Reagan's imperial invasion and conquest of Grenada

The three way drive to war: Grenada, endless militarization, retrogression on Black rights

by Raya Dunayevskaya
National Chairwoman, News & Letters Committees

As against Reagan's claim that only when he was awakened early Sunday morning, Oct. 23, with the "urgent request" from the U.S. that East Caribbean countries for him to participate in an invasion of Grenada did he decide to do so — the record shows that it was the U.S. that had been urging the invasion "for some months." Indeed, the whole truth shows that, from Day One of the bloodless Grenadian revolution of 1979, Reagan had been carrying on a non-stop propaganda war against that revolution led by Maurice Bishop.

By 1981, when Reagan was solidly in the White House, he ordered a practice-run invasion and held actual military maneuvers in the waters off Puerto Rico. All through 1982 he extended his Cover against the newly-independent Black nation by pressuring international bodies like the International Monetary Fund as well as Latin American countries not to trade or show any type of solidarity with Grenada. By 1983, the 1981 practice-run off Puerto Rico was spilled out as actual invasion of Grenada by U.S. imperialism for its East Caribbean stooges.

As for the critical week following the house-arrest of Maurice Bishop, the efforts of the Prime Minister of Barbados, Tom Adams — who tried to prove that it was the East Caribbean people who "invited" Reagan rather than Reagan who ordered the invitation and gave the exact legal formulation for the invitation — turned out to prove the exact opposite. Thus, Adams' revelation that it was Barbadians who had been urging Caribbean nations "for several months" to consider military action against Grenada;

Montgomery: the 1955 Bus Boycott

by Charles Denby
Author of Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal

December is the 28th anniversary of the beginning of the 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott, which marked the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement and was also the year Charles Denby became editor of News & Letters. Below, we reprint excerpts from his trip South to join the boycott.

Carol Green is a health care worker from Canada who had been in Grenada since August, 1983. She witnessed the overthrow of Bishop and the invasion by the United States. Below are excerpts of an interview reported by Carol Green in "Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal.

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WOMAN AS REASON

Philosophy critical to ‘feminist dialogue’

Dear Sisters,

I wanted to write on last month’s column on “Rich’s Feminist Dialogue” in S&D. I was asked to respond to Michelle Landa’s interpretation. I did not agree that Rich does not capitulate to "any uncanonical Third Worldism or anti-feminist tendency." That’s exactly what she does and in a most condescending and elitist way, as if only she has the right to interpret the views of some of the people from the Third World. She asks you to assume that beauty pageants and fight for abortion (a fight which always meant and still means, the rights of women in the villages — many of whom became our brothers, sons, and husbands are dying in Vietnam?)

In 1983, Rich, in excusing Nicaragua’s oppressive abortion laws, writes: “In a society born in poverty, menaced from without, the priority at this moment is life itself, and you demonstrate against beauty pageants and fight for abortion (a fight which always meant and still means, the rights of women in the villages — many of whom became our brothers, sons, and husbands are dying in Vietnam?)”

Rich’s IMPOSED PRIORITIES

I feel brave taking on this sentence because it sounds so noble — who could argue with her? But it made me furious! Rich’s position is that she is the only one who can interpret the views of some of the people from the Third World. It is so concerned with the “protection of life itself” as if that only means fighting the counter-revolution from without — that somehow the struggle must be decided four years after revolution, to have a law that is so awful that abortion is only legal if the woman’s life is in danger.

Women’s liberation and revolution in Guatemala

Editor’s Note: Victoria Alvaraz, a 21-year-old Quiche Indian from Guatemala recently spoke in Chicago on the position of women in her country and her development and attempts to organize and act on women to make the changes necessary in women’s lives. The following are excerpts from her talk and from an interview with News & Letters.

I am one of the few Indian women to have the opportunity to learn Spanish. In spite of the fact that I speak Spanish quite well, in Guatemala I was the victim of double discrimination: as a woman and as an Indian.

The terrible repression unleashed by the government in this country, mainly in favor of the middle class and the rich people. At the beginning of June, 1981, our family had to flee our town, our house, our people, our friends, everything. Worst of all, the members of my family were abandoned our town, our house, our people, our friends, everything. I don’t know where to find them. My brother and my sister, the three of us run around like mad. My mother was working among the people both on nutrition and sewing and also for women’s equality. This got her into trouble with the government. She was one of the women in the villages — many of whom became her enemies. According to tradition, women should be in the home. The men go out and make things happen. I realized then after the whole day’s work, when my mother first spoke in public because she said that we had to get rid of what affects us all, as well as our particular oppression. It is important to see that women should not struggle side by side with the men if they were not for our political development side by side with men.

The idea of revolutionary struggle was not born in a moment. Women were trying to make gains as women, just like the factory workers or peasants were doing from their particular perspective. But the army labeled all of the women’s movements as communists. Then we realized that we have to get rid of what affects us all, as well as our particular oppression. It is important to see that women should not struggle side by side with the men if they were not for our political development side by side with men.

It would be simplistic to say that there is now real unity between peasants and city dwellers, men and women. Instead, women sometimes are asked to trade in order to be able to take the existence. Women are not only marginalized and denied, but they are also subjected to violence and exploitation. They are a lot of things that need to be overcome, but in the process of our struggle that is a process of development.

The new regime means nothing better for us. There are reasons for the coup. Montt’s policies brought out the “true” people from the middle class — the rich and the poor.

The coup has meant that violence and conflict, which have existed in Guatemala for years, have been escalated in a way that has actually thwarted the U.S. desire to intervene militarily. But it was not just internal contradictions that led to the coup, but also the protests in 1982 meaning “squeezing out the revolutionary forces” failed and he lost control of the country in 1982. The continuation of the people’s struggle provoked the coup.

Now the effort of our government and the U.S. is to beat down the grass roots organizations. The house-to-house raids, murders, saturation bombing of the villages and the effort to wipe out sections of the country against which women and children hear that the people’s grass root work continues to move forward.
LABOR BATTLES ON GREYHOUND PICKET LINES

As we go to press, the Greyhound strikers have rejected the latest company offer, 9,181 to 325, by an overwhelming 90%.

Detroit, Mich. — Wednesday, Nov. 16 was the day class struggle came back in force in the U.S. In city after city, from Seattle on the West Coast to Boston on the East Coast and dozens of cities in between, strikers at Greyhound, members of Amalgamated Transit Union and their supporters were out on the picket line against the first day of Greyhound's union busting, concessions contract.

Here in Detroit, some 250 of us were on the line at the downtown terminal shouting "No scabs, No way" as Greyhound first brought in four buses and then tried to get them running. The first two buses left even though they had hardly any passengers. Our line was strong and it was only with the help of dozens of parking attendants from the city's DPD and some city buses that any buses got in or out. Pickets were knocked to the ground, with nine arrests in one of the sharpest clashes between picketers and cops in years.

Because this strike is on the local news and in the newspapers throughout the country, it is perhaps a watered down version of what is happening on picket lines and union busting corporations. Corporations are hoping that it will be the PATCO strike of private industry. Both the bosses and the police are trying to make us see whether labor can win, and begin a new offensive against Reaganomics and the bosses. All out on the Greyhound picket line!

New York, N.Y. — On the eve of Thanksgiving Day 2,500 workers at the Greyhound bus terminal for a spirited rally in support of the striking Greyhound workers.

We all marched into the terminal, completely jamming the area in front of the Greyhound ticket counter. Yelling at the scabs and chants, "Stop the buses!" "We give you only 24 hours." The crowd was thunderous cheering when Greyhound had to shut down the counter and pull the gates around it.

One of the workers said, "This was ever so quick to lead us outside and disbanded the demonstration. Workers were saying, Let's go down, man. I think we should have the bosses at the counter and not do anything with all that power and anger except dissipate it.

Three of the pickets, hospital workers, garment workers, public employees, teamsters, electrical workers and office workers were all at the demonstration, including some of the picket line. One electrician said, "The ATU is a different kind of union. It is willing to appeal to the ranks of other unions. Maybe this will finally get someone to talk. Trucker workers were convinced that their union was going to be next.

One of the ATU pickets who had 15 years in said, "This is the beginning of something that would shake the nation."

Flint, Mich. — Greyhound forced this strike. All of a sudden, out of nowhere, at a time to work for $5.29/hour, half of what we make. Now they have reconsidered and want to take away 9.5% from our wages, pay only part of our hospitalization plan, and have no plans to give the buses back. They want to hire part-time help and have split shifts.

The president of Greyhound is making over $100,000 a year and sitting back making decisions about me who doesn't make anything. When Greyhound bought Armour he got rid of the crew that was working there, brought in non-union truckers and let them do anything they wanted.

If airline pilots earning $80,000 a year can be forced to accept a similar package, it shows us what to expect when workers are beginning to fight against the whole wave of concessions and give-backs that management and union leaders have been trying to stuff down their throats.

The offer to the McDonnell Douglas workers called for pay hikes to go only to the higher-paid skilled workers. The contract the workers voted down a master contract that would have notified the company of their intent to return to work. This before anyone was even on strike.

But the strikers, women and men, joined the workers in their fight. The strikers, women and men, joined the workers in their fight. The strikers, women and men, joined the workers in their fight. The strikers, women and men, joined the workers in their fight. The strikers, women and men, joined the workers in their fight.

The overwhelming vote by striking UAW members to reject a contract offer from McDonnell Douglas this month — and the slim majority of machinists who voted to accept a similar package — shows what the extent to which workers are beginning to fight against the whole wave of concessions and give-backs that management and union leaders have been trying to stuff down their throats.

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Workers are saying that even the skilled have been left behind. Greyhound looks at this as a contract the UAW may think they negotiated, that vote by the workers who are in the neighborhood.

In vote after vote nationwide, workers have been showing that they won't accept the propaganda about their need to "sacrifice" anymore. This was shown in the union busting that is happening in the Greyhound strike.

There is so much that we suffered through to hold this job. When I first started here I used to work eight hours, go home, and then the next day I used to come in and work eight more hours. I'm not going to let anybody take my job. I understand what it means to be out of work, but you can't just let someone come in and take your job.

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The three way drive to war: Grenada, endless

(continued from page 1)

to reveal the true situation — that there was no unanimity among the seven members of the OECS on the question of the invasion. And, since unanimity is what the OECS charter requires if any act of intervention is to be undertaken, a different route had to be fabricated.

The story of how the idea of a coup was to go to the 13-member Caribbean Community economic organization (CARICOM). But here, too, they found that George Shultz, the Secretary of State and Chairman of CARICOM, was opposed to any invasion of Grenada. When Chambers called for a meeting of CARICOM at Port of Spain, Trinidad, Tom Adams informed him that he could not come since the East Caribbean countries were meeting with him in Barbados right then. "I did not want to miss the Sunday meeting until the early hours of the morning of Saturday, Oct. 22. Here the actual events began being worked out a "contingency" plan for the invasion.

Adams of Barbados, or George Shultz of the State Department, or even to work out a "contingency" plan for the invasion.

THE LIES BEGIN

Oct. 19 was also the day Reagan held a press conference to report on the "coup" he had arranged. No questions were asked about what. What was raised was what seemed to have no connection with any of these events. A bill to make Rev. Martin Luther King's birthday a national holiday. Though Reagan knew that, for what it was, he had heard of the arrest on Oct. 14 and that the following day, Saturday, Oct. 15, a Barbadian military official "verified that hardly more than 100 of the Cubans were involved in the invasion. And, since unanimity is what the OECS charter requires if any act of intervention is to be undertaken, a different route had to be fabricated.

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Grenada demonstration when New Jewel Movement was in power.

Mass freeing, army murder of Bishop

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THE U.S. INVADES

Sunday they started making announcements that the country was going to be invaded. But people didn't really think the U.S. was going to invade the whole country. Everything didn't have any confidence in what was said over the radio. The government was trying to mobilize people against an invasion, but they had no confidence in the people. They couldn't really mobilize people because they were so against them. I heard people say things like "Mass, the Bishop is the only man I will follow. And Bishop is the one who would get us together against the Americans."
DAY AFTER GRENADA, DAY AFTER NUCLEAR WAR?

I wonder some questions, “Is this the way the world ends?” Many people say they were frightened by the “Day After,” but truthfully I have been more scared by the real TV news of the last month, because that is how we could lead to nuclear war. In Washington D.C. on Nov. 12, many youth came out to demonstrate against the Warsaw Pact and carry through a coup; for elements of the People’s Revolutionary Army to trigger the nuclear explosions when they had liberated Bishop from arrest; and finally to murder Bishop. This did not go over well, and the leader asked “lack of facts” to end discussion. I still hope to find some who will be open to these questions.

Richard Bunting
Oxford, England

After the invasion of Grenada what really happened there? Thatcher. Both she and her government are in a fix. Even on the question of costs for Cambodia they are far from out of the woods. More women have been arrested at Greenshield Common and more trouble lies ahead.

Thatcher’s hysterical speeches about Marxism were long-winded and irrelevant in the present situation. She has been giving the impression that Marxism is a part of the past, the world was destroyed by Stalin and Stalin’s servile followers.

Harry MeShane
Glasgow, Scotland

THREE YEARS AGO

A few days before “The Day After” was shown on TV I saw a Canadian television documentary on the aftermath of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The documentary was produced by the Pentagon for almost 40 years. It was absolutely horrifying. The total destruction, the radiation burns, the grotesque disfigurement of human faces was almost beyond belief.

The U.S. military has arranged for a professional film group to film Japan immediately after the surrender. The television program is produced by the assistant director of the project, who not only has been known as a sabre-rattler but was also a pilot in Nagasaki, but has for decades been trying to get the film footage (since 1976) from Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The man had leukaemia, a type of cancer common among the A-bomb survivors in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

This film material should be shown on U.S. television with all the publicity they have been given, I only hope it will reach the masses and not be used for propaganda purposes.

Construction worker
Denver, Colorado

Thank you for all the literature you sent. It has taken one month to read it, but I haven’t been able to put it down. I shared the material with friends who were very interested. I put the Canadian workshop on the woman question here. The topic that came up was the relationship between women and the family. There is an article about the relationship between the nuclear family and the nuclear world. I feel that marriage is very much of an institution to get freedom. We were also interested to know how patriarchal society had developed historically, and how it is capitalism and private property — as applied to the local situation. Here only the women have the right to property. They buy women in marriage (“bride price”) and women are sold on the marriage market.

We also discussed the difference between feminism and Marxism, and how technology affects women’s labor in agriculture. I am interested in having study sessions and many friends are hungry for these ideas also.

Keep sending me material that we can get. The little we can get here comes from “orthodox Marxism”

Feminist
Bihar, India

DOMESTIC OR HOUSEHOLD WORKERS

Domestic or household workers rarely even have any publicity about their jobs. They are like a living in the article on “Voices raised against domestic work slavery” (Nov. N&L) was shared the material with friends who are very interested. I put the Canadian workshop on the woman question here. The topic that came up was the relationship between women and the family. There is an article about the relationship between the nuclear family and the nuclear world. I feel that marriage is very much of an institution to get freedom. We were also interested to know how patriarchal society had developed historically, and how it is capitalism and private property — as applied to the local situation. Here only the women have the right to property. They buy women in marriage (“bride price”) and women are sold on the marriage market.

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Feminist
Michigan

I had the idea that it might be nice if the editors of N&L sent Lech Walesa a congratulatory letter or card, showing him and the Polish government that his efforts have not gone unnoticed of Poland, that the People of Poland, the Solidarity supporter
Zephyrhills, Florida

Chicago politics is madding the politicians and the people are tight-lipped. Many people have nothing to say. Ronald Robinson, head of the Chicago Housing Authority, was named the President of the Westinghouse company. Then he asked the other mechanisms to take care of the housing and they quit. So the elevators don’t run and even elderly residents have to walk up the stairs, hoping they won’t get attacked in the stairwell or fall because the stairs are crumbling.

It’s always the little guy, whether in world politics or city politics, who gets screwed. The only way they play the city politics game is to hold the people hostage.

South Side resident
Chicago

On “Devil’s Night” in the city of Detroit, troopers over 400 fires were set, many in abandoned, vacant homes, firefights are being set up to figure out how to stop the “vandalism.” They could look right at city government, whose blatant neglect of neighborhoods and complete inaction against the vandalization of vacant homes have created the situation. These schoolcries were raped last month on the same day in the early morning. Two were pulled into vacant houses. Who could even mention the word “union” — it’s different today. The unions are going to have to come out to stop these violence.

Black student
Los Angeles

FROM THE CLASSROOMS

I often hear parents say that youth are useless. I couldn’t stand listening to those guys who were saying that they are useless and I got mad. I said, “You are wrong. I will prove it.”

Latina high school student
Los Angeles

In my North Side there school are about 200 Blacks and 800 whites. On November 4, 1983, my classroom had a vote between Ronald Reagan and Jesse Jackson. There are 29 white and 7 Black students in my classroom. Out of 29 votes for Ronald Reagan, and 7 votes for Jesse Jackson. Now I’ve heard of miracles and coincidences, but that was just too much. When we asked the teacher why didn’t she participate in the vote, she said she didn’t participate in such nonsence.

Black student
Chicago

UNIONS SOUTH AND NORTH

I read the story about Black workers fighting to organize the Dan River Mills plant in Alabama (Nov. N&L) and it reminded me of the conditions in Grenada. I worked in the textile mills in Alabama in the early '70s. The machines were going constantly and production was always on your mind. I worked 12 hours a day. I had a lunch break. If you even took a five-minute break, the production piled up: and if you got back late when you went to work, you could even mention the word “union” — you were out the door. When I moved to L.A., I joined a union for the first time. Union jobs are good in that you have a type of defense against management, but still the union is separate from the workers. I wonder how long these unions are now for the strikers that are happening, with management hiring so many scabs. There came a time when striking workers wouldn’t let anyone cross a picket line, but it’s different today. The unions are going to have to come out to stop these violence. Black workers
Los Angeles

I read Marxist and Freedom and Political Science served as an invaluable guide through a reading of Vol. 1 of Capital this summer. Reading Meek's guide to Marx's exploration of society as concrete human activity. It helped me see the process developed in capitalism as basic and unalienable. I've come to see capitalism as an institution to exist, like our own life (I'm a computer programmer by trade); alienation, like the domino effect, of labor, the domination of lust and greed, of capital's domination of commodities. It isn't just as political or revolutionary case. It's real and human expertise.

I think the analysis of state-capitalism is crucial, as well. If you don't understand the nature of the USSR and other states that call themselves socialist, then you don't know what capitalism oppression is all about and after realizing the interests of one state reproduce in other your intensions.

Marxism seems increasingly important to me, not as some kind of economic solution for all the events in the daily newspaper, but as a real method for understanding how the world works as a toality.

Subscriber and activist
Virginia

I read American Civilization on Trial twice last week. One time because there was a question on a test. The other time because I think “Black masses as vagrind” a refreshing departure from all this conformational conception of guard that has always been a small group of people engaged in some usually male, who will lead the masses to revolution. Your point of view is very different.

Thinker-activist
Northern California

The pamphlet Marx and the Third World offered a real impact on me. I had always wanted to know Marx’s view of the world outside Europe. I especially liked his comment that the Third World’s reform movement toward the extension of railroad lines in the coming decade was a strategic mistake (Nov. N&L). The expansion of railroad networks in the world to people who didn’t know it, and the 1870’s, when British colonialism used to use railroads to bring more into the traditional communities of Asia, breaking down their co-operative forms and independence.

As a Native American, I couldn’t help but think of the railways in the 1870’s in the US. I read the story in the paper about the economy and way of life of the Indian nations of the Great Plains. I wish more people knew of these things.

Shainage Shecapwe
Chicago
When I think of Charles Denby’s life, I think of the unity of mental and manual labor, because that is what he was. Denby was a young Black woman who spent most of her life working with the workers of Detroit. She was deeply involved in the labor movement and dedicated her life to bringing common people to understand Marxism through that art form of the book.

I remember the first night I spent with him in Detroit. Right from the first discussion I saw how he could tell stories, how he could make a point talking about things in everyday living, and yet he was able to express it to everyone, and told a tale about how humanity could become free. I recall the story in his autobiography about the time he tried to stay in a motel in the South. At first they would not allow him in because he was Black. But the bellboy got him to stay, and asked him to sit in the window of the hotel restaurant, so everyone could see that he had broken the race barrier. Just in that one story you could see how revolutionary was his thinking with Raya helped give birth to the philosophy of the Black and worker within him, and was, in his own right, a revolutionary intellectual.

I was so glad Raya’s article on Denby’s life singled out his relationship to philosophy, from the discussions on Lenin’s Philosophic Notebooks in the 1950s to his interest in Marx’s views of the Black World in the last year of his life. One section said all for me: “Philosophy of liberation was not mere rhetoric, much less an empty intellectual task. To Denby, philosophy became a clearing of the head for action.” With his energy and talent and brains he could have got a comfortable place for himself — with the company or with the union bureaucracy — but he devoted his whole life to staying with the workers. At the same time, he opposed the radicals and so-called leaders who wanted to make shortcuts to revolution. There are no short-cuts; only the mass movement of the workers can make a revolution.

In remembrance of Comrade Denby, let us always have his courage and his love for what workers were saying in the plant. Let us never forget him as a fighter for freedom and humanity and as our friend of the heart. Thousands of years from now, I believe that the memory of Denby will live on in the hearts of all who knew him.

Raya Dunayevskaya

The hand of comradeship extended in sorrow to all close associates of late citizen fellow fighter for all humanity, Bro. Charles Denby. He would have wished us all to remember Joe Hill’s dictum: “Don’t mourn. Organize!” Perhaps modifying the words, “after critical thought.”

Lefty Morgan
Vancouver, B.C.

I first heard Charles Denby’s name when Raya visited our city many years ago. I can remember how pleased she was about having a Black man as editor of N&L. There is nothing more meaningful than the final departure of one who not only shares our views but regards them as of vital importance to the welfare of humanity as a whole.

He is a loss to all who knew him. I met him in Toronto once, and I had hoped to see him again. He impressed me. Now it is too late to get on with furthering the only cause that matters. Our goal still lies ahead.

Harry McShane
Glasgow, Scotland

I was fortunate to spend 10 years in Detroit from 1965-69, from the beginning of the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Hungarian Revolution, through all that was happening in the Detroit shops, to the Civil Rights Movement. I was working with Denby on N&L — going over each article, knowing exactly what a worker’s article meant in all its aspects.

Appreciative
Detroit

I remember working with Denby and Raya on Workers Battle Automation. That was the greatest learning experience of my life: the meetings with workers, the digging into workers’ lives and thought. I remember, for instance, Denby arguing with doctors who told a worker his urine could not have blood in it because of stress. I’m keeping on my bookshelf for the rest of my life "After Critical Thought": I was so glad Raya’s article on Denby’s life singled out his relationship to philosophy, from the discussions on Lenin’s Philosophic Notebooks in the 1950s to his interest in Marx’s views of the Black World in the last year of his life."
Africais Today Review: Dunayevskaya on the Black World

Dunayevskaya quotes Lafargue's 1882 complaint to Engels that, after his trip to Algiers, "Marx has come back into the house as though he had been 'unchained' dialectic where, she argues, Hegel (and Marx) "present the structures not as mere facts but as principles." She continues, "That dialectic of human reality as "one long trek to freedom." The African revolutions of the 1950s and 1960s were, to Dunayevskaya, the "discovery of the affinities of both the African and the Third World to human history. For such a Marxist, African revolutions are not a place to "apply" a ready-made theory, but a place for such a Marxist theory can be reconstructed for the present.

MARXISM AND FREEDOM AND ARCHIVES

Dunayevskaya's first book, Marxism and Freedom, contains the selected writings in 1941 to Today.

She also traces Luxemburg's concern with the question of colonialism, that (this) "ruling is an ominous sign that human issues.

Help handicap bias

Montgomery, Ala. — Gwen Patton, a Black instructor at Alabama State University (ASU), has filed an appeal on her discrimination case with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit.

In a letter to human rights activists, Ms. Patton, states that "Judge Varner's opinion has greater implications than is within our grasp to the reality that these are not arranged in a linear fashion, but are interrelated and dependent on the context in which they are experienced.

Each epoch, each generation must work out its own relationship of theory to practice. What is constant in working out these ever new relationships of theory to practice is the need for intervention by the movement from leadership, that is, to understand that the movement from practice, the fight for freedom, contains both a theory of freedom that is in need of concretization."

The fact that the last section of this book deals with Marx, Much of it centers around his last writings on Russia and on non-European society such as his little-known Khothodological Manual. He has in the creation of this Black/Red column that I wrote was devoted to the exploration of just fighting discrimination in our workplaces and in our union meetings.

"Denby, in his welcoming remarks to the Conference, explored the limitation of just fighting discrimination in our workplaces and in our union meetings. But he also explored the concept of freedom that is inherent in their activities. As the Conference unfolded, the self-determination of Black people was defined as the "Philosophy of Liberation" that can be used against the handicapped.

Dunayevskaya's concern with the question of colonialism, that (this) "ruling is an ominous sign that human issues to that of socialist humanists in Africa such as Nyerere and Amin. It is Fanon whom she called attention to "color" by saying that: "Black and white people and their opposites by internal and external forces.

Denby, Charles Denby would agree with some of the criticism, because he detested elitism and knew that it was from the Africanists. The concepts of state-capitalism and of spontaneity and humanism developed in this book offer a key example of the centrality of a dialectic of freedom and archives. The concepts of state-capitalism and of spontaneity and humanism developed in this book offer a key example of the centrality of a dialectic of freedom and archives.

By John Alan

I don't know how many of our readers are aware of the role that Charles Denby, the late longtime editor of News & Letters, had in the creation of this Black/Red column. He was a monthly feature of News & Letters. This column would not have existed if the Marxist-Humanists had not been involved, in Detroit on Jan. 1, 1968, a Black/Red Conference, that had the support and participation of a wide variety of people that included Black and white workers, women, students, and intellectuals. In this, she says, "These are the ideas of freedom in all of its concrete ramifications that the Black movement for liberation had awakened us to."

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Detroit, Mich. — On Nov. 6 we held "Indignant Heart: A Memorial Meeting for Charles Denby." The multi-dimensionality of the 100 who came out left a deep impression on those who rallied to our cause. Every chapter in Denby's life was represented in that room, from Alabama struggles over 50 years and more, through the 1983 Berlin West Berlin demonstrations and the many university classes he addressed, to the political tendencies he had an impact on. Over half the audience was Black. The impact of his memory on youth was evident from the start.

In the lobby the most magnificent exhibition of Denby's life-story was displayed. There were photographs of Denby and his circle, letters and papers from his years of struggle. There were reviews of Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal and letters from its readers. They told of the excitement of planning a series of worker battles, selections from his "Worker's Journal" columns and from Workers Battle Automation. Many stayed after the meeting to study the displays. One labor history professor who taught Indignant Heart in his classes was nevertheless surprised at the exhibition, saying how taken he was with what it showed of the organization behind the book.

FROM THE SHOPS TO MONTGOMERY

This was yet another prologue to the program itself. The roof over our heads, the buses and the banks, were the scene of the whole history of Marxist-Humanism, in the remembrances and the music, in the readings from Indignant Heart and in Revolutionary Life. The whole story on "Charles Denby — Worker-Editor, Marxist-Humanist."

Out of his experiences in the shops, so vivid were they that it almost felt like an editing session for the next issue of NEL, as we heard about Denby taking the floor in a factory where they were firing upon Negroes. We learned to fight against smoke in the shop, creating a rank-and-file paper — the Stinner and smuggling it into the plant. They spoke of the impact that Denby's appearance had on production for the first time. And when John Allison, with his now almost 50 year old Chryslers, told of how discussions with Denby on shop problems always ended up viewing civil rights, women's rights, the whole of society, with his "philosophy of liberation," a murmur of recognition swept the room.

Interwoven with the remembrances were the audience's readings from Indignant Heart. So powerful did the readings connect with the remembrances that it was often hard to tell where one stopped and the other began. We heard Rosa Parks get up to tell of her meetings with Denby, of their Black unity, and of the oddity of how Denby had re-told her story in his book. And then suddenly Denby's own words were read out, speaking of the joy he felt when he was able to say, "I'm not going to be tried on a certain day — I think it was Wednesday."

"The students came here to the church," Rev. King said, "because we wanted to work to make sure that they wanted to run off some leaflets. And to tell the truth, what I believe caused the Montgomery bus boycott was the Montgomery Advertiser, the white daily paper."

He went on to explain that the youth who ran off a couple hundred leaflets of the Montgomery Advertiser, wanted to run off some leaflets. And to tell the truth, what I believe caused the Montgomery bus boycott was the Montgomery Advertiser, the white daily paper.

...and they were all white then — would pull up to a stop and, in the face of all of this, they fought and won.

...Actually, the idea of a boycott had been around for a long time, but it was just going to be a one-day demonstration for Mrs. Parks. But after the Blacks boycotted the buses that Wednesday and then went back to the bus stops on Thursday, something else happened. All the bus drivers — and they were all white then — would pull up to a stop and, where there were all Blacks standing there, went on by without picking up a single one of them.

The reaction of the Blacks was, "What the hell! We walked yesterday... we walk today," and that, Rev. King said, "was the beginning of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. And they kept on walking from that day on — for over nine months — until they won.

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE STAND FOR

News and Letters Committee, 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 form property as in Russia or China, and for the creation 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 revolutionary trade unionists and workers not related to the formulation of a philosophy of liberation. A Black production worker, Charles Denby, author of Underground, the book that won Rosa Parks her freedom, 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 Marx's Humanism, a philosophical analysis and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution, which spell out the philosophical ground of Marx's Humanism internationally as American Civilization on Trial concretizes it on the American scene and shows how Marx's Humanism applies to the U.S. and the world.

Where Marxism and Freedom, whose structure was grounded in the movement from practice throughout the 200 years from 1776 to Today, discloses itself through an exclusively American relationship and in its American roots, Philosophy and Revolution, in recreating Marx's philosophical roots both in the Hegelian dialectic and in the actual revolutions of the last 30 years, identifies these forces of revolution as Reason — Labor, Black, Youth, Women — of our day. By tracing and passing through a dialectical process from the actuality to theory with our own theoretical development for the same three decades, Marxist-Humanist in the U.S. has met the challenge of the "new movement" and met it successfully by in them a trail to the 1980s. It is this trail, this path of revolutions — be it in the birth of a new whole 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 bears the label "Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution." This work challenges post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Humanism. At a time when the nuclear world is threatened with the extinction of civilization and the political-economic forces that breed the means to revolutionary action are growing, the question that is raised is what is, but to reveal the revolutionary Humanist future inherent in the present.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildfires against Automation and the 500,000 Black Kitchen Front, the year of the 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 bears the label "Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution." This work challenges post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Humanism.
In-person report of deepening revolt against Pinochet in Chile

Editor's Note: The following description of Chile in October, 1983 is by a Chilean political refugee who returned there after six years.

The shantytown dwellers, workers and unemployed, have thrown up barricades in the street protests which have been the hallmark of the situation — not because today’s barricades will overthrow President Pinochet, but to learn today so they will be ready tomorrow. Tomorrow, when the youth, who are almost all over ten years of dictatorship and haven’t had a chance to study, to prove that tomorrow, by the barricades, will be able to throw out the military leaders, of which a military operation. After the liberation they were main­ly to the U.S. because it is Black and English-speaking, and there are 30 million Black people in the U.S. Rev. Austin and Coard’s view of socialism, only that their coup were not the military alliance of the U.S. and Korea as well as outside relations, etc.

This situation has exploded into land seizures and squattling on vacant urban land by Committees of the Homeless. The people of a shantytown, where everyone knows everyone else, can’t turn to the government. But many are involved in underground organizations, but not now. The Homeless Committees are more powerful today. The unions were completely de­stroyed by the government after 1973. Under the repres­sion, Chilean labor, to whom a strike used to mean a factory occupation, has been reduced to small, ineffective and reduced unemployment from 50 to 14%. "The U.S. would like to see the Caribbean as floating Bantustans," one U.S. diplomat said. "The concept of a U.S. war in the region is that many didn’t leave even after the long program was over, standing in the street in tall boots. But people are still there. The students last summer, and the students were proud to have known him. The President of the Student Government called him. The first youth of the 1960s to gain power, to "engage in a theoretical debate on the nature of revolu­tion and the so-called socialist countries, to see if they are socialist, and to discuss what kind of society we want to build in Chile.

South Korean protests against Chun Do Hwan

Editor’s Note: Soo Ill is the name assumed by a South Korean youth who has been active in the student movement against Chun Do Hwan, and who wrote this account from an interview on the Reagan tour of East Asia and the opposition movement in South Korea.

One of obvious purpose of Reagan’s trip is to strengthen the new U.S. security alliance with Japan. Reagan also wants to get Japan to increase its military spending. I believe this is meant to both tie down the Japanese economy, and to strengthen the U.S. less vulnerable to unrest in Korea.

You must understand that the attitude of Koreans to­wards the U.S. has changed greatly by Kwangju (the Kwangju Uprising of May, 1980. Since then, the Korean “revolution” has operated on democratic reforms from the military dictatorship. The people, especially the youth, now see the U.S. as a major obstacle to the change. That is why it is anti-Americanism. The increase in student protests in recent months are directed at the trip.

On a whole it has been a very explosive. It may seem peaceful and stable from the outside but inside the country it is the opposite. When you walk down the street there is a police presence. I have never been able to rest since the time he seized power.

Now with the 007 plane that was shot down and the bombing in Burma, Chun has preempted all the regular media. There have been many land occupations, but only the two outside of Grenada brought together Black and white and the film of Grenada brought together Black, white and Caribbean students and community people who supported the revolution. Despite it that many didn’t leave even after the long program was over, standing in the street in tall boots. But people are still there. The students last summer, and the students were proud to have known him. The President of the Student Government called him. The first youth of the 1960s to gain power, to "engage in a theoretical debate on the nature of revolu­tion and the so-called socialist countries, to see if they are socialist, and to discuss what kind of society we want to build in Chile.

Opposition to Bishop’s murder, Grenada invasion

New York, N.Y. — A memorial meeting for the murder­ed Prime Minister Maurice Bishop of Grenada drew over 1,000 people to Hunter College, Nov. 4. Sponsored by the Pan-Africanist groups and the black community, the meeting announced its intention to form a committee to decide what political leaders are taking advantage of the mass pressure to make a change at the top — all the classes. The political leaders are taking advantage of the mass pressure to make a change at the top — all the classes. But many are involved in underground organizations, but not now. The Homeless Committees are more powerful today. The unions were completely de­stroyed by the government after 1973. Under the repres­sion, Chilean labor, to whom a strike used to mean a factory occupation, has been reduced to small, ineffective and reduced unemployment from 50 to 14%. "The U.S. would like to see the Caribbean as floating Bantustans," one U.S. diplomat said. "The concept of a U.S. war in the region is that many didn’t leave even after the long program was over, standing in the street in tall boots. But people are still there. The students last summer, and the students were proud to have known him. The President of the Student Government called him. The first youth of the 1960s to gain power, to "engage in a theoretical debate on the nature of revolu­tion and the so-called socialist countries, to see if they are socialist, and to discuss what kind of society we want to build in Chile.

* * *

Oakland, Cal. — Over 5,000 people marched and rallied in Mosswood Park, Nov. 12, against Reagan’s invasion of Grenada. This Bay Area demonstration was a refreshing departure from the usual protests because it went through a Black community of Oakland where many neighborhood people have been taken to prison. The march was also predominately Third World people, with many American Blacks, Caribbean, Latinos and Native Ameri­cans.

The discussions at our News & Letters literature table reflected not only the instant revolution to Reagan’s inva­sion of a tiny Black nation, but also a hunger for new ideas. We discussed the idea of revolutionaries working as a dimension of genuine mass movements in this country.

„News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolutionaries and socialists could be heard, not separated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. It is our aim to assure its publication and to provide a forum for workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor. “

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Nov. 12 protests

Washington, D.C. . . . . .

by Jim Mills, Youth columnist

The most significant action of the Nov. 12 march in Washington, D.C. was its spontaneous outpouring against U.S. interventions into Third World countries. I talked to demonstrators throughout the day and was impressed by the determination of those who decided to come there only after the invasion of Grenada. That brazenly imperialist occupation as well as the demonstration of the solidarity of the working class and the students for protest the agencies of Reagan's reactionary Administration. There were three initial rallies at three sites. At the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Haitian and Central American freedom fighters and refugees spoke about human rights. Those who wanted to take away the few benefits we have won over the hands of their rulers, who are supported by the Reagan Administration. The rally at the State Department protested the interventionist policies of the U.S. and the U.S. occupation forces in Central America. The form of the march encompassed a new, broader totality of the movement.

Many of the people who participated already had been at local demonstrations protesting the invasion of Grenada. There was no doubt that both this Nov. 12 protest, and the one that occurred in the day before it over Grenada, reflected a sensitivity to the rapidly developing changes in the objective situation around the globe.

Yet the organizers on Nov. 12 were not able to catch the newness of this situation. One had the feeling that the protest was seen by many organizers as merely a tool to change Reagan. As one organizer put it, "This march was more unified than the one on March 27, 1981, the first massive protest against intervention into Central America. But the form of this march encompassed a new, broader totality of the movement." Many of the people who participated had already been at local demonstrations protesting the invasion of Grenada. There was no doubt that both this Nov. 12 protest, and the one that occurred in the day before it over Grenada, reflected a sensitivity to the rapidly developing changes in the objective situation around the globe.

Thus, I talked to many people active in anti-nuclear organizations who have now joined the resistance to Reagan. One of the most active of these organizations is Spanish for Vietnam, besides an often repeated slogan seen on buttons and banners on Nov. 12, was as well a theme in discussions: "Spanish for Vietnam".

Africans, both 23, were sentenced to prison terms in Anarchism of the '80s, I was moved to put this movement in a larger context. Thus, there were reformist speakers who ended by praising the Reagan Administration. In contrast, I felt that the protesters came precisely because they refuse to wait for or be limited by electoral change. Otherwise it may be too late.

Nov. 12 protest of 4,000 in Los Angeles.

. . . Los Angeles

Los Angeles, Cal. — More than 4,000 determined people came out on Nov. 12 to march against the escalating insanity of Reagan's America. The crowd was diverse and included large numbers of Central Americans, Blacks carrying signs reading " Afro-Americans Oppose the Invasion of Grenada," a contingent of striking garment workers, and young white anti-nuclear activists. Some demonstrators had come from other states, including Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. For many people, it was the first demonstration they had ever attended.

Starting at Shatto Park and moving down Wilshire Boulevard for more than a mile, we made our way to MacArthur Park where others joined us for an exuberant rally sponsored by the Nov. 12 Coalition, a group of 100 organizations, civil rights, labor, political, and religious organizations.

All this took place under a constant drizzle, but nothing could dampen the protesters' spirits as they shouted slogans and waved signs and symbols which expressed their feelings including a 15-foot-high effigy of that busts of Death Valley Days clashing a fistful of war bucks.

Police on horseback and armed with long clubs accompanied the stream of marchers, channeling them into one lane of the busy street. At one point, the procession passed a graphic display of what the Reagan Administration is defending in Central America. Several members of a guerrilla theatre group were huddled together at the edge of the sidewalk. A man knelt and prayed over the bloody bodies of students who were murdered in Massacre in the previous hundred of thousands of political prisoners.

As they passed a group of five to six people who were sitting in the street, a young man, who was bald and wearing a black jacket, shouted at the police, "What are you doing?" One of the police officers who was not wearing a helmet, replied, "Off your horses and get out of the street." But the police clubbed the young man until he fell to the ground.

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At the rally, reggae music was interspersed among a variety of speakers all condemning Reagan's actions on a number of fronts, from nuclear escalation, to continued support for the occupation forces in Central America but a number of areas around the globe as well, to the lack of economic and political development occurring at home. All of this was echoed in the cries of the crowd who constantly called for " bread not bombs," " jobs, not juggernaut weapons." — Participant. News and Letters Committees

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Youth in Revolt

South Korean dictator Chun Doo Hwan's detention of dozens of dissidents didn't stop students at three campuses from organizing sit-ins against his visit there, and 400 students from rallying the next day. Ten days earlier, more than 1,000 students in Seoul shouted, "Down with fascist President Chun!" three stones at riot police, and passed out leaflets demanding Reagan cancel his visit. Students also demonstrated in Japan before and during Reagan's visit there.

"Murderers, murderers!" was the cry of thousands of young people who surrounded the U.S. embassy in Mexico City Nov. 6, referring to U.S. actions with regard to Grenada, Nicaragua, and El Salvador.

The White House has angrily warned Stanford University that it may not get the Ronald Reagan presidential papers and other materials offered by a Stanford professor when the university originally promised to hand them over. The university had backed out on turning control of the papers. After a campaign by Stanford students and faculty, Prime Minister Shamir and his "Defense" Minister when an Israeli soldier told them this and compared them to the U.S. and the intensification of the arms race. Several members of a guerrilla theatre group were huddled together at the edge of the sidewalk. A man knelt and prayed over the bloody bodies of students who were murdered in Massacre in the previous hundred of thousands of political prisoners.

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At this pivotal moment, the Nov. 12 Coalition provided a strong voice of anti-war and the struggle for Central American freedom fighters and refugees spoke about human rights after one year of lay-off. For example workers with 20" 30 and 40 years on the job, trying to take away the benefits we won over those years through our sweat, sacrifice and blood. We will remain united to the final consequences. Let only one thing be heard: our rights, No Demo, No protest, No work.

— Art Steel workers
Workers strike in British Columbia

Government employees strike in British Columbia. basa, and along with labor, the solidarity coalition represents close to one million people.

On Oct. 15, a third mass protest of 50,000 was held in Vancouver during the Socred party convention. Other actions have included a one-day occupation of Bennett’s offices on Sept. 16 by 80 protesters, and a series of “focus weeks” on specific issues, such as housing, so that member groups of Solidarity have the opportunity to publicize the effects of proposed legislation on the community.

Members and supporters of Solidarity see the movement’s impact due not only to its anti-Socred base, but also to its attempt to move beyond the narrow focus of just economic or labor issues, to social questions. Thus the discussions around education expenditure cuts, coupled with Socred ideologues’ statements that education is a privilege and not a right, have meant a deeper look at what the quality of education means in BC. In the Solidarity coalition itself, the community groups have full right to take the floor and are members of the steering committee. The coalition has begun to publish its own weekly paper, Solidarity Times.

One Solidarity supporter observed, “When it comes to labor, Bennett is like Poland’s Jaruzelski. He doesn’t necessarily want to eliminate unions, he would just like them to be no trouble and do nothing.” BC workers, however, have a different future in mind. On Nov. 8, 28,000 members of the BC Teachers Federation and 29,000 allied workers in the Canadian Public Employees Union joined the BCGEU workers on strike.

As we go to the press, a tentative agreement has been announced, but the reaction from strikers has been very mixed. As the BC Teachers Federation’s vice president put it: “The strike has been suspended. It has not been called off.”

(Breaks to Lefty Morgan, Vancouver, for information included in this article.)

In Brief

ARGENTINA — The resounding victory of the reformist Left candidate, Raul Alfonsin, was a stunning blow to both the government and the Peronists. Of all major political figures, Alfonsin has been the most critical of the Marxist-Leninist view, and the “disappearance” of the 20,000 under the fascist military. He has promised no amnesty for those accused of terrorism, and the “disappearance” of 70,000 under the fascist military. It has created a democratic opening where revolution and protest movements can organize openly.

BRAZIL — With inflation running at 200%, unemployment is 30%, and starvation at the door, the masses are demanding a cancellation of the huge international monetary fund debts, going on strike and rioting over food. On Oct. 28, Sao Paolo subway riders burned two train stations in a protest against a totally defective transport system. Even the halls of Congress resounded with anger when the one Indian representative, elected by workers, Blacks, Indians, and feminists from Sao Paulo, told a stunned and horrified room full of politicians: “To me, every minister is a thief.”

CYPRUS — Turkish-occupied northern Cyprus increased tensions between Greece and Turkey, Nov. 15, by declaring its independence as the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and naming Rauf Denktaş as its president. Turkey first invaded northern Cyprus in 1974 to “protect Turkish Cypriots” after the Cypriots voted in a coup backed by the Greek military. Approximately 120,000 of Cyprus’ 20,000 citizens are Turkish, while half a million are Greek.

Philippines

While the Philippine masses have not yet succeeded in driving themselves into Marcos, they continue to force concessions from his regime. Workers have gone on strikes nationwide, demanding a raise in wages in face of devaluation of the peso by 27%. On Nov. 8, 28,000 workers voted for a pay increase, from $2.45 to $2.68 a day minimum wage. New expressions of opposition continue. A conference on dismantling U.S. military bases was convened Oct. 25 at the University of the Philippines. It was organized by the Anti-Base Coalition of the Philippines and drawn participants from other Asian and Pacific countries, including U.S.-controlled Guam. The final day, participants marched on the U.S. Embassy to present demands for removing the bases, and calling for an end to nuclear arms.

A new Left organization, the Nationalist Alliance for Justice, Freedom and Democracy (NA), held its first meeting in Manila on Nov. 5, the largest political gathering since the September memorials for Benigno Aquino Jr. Among the 35,000 participants were union and student activists, representatives of community groups and intellectuals. The NA organizers describe the new group as an alternative to the Communist Party of the Philippines and its National Democratic Front.

Protests continue, sometimes several in a day. On Nov. 11, a six-hour funeral procession for Rolando Galman was held in Manila. He was one of 1,600 workers who had been on a 26-day strike for higher wages.

Bolivia

Once again Bolivia’s tin miners are on a revolutionary offensive. But this time their fire is directed not against a fascist military regime but against the Left government of Hernán Siles Zuazo. The powerful national union federation, led by Juan Lechín, has been demanding nationalization of all mines owned by foreign interests, indefinite postponement of the foreign debt to the international bankers, and rejection of "all compromise with petty-bourgeois reformism." In April, miners did not wait to be consulted they marched on the U.S. Embassy to present demands for enactment of native control of their land and their culture. They have thus simultaneously begun to democratize the state mining company, Comibol.

By Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

The movement opposed to Socred’s policies has swelled to its largest political gathering in BC history, held in Victoria, July 27. Tens of thousands came to protest the legislation Socred had introduced: a series of bills attacking labor, including Bill 3, along with cuts in social programs such as the practical elimination of the Human Rights Commission. After the July demonstration, a coalition of trade unions, called Operation Solidarity, was formed.

What is needed now is solidarity. Solidarity movement is the wide participation and support of many community organizations, which formed their own coalition after a second mass demonstration in the business district. One sign alluded to Marcos’ health: "Your doctor’s advice is, Please resign."