often have no relation to the mass of Black students. And even science is perverted — just look at what was done to Barney Clark to further research for sales of manufactured hearts.

Disgusted
Oakland, Calif.

An article in last month's N&L, entitled "Academic Marxism stunts students interest", reminded me very much of the critique students were making of academic Marxism in the 1960s, as we got tired of being labeled as "Reds" for our work in the Civil Rights Movement

Readers' View

It was good to see Shainape Shcapwe back again in N&L last month — and in so full a form. I had missed her analysis of what is happening in the Native American community, and on the reservations in the West. It isn't reported at all, and I can only imagine that under Reagan things have gotten worse.

Factory worker
New York City

SEXUALITY IN U.S. ARMY: HARASSMENT AND DEATH

Suzanne Casey's column (April N&L) on the New Bedford rape incident came to mind when I read about Pvt. Dawn Stubbs' suicide. Stubbs enlisted to obtain a trade as an electrician and was stationed at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri. Right before going on leave for Christmas, her commanding officer, Staff Sgt. Soondar Sookdeo sexually harassed her.

Three years before then, after getting off from her job as a waitress, she had been raped. With the memory of that — and the realization that women in the military are trapped without even civil justice — she faced going back to Fort Leonard Wood when her leave was over. She took her own life instead. How sickening for one's sexuality to be a liability in this society — and in the Army where all rights are stripped away, as well.

Anti-militarist man
Detroit

NURSING HOME STRUGGLE

In a nursing home in Santa Cruz, Calif. a struggle normally hidden from public view is now getting more publicity. Cabrillo Convalescent Hospital and Manor there was sold last fall to Jewell Corporation, owners of some 90 nursing homes

nationally. What resulted was an immediate slashing of patient care standards and an attack on the wages and working conditions of the 110 employees.

One Cabrillo resident, Dixon Adams, commented, "They're trying to make money off our ill health. That's what I object to. The Jewell brothers are speculators in old people's health." Jewell ordered a wage freeze, eliminated all sick time and paid off all vacation time. Then they cut wages severely.

Now workers there have started to organize to get a union, and a vote is scheduled soon on union recognition. I hope they win, and not only at Cabrillo, but all over the country. Nursing homes are big business now, and both workers and patients have to organize just to protect themselves.

Ex-nursing home worker
Michigan

U.S. DIALOGUE, PROTESTS ON LATIN AMERICA'S REVOLTS

An American worker asked me what I was doing here, working with him in the U.S. He is one of those racist types. I told him I didn't come here to get anything free. I earn my living by the sweat of my brow. But Americans come to my country and without lifting a finger, carry off all our riches, our gold, our sugar. They sent 42,000 Marines to my country in 1965 to keep us from changing our government.

The Americans forbid us to buy from Japan — but they buy all those Japanese cars. They tell us we cannot sell to Russia or talk to Cuba — but they sell their wheat to Russia and Castro goes to New York to speak at the UN. They say they have no money to develop our agriculture, which is what we most desperately need. But they have millions to send arms to keep our dictators in power. I will never let them send me to fight in El Salvador. If the U.S. were invaded, I would fight to the end, because this is where I live. But that is a different matter.

Dominican worker
New Jersey

Before the Barnard College administration was even able to announce publicly an award to one of its alumni, Jeane Kirkpatrick, more than 1,000 students and a substantial number of the faculty signed petitions in opposition. This was achieved literally overnight. Since we haven't had any real mass student activity this Spring, I think the speed and strength of the protest was remarkable, and apparently shocked the Administration. I believe this is a sign of an important new movement that is building up below the surface.

Columbia U. activist
New York City

I recently heard a speech given by the Nicaraguan Ambassador to the OAS here in Los Angeles which revealed to me some of the contradictions the Sandinistas are now facing. On the one hand, the Ambassador gave a very fine speech, denouncing the secret war against his country by Reagan and showing how the Nicaraguan people are far freer today than at any previous moment in their history.

On the other hand, when an Iranian student asked why are the Sandinistas doing business with Khomeini, he answered that they need "allies". When another student asked when will production be put fully into the hands of the workers, he just dodged the issue. It's not hard to see how external threats of invasion from the U.S. make it difficult to make a new beginning for a revolution, which is why we have to work doubly hard to stop Reagan's war against the Sandinistas.

Marxist-Humanist
Los Angeles



"The trustees understand the curriculum requires you to teach Marxism. We just feel you're not making it boring enough."

NEW VIEWS OF MARX, LUXEMBURG, TODAY'S MOVEMENT

Meeting Marxist-Humanism has opened my eyes to a whole new view of Marx. He is so often presented as the vulgar materialist of the type that Dunayevskaya critiques in the category "post-Marx Marxists," that many feminists want nothing to do with Marxism. The view of Marx as humanist, as uniting idealism and materialism, as embracing "human sensuous activity" is exciting to me. I think there is a real possibility for communication between Marxist-Humanists and feminists who have rejected Marx on the basis of the post-Marx Marxists.

Feminist activist and thinker
Oregon

I was interested in Raya's talk at the campus because of the way she discussed Marx. I had never heard about the Humanist part of Marx before, even though I took a class on Marx. What is funny is how the Reaganites and the Communists present Marx the same way — as an unfeeling dictator laying out a plan for your life. You can begin to see what ties together the Russian rulers and the American rulers just by seeing how they view Marx.

Student
Cal State-Los Angeles

The passages from the 1875 French edition of *Capital* in the N&L Marx Centenary issue inspired me to look at the Farsi edition of *Capital*, Vol. 1, first translated only nine years ago. Iranian Marxists are fortunate, for the translation was from the 1875 edition. This does not mean the translator (head of the Tudeh Party) appreciated what Marx added. He only mentions that Marx made changes, and says we shouldn't feel bad, since Marx "supervised" the French translation as closely as the original German edition. The translator wrote he also "took liberties" in omitting some passages and giving preferences to others as formulated in the Russian and German editions.

I would like to trace how much of the Farsi edition follows Marx's original editing of 1875. It is important in the context of new moments of Marx's last decade, which Dunayevskaya has brought to light, when Marx was envisioning revolutions in non-Western lands.

Iranian exile
California

In scanning Dunayevskaya's new book, I see that many references are made to Rosa Luxemburg as a "feminist." Frankly, I think that this interpretation is a case of "beauty in the eye of the beholder." It has always been my understanding that Rosa buried her womanhood, so as to give no cause for reformists to use that question in arguing with her intransigent revolutionary position. I would be interested in seeing whether Dunayevskaya has any proof to the contrary on this point . . .

New reader
New York

The new interest of Women's Liberationists in Rosa Luxemburg was expressed by a Berkeley student who came to our International Women's Day meeting. She had just encountered Luxemburg for the first time while reading excerpts from *Accumulation of Capital*, and was so taken with Luxemburg's passion for revolution that she wanted to hear more. Then she bought Dunayevskaya's entire *Trilogy of Revolution* "to find out what Marxist-Humanism is all about." What impresses me is that this interest in Luxemburg that we keep finding is coming not from just "recovering our lost history," but from trying to work out today's questions for women's liberation and for revolution.

Women's liberationist
Berkeley

Our mobile radical bookstore is doing well. In fact, *Indignant Heart* and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* have been our biggest sellers. I just completed a study of the International Mone-

tary Fund and the World Bank and their relationship to the current workings of U.S. imperialism, including the most recent statistics on the subject. I want to do a study of Dunayevskaya's state-capitalist theory, as I think it will fit well with my other studies . . .

Student
Catskill, NY

I've been studying Part II of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, the Part on the contributions of the Women's Liberation Movement. I felt that it unceasingly raised new questions in relation to feminist consciousness, quite the opposite of the way Engels consigned us to a role as victims when he posited the "world historic defeat of the female sex".

For me, an integral part of the freedom struggle is to address questions before the day of insurrection, to keep in view at all times the kind of society we want to create, even while we are trying to bring down this old oppressive one.

Feminist
Brooklyn, NY

ALABAMA, BRITAIN: STOP POLICE KILLINGS OF BLACKS

Police brutality and murder continue to be burning issues in the Black community here. On May 14 a young Black man, Nicholas Ofusu, died after being "restrained by three police officers" in East London. That same day 1,000 people marched through the streets of Hackney and Stoke Newington, demanding a public inquiry into the death of Colin Roach, who was killed by a shotgun in the foyer of the Stoke Newington police station. 93 people have been arrested in these demonstrations.

Thatcher's election platform stands on continuing the repression of Black people through police and nationality legislation. Yet instead of taking up the threat to civil liberties and the militarization of life posed by the Tories, Labour is more concerned with showing the bosses how it could run the economy better, and "get Britain back to work."

Labour's history shows that they are the ones who bring in repressive laws first. They brought in the first "Immigration" Act, the first Prevention of Terrorism Act. They were the ones who appointed Kenneth Newman, now Commissioner of Police in London, as head of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, presiding over torture in Northern Ireland. The opinion polls put Thatcher ahead by 10%. But whatever the outcome, more can be said in the streets.

Nigel Quinten
London, England

Thank you for printing news of Alabama in N&L. We are in need of all possible help now. In Montgomery another Black man has been shot and killed on the streets. This time the killer was a Black policewoman, so they say. But the point is still the same — Chief Swindall and his officers have no respect ever for law, much less for justice. I promise to send you news of Alabama events in the future . . .

Subscriber
Hayneville, Alabama

GALILEO WAITS

Some 350 years ago the Roman Catholic Church conducted an inquisition trial for the world famous astronomer Galileo, who had advanced the theory that the planets, including the earth, revolved around the sun. The church court found him guilty of heresy and sentenced him to life imprisonment, later changed to house confinement. With all deliberate speed, the Pope appointed a commission in 1979 to study the matter and report back. It is still investigating, and hopefully poor Galileo will be vindicated someday if it can be done within the framework of the infallibility of Papal doctrine.

Ex-Catholic
Massachusetts

EDITORIAL

Economic crisis deepens; rulers prepare summit

So deep is the worst recession this country has seen since the calamitous depression of the 1930s that not even the reactionary Reagan Administration — busy claiming that we are finally on our way to "economic recovery" — can hide the fact that millions of workers will never get their jobs back. Reagan's so-called "economic recovery" means nothing more than the unconscionable profits some parts of capitalism have been able to achieve through robotics, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the fantastic concessions the labor bureaucracy has been able to force the workers to accept, under the threat of closing plants and permanent unemployment.

Far from the latest GNP (Gross National Product) figures (which had to be revised downward from an estimated 3.1% to an even weaker 2.5% the minute they were released) proving "recovery" was on its way, the true measure of the ever further deepening of the crisis was the Labor Department's report, that same week, that initial claims for unemployment benefits rose by 10,000 the first week of May.

Incredibly, in all the ballyhoo about "recovery," not a single word is mentioned about the fact that unemployment rates were higher in the first quarter of 1983 than a year ago in 41 of the 50 states, as the national rate has climbed from 9.2 to 10.1 percent — with states like Michigan reaching 17 and West Virginia reaching 20.1 percent. In Black America one out of every five is jobless; and in many urban centers, for Black teenagers it is three out of every four.

That Reagan doesn't count mass unemployment as a recession is not only because his own exacerbation of such deep unemployment is a "calculated risk" (supposedly necessary to bring down inflation), but because all know that the massive unemployment is now permanent.

A GLOBAL PERMANENT UNEMPLOYED ARMY

Indeed, permanent unemployment today characterizes all of the Western industrialized nations, with an unemployment rate of 11.3% and rising estimated for 1983 in Britain; 12.9 in Canada; 9.5 in France; 9.7 in West Germany. Over 25 million are jobless in the countries whose retrogressive rulers are preparing, as we go to press, to meet in an "economic summit," fittingly enough, in 18th century Williamsburg, Va. — where Reagan plans to give them "a good feel for America" by feeding them on (gourmet-prepared) catfish, hushpuppies and chili, along with Maine lobsters, Long Island clams and Virginia oysters. Clearly, they would get a better "feel for America" by standing in one of the food lines at hunger kitchens throughout the land.

The crisis, of course, is not limited to the industrialized "West." It is the Third World that has been hurt more than any — both because the price for their raw materials are constantly forced downward by the industrial Goliaths, and because, at the same time, what they have to pay for industrial products has constantly skyrocketed. The Third World has thus suffered far more than the industrialized West in the last decade from the ten-fold price-rise for oil — "the" strategic commodity because it is the commodity needed for war.

What worries the leaders of the industrial world on the way to their "summit," of course, is not the misery of the Third World, but the fact that a default in their debt of more than \$600 billion might menace the banking system of the West, and the fact that one out of six jobs in American industry depends on sales to undeveloped countries.

THE NON-EVENT VS. THE WAY OUT

The "economic summit" at Williamsburg is sure to be the "non-event" of the year. But the truth is that no summit conference of rulers can touch the heart of the deep worldwide crisis today — the millions who have become what Marx called capitalism's "surplus population." Marx did not live to see our actual age of Automation, of unimation, of robotics, of high-tech computers — but over 100 years ago, in *Capital*, he described the whole process he had discerned in terms that our age can understand better than any before.

Long before the word Automation had been invented, Marx described the "automation" and not only called the constant new inventions, in the hands of the capitalists, "the most powerful weapon for repressing strikes" but wrote: "We have seen how this absolute contradiction between the technical necessities of Modern Industry, and the social character inherent in its capitalistic form . . . vents its rage in the creation of that monstrosity, an industrial reserve army, kept in misery in order to be always at the disposal of capital; in the incessant human sacrifices from among the working class, in the most reckless squandering of labor-power, and in the devastation caused by a social anarchy which turns every economical progress into a social calamity."

So deep and irreversible are the structural changes that have taken place in the last decade — the overwhelming preponderance of constant capital (machinery) over variable capital (the living labor employed) — that it has become clear to every worker that we are beyond the former cycles of boom and bust, and that there will be no more booms.*

Indeed, the workers know this so well and are so determined not to continue the suicidal concessions that have been given both on wages and benefits, and on work and safety rules, that at the just-ended convention of the UAW (see "Our Life and Times," page 12), we have seen the labor bureaucrats suddenly assuming a militant pose, as they arm themselves for the underlying workers' revolt they now see coming.

* For a full development of this analysis, see Raya Dunayevskaya's special introduction to her *Marx's "Capital" and Today's Global Crisis*, available from N&L for \$2.

MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES

Marxist-Humanism, 1941 to Today Its Origin and Development in the U.S.

The newly-expanded 7,000-page Raya Dunayevskaya Collection is now available on microfilm for \$60. Please write to:
Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs Walter Reuther Library
Wayne State University, Detroit, MI 48202

The Guide to the Collection prepared by News & Letters is available for \$1.00. Please write to:
News & Letters, 2832 E. Grand Blvd., Detroit, MI 48211

Central American war plans

(Continued from Page 1)

official Democratic Party response to Reagan's speech. Dodd accepted virtually all of the goals and premises of the Reagan speech, stating that his disagreement is that "the means he has chosen will not fulfill them."

As a result, Reagan is getting most of what he asked for. Military aid to El Salvador alone is being increased by at least 150%. And the much publicized "strings" on that aid and on Reagan's ability to conduct covert operations in Nicaragua are so vague as to give full reign to a policy of counter-insurgency on a regional scale.

The U.S.'s Central American policy also points up the lie in Reagan's claim that the Central American revolutions are being fomented from outside of Central America. The intent of his policy is to escalate a long-standing practice of regionalizing the war against freedom forces in Central America by establishing a base of operations in Honduras from which the Government of Nicaragua can be destabilized and the people's organizations in El Salvador and Guatemala can be subverted and attacked.

Despite Reagan's claim that the U.S. initially looked favorably upon the revolutionary government of Nicaragua, a regionalized counter-insurgency program was established immediately after the Sandinista victory in 1979. Between 1979 and 1981 the size of the Honduran armed forces was doubled with U.S. aid, and over 100 U.S. advisors were sent. Under pressure from the U.S., Chile, Argentina and Israel joined in the operation. The U.S. also replaced its Ambassador with John Negroponde, who had served as political officer to the U.S. Embassy in Saigon during the Vietnam war. In the past year and a half, a CIA-supported army in Nicaragua has grown from 500 to over 7,000. And, on May 9, the Defense Department admitted that a secret intelligence unit which they organized in 1980 has been conducting clandestine operations in El Salvador since March, 1982 without the knowledge of Congress.

ECONOMIC CRISIS AND CHILEAN REVOLT

Yet Reagan's policy of counter-insurgency doesn't reckon with the pauperization of Latin America brought on by the worldwide economic crisis. As the crisis deepens, people are responding with revolution. A Salvadoran exile explains: "This crisis is not just political or military; it is a structural crisis that involves a whole system of world capitalism. U.S. capital is devastating Central America. The economic crisis is very much a factor in my country. There is less income and the system is at a dead end. So the people fight all the harder."

The same is true in many countries once considered "safe" by the U.S. government, even Pinochet's Chile, a country which conservative economist Milton Friedman termed an "economic miracle." There the unemployment rate has tripled to 22% in the past year with another 13% of the work force engaged in emergency public works projects that pay only \$27 per month. The rate of inflation has reached 30%. Despite the fact that the U.S. organized the coup that put Pinochet in power, helped murder the opposition, supplied military and economic aid and the advice of a host of economists known as "the Chicago boys," the economy has collapsed and political opposition is on the rise. In the first three months of this year, nearly 600 people were arrested for protesting government policies.

At the end of March, a multitude of rock-throwing demonstrators chanted "Pinochet Assassin!" before police moved in with clubs and water cannons and arrested 250. On May 11, two people were killed and another 200 arrested as millions of people participated in a day of protest to end military rule which had been called by five of the country's labor unions. The following day, thousands of people clashed with police following the funeral of the two who were killed. Police retaliated with the arrest of another 2,000 on May 14 during a pre-dawn raid on two Santiago neighborhoods.

The foundation of Reagan's fears about the growing strength of revolutionary activity in Central and South America as well as his lies about the external character of those struggles can best be seen by looking directly at what is happening in El Salvador and Guatemala. "In contrast to what Reagan says about our revolution being imported from Russia and Cuba," said a Salvadoran exile, "we have a saying in my country. The people are our mountains and jungles. We are such a small country, without support of the people, a liberation movement would be impossible. In Usulután Province there are not even any hills. It is all open. Some 'violent minority from the outside' could not operate here. The government understands this. That is why there are all the massacres."

GUATEMALA: WOMEN AND PEASANTS

In Guatemala nearly 100,000 people have been murdered by government troops or death squads since 1954 when a popular government was overthrown by a CIA-based coup. Yet each successive wave of oppression has produced an even stronger set of armed and mass organizations opposing the government. Up until a year ago the country was governed by Lucas Garcia whose policy was widespread random assassination of all opposition. His excesses were so great that world opinion forced the

U.S. to give its aid through covert channels. Overt aid was restored after the present dictator, Rios Montt, came to power. Montt began a systematic series of sweeps of rural provinces and mass murders of Indian peasants. In a report issued on May 1, a human rights group called "Americas Watch" charged that the human rights situation in Guatemala had deteriorated since Reagan resumed aid last January.

Even in this atmosphere of terror, new revolutionary forces are developing. In Guatemala over 70% of the population is made up of Indians, who themselves represent 22 different nations. Hostility among these nations and between Indian and Ladino have in the past been an impediment to unity. Yet the formation of organizations such as the Committee for Peasant Unity (CUC) which is made up of all 22 Indian nations and the National Committee for Trade Union Unity has begun the process of building a new nation.

Women throughout Central America have not only joined men in fighting and in leadership roles in these organizations, but they continue to struggle with men over their own equality and in the process demonstrate how deep the idea of freedom has gone in these countries. CUC member Rigoberta Menchu described the depth of the revolution in Guatemala. "Although the fathers and



sons were soon integrated into the struggle, they refused to let the women participate. Gradually, as their consciousness was raised, the men said, 'Alright, now we will only hit them with sticks rather than machetes!' It was very difficult. Yet, once the Indian woman was fully integrated, it became evident that she already possessed the spirit of the revolution."

The fact that throughout Central America people are working to build new human relationships whether that be between women and men; or Indian and Ladino; or worker and peasant — attests to the depth of the revolutionary movements there. Reagan and his "opponents" have reason to be scared. For such a total revolution, as it continues to deepen, will not only spell the beginning of the end of U.S. domination but help provide a direction for the freedom movement in the United States as well.

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees, an organization of Marxist-Humanists, stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of a new human society based on the principles of Marx's Humanism as recreated for our day.

News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard not separated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. A Black production worker, Charles Denby, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, is the editor of the paper. Raya Dunayevskaya, the Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees, is the author of *Marxism and Freedom, Philosophy and Revolution and Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, which spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa.

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

Boycott Maxwell House, Mexicana Airlines!

Two important new boycotts and protests have been launched this month in support of the Central American freedom struggles. We urge all readers of N&L to join these efforts:

MEXICANA AIRLINES — Help stop Mexicana Airlines death flights. Mexicana is carrying more than 1,000 deported Salvadoran refugees a month from the USA back to El Salvador to face arrest, torture or death. The airline is paid to do this under contract with the U.S. government's Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). This is horrible profiteering off the misery of the Salvadoran people.

In the past, INS used Western Airlines. But a national campaign of demonstrations forced Western to end their contracts for death flights. Now the Chicano Students Association and many chapters of CISPES have begun demonstrations against Mexicana, the government airline of Mexico. Groups are being formed in U.S. cities to picket Mexicana and Mexican consulates and to boycott the airline, until they stop the flights.

GENERAL FOODS COFFEE — Coffee is the primary source of foreign revenue for both the murderous El Salvadoran government and its counterpart in Guatemala, headed by General Rios Montt. Over half the Salvadoran coffee revenue goes directly to the government — \$268 million in 1980, while the Guatemalan regime received \$155 million from coffee that year. Much of the money is used to buy guns and ammunition for the murder of freedom movement activists. General Foods is the world's largest coffee distributor, and the biggest purchaser of coffee from El Salvador and Guatemala.

An international campaign has begun to stop this blood-stained coffee from the plantation owners of those countries from being sold on the international market. They are demanding that General Foods agree to stop buying coffee from Guatemala and El Salvador. Demonstrations are being held at General Foods facilities nationally. General Foods sells coffee under the brand names of Maxwell House, Sanka, A.D.C., Brim, Max-Pax, Maxim, Yuban, Cafe Oro and others. Look for the corporate name — and stop buying General Foods coffee. For more information, contact Global Justice, 1107 Edith, S.E., Albuquerque, NM 87102.

Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution.

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

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

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

Costa Rica, Nicaragua: health, safety in ongoing revolution

Editor's Note: This spring Jim Brophy and Margaret Keith, two activists from the Windsor (Ontario) Occupational Safety and Health Group, travelled to Costa Rica and Nicaragua to study health and safety in those countries. Their trip was made at the invitation of unions in both lands. Here are excerpts from their presentation.

Costa Rica

We went to the East Coast of Costa Rica and visited a 25,000 acre Standard Fruit banana plantation. Standard Fruit is owned by Castle & Cook, the company founded by Christian missionaries in Hawaii. Its notorious history of taking native land in Hawaii is matched by its history in Central America. The plantation runs right to the back of workers' homes, and there is continual aerial spraying of homes with pesticides. The workers on this plantation make about \$150 a month for back-breaking labor, often lifting 150 lb. sacks. The temperature is 100°-110°.

Workers regularly pull 25 bunches of bananas on pulley lines over long distances by themselves to the sheds where preservatives are put on. Recently the workers on this and other plantations had a two-month strike to reduce the number of bunches a worker has to pull from 50 to 25! One worker was killed and his five-year-old daughter was seriously wounded. The union leadership was thrown in jail. But they didn't break the strike. Standard Fruit still has tremendous power. Priests who supported the strike were kicked out, as were sympathetic doctors. It took workers a 60-day strike in 1976 just to get electricity installed.

After the bananas are pulled to the sheds, mostly women workers put on preservatives. The union is concerned about the number of miscarriages and sterility. One woman we met had been vomiting. Others had skin eruptions. We discussed this with the leaders of the banana workers' union, Sindicato UTRAL. In fact, when we were taking a picture in front of the union hall, a plane came over and sprayed us with pesticides. The workers said that this was a daily occurrence.

One of the pesticides — Clorotalonil 500 — is a carcinogen, but the warning label on it is only in English. The warning says that "this product is toxic to fish. Keep out of lakes and streams." The workers first discovered the seriousness of the problem when all the fish died. There isn't much of a problem with cancer among the workers though, because their life expectancy is so short that most don't live long enough to get it.

The bananas leave the plantation and go by rail car to the docks. The day before we arrived eight dock workers had been badly burned unloading caustic substances. The safety bath that is supposed to help is three quarters of a mile from the unloading area and doesn't work. By the way, the railway cars that bring the bananas to the docks have often been used the day before to ship chemicals.

The dock workers in the city of Porto Limon are mostly Black, and among the most militant unions in the country. When they go on strike, every unionized worker in the city joins them. But they are not as interested in the Central American situation as the banana workers, however. One of the reasons is the long-standing racism against Blacks on the East Coast. In Costa Rica up to 1948, Black workers were not allowed to go more than 50 miles from the coast.

Nicaragua

In Nicaragua what strikes you right away is the terrible housing, both in the city barrios and in the countryside. Once in a while you see the housing of the rich, and it is a real shock by contrast. But everywhere you also see revolutionary wall slogans put up against Somoza. A total of 50,000 in all were killed during the civil war, and 75% of the children left were seriously malnourished. This was Nicaragua when Somoza fled.

We went to the coffee-growing areas. One plantation we visited had been owned by a general in Somoza's National Guard. The TV pictures of "Juan Valdez" walking through the fields are nothing like what it takes to grow coffee. It is grown on the steepest slopes. I don't know how people get up them with a 150 lb. bag of coffee beans. When the whole country was organized for a month to bring in coffee for foreign exchange needed for medicines and machinery, activists learned respect for farmworkers. But all the conditions are still very undeveloped. For example, they are using 2-4-D, what was "Agent Orange" in Vietnam. And there are tremendous problems with pesticides. DDT was still used last year, but they are trying to get away from all this now. But the only protection the farmworkers currently have are respirators, which are inappropriate in that climate.

Most of the coffee beneficios, which is where the coffee is dried and packaged, are in private hands. And in many places there is not even a union yet. You get a feeling of the tremendous problems they face — that after the revolution some workers aren't organized. The Ministry of Labor inspections, though, are so different than those in Ontario. They take health and safety very seriously; they write up 35 pages of violations. We saw women sorting coffee beans, and got into a discussion about whether women were slotted into certain jobs. The man from the Ministry said that they have "equal pay for work of equal value," but there are still problems in this area.

We went to textile factories also, where they have serious problems with chemicals in the dyes. One problem is that most of the ventilation equipment they need is American, and there is an American trade embargo now. The parts and raw materials they need for production have been cut off, as well as many of their markets. So the unions have faced the crisis of the need for whatever production they can still get, versus the need for health and safety. What do you do in that situation?

It's the same in a housing project, where we saw workers cutting and drilling asbestos. It was a powerful thing to see because in Canada we have been involved in exposing deaths of workers from asbestos. But here that was the only material they had. If they didn't use the asbestos they would have no roofs. The society they inherited leaves them so many contradictory situations.

One very important union in the whole health area is FESTSALUD, the hospital workers union. They have about 20,000 members. It was legal under Somoza, but there was a lot of repression against it. About 6,000 of its members were fired. And one of the first things that the FSLN did in power was to re-hire all of them with back pay for the three years they were jobless. Everyone from the doctors and nurses to the cleaning staff is in the

union. One secretary-general of FESTSALUD is 20 years old. He has been a revolutionary since he was 16. He had leprosy and almost died of starvation in the mountains.

We asked these union activists, "what are your most serious health and safety problems?" And we were told things like "clean water for the workers where they live." So many children suffer and die from diarrhea. The union was thinking not in terms of the workplace alone, but of the whole society. We had come down thinking that the workers were trying to develop workers' control of the workplace as a way to get health and safety. But we learned that the workers were thinking in much broader terms also.

We were enormously impressed with the revolution. The workers gave it real support and got real participation. The trade unions there are not like the East European variety where only the leadership counts — or like the USA for that matter. The biggest threat posed by the Nicaraguan Revolution to the USA and the old regimes is the model of development they are pursuing, the model of mass participation.

Worker unrest in Mexico

Mexico City, Mexico — Angry workers transformed May Day 1983, an official holiday called "Day of Work," into a live expression of mass unrest in Mexico City.

The yearly traditional march of cadres faithful to the Mexican Workers Confederation (CTM) union bureaucracy was disrupted by 7,000 dissident school teachers, who insisted on marching when the column of their union's official representatives filed past Pres. Miguel de la Madrid in the Zocalo.

Instead of a passive parade, the teachers wanted to protest in front of the President against their low wages, irregular pay, repressive union, and general decaying conditions of education. A fight broke out when goons from the union bureaucracy attacked the independent teachers with clubs, and the planned events of the day were abruptly terminated.

In addition to the teachers, other workers outside the CTM had come on May Day to protest loudly and actively. They represent part of the "Democratic Tendency" of independent union confederations — including railroad, nuclear industry, electrical, university and telephone workers — that arose against the labor bureaucracy in the 1970s.

The CTM called for a general strike of its unions at the end of May. The central demand is a 50% wage increase, and the unions included represent workers at 200,000 companies.

However, the CTM has been using the strike threat as a pressure tactic. Although its member unions have filed overwhelmingly to strike, the CTM leaders have no intention of carrying it out.

Meanwhile, worker unrest and strikes continue daily. The teachers themselves returned to Mexico City from all parts of the country on May 15, "Teachers Day" in Mexico, to continue their protest. More than 14,000 marched and held a rally in the Zocalo with an additional protest — against the thugs in the union bureaucracy who beat them up.

— Mary Holmes

Letter from Nicaragua

We received the following letter from a young Nicaraguan woman after Reagan's speech on Central America.

Granada, Free Nicaragua — Impressive was the response in the streets given by some 40,000 comrades of Region IV: Masaya, Carazo, Rivas and Granada the afternoon of April 28 in face of the accusations Mr. Reagan made before the chambers of Congress. The ordinary people demonstrated their disposition to be patriotic, revolutionary, nationalist in order to defend peace and sovereignty.

Mr. Reagan attempted to persuade the U.S. Congress and the North American people to strangle the Sandinista popular revolution and the Salvadoran armed revolution. Mr. Reagan wants to intimidate the people of Sandino and the revolutionary movements, but the people support the principle of self-determination. For this reason we join the Reserve Battalions, the Popular Militia, and the Sandinista Popular Army. As General Sandino said: "one doesn't discuss the sovereignty of a people, one defends it with weapons in one's hands."

The announcement of this new escalation of aggression means new crimes against our working people. We are to be exterminated because we have cleaned the country of Somocistas and constructed a just society; we have made a Literacy Campaign; we are developing Agrarian Reform. Our Revolution constitutes the most crushing defeat for Imperialism and is an example of struggle to the peoples of Latin America.

The future of Nicaragua will be determined by the ordinary working people organized in the different mass organizations. In all of Nicaragua demonstrations were held and the people reaffirmed their support and confidence in the F.S.L.N. Imperialism and the Somocistas will not go forward!

Asian-American protest

(Continued from Page 1)



— News & Letters photo

Demonstration demands justice in Vincent Chin case.

industry. Their racial hatred was so strong that they just wanted to get an Asian, any Asian."

Since the case gained national prominence with demonstrations in New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles, the anti-Asian racism surrounding the case has escalated. Federal investigators have harassed Asian-Americans when questioning them about the case, demanding to see their green cards as proof of citizenship. In response, Asian students from the Ann Arbor campus of the University of Michigan organized a contingent for the rally.

The anti-Asian hysteria that has been whipped up by the UAW and the auto companies' anti-Japanese campaign places them on trial as much as Kaufman and Cahalan. Thus, it cannot merely be an irony of history that 100 years after the upper stratum of the labor movement collaborated with the government and corporate interests in passing the "Chinese Exclusion Act", those same forces are today responsible for whipping up the kind of anti-Asian hysteria that has taken such deadly form in Detroit.

— Lou Turner

Guatemalan Revolutionaries Speak

Domingo Hernandez Iztoy — Quiche Indian, founder of the Committee of Peasant Unity of Guatemala.

Manuela Saquic — Ixil Indian from El Quiche, member of the Committee of Peasant Unity.

Rigoberta Menchu — Quiche Indian, member of Vicente Menchu Christian Revolutionaries and Committee of Patriotic Unity.

Nicolas Balam — Cakchiquel Indian, member of the Peasant Committee of the Altiplano

plus articles on

The Peasant Dimension in Latin America, by Mike Connolly

The 1954 Guatemalan Coup, by Raya Dunayevskaya

50¢ — order from News & Letters,

2882 E. Grand Blvd.
Detroit, MI 48211

Eritrea: revolution, refugees and reconstruction

(Editor's note: The following are excerpts from a presentation by Dr. Araya Tsegai, Coordinator of the Research and Information Center for Eritrea).

In 1961 when Ethiopia refused to grant independence to Eritrea but simply treated it as Ethiopia's 14th province, the armed struggle began in Eritrea. That struggle has been continuous now for more than 20 years and yet the outside world has not heard anything about it.

It is not necessary to concentrate on statistics and details, but unless you connect to the history of the present problem in Eritrea you will never understand the problem. The problem of refugees in Eritrea is a political problem.

The main reason that Eritrea was denied independence was because of the United States. The area was of strategic interest for the United States because of its relationship to the oil territory of the Middle East. In 1945, in-

stead of giving independence to Eritrea the U.S. convinced its ally, Ethiopia, to lay claim to Eritrea and said it would support Ethiopia's claim at the United Nations. In 1950 Ethiopia and Eritrea were put together through a UN mandate. The U.S. followed with a huge communications and military base which later served as the main transmitting line between Vietnam and Washington during the Vietnam War era. So it wasn't for its own interest that Eritrea was given to Ethiopia.

REFUGEES AND SHIFTING ALLIANCES

The two problems of war and drought are creating a new problem — the dispersal of refugees worldwide. The refugee problem is especially acute in the neighboring countries. Half a million Eritreans are in the Sudan.

The suffering of the Eritreans is also being played up by the government of Ethiopia to get funds. It is not only enough for the Ethiopian government to displace these people, but it is asking for millions of dollars from the UN to "help resettle" refugees. The same government that has perpetuated atrocities against the Eritrean people and has displaced them, is using its membership in the UN and Organization of African Unity to obtain (OAU) funds.

It is also necessary to talk in terms of the shift in political alliances in the Horn of Africa. When there is a political shift in the governments that supply arms to Ethiopia then there arises a problem in the Horn of Africa. Between 1974 and 1978 the Ethiopian government was under the control of the U.S. What broke that relationship was the question of arms shipments. The U.S. was not on time with the kind of arms Ethiopia wanted. So they opted to go to the Soviet Union and got \$2.1 billion in arms.

With the support of Russia and Cuba, Ethiopia has launched six military offensives against the Eritrean people. It costs the Dergue (military government) \$150 million a day to carry out its latest and largest offensive.

Every Soviet weapon has been used in Eritrea, including internationally outlawed chemical warfare. None of our supporters gave us much in the way of gas masks to survive, so we learned to mass produce them ourselves. There are countries that support us because they do not like the Soviet Union. What kind of support do we get from these countries? They will give enough aid so that we won't die, but not enough to win.

NEW SOCIAL RELATIONS

We have had to construct underground dwellings and fortifications so as not to be detected from the air. In some cases these dwellings are like apartment houses which may house 90 families. There are underground schools, hospitals and printing presses. In one case, even the engine from a very old car was made into an electric generator. Eritrean students who study engineering in the West have turned their knowledge and skills toward the practical needs of the revolution. During the last Ethio-

pian offensive we planned and built a road — "The Challenge Road" — in 8 months, which anywhere else would take that long just to plan.

Being a feudal society, Eritrea is influenced by religious traditions that oppress the woman. When the revolution began this was one of the burning questions. The changes that must come about must begin at this moment. 35% of the Eritrean fighters carrying arms are women. By no means is this struggle over, it is just the beginning. At the same time that we struggle to be free of Ethiopian domination, we produce the notion that changes in our own society must free half of the population that are dominated. Our task has been to focus on those traditions that keep the woman as an oppressed element in our society. The change in social relations has to begin now because it is a revolutionary time.

WORKER'S JOURNAL

(Continued from Page 1)

was there from the beginning. You had included right in the pamphlet your trip to West Africa in 1962 and some of the interviews you had there, like the one with Dr. Azikiwe from Nigeria. It wasn't just that we were singling out a "two-way road to the African Revolutions." It was that we made an actual trip there to try to develop that road in person.

And in 1970, when I wrote an appendix to ACOT called "Black Caucuses in the Unions." I pointed out that the young people today aren't thinking of changing this or that leader; "They are thinking in terms of a complete change — of revolution." This is true throughout the world today.

So, Raya, whatever else we decide to write for the 20th anniversary of our pamphlet, I strongly feel that your new paragraph should be the focus. We need to put right in the beginning the world context of our struggle and the way our view of it is rooted in Marx. I would like to let all the readers see that paragraph for themselves, so I am quoting it here in full:

"Marx's reference in the *Ethnological Notebooks to the Australian aborigine as 'the intelligent black' brought to a conclusion the dialectic he had unchained when he first broke from bourgeois society in the 1840s and objected to the use of the word, 'Negro,' as if it were synonymous with the word, 'slave.' By the 1850s, in the Grundrisse, he extended that sensitivity to the whole pre-capitalist world. By the 1860s, the Black dimension became, at one and the same time, not only pivotal to the abolition of slavery and victory of the North in the Civil War, but also to the restructuring of Capital itself. In a word, the often-quoted sentence: 'Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the Black skin it is branded,' far from being rhetoric, was the actual reality and the perspective for overcoming that reality. Marx reached, at every historic turning point, for a concluding point, not as an end but as a new jumping-off point, a new beginning, a new vision."*

Mississippi struggles

Twenty years ago, on June 11, 1963, civil rights activist Medgar Evers was gunned down outside his home in Jackson, Mississippi. Today racist repression persists in the Deep South, but so does Black resistance:

• Oxford, Miss., the home of the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss), has this Spring seen Black student protests over the use of the Confederate flag and other symbols of white supremacy as university emblems. Though national attention has focused on what the Black students are opposed to, few reports have related that to their other demand listing what they are for. Other demands include: hiring more Black faculty and administrators, increasing financial aid, hiring a Black affirmative action officer, placing Blacks on student boards, funding for Black cultural programs and instituting a Black Studies program. While the university barely conceded to the demand regarding the Confederate flag as a school symbol, its racism was fully expressed in its summary rejection of all other demands.

• Oxford, Miss. was also the scene of a recent Black protest at Oxford High School when a white South African exchange student showed a film depicting Blacks in South Africa as savages. Black Oxford parents have demanded the removal of the principal of the school for condoning the film showing, the firing of the white teacher in whose class the film was shown and the return of the student to South Africa. The protest began when Black students in the class walked out during the showing.

• Houston, Miss. has been the focus of a boycott by the United Front of Chickasaw County against white merchants and the local school system. The United Front has issued demands calling for affirmative action representation in businesses and schools in this Northeast Mississippi community. A march was held in April to bring national attention to the struggle for Black human rights in Houston.

BLACK-RED VIEW

Black mass politics

by John Alan

The national mass media has orchestrated a theme that Harold Washington's mayoral victory in Chicago and the recent Democratic mayoral primary victory of W. Wilson Goode in Philadelphia are fundamentally different political events, because unabated virulent racism did not boil to the surface in the latter political campaign, as it did in Chicago. Thus, as if to sweep the racial ugliness of the Chicago election campaign under the political rug, Philadelphia has become the embodiment of political virtue without racism.

Goode has gotten favorable attention in the national media. His career has been shown as that of a man who was able to rise from the poverty and the illiteracy of his father's sharecropper cabin to a man of political power by "Keeping his nose clean and working hard." On the other hand it has been Washington's long connection with Chicago's political machine and his tax infraction that has gotten the attention of the media.

THE PARTY: UNITY FOR WHAT?

Regardless of these personal characterizations, it is the relationship that these men have with Black masses, at this moment, that is the point. Both of these men are Black Democrats and both by their electoral victories have split apart the Democratic party of their respective cities along racial lines and they are now seeking to unify the party, that is, to work with anti-Black forces that did not support their election. This runs counter to the tremendous support that they received from ordinary Blacks who wanted to rid themselves of the policies and the racism of the Democratic party that dominated the Black community both in Chicago and Philadelphia. The question is unity for what?

Quite sometime before Washington presented himself as a viable opponent to the old guard of his party, Black mass opposition had already congealed against Mayor Jane Byrne. She had proved to be nothing more than the continuation of the old Richard Daley machine in a vastly segregated city. In an outrageous action she dumped two Black members of the Chicago Housing Authority and replaced them with two white members that were avowedly segregationist. This ended any support that she had in the Black community.

In Philadelphia Goode and Rizzo agreed not to mention race during their campaign. This did not exclude the underground racism that was prevalent in that campaign. Philadelphia's Black population gave 95 percent of their vote to Goode because they considered him to be the opposite of the racial practice that they had experienced when Frank Rizzo was twice Mayor of Philadelphia. It was during those two terms of Rizzo, after much complaint from Black citizens, that the Federal Government filed a law suit against Rizzo's police department charging that the police were brutal and used excessive force in arrest, violating the civil rights of citizens.

It was the groundswell of Black mass opposition to the racism of the Democrats that made both Washington and Goode powerful enough candidates that could win against the opposition of their party's leadership. Neither in Chicago or Philadelphia did official party leadership support them.

POLITICALIZATION OF MOVEMENT

The "politicalization" of the Black Movement for Freedom was "to open the door", as a Black politician said recently in Oakland, Cal. A few Blacks have been brought within the orbit of "success" by the "politicalization" of the Black Freedom struggle where freedom has come to mean simply middle class success, but the majority of us have remained outside in the unemployment lines, in the cheese lines and in the segregated sections of the large cities.

A careful reading of Washington's and Goode's election victories will show that Blacks went to the polls in large numbers because they were opposed to the old political "solutions" to their economic and racial problems. They essentially voted against the Democratic party when they supported these two Black candidates. They were not thinking about the limited spoils of political victory as much as they indicated that they wanted an end to the old political system.

Black Consciousness Movement of Azania

Editor's note: On the seventh anniversary of the June 16, 1976 Soweto revolt against apartheid South Africa we reprint brief excerpts from Issue No. 9 of *Solidarity*, the official organ of the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania.

• A Brief Look at Events Inside Azania: "Assessment of the Unions" — The conditions that gave birth to black unionism at the point of production will inevitably lead to trade union unity of purpose and action. It will not be easy, as can be seen by the differences in policy, but it is inevitable because black workers suffer under the same trying conditions: mass unemployment, transport, food and rent increases, discriminatory wages and political repression. These will inevitably make them opt for unity of purpose and political direction — the prerequisite for fulfilling their historical role, that of ushering in a new society — a democratic and socialist one.

• On the National Question by Bangani Tsotsi: "... an understanding of the dialectic between national oppression and class exploitation is crucial in the liberation of Azanians. While the national is the immediate question, the social provides the method and the key to its solution.

Proletarian internationalism with respect to nations received expression in Marx's famous dictum that 'no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations.' In his polemic on the Polish question, Lenin strongly denounced those who employed circumlocutory language in calling for the right of the Polish people to self-determination.

This new awakening of the people contributed in no small measure in igniting the fires that led to the December 1973 Durban workers' strike. This series of strikes in turn ushered in a new era in the Black workers' class struggle against the settler-colonialist bourgeoisie. Having shed off the lethargy that had gripped the 60s, Black Consciousness paved the way for June 1976. The students, ever the barometers of society, took issue with one of the main pillars of White dominations — Bantu Education.

Readers in the U.S.A. may subscribe to *Solidarity* through BCMA, Box 18836, Washington, D.C. 20009. In Britain, please write: BM Box 4830, London WC1 3XX.

YOUTH

by Jim Mills

In an effort to clean up unemployment statistics recently, the Reagan Administration counted military personnel in the tallies for the employed. Inadvertently, the Administration spoke the truth about the all-volunteer army. Rather than a home for patriotic youth, it is the employer of last resort, and very often for women and minorities — a vengeful boss with a freer hand to discipline its workers than civilian employers.

Citizen Soldier, a GI/veterans' rights advocacy organization reports that over 600 GIs accused — without proof — of "sexual perversion" were kicked out of the service in 1981. They are currently assisting a victim of the Air Force's efforts to purge women and homosexuals (real and alleged). She is Second Lt. Joann Newak who was sentenced by a court martial to seven years in Ft. Leavenworth military prison for having a lesbian affair and for other trumped up offenses.

MILITARY'S 'INTERNAL OPPONENTS'

When it comes to Black enlistees and even officers, the higher-ups turn their backs on the open forms of neo-fascist racism that appear in the military. A Black Naval ensign in Newport, R.I., resigned from Officers' School

Die-In at UIC

Chicago, Ill. — On Friday, May 13th, a "Die-In" was staged by Students Concerned About the Nuclear Arms Race (SCANAR) at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). This was the first student sponsored nuclear weapons freeze rally in Chicago. Despite the low level of political activism on the campus, about 30 people participated and many more watched and listened.

Jesse Tabor from Physicians for Social Responsibility spoke of the impracticality of civil defense, and described the medical consequences of a nuclear explosion.

The speech by Dick Simpson was the most thought-provoking because it dealt with strategies. He compared the nuclear freeze movement to the anti-war movement in the 1960s and emphasized four levels of activity: education, mass demonstration, militancy and electoral politics. Within the movement conflicts inevitably arise about tactics because not only do they determine the form of action, they also establish the essence of the struggle itself.

For example, the mass demonstration in New York last summer proved that the movement is indeed popular. Although predominantly white and middle class, it has a community grass-roots orientation. I personally fear the idea of rallying around a freeze candidate and putting our faith into the very system that perpetuates war. This provides the Democratic Party an opportunity to run a campaign based on unfulfilled promises — again.

As a student, I feel a responsibility to affect my fellow students, and SCANAR, serving a role through education and activity, is a beginning. — Lisa, undergraduate

Low paying rush job at Arthur Treacher's

Detroit, Mich. — The unemployment is at a very high level in Michigan, especially for Black youth. After I graduated from high school last year, I began to search for a job. Reagan's cutback in loans and grants to students has hit Black youth the hardest. Without a job and family support you cannot go to college.

I began working in March at a fast food restaurant called Arthur Treacher's Fish & Chips. My problems started when the manager said to me, "You're not working fast enough for the job!" I simply asked him what does he want me to do? I am not a machine; I'm working as fast as I can.

His reply was, "Don't ever say you are working as fast as you can because if you were I would not tell you to work faster." He also told me if I didn't work faster, he would have to fire me. But you can't work any faster without falling. The floor is slippery from grease from frying and water from the sinks.

There's no training period for workers. The first day I began work, I was put on the front line to fill orders and pass them to customers, and the next day, I was put on the cash register. Believe me, I was not perfect. The threat came again; if I didn't work faster, he would fire me. A machine can be programmed, but a human being you have to teach and train to do a job.

We work six hours without a break. If a rush comes, you don't get any break at all. And we have no benefits. You have to be employed for two years to receive any benefits.

Now that I have found a job, Reagan wants to cut the minimum wage to lower than \$3.35. I only work 28 to 30 hours a week. They will not let you work over 30 hours a week, therefore no union will try to organize to help the workers. If Reagan cuts the minimum wage any lower, I will not be able to support myself in or out of school. I am a "no collar" worker! — Young Black woman

Resistance growing in U.S. military

after receiving death threats from the "Navy KKK." The Navy command, besides failing to support him, accused him of writing the notes himself.

But anti-militarists cannot think of these incidents as merely injustices of the military, unrelated to the task of uprooting capitalism. The revolt that is below the surface is, in truth, the Achilles heel of the military establishment. For just as Marx showed that every advance of capitalist production is punctuated by revolt of the workers, so the military, as it attempts to fashion the perfect soldier, is creating new internal opponents to its irrationality and despotism.

Some of those opponents are in the federal penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas, which holds more soldiers now than ever since the end of the Vietnam war. The Air Force alone has quadrupled its prison population in the

last four years. Although the brass claims it has gone after bad apples, discipline, whether in the factory or in the barracks, has always been meant to stem mass revolt in the ranks.

There is in fact a new generation of military resisters who refuse to be clones marching behind Reagan's nuclear lunacy. Air Force Lt. Steven Gifford was involuntarily discharged for having doubts about his job in a missile command. He was told in a training course, "You should salivate at the very thought of turning the missile ignition key." When Gifford was asked if he had any personal reservations about firing a missile on command, he replied that he wouldn't push the button without thinking about it first. "I'm not a robot," he said.

ELECTRICIAN OR JANITOR?

If a few officers are dissenting from the nuclear war plans, surely the ranks are teeming with soldiers and sailors disaffected from the entirety of the military regimen. A sailor, Jack David, is a service person whom **Citizen Soldier** has assisted successfully. Jack had quit his job as an electrician's helper to enlist with the idea of training to become a steam-turbine mechanic. Instead, he was assigned to be a janitor on the U.S.S. Independence. Jack went AWOL from the Independence in 1962, rather than risking further exposure to a cancer-causing substance, Cellulube, that janitors on board had to handle without protection. He had informed his superiors of the known hazards with no result.

I think that the most significant recent appearance of cracks in capitalism's drive to militarize was reported on this page last month. At Vandenberg Air Force Base, during mass arrests of demonstrators opposed to the MX missile testing there, a soldier threw down his rifle and crossed the line to join the protesters; he now faces court martial. And, according to a participant, "two Black soldiers guarding arrested blockaders told them they agreed with us, but feared the consequences of joining us."

Clearly the anti-militarist sentiment inside the service responded to the anti-militarist activity on the outside. Organizers in anti-draft and anti-nuclear efforts can no longer ignore that other side of what is a single anti-militarist movement. Because of its direct encounters with militarism — in lifestyle, working conditions and conscience, the military ranks are in the forefront of a revolutionary anti-militarist movement. How will those of us on the "outside" respond to their anti-war activity?

For more information about the work of **Citizen Soldier**, write 175 Fifth Ave., Suite 100, New York, NY 10010.

Snooping on the poets

Poet-scholar Morgan Gibson, whose biography of Kenneth Rexroth has become a standard acquisition for academic libraries, has recently turned his pen to a brief but powerful autobiographical account — the harrowing story of his and his family's hounding by the FBI for a quarter of a century, because of his opposition to racial discrimination, the Vietnam War, censorship, and all forms of oppression.

He has told his story, he says in a recent issue of *New Pages*, "to alert the public to continuing repression by a government dedicated more to waging war than to human welfare, and to urge writers to communicate the truth, despite dangers to themselves." The dangers to himself were considerable.

Spied upon ever since 1947 when he became a conscientious objector at Oberlin College, actual physical surveillance began in 1956 "when an FBI agent observed passengers from my automobile entering the office of *News & Letters* . . . a Marxist-Humanist newspaper, opposed to communism as well as capitalist exploitation."

Gibson was not rehired in 1961 at American International College, because he did not fit the "image" of that institution. He then went to teach at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. It is here that Gibson and his activist first wife, Barbara, also a teacher at the time, were targeted by FBI director Herbert Hoover and the Milwaukee Red Squad. "The ultimate objective," Hoover said, "would be the dismissal of the Gibsons from the University of Wisconsin."

The university administration, with the help of the FBI and Wisconsin's Attorney General, brought charges of "obstruction of classes" against Gibson, resulting from a strike of UW-M teachers outraged at the bombing of Cambodia and the subsequent Kent State student massacres. The verdict stripped Gibson of his tenure, denied him promotion to full professorship, banned him from the English Department's Executive Committee, and placed him on probation. His wife, who did not have tenure, was dropped from the faculty.

Surveillance of Gibson continued in the turbulent '60s and the early '70s. Yet, as our editorial in the last issue of *N&L* emphasized, Reagan has quietly but effectively again unleashed not only the FBI but also the National Security Agency against those acting for peace and freedom in the U.S. To get a copy of *New Pages*, write: *New Pages Press*, 4426 S. Belmont, Grand Blanc, MI 48439.

Anti-war Mother's Day



— News & Letters photo

Mother's Day Peace March in Chicago.

Chicago, Ill. — Despite a chill wind whipping off Lake Michigan, over 10,000 demonstrators against the arms race marched more than a mile in a Mother's Day Peace Walk, May 8. Advance publicity had stressed the international anti-war dimension of feminist Julia Ward Howe's 1872 appeal which started Mother's Day.

More Blacks were present than at last year's Peace Walk, and many marchers, Black and white, wore buttons saying "Stop Fast Eddie" (Eddie Vrdolyak, leader of the City Council members representing the white power structure).

Yet where a movement of Chicago's Black community has just created the greatest opening in many years for change in this city, the small number of Blacks and Latinos at the march testifies to the anti-nuclear movement's continuing failure to connect with the anti-war sentiment and activity in those communities. Quite a number of high-school age and younger people came, several of whom bought *N&L* in order to read the article by an anti-nuclear activist in ninth grade.

The movement for Black self-determination which put Harold Washington into the mayor's office was not addressed, nor was the draft resistance movement, although anti-draft slogans were seen and heard frequently during the walk.

Some demonstrators, however fed up with the failure of traditional peace organizations to connect with Black and Third World liberation movements, were publicizing their planned June 20 blockade of a nearby military plant.

— Franklin Dmitryev

Demonstration greets Kirkpatrick in L.A.

Los Angeles, Cal. — About 800 people picketed a talk here by Jeane Kirkpatrick, architect of Reagan's Central American policy, on May 3. Groups and individuals from across the political spectrum attended the rally, all expressing opposition to Reagan's secret war against the Sandinistas of Nicaragua and his open war against the Salvadoran people.

Many at the rally said they came because Kirkpatrick is known as the "mastermind" behind Reagan's disastrous Central American policy. "I don't think she has a right to speak at all," one Salvadoran exile said. "She is just a mouthpiece for the Somocistas and the CIA."

Indeed, not long after the rally Kirkpatrick showed how true this characterization was, when she denounced the speech of the Nicaraguan Ambassador to the United Nations, calling it a "tissue of lies." The Ambassador had documented the extent of the U.S. effort to unseat the Sandinistas.

The Ambassador's response to that comment was, "She should have her mouth washed out with soap" — a view surely everyone at the rally would agree with.

On the other hand, a strong police contingent shielded Kirkpatrick from the wrath of the crowd, and allowed right-wing Christian fundamentalist counter-demonstrators to harass the picket line. Surely, neither they nor Kirkpatrick's slanders will prevent further such demonstrations from occurring.

OUR LIFE AND TIMES

1983 Convention: UAW in deep decline

by Peter Mallory and Kevin A. Barry

This year's United Auto Workers Union national convention was held in anti-union Dallas, Texas, May 15-20, at an estimated cost of a million dollars — about as far away as they could get from home base in Detroit where they would have met with protests from thousands upon thousands of laid-off auto workers. Even among the 2,500 hand-picked delegates the labor bureaucrats couldn't stifle the protests that were aired.

Rank-and-file delegates protested that many times they had been sold out in this year of high profits for the auto companies, precisely because of the fantastic concessions they had been forced to make to management with union consent. They also objected to the way they are now being confronted with a hand-picked president, demanding that election of top officers be returned to the rank-and-file.

Further insult was heaped upon the delegates by their so-called union leadership — the top labor bureaucracy — when in their union folders they found warning notices to stay out of predominantly-Black and Hispanic south Dallas and the near east side. When the NAACP, Urban League and Hispanics raised a hue and cry about this added insult to minorities, these bureaucrats simply blamed the Dallas police for having these notices placed in their portfolios. The weak apology will hardly fool the Black and Hispanic communities.

The convention, which was conducted in a circus atmosphere, is a paid holiday for the delegates, who are largely local union officials, dedicated to maintaining the status quo. With seven members of the all-powerful national executive board reaching retirement age, including President Douglas Frasar, the union changed leadership at a time of internal crisis. Yet, nothing will really change. The new president, Owen Bieber, was hand-picked months ago by the self-perpetuating executive board.

There was a protest from about 150 delegates to the election procedure, which denies the rank-and-file direct participation in the election. Only the 2,500 delegates out of 1.1 million members can vote for union officers.

The recent history of the union has witnessed a sharp decline of over 400,000 members; seen billions in hard-fought gains given back to the auto giants; stood by while robots replaced workers on the production lines. Despite a strike fund of a record \$515 million, organizing activity is at a low point and union-authorized strikes rare. While production line workers see their jobs vanishing the official policy of the union is to encourage automation.

The strategy of the UAW leadership has been to seek legislation to limit imports, aid the company through loans and concessions of workers' wages and working conditions.

Faced with the permanent loss of over 400,000 jobs, the union is at a crossroads. To place the future of the union in the hands of Democratic politicians seeking government regulation to redress abuses, in place of the militant rank-and-file action that built the union, is a basic error.

While the new president, Bieber, will certainly do even less than Fraser who, at least at the start of the UAW, was with the rank-and-file that created the CIO, the point is that the rank-and-file still can make a difference. This was made very clear in late 1982 when the Canadian auto workers refused to follow the Fraser-led American union in granting all the concessions demanded by Chrysler. They went out on strike and held out till they won their demands, and thereby pointed the way also for the American rank-and-file.

It isn't only the capitalistic run for robots creating endless unemployment. It is a fact that the company has integrated the union leaders into class compromise to the point where Fraser is part of the Chrysler Board of Directors. It is that which has driven the union into such deep decline that there is hardly a difference between unionized workers and sweatshop workers. Wildcats can therefore be expected to break out massively in all shops. Japanese companies which have opened here with non-union labor will also find the truth of American labor and its militancy. (See Editorial on the economy in crisis, p.7)

Poland

The nationwide celebration of May Day as a workers' holiday showed that Polish workers will not forget what the movement has meant to them: taking control away from the Party and the state and returning truth to words and celebrations. Thus, against the official May Day demonstrations which the state has turned into a parade of military force, thousands came out on the streets all over Poland to reclaim the day.

In Warsaw 10,000 marchers chanted "our holiday" as the defense against water cannons and club-wielding police; in Gdansk, an estimated 40,000 workers attempted to march to the monument erected by Solidarity to the workers killed by police in 1970, and were met with clubs and tear gas; in Nowa Huta people chanted "This is a peaceful demonstration," but the police broke the peace — killing at least one youth, Ryszard Smagura, with a tear gas canister; and in Wroclaw — where three of the top underground leaders, Frasnikiuk, Bednarz and Piniar, were arrested recently in a crackdown that the authorities hoped would break Solidarity — not only was there a Solidarity march but even those forced to participate in the official parade chanted Solidarity slogans.

Two days later thousands of people came out on the streets again to commemorate the anniversary of the adoption of the first liberal constitution in 1791.

The success of May Day reaffirmed that the spirit of Solidarity is so strong that it shook up the government. The deputy foreign minister, Rakowski, came under attack from Moscow and the Polish hard-liners for allowing "anti-socialist elements" to exist in the society.

As the government turns to more brutality — breaking into a convent to beat up those helping families of jailed or interned Solidarity members, and beating to death Grzegorz Przymyk, 19-year-old son of Solidarity supporter Barbara Sadowska — the lines are drawn even sharper. There will be no negotiations with that government, as they themselves are rejecting even such avowed moderates like Walesa as negotiating partners. The only hope is that the next time the movement will re-emerge in full force.

West Germany

A major concern of the reactionary coalition government in West Germany is halting the influx of foreign "guest workers" and refugees — especially Turks and Kurds. By the year 2000 their number, according to the government's projection, will have risen to seven million or 11.3% of the total population. The racist nature of this concern is seen in the fact that the present 100,000 Russian and East European emigrants "of German descent" are not included in the government's statistics.

A special Federal Commission of Alien/Emigration Policy, convened shortly after the election last fall, issued its conclusions March 1 in a 250-page report. Among its recommendations for legal change: alien residence papers to be carried for police inspection at all times, even by children and infants; abolition of "equal opportunity" in employment, education, the civil service, and social aid and services; denial of admission, or deportation for "extremist political activity," for "advocating or supporting" such activity, and for legal offenses including traffic violations!

At the initiative of the Association of German Women Married to Foreigners (IAF), representatives of organizations — both German and "foreign" — from all over West Germany met in Frankfurt on March 19 in the first of an ongoing series of meetings to plan joint action against the government's proposals. A national Tribunal



20,000 Poles flashing the V-sign of resistance marched with the Solidarity-draped coffin of slain youth, Grzegorz Przymyk, in Warsaw

on Prejudice Against Foreigners and a nationwide demonstration are planned for June. Further information can be obtained from the IAF, Tiberius Str. 50, 6000 Frankfurt/M 50, West Germany.

Indian land claims

Editor's note: Shainape Shcapwe, Native American activist, wrote the following report on Indian land claims struggles.

All the reservations of the Lakota Nation — in North and South Dakota, and in Montana — rejected the government's offer of money to "compensate" us for the way the whites stole the Black Hills from us in the treaty of 1868. In each tribe we met, and each one said "no." When we heard that the money would come out to \$280 per person for the whole Black Hills, we said, "that's insane!" But it isn't just more money we want. We are through with just raising the ante, just asking for money. We want the land back — the Black Hills.

Now there is a response from President Reagan. He vetoed a bill passed by Congress to pay \$900,000 for the Pequot tribe in Connecticut to buy back 800 acres taken from them. And he suggested instead that the Pequots be paid \$8,091 — the value of the land when it was taken in 1856. This position is part of his racist backlash against everybody. It used to be that the President just signed the bill after the compensation agreement was made. Now he is saying: "we're not a government for people like you".

The backlash extends to the 17 tribally-controlled community colleges. These were set up in the last few years on reservations in the West. I know of one at Fort Yates, N.D., on the Standing Rock reservation. They hired Indian teachers and gave Indian youth a chance to take college courses. But now Reagan vetoed all federal assistance to these schools, trying to force them to close. Reagan said: "The federal government does not have a responsibility to support college-level Indian education." This new action is the latest attack on our schooling, but he had already cut out nearly all scholarships for Indian students to go to colleges off the reservations. If Reagan thinks that by taking away money for education he can stop our resistance, he is fooling himself. We already know so much more than we did before the movement began, and we will not turn back now.

Pakistan

Pakistani women have recently sparked the most massive and determined resistance to date against the hated "Islamic" dictatorship of General Zia, a regime supported to the hilt by U.S. imperialism and China. While banned political parties wait for elections that may never come, and students carry out a lonely struggle against the regime's Islamic fundamentalist thugs on the campuses, women succeeded on Feb. 12 in turning the major city, Lahore, into a battleground.

Ever since Zia's regime has begun to turn the clock back in education, labor, politics, and women's rights, new women's groups have sprung up to fight the regime. Now grouped together in the Women's Action Forum, this diverse coalition of working as well as professional women has opposed all of the new anti-woman laws. The latest was a proposed "law on witnesses" giving a woman's testimony in court only half the value of a man's.

When 200 women showed up at the Supreme Court in Lahore to "petition" against this law (protests are illegal), they were set upon by Zia's police. When the women stood their ground and fought, they found themselves surrounded not only by police, who arrested 40 of them, but joined also by hundreds of other anti-regime demonstrators, men as well as women, who poured into the fray from the surrounding streets.

For three hours the downtown area was paralyzed by the anti-Zia demonstrators. The outrage against the beatings and jailing of the women was so great throughout the city, that Zia was forced to release them from jail immediately.

Nothing better than Pakistan today demonstrates the vanguard nature of the Women's Liberation Movement in the worldwide struggle for total liberation.

30th anniversary of East German revolt

In Vol. 1, #1, June 24, 1955 of News and Letters, this column, which was then called "World Comment", commemorated the revolt of the East German workers, June 17, 1953. The workers arose on that date against the inhuman production schedules set up by the state-capitalist government, calling itself communist.

All over East Germany strikes and demonstrations broke out. Men, women and youth came together shouting, "We will not be slaves." Russian troops and tanks were called out, killing some by machine gun fire, crushing others under the tanks. The workers disarmed the so-called "Peoples Police," freed political prisoners, and in the end forced the government to give in and withdraw the obnoxious production schedules. While state-capitalism was not overthrown, the continuous revolts against it have spread throughout East Europe.

The example of the East German workers 30 years ago has served and will continue to serve as an inspiration to workers everywhere. Revolutionary struggles will continue until freedom is won and new human relations created.

Since that first issue of N&L in June, 1955, I have been writing what now is "Our Life and Times," covering international affairs from a Marxist-Humanist point of view. I am now turning my space over to a young Marxist-Humanist woman, Mary Holmes, who will co-author this column beginning next month. I will, from time to time, continue to contribute feature articles to the paper.

— Peter Mallory