

Theory/ Practice News & LETTERS

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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Eastern: workers vs. Lorenzo!



by John Marcotte

I was talking to some Eastern Airlines workers on their picket line. It didn't take long to see their anger at Frank Lorenzo. These plane cleaners and ramp workers said they would rather be in there doing their job, which they did with pride and professionalism, but Lorenzo made it impossible to keep on. They told of harassment, firings, frustration at not being able to do the job the way you knew was right. "I don't want to work for Frank Lorenzo anymore," a cleaner summed up.

These workers told me it was when their union was pushing Frank Borman, Eastern's president before Lorenzo, to sell the company to the workers that Borman turned around and offered Lorenzo 20 million dollars just to look into buying Eastern. "If Borman had sold us Eastern, we would have shown them how to run an airline. We are the ones who know everything about running an airline, we do it everyday. We don't need management to tell us how to do our jobs. Borman was afraid of that—that we'd set an example."

WORKERS QUESTION MANAGEMENT

Two cleaners told me, "For instance, if you are a business traveler with a \$300 suit, what is more important to you, that there's a piece of gum on the carpet, or that your seat is clean? But this quality control person, who has never cleaned a plane in her life, comes in with a stopwatch and times you, and takes eight points off for seats but 40 points off for the carpet! So you lift the carpet, and go to the storeroom and get one that's been to the cleaners. You install it, and there's 12 pieces of gum on it! You go to the manager, and he just shrugs his shoulders. And you still get the 40 points off."

Listening to these workers, I was thinking that, as in every strike, the workers are raising questions that go deeper than the immediate issues of the strike. No one

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Black World

Gorbachevism and the Third World



by Lou Turner

Due to the fresh revelations, reported in the *New York Times* (March 16, 1989), concerning the Russian foreign policy shift in relations with the African National Congress (ANC) and the apartheid government of South Africa—where according to Boris Asoyan, deputy chief of the Department of African countries in the Foreign Ministry, "we doubt that revolution in South Africa is possible"—I have excerpted that part of my report to the last *News and Letters* Convention analyzing the "new thinking" of Gorbachevism on the Third World. My entire report, entitled "Toward the Dialectic of Black Reality/Black Thought," is available, along with the other reports given at the Convention, from *News & Letters*.

There is one other, whom, if it cannot be said is a serious student of the Hegelian dialectic, at any rate waxed philosophic at the 27th Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1986 about "tselostny?" (the "integral world"), whose "real dialectics of present-day development," he contends, "consists of a combination of competition and confrontation between two systems and of a growing tendency toward interdependence of the countries of the world community." This is the "new thinking" of Mikhail Gorbachev concerning the Third World, some aspects of which we analyzed in this year's Draft For Perspectives (1988-89), and that I wrote about in the July (1988) issue of *News & Letters* as "Super-power collusion in Southern Africa."

Gorbachev has initiated what I consider a foreign policy of "constructive dis-engagement" from "troubled hot-spots in the Third World." The 1961 program of Krushchev which was supposed to break through encirclement by the West by gaining a foothold in the Afro-Asian Latin American revolutions has been in process of reversal since the latter part of the Brezhnev era. (See the 1984 edition of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions for a critical analysis of this period*).

CHANGED WORLD

In Gorbachev's program, according to the *World Policy Journal* (Fall 1987) article, "New Soviet Thinking About the Third World," written by Prof. Elizabeth

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In-person report

Mexico in crisis and revolt



More than 100,000 schoolteachers on a one-day work stoppage marched in Mexico City, March 7, demanding a 100% increase in their \$5-\$6 a day salaries and against corruption in their union.

by Anne Jaclard and Eugene Walker

Mexico City, Mexico—In the first three weeks of March—as masses in Caracas and many other cities of Venezuela poured into the streets in rebellion against government-imposed increases in the cost of public transportation and fuel, and as cities and much of the countryside of El Salvador was aflame with a new intensity in the almost decade-long civil war—we had the opportunity to visit another Latin American country in crisis and revolt, Mexico. From almost the moment we arrived we were swept into mass protests and marches, had the opportunity to listen to many, many voices from the "other Mexico," and found a wonderful openness on the part of thinker-activists to discuss ideas of Marxist-Humanism. Let us begin by experiencing some of those demonstrations, and listening to voices from the other Mexico.

VOICES FROM THE OTHER MEXICO

On March 7 the *maestros* (schoolteachers) were well over a hundred-thousand strong as they marched and ran through the streets of downtown Mexico City, carrying banners and life-size puppets, chanting slogans, accompanied by bands, ending their separate marches in a massive hours-long demonstration in the huge central plaza, the Zocalo.

"Our salaries are so low because the government does not value our work," said one teacher. Primary school teachers earn \$5-6 a day. "The government says education is in the reach of all, and it is theoretically true that there are schools for everyone and that not only those with economic means can reach a higher level. But I have students who have been working since the first grade. They work as scavengers in the dump. They don't have the will to study because they need to survive."

The teachers' 24-hour *paro* (workstoppage) was, as well, against their government-run union. One said,

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On the Inside

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From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya: What is Philosophy? What is Revolution? page 4

South African Freedom Journal: Trade Union Unity Summit page 8

New edition from Columbia University Press:

MARXISM AND FREEDOM

by Raya Dunayevskaya

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From Dunayevskaya's 1985 Introduction:

It is this concept of philosophy as being rooted in the movement from practice which creates a challenge for theoreticians to work out a new stage of cognition. It created the structure for Marxism and Freedom...

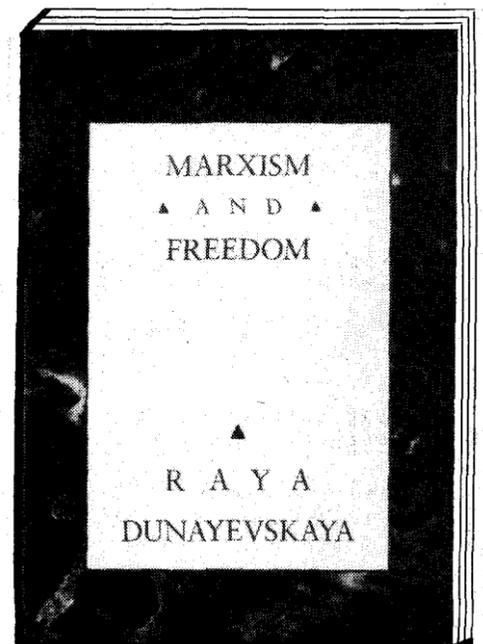
From the commentary on *Marxism and Freedom*:

Dunayevskaya's book...shows not only that Marxian economics and politics are throughout philosophy, but that the latter is from the beginning economics and politics.

—Herbert Marcuse

She has the capacity...to respect and learn from other kinds of thinking and other modes of expression: those of the Third World, of ordinary militant women, of working people, of...the Black Dimension.

—Adrienne Rich



Order from: News & Letters, 59 East Van Buren, #707, Chicago, IL 60605

A continuing discussion:

How are we fighting for abortion rights?

We are the roadblock

Los Angeles, Cal.—“Operation Rescue Hits Roadblock,” read the headline in the L.A. Herald-Examiner, March 24—and that roadblock was us, hundreds and hundreds of L.A.-area women and men determined to defend a woman's right to choose safe, legal abortion. For three days, March 23-25, the fanatical right-wing “Operation Rescue” had targeted a national effort in L.A. to shut down abortion clinics, and we were there at the clinics before they were (at five in the morning!), with our bodies, our signs, our chants, our resolve, anger and passion.

They got arrested (as they had wanted to); and they got media coverage—but so did we, and not only media coverage, but a great show of public support for pro-choice on abortion, wherever we were stationed at clinics throughout Southern California. And the clinics remained open.

“Operation Rescue's” founder, Randall Terry, has expressed very clearly the real agenda of the anti-abortion movement: not only forcing women back to the terror of butcher abortionists, but ending what he calls “radical feminism” and forcing women back into the “traditional family unit.” Our agenda is our lives and our freedom.

We won this skirmish against “Operation Rescue,” and gained a bit of ground. But it's only one skirmish of a much longer war; and for that reason, Women's Liberation-News and Letters Committees distributed a flyer which stated: “For that, even the critical, militant action of putting our bodies on the line is not enough. It is a holding action, but not much more. To develop a movement that really will bring us to freedom, we need to be as bold in thought as we are in activity”; and we invited all to participate with us both in the ongoing discussion in the pages of N&L on “How are we fighting for abortion rights?” and in a series of classes we will be holding on “How to Prepare for the 1990s? Marxist-Humanism as a Body of Ideas.”

These thought-activities are as essential as demonstration-activities for the self-development of our movement. And there are sure to be many more demonstrations and confrontations in the months to come.

—Michelle Landau

Students raise key ideas

New York, N.Y.—Thousands of students around the country are planning to participate in the April 9 March on Washington for abortion rights. At New York University, (NYU) where I am a graduate student, many of the women most passionately involved have never been to any type of political rally before. Yet they are raising all sorts of questions.

Recently students at Bard College in upstate New York invited me to speak on a Marxist-Humanist view of the reproductive rights movement. A third of that student body is going to Washington.

Black/Red View

Bus boycott shows Black women as Reason

by John Alan

The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It: The Memoir of Jo Ann Gibson Robinson. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1987, 190 pp.

It seems no matter how many times the story of the historic 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott is told, it never fails to disclose startling new information as well as new insights into how it was organized and how it carried on its daily activities. Jo Ann Gibson Robinson's Memoir is no exception to this truism; it opens a new window on the crucial role played by the Black women of Montgomery in getting the boycott started after Mrs. Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give her seat on a Montgomery bus to a white man.

Jo Ann Gibson Robinson has never been as well known as many of the male leaders of the bus boycott, but she was there from day one. Not only did she serve on all the important committees, but she was that catalytic personality who conceived, wrote, mimeographed—with the help of two of her students—and managed the distribution of 50,000 copies of the famous “anonymous leaflet.” It was that leaflet that called upon the Black citizens of Montgomery not to ride the buses for one day as a protest against the arrest of Mrs. Rosa Parks.

At the time of the boycott, Mrs. Robinson had been a professor of English at the Alabama State College in Montgomery for six years. She was also the President of the Women's Political Council (WPC). For years she had led committees of the WPC in fruitless negotiations with the Mayor and the Commissioners of Montgomery to get “better seating arrangements” for Black passengers and to end the racial verbal abuse heaped upon Black passengers by white bus drivers. None was “so

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When I got there I discovered some students were furious at a speech they had heard by National Organization for Women president Molly Yard nearby at Vassar College. They felt she separated the concerns of white women whom she called “we,” from those of Black women whom she referred to as “they.” “If women are Other,” one student said, “what does that make Black women?” They felt the experiences of Black women their own age could bring a dimension to the women's movement which has been missing for as long as they can remember.

Questions like these can open the door to new beginnings for the movement. On the other hand, two recent meetings I attended erected barriers to this kind of opening.

The first meeting, an abortion speak-out attended by over 200, was held by Redstockings, one of the first radical feminist groups in New York in the late 1960s. To commemorate the 20th anniversary of the first public speak-out by women who had illegal abortions, women again spoke out about their experiences. You could really see how the demand for abortion rights was unseparated from self-determination back in 1969.

However, I became concerned at what was missing in this discussion—self-critique. One Redstocking member told me the historical/theoretic discussion was kept private and that they hoped to become a women's “think tank.” Thinking and theory are surely crucial, but how can you work out new beginnings in isolation from Black and working-class women, whose struggles have been unceasing, or from the thousands of students who are organizing to march on Washington?

This brings me to a meeting at New York University at which a student spoke about her desire to see the group discuss not only abortion but reproductive freedom. I suggested an open forum on that subject. Then a member of a Left vanguard party pronounced that we weren't here to discuss the theory of women's liberation. She said we have to focus only on conceiving strategies for abortion rights or we will “alienate people.”

It's true that it's nothing new for a vanguard party to think they have the answers so they don't need to hear the thoughts of women or youth. But what does it mean when a similar attitude occurs among women who were radical in 1969 partly because they had broken with this vanguardist elitism and, as women, wanted to “take back” not only their bodies but their minds?

We need to challenge these attitudes which appear as shortcuts to freedom. Nothing less than a new relation between thought and reality will truly be able to encompass the strivings of the thousands of young women who are going to Washington April 9.

—Laurie Cashdan



Women-Worldwide

A growing movement is speaking out against the increasing number of medically-unnecessary Caesarian-section births. In Brazil, a third of the babies born in hospitals are delivered through surgery—usually at the urging of the doctor, either in the form of subtle persuasion or outright terrorism. One woman's doctor angrily told her she would have to have a Caesarian in December because he would be on vacation at the time of her January due date. In the U.S., Caesarian births have doubled from 12% in 1976 to 24% in 1986.

In Izmit, Turkey, women and children armed with axes and pickaxe handles blocked a main road for ten hours demanding that the army and local government councils stop endangering their health by using the street as a rubbish dump. For years refuse had been regularly dumped in the middle of their large working class settlement. The authorities agreed to their demands on the spot.

—Information from Outwrite

A group of 40 Jewish women holding a prayer service at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, March 20, were attacked (and some injured) by Orthodox men throwing metal chairs at their heads. Police responded by shooting tear gas into the crowd. Police had earlier warned that the women might be arrested if they met to pray because they posed a threat to public safety!

The “Hibbing 7,” seven women workers at the American Linen Supply Company in Hibbing, Minn., have been on strike since October, 1987 over lack of a contract and the company's union-busting activities. They were replaced by scabs on the first day of the strike. In September, 1988, a federal judge upheld National Labor Relations Board allegations of company wrongdoing and ordered the women reinstated with full back pay and seniority rights. A company appeal is pending.

More than 3,000 Greek Cypriot women, along with supporters from the U.S., Europe and Australia, stormed past troops into Turkish northern Cyprus, March 19, to protest the continuing division of the island. Some women were dragged away screaming and more than 50 were arrested as they crossed the Green Line waving white flags and banners reading “We come in Peace.”

“Mexican women fighting to transform the world!”

Mexico City, Mexico—March 14, 10:00 a.m.: The feminist center Cuarto Creciente and the Women's Network of the Urban Poor People's Movement (CONAM-UP) are evicted by their landlord and 20 men. The illegal eviction takes place with no warning and breaches an agreement made with the government after the women fought off an attempted eviction last September. Cuarto Creciente has been in the space four years and constructed a library and rooms that are well-used by



News & Letters photo

Women of Cuarto Creciente arrange their furniture on the sidewalk in the Zocalo. The banner reads: “When the woman advance there is no retreat for the man.”

many groups for meetings, lectures and workshops. Now the library, the furniture, the posters, the stove—everything is in the street.

11:00 a.m.: Rosalina Salazar of the San Miguel Teotongo Group of Women in Struggle is grabbed in her colonia (neighborhood) by “agents” without documents, who hold her six hours and then throw her in jail on trumped-up charges.

Cuarto Creciente's central location has been vital to the women who come together from over 50 colonias around and outside Mexico City. These working class and shantytown women are the leaders of all kinds of community activities, from getting water and electricity in the “zones of misery” that surround the city, to fighting for housing and education, child care centers, breakfasts and medical care, to organizing against violence against women.

WE WILL STAY AND FIGHT

3:00 p.m.: The women who have gathered outside Cuarto Creciente hold a meeting in the street. Clara reports that the same government officials who had agreed to prevent their eviction, are now offering them relocation. Their hall is just one block from the main square of Mexico City, the Zocalo; they are offered a place far away. They speak of Rosalina Salazar and say, shall we go to a neighborhood where the government can kidnap us easily? Instead they demand that the all-powerful government take over the Cuarto Creciente building and give them back their space.

They resolve to stay and fight. Women go off to their colonias to spread the word and bring others back. Some write a press release and a flyer; others go to seek help from the transit workers. They resolve to carry on their normal activities and tell us that we should give our scheduled talk that evening—in the street.

6:00 p.m.: Women keep coming in small groups from the colonias. Transit workers and other supporters arrive. The furniture in the street is rearranged to provide tables and chairs for a meeting. The large puppets which have represented repression against women in many demonstrations are set up at the entrance of the building; the loudspeakers are plugged into a friendly neighbor's line. We are invited to give our talk on the women's movement in the U.S. and Raya Dunayevskaya's philosophy of liberation. It is well received, and punctuated by the audience's chants of “La mujer luchando y al mundo transformando” (“Women fighting are transforming the world”).

March 15: The women move the furniture, books, stove, and puppets to the Zocalo, right in front of the cathedral, and announce a permanent encampment. They write their story on a blackboard and a crowd gathers. They hold a press conference, denouncing the government for its repression just one week after International Women's Day and stressing that they are continuing their activities.

THE PEOPLE SUPPORT US

They say: Our eviction and the kidnapping of Rosalina Salazar are not isolated acts, but part of government policy which includes many people killed and disappeared. Our situation obliges us to redouble our efforts not to be diverted from our objectives in our work as women! If the government thinks its acts can stop our colonias' struggles to democratize the city and defeat the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) it is mistaken. We are not alone. The people support us from the first moment, until we win.

We demand: freedom for Rosalina Salazar; expropriation of our building and return to our space; return of our stolen property; enforcement of our agreement with the government to stop these evictions and to support our alternative social projects.

“With each blow we are stronger; in each battle we are more people.” “No more violence against women!”

—Anne Jaclard

Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

can live on the \$5 an hour Lorenzo is offering, and that has to be fought. But aren't these workers also saying they don't need any management? Aren't they raising that question of the separation between thinking and doing, between mental and manual labor, that is at the root of all class-divided society, as Marx showed?

This idea of workers running the company themselves arises naturally because workers know they are the ones who understand most about the job. In the 1970s and 1980s some union leaders and labor activists like Staughton Lynd have tried to oppose plant closings by encouraging ESOPs (Employee Stock Ownership Plans). In some ESOPs, workers became "owners" of the company by buying up the stocks and making great sacrifices in pay cuts; but they did not make decisions, and found themselves opposed by management just as alien to them as before. The better ESOPs had some degree of worker decision-making, but they still found they had to cut their own wages and even lay themselves off to "stay competitive" with the rest of the industry.

ARE ESOPs ANY SOLUTION?

I know Lorenzo has to go, and I know Borman had to go, and I have no doubt Eastern's workers organized in an ESOP could run things a lot better. But in a capitalist economy in crisis, will that measure up to what Eastern workers are questioning about their working conditions and relations with management? If Continental is paying \$5.65 an hour, and American has a three-tier contract, won't the next owner of Eastern, even if it's an ESOP, have to compete with that, and want the same? Even if President Bush did call a mediation panel to impose a settlement, it might be better than Lor-

Eckrich workers refuse early negotiations

Chicago, Ill.—Local 100-A United Food & Commercial Workers called a meeting on March 5 for Eckrich employees. Eckrich had refused to pay for improvements in our union medical and pension program unless they were part of a new contract. The question for the meeting was: Do we want to open negotiations now, even though our current contract doesn't expire until December? The people who attended the meeting voted unanimously to tell the company "no."

All the company offered to discuss was a three-year contract with the new benefits and a wage freeze combined with a yearly \$500 bonus. The bonus would amount to less than 25¢ an hour, and at the end of the three years, we'd be right back where we started. Rents and groceries are not going to stay the same; they are not going to freeze them. All other parts of the contract, under the company's proposal, would remain exactly the same as what we have now.

People spoke at the meeting about what had happened just the Friday before: departments 645 and 647 started work two hours early and were notified of the change only the day before. Now, how are you supposed to find a babysitter the night before who will take your child at 4:00 in the morning instead of 6:00?

Other people brought up the overtime, the hours at the union clinic and the difficulty of getting appointments, and the company's attendance policy. We wanted those things to be part of the negotiations, too, so we voted to wait until December when we can bring them up.

The problem is that not enough people came to the meeting. Why? What do Eckrich workers want? If no one had showed up, we might have been stuck with the same contract for another three years. What if this is all the company offers in December?

December is just around the corner, and if we don't get together now and start doing something, the company is just going to walk all over us. There are other people in this plant who feel the way you feel. You are not by yourself. Together we can do things that we can't even imagine now.

—Eckrich workers

Oscar Mayer—changes needed in "job rights"

Chicago, Ill.—There are a lot of rumors going around the plant about the new "lunchable" lines that are supposed to be coming in. Supposedly, Oscar Mayer will be selling the product to airlines. But now the mechanics took out the equipment for one of the lines, and the start-up date has been postponed.

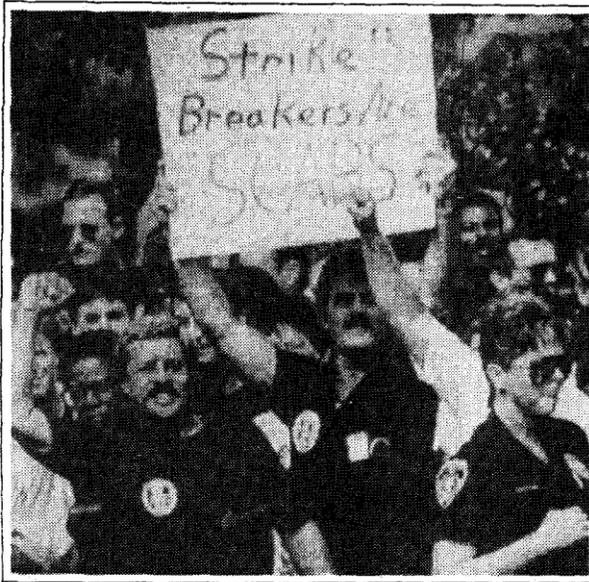
I wonder if the whole point for the company is to keep you full of anxiety, never knowing if you'll be working. It's like that for the workers on third shift in Bacon. They still haven't been called back. Over the last four years or so, automation has eliminated many jobs in Bacon. This year the new slicers have eliminated even more. So you can have a lot of seniority and still get laid off. What happens to you then? You have to "qualify" for open jobs elsewhere in the plant—whatever is on the list. But they never give you sufficient time to "qualify," and the decision on whether you can do the job or not is up to the foreman alone. Many women in particular have been done out of jobs this way.

This whole question of "job rights" is something

Eastern on strike

enzo, but will it begin to satisfy what I hear workers saying?

I know Eastern workers are striking for all of us, and I hope they will stop Lorenzo by any means they can. I am impressed by their level of solidarity. I think in this time of crisis in the labor movement, with all being pushed down to \$5 an hour and less, it is also important to keep our eyes on the absolute opposite to Lorenzo. To me, the absolute opposite is in the thinking of the ramp workers and plane cleaners. I hope they will have the self-confidence to recognize how deep their questions are. I know no matter what the outcome of this strike, their questioning and working out their own ideas will not stop.



Workers of the International Association of Machinists union have continued their strike since walking off their jobs at Eastern Airlines March 3. They demand no more contract concessions. Their picket lines are being honored by pilots and flight attendants.

'If this is the America you want, you leave'

What a wonderful world and country we live in: people getting killed over a fictional book; people worrying about unborn, unwanted babies while real live, breathing people go homeless and hungry. The same societies that scream against abortion promote capital punishment. Our president vows to stop drugs while the agencies entrusted to do so must rely on confiscated planes and boats because their budgets are cut to the bone.

International unions conspire with companies against local unions who buck the "system." The Supreme Court rules that workers can be replaced with scabs permanently. Our racial problems are worse than ever. Airplanes fall from the sky like flies but we can't ground them because of the almighty dollar. The rich get richer while the so-called middle class goes below the poverty line.

People say "America, love it or leave it." I say if this is the America you want, you leave. Our forefathers based our government on the people's right to dissent. I say, America, love it and change it—and brothers and sisters, it needs rapid, radical change. When politicians use the word "liberal" like it's a dirty word, it's time to get rid of these rats by any way possible.

I know there are millions of others like me, fed up with what is happening to workers because of this back-breaking, life-taking capitalist system. Our day will come. I hope it's soon. I hope you understand what I'm saying. It's from my heart, my back, my bones. I'm not an intellectual, but I've been to the "school" of the production line.

—Former production worker, now a Kansas farmer

where we really need to negotiate changes. At the time of the last contract we tried to bring it up, but the union officials had messed up by not including it on the list of issues to be discussed, so it never got resolved. You can be damn sure that we will try to get it changed when our contract comes up this December.

You can't learn a new job overnight; many jobs can be dangerous. The company is now saying they are watching out for injury situations closely; there's been so much publicity about the meatpacking industry being unsafe. But if you get injured, you automatically get a warning ticket. In other words, you have to prove that the injury was not your fault. You are presumed guilty until proven innocent. The truth is that they are not so much trying to keep down the number of injuries as they are playing with the injury numbers. It's not for our benefit. When they hold down the injury numbers, it's to keep you from getting workers' compensation. If they can pin the injury on you, all you get is company insurance.

—Oscar Mayer worker

John Dwyer's legacy lives

Fighting Reaganism and union bureaucrats

by Felix Martin, Labor Editor

When I learned that John Dwyer (Peter Mallory) had died (see N&L, March, 1989), I started to think back on the many stories I had heard him tell about becoming a union organizer in the 1930s. I also was thinking about the articles he wrote for *News & Letters* against Reaganism and against today's sell-out union bureaucrats who are transformed into opposite from what the rank-and-file workers fought for in the 1930s.

It was then, during the Depression, that John Dwyer became a revolutionary. He lived in Lynn, Mass., where the big industries were shoe and leather. Listening to John talk about leather-tanning made me think about leather workers I knew when I was growing up in Kentucky. There'd be no work in Kentucky in the early 1930s, so people would go up North to work, and come back.

ROTTEN JOBS, ROTTEN WAGES

Leather-tanning is one of the dirtiest, stinkiest jobs that the world has ever known. If you worked there, for weeks afterwards the smell was in the pores of your skin. You smelled like something dead. The men would still be smelling when they came back to Kentucky.

That shows how badly people needed to work. And this is what we see so much of still today with these takebacks that workers are accepting. Since Reaganism, many workers think that any job, no matter how bad, is better than nothing at all.

Now, in the 1980s, all the gains that workers had fought for and won from the 1930s on have been rolled back. Some factories have two—and even three—tier wage systems. Any job above \$5 or \$6 per hour looks good. Many shops are like the sweatshops of 60 years ago.

Here in Los Angeles, there are thousands, if not tens of thousands of workers who don't even earn the minimum wage. Some don't earn a wage at all, but work only for tips, like at a car wash. A government General Accounting Office report showed that last year investigators found 43,000 employees in six Western states who were owed more than \$15 million in unpaid wages or unpaid overtime.

But the number of these investigations cover only a tiny fraction of the violators. When Reagan was getting government off the back of the capitalists, he cut the personnel for the enforcement of the labor laws.

What gets me is that if these thieves are caught, they pay the back wages to the workers that they stole from, get rid of those workers, and keep on stealing from the new workers. They are not fined or punished in any way. That is the labor law.

What is the enemy that stopped the labor movement in this country? We've gotten so far away from the days when the workers were organizing themselves. A class of bureaucrats, the union leadership, has taken over, and destroyed the kind of togetherness where workers recognized that if one hurts, we all hurt. How long has it been since, if the auto workers are on strike, you saw the Teamsters and all the other unions join in a national strike? It never happens today.

In the 1980s, John Dwyer wrote some great articles against the bureaucrats of my own union, the UAW, as they went along with the so-called "Japanese-style" management system. John showed that it is just another form of speed-up.

In an article for N&L, October, 1985, on the new GM Saturn plant in Tennessee, he wrote: "For the first time in labor history, the union has signed a contract for workers, who will not be employed until 1990, at 80% of the wages now prevailing in the auto industry. The contract was agreed upon by a 25-member executive board without any consultation or consent of UAW members..." That shows so perfectly the fact that the union has been transformed into its opposite.

CHANGES IN THINKING

Until I found *News and Letters* Committees, I couldn't understand why this happened. In my years in the plant I had seen so many people—including good, militant workers—who, once they were a "leader," or even a union steward, became different. They were dealing with the company, and the first thing you know, the company's thinking and their thinking became the same. They weren't talking about what the workers were saying anymore. They were making deals with management.

With Marxist-Humanism I have learned about the philosophy of Hegel and that dialectics means self-movement and self-development, and if it doesn't come from the self, from the workers themselves, then the movement goes backward, or transforms into its opposite.

I know that John, too, had seen many of these betrayals of the workers by the union bureaucrats and by the radical parties in the 1930s and the 1940s. He became a founding member of *News and Letters* Committees in 1955.

This is the way I feel inside myself about that: If you have that background of struggle, like John, you know there's something you're fighting or, but you haven't got it yet. You're looking for that Idea of Freedom that won't betray the workers' struggle and why you became a revolutionary in the first place.

From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya
Marxist-Humanist Archives

What is Philosophy? What

is Revolution? 1789-1793; 1848-1850; 1914-1919; 1979

by Raya Dunayevskaya
Founder of Marxist-Humanism

Editor's note: On the 10th anniversary of the Iranian Revolution we are printing excerpts from one of a series of Political-Philosophic Letters Raya Dunayevskaya wrote from 1978 through 1981 in the midst of revolution/counter-revolution in Iran. For the entire collection see The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development, microfilm #7218-7265.

I

It sounds so abstract, so easy to say, with Hegel, that philosophy is the "thinking study of things." (para. 2) It surely sounds oversimplified to say, at one and the same time, that "Nature has given everyone a faculty of thought. But thought is all that philosophy claims as the form proper to her process...." (para. 5) When, however, you realize that this is the Introduction to *Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences*; that it was written after the French Revolution, which made popular an actual "permanent revolution"—no revolution is ever its first act alone—you can begin, just begin to grasp the meaning of Hegel's expression, "second negativity." Furthermore, Hegel had not found articulation that easy until after *Phenomenology of Mind*, until after the *Science of Logic*, until after he tried to summarize all of his works, including the 2,500-year history of philosophy. Then, of course, you realize why, when Hegel is speaking of philosophy, it is not an abstraction, that even though he limits it to thought and not activity, he can conclude in that very same Introduction:

"This divorce between idea and reality is a favorite device of the analytic understanding in particular. Yet strangely in contrast with this separatist tendency, its own dreams, half-truths though they are, appear to the understanding something true and real; it prides itself on the imperative 'ought' which it takes special pleasure in prescribing on the field of politics. As if the world had waited on it to learn how it ought to be, and was not!" (para. 6)

And that same paragraph further stresses that "the Idea is not so feeble as merely to have a right or an obligation to exist without actually existing."

WHEN A NEW objective stage arose in 1844-1848 which as proletarian, and not just semi-proletarian as with the enrages of the French Revolution, the young, new, revolutionary philosopher and activist, Marx, practiced Hegel's Idea of freedom by realizing it in an outright revolution. He had told his young Hegelian friends who were becoming materialists: You cannot become a true new Humanist by turning your back on Hegel because he was both bourgeois and idealist and because he limited the revolution to a revolution in thought. The truth is that Hegel's dialectic was not just any idea, but the Idea of freedom, and must, therefore, first be realized in an actual material way. We must be specific and shout out loud who the forces of revolution are. What the Reason of revolution is. And how we can achieve freedom. I, said Marx, say it is the proletariat, because they are at the point of production where all things are created. I say that in issuing the challenge that will cause the whole capitalist world to tremble, we need to unfurl a totally new banner of philosophy as well as of revolution. And the philosophy of revolution now—that is, after the bourgeoisie has betrayed us in this 1848-49 Revolution, and it is necessary to depend only on our own forces—must be "REVOLUTION IN PERMANENCE." (Address to the Communist League, 1850)

This revolution in permanence, he continued, is not the generality it was in 1789-93. This revolution in permanence is on the basis of these new forces of revolution, and this new philosophy of revolution I unfurled in the *Communist Manifesto* dealt with a total uprooting of the old, a total creation of the new, showing not only what we are against, but what we are for. In a word, even though we have now challenged not only the mode of production but also the form of the family and dug into the fundamental relationship of man/woman, we must go further into the dialectics of revolution, i.e., into "the dialectic of negativity as the moving and creating principle" of Hegelian philosophy. (*Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic*, 1844.)

Internationalism is not telling other nations what to do. It is solidarizing and fraternizing with those sent to shoot you—and having them turn their guns on their own officers. Finally, in very nearly the last work of Marx—the 1881 Preface to the Russian edition of the *Communist Manifesto*—that permanent revolution gets spelled out on a still higher level—that is, internationally as well as nationally. It is there that it is concretized as the relationship between technologically advanced and technologically backward countries—i.e., that backward Russia could have its revolution ahead of "West Europe"—provided: 1) the revolution is accomplished within the context of European revolutions, and 2) the new forces, in this case the peasant communes, are never out of context of both internationalism and dialectics



In 1979 women were among the first to demonstrate in opposition to Khomeni's usurpation of the Iranian revolution.

of liberation. The Idea is the power because it is concrete; it is total; it is multi-dimensional; and at no time is the Individual made just to tail-end the State or "committee." Rather, let us never forget the principle: "the Individual is the social entity" and society must never again be counter-posed to the Individual.

II

Marx had spent something like 45 volumes in expressing his thoughts, in participating in revolutions, in leaving a legacy that was the very opposite of an heirloom. Instead, the new continent of thought became the ground for all future revolutions that would be filled out anew with ever-richer concrete and with ever-greater forces—men, women, children of all colors, races, nations—until we finally have achieved that type of total revolution and that type of total uprooting. Surely no one was more prepared, was more serious, was more experienced to help create such a total revolution than those who had "made" the 1905 Revolution—Lenin, Luxemburg and Trotsky. And yet, and yet, and yet...

Comes World War I, and the shock of the simultaneity of imperialist war and socialist betrayal is so overwhelming that one and only one—Lenin—says, if I could have been so misled and considered that betrayer, Kautsky, my teacher, something is altogether wrong with my way of thinking. And while I will not stop shouting "down with the war—turn the imperialist war into civil war," I will never again be satisfied with the "correct analysis" of a political situation without first digging into Hegelian dialectics. It could not have possibly been an accident that Marx, Marx's Marxism, was rooted in Hegel—and after having broken with that, he returned to develop Hegelian dialectics into the Marxist dialectic. And so this great revolutionary, Lenin, spent his days in the library studying Hegel's *Science of Logic*, and his evenings preparing for revolution.

WHAT DID LUXEMBURG and Trotsky do? They surely were as revolutionary as Lenin. They surely opposed the imperialist war. They surely were trying to prepare for revolution. But without that rudder of philosophy, what came out of it? And in this case, because Luxemburg has no party on the scene today, but Trotsky does, it is on Trotskyism that I will now concentrate.

Trotsky counterposed his slogan "peace without annexations" and "mobilizing the proletariat for a struggle for peace" to Lenin's slogan "turn the imperialist war into civil war" which Trotsky rejected. What was even worse was Trotsky's rejection of Lenin's statement that the defeat of your own country is the lesser evil....

Listen to Trotsky on the Russian Internationalists trying to achieve a unity, first under his peace slogan which Lenin rejected, and then on Lenin's slogan which Trotsky rejected. Here is what he said:

"Under no condition can I agree with your opinion, which is emphasized by a resolution, that Russia's defeat would be a 'lesser evil.' This opinion represents a fundamental connivance with the political methodology of social patriotism, a connivance for which there is no reason, or justification and which substitutes an orientation (extremely arbitrary under present conditions) along the line of a 'lesser evil' for the revolutionary struggle against war and the conditions which generated this war."

...Trotsky's specific article from which I quote above was dated Paris, 1915. That article was part of what those Marxists who had not betrayed and who tried to reconstitute themselves internationally—not on the basis of Lenin's revolutionary struggle of "turn the imperialist war into civil war," but on Trotsky's "struggle for peace."—wrote. Indeed, Trotsky was speaking in such

general terms that he opposed the naming of Liebknecht specifically,* saying: "Such a personification of tactical evaluations, conforming to German conditions alone, was inappropriate in the given document. Upon the insistence of the whole commission, it was withdrawn." This is why such pseudo-universalism is the way to skip over concrete realizations of freedom. Yet, in his 1919 Introduction, [to *War and Revolution, Russian edition*] Trotsky stressed the internationalism and repeated that: "The March revolution liquidated these differences."

BUT THAT IS NOT TRUE. THEORETICAL DIFFERENCES ARE NOT "LIQUIDATED" JUST BECAUSE, IN FACT, YOU ARE A REVOLUTIONARY. Quite the contrary. Once the heat of the battle dies, the deviations from Marxism first come to plague you.

The truth is that the theoretical difference reappears in a most horrible form exactly when the next new, objective situation arises. You must then dig for new philosophic depth on the basis of the highest theoretic as well as practical point last reached. If, instead, you remain without a philosophic rudder, the supposedly "correct" political analysis becomes, if not outright counter-revolution, definitely no more than tail-endism. That was true of Trotsky in 1905. It wasn't true in 1917 only because the one he then tail-ended was Lenin. But it became dangerously true in our era as all the opposition and great fights against Stalinism led only to tail-ending Stalin once World War II broke out.

III

Perhaps, I shouldn't have asked only what is philosophy? what is revolution?, but also what is anti-imperialism? Does the taking of low-level personnel from the U.S. Embassy in Teheran and designating them as CIA agents shake up the American empire?... That kind of pseudo anti-imperialism, such as the taking of hostages, opens no new stage of revolution. Rather, it initiates a retreat from the original revolutionary perspective. It may give Khomeini a "red" coloration, and it surely helps him divert from the grave new contradictions in Iran itself, but it does nothing to solve the increasing crises since he came to power. The hardships on the masses intensify....

Concrete, in the Hegelian sense of the synthesis of diverse elements into a concrete totality, would show that, by no means coincidentally, the occupation of the Embassy paralleled the completion of the counter-revolutionary Constitution. Yes, the masses are anti-imperialist, but Marx didn't say that just because the masses were anti-feudal and the bourgeoisie was leading a revolution against feudalism, that therefore the masses should follow the bourgeoisie. Quite the contrary. He said: We were with the bourgeoisie in that first act of overthrowing feudalism, but now count us out. Not only that. It is high time to deepen and develop the strictly proletarian tasks.

Luxemburg understood that very well, and applied it not only in Russia in an actual revolution, but tried to bring that concept of pure class struggle to Germany. And yet, when a new objective stage arose—imperialism—and despite all her prescience of that exploitative stage, she did not work out a new unity of force and reason with new revolutionary forces, that is, the revolutionary nationalists fighting for self-determination. Lenin had to begin separating himself, not just from betrayers of the workers, but from revolutionaries who would not see the new concrete, whether that was a new revolutionary force in another country or his own.

(continued on page 5)

*Editor's note: The reference is to Trotsky's rejecting the suggestion that the Zimmerwald anti-war call single out the name of Liebknecht, the only Socialist Deputy courageous enough to dare vote against granting money to the Kaiser for waging war.]

Editorial

Our two-tier society: sub-minimum wages, strike breaking courts

The real battle against a two-tier society is being waged in the Eastern Airlines strike. Eight years ago the machinists union instructed the mechanics to cross the PATCO picket line on the excuse that they had a no-strike clause in their contract. Now, when Eastern mechanics were forced out on strike, Eastern workers from baggage handlers and flight attendants to pilots, creatively made the strike a general one.

Our two-tier society has developed with particular virulence during the Reagan era—an era which has not ended simply because Bush is sitting in the White House. The latest statistics show that from 1979-1987 the top 20% of the population has increased its family income by 11% while the bottom 20% of the population saw its family income fall by 6%.

THE SUB-MINIMUM WAGE

Now this two-tier society is going to be further solidified into law with the latest Bush-Congress "consensus" for an increase in the minimum wage tied to the imposition of a sub-minimum wage. Even Reagan's bullying never succeeded in getting a sub-minimum wage bill through Congress in the 1980s.

The House bill up for consideration adds just 40¢ per hour per year over three years to the \$3.35 an hour current minimum that has become almost valueless since its inception in 1982. But this small rise in the minimum wage will be shackled to the imposition of a sub-minimum "training" wage. The "battle" now occurring is limited to how many months a worker can be forced to work at this sub-minimum level.

While on the surface it may seem shocking that the AFL-CIO officials are supporting a version of this bill, in reality it is appropriate. For these union misleaders have throughout the Reagan years pressed two-tier wages and working conditions on their union members, particularly on the workers to be hired in the future, and thus unable to vote on these contracts. Concession contracts predated Reagan's infamous breaking of the PATCO strike in 1981.

The stakes are high in any strike after eight years of Reaganism. Eastern boss Frank Lorenzo could fully expect to force a strike and break the unions, because he has "the law on his side." Like the courts of the 1890s, which used the 14th Amendment to the Constitution not to strike down segregationist Jim Crow laws, but to make corporations invulnerable, Lorenzo at Continental Airlines has managed to use the bankruptcy law to dissolve union contracts and impose his own conditions.

In the climate of Reaganism corporate America has devised a host of tricks—plant closings, mergers, subcontracting—to rid itself of the rights of even long-term employees. Seniority and a union contract have not protected many a worker from the company's search for someone to work his job for less, or forcing the unionized high-seniority worker to do it for less.

THE LAW VS. LABOR SOLIDARITY

Just last month the Reagan-Bush Supreme Court handed down a most venal anti-labor decision when it allowed Trans World Airlines (TWA) to keep strike-breakers working ahead of striking flight attendants with greater seniority after the strike ended. This giving superseniority to scabs is an obscene weapon in the hands of any company using its "lawful economic power," and a blow against limitations on that power won by the battles of the labor movement over many decades. It is not the law that will get Eastern's flight attendants back their jobs. Only the solidarity of the labor movement can do that.

The fact is that the insatiable drive for cheaper labor power has driven millions of workers, who once could have expected a job that would pay enough to live on, to now work for wages close to the minimum—a minimum which does not even provide a minimum standard of living. The connection between having a job and making a living is being broken as

the larger companies go to a part-time workforce for its full-time work. How much of the fact that the current unemployment rate is hitting a 15-year low is due to employment in part-time jobs that won't keep a roof over anyone's head? Many workers are stringing two or three of these non-jobs together.

In these first days of the Bush administration, the Eastern picket lines are crucial if labor is not to be lost in the courts, in deals and shortcuts. A new concept of labor solidarity needs to be forged.



Kaiapo Indians demonstrate in Altamira, Brazil, in March, where they organized a protest with other amazon tribes against proposed dams that will drown the Amazon rain forest.

British seamen's struggle

Dover, England—Famous for its castle and its white cliffs, Dover is one of the main ports for passengers and goods going by sea between Britain and France or Belgium. I traveled down with a contingent of union activists from Oxford to support the seafarers of P&O European Ferries, members of the National Union of Seamen (NUS), who have been on strike since February 1988. They have been holding out against the new system of work imposed by P&O, which involves:

- a 24 hours on/24 hours off shift cycle (with every third week off) in place of 24 hours on/48 hours off
- the loss of definite rest periods
- smaller crews (out of 2,163 jobs, 459 to disappear)
- no overtime payments
- no annual holidays of longer than one week.

The seafarers know that such an intensified pattern of work would push them to the limits of endurance, cause fatigue and stress, and inevitably lead to the kind of mistakes which could cause a disaster at sea. The dangers of the roll on/roll off ferries operated by P&O and its competitors were tragically revealed in March 1987, when the *Herald of Free Enterprise* capsized off Zeebrugge, Belgium, with the loss of 191 lives. The vessel's bow doors had been left open as she set sail; the unsafe design, meant that the whole ship flooded rapidly.

The inquest on the victims returned a verdict of culpable homicide, while a court of inquiry found that "From top to bottom, the body corporate was infected with the disease of sloppiness." Yet P&O has never been prosecuted for negligence. Survivors of that shipwreck are among those on strike.

Last May, P&O ruthlessly fired all the strikers and reopened the ferry service with scab crews. There was a militant response from ports all around Britain, with seafarers taking strike action and sometimes even occupying their ships. P&O was able to invoke the Thatcher government's anti-strike legislation; the courts imposed massive fines on the NUS, and sequestered its assets. The union backed down, calling off the wider solidarity action.

Since then, the Dover strikers have hung on tenaciously, rarely in the news, organizing food kitchens, putting their message on badges and coffee mugs as well as in leaflets, going to meetings around the country to publicize their case and raise money, and calling for a consumer boycott of P&O.

—Richard Bunting

From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya

(continued from page 4)

What he had learned from the Hegelian dialectic that made him so sharp against his own Bolshevik colleagues was that overthrow, first negativity, was not enough; that you must now see that counter-revolution can arise from within the revolution itself.

THIS AND THIS ALONE made it possible not to stay at overthrow of Tsarism and bourgeois democracy calling itself "socialist," though headed by a so-called socialist, Kerensky, and even supported by genuine revolutionaries. Just as now, the Trotskyists think that they are the true revolutionaries in Iran because they hyphenate the name Khomeini with Bazargan and thus talk against capitalist government, as well as shout anyone else in anti-imperialist slogans, so did the Bolsheviks before Lenin returned to Russia think that they were pushing the revolution forward by their critical support of Kerensky. It becomes imperative, therefore, to take a second look at these stages: February to April; April to June; July-August full counter-revolution; October. As soon as the overthrow of the Tsar occurs, and while this great, historic, spontaneous outburst achieved what no Party—Bolshevik or otherwise—could achieve, and though it was unanticipated by Lenin, he by no means let euphoria overrun him. Quite the contrary. He had already grappled with the Hegelian dialectic; he had already analyzed the new stage of imperialism, not just economically but seeing new forces of revolution; and he already began to work out what became *State and Revolution*, that is to say, have the perspective of not only overthrow but the total uprooting, so that only when production and the state would be in the hands of the whole population "to a man, woman, and child" would it be a new society.

Clearly, when he arrived in Russia in April, 1917, it was not 1905 slogans—either his or Trotsky's—that he was repeating. Rather, it was reorganizing his whole Party on the conception of *State and Revolution*. Once that became the basis for all the activities of the Party, there was no separating the revolution from the philosophy of revolution. But the masses wanted to go still further, directly to the conquest of power; they underestimated the forces still in power, and it was the beginning of all the counter-revolutionary moves that still passed themselves off as revolution, accusing Lenin of being a German spy and saying that is why he called for the end of the war. The relevant point for us today is that when outright counter-revolution was initiated by Kornilov so that one still had to defend Kerensky, the manner in which it was done has all the answers against tailendism. It was at that point that whether it was the creation of a revolutionary military committee, which permitted no transfer of guns to the front unless they approved it, or whether it was such slogans as "All power to the Soviets," or whether it was "Land, Bread and Peace," there was no way whatever to confuse that Party with any other.

Contrast this to what everyone from Trotskyists to Qaddafi is saying to blur those new grave contradictions within Iran, the diversion from what threatens civiliza-

tion as we have known it—preparation for atomic war. Qaddafi and Khomeini and General Zia may think the Middle East as they define it will be the graveyard of U.S. imperialism. Nothing could be further from the truth....

What new retrogressive stage are we in now, when religion usurps also political power? First it was the Little Red Book of Mao. And now it's the Green Book of Qaddafi. And what part of the Koran will Khomeini embody in some brief sayings that all must repeat?

It is not a question that a leader must write fifty books, like Marx or Lenin—and I'm sure that Trotsky and Luxemburg wrote as many. It is a question of being serious about revolution and therefore the philosophy of revolution, and being responsible to history, which means men and women shaping history. No, you cannot throw out philosophy, and indulge in sloganeering. Even a good bourgeois philosopher, at least in the stage when the bourgeoisie achieved its revolution, a good Lutheran like Hegel, who insisted all his life that he believed, had to submit to the dialectic drive of philosophy and subordinate religion to it. All his protestations notwithstanding—and "revealed religion" is pretty high in the sphere of the Absolute, nothing can change the fact that it isn't the highest; that philosophy is. Needless to say, that revolution in thought initiated by Hegelian dialectics was transformed by Marx's new continent of thought into reality. Ever since then no revolution was successful that wasn't grounded in a philosophy of revolution.

Every generation of Marxists must work this out concretely for its own age. The fact that our age is in such a total crisis makes it all the more imperative that we tailend no state power.

—December 17, 1979

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'PHILOSOPHIC DIALOGUE' ON RAYA'S MARXIST-HUMANISM

I was in News and Letters Committees in 1982 when Dunayevskaya wrote the Political-Philosophic Letter "On the Battle of Ideas," excerpted in the March N&L. But I read it with new eyes now that we are grappling with the 1953 Letters on Hegel's Absolutes as the "philosophic moment" that was the determinant for the development of the entire body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism for 34 years.

In 1982, Dunayevskaya had just finished *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, and begins this Letter where that book had ended—with the challenge to concretize Marx's philosophy of "revolution in permanence" for our age. She says she wants to develop that in the context of both Hegel's Absolutes (i.e. her own 1953 working out of Hegel's Absolutes) and the forces of revolution as Reason for our age (i.e. how she has traced those through her "trilogy of revolution"). Isn't she here practicing what she states for Hegel's Absolutes—that the totality (her trilogy) is not a system, but new beginnings that become philosophic mediation "that first creates from itself the whole"?

Michelle Landau
Los Angeles

In the new "Philosophic Dialogue" section, I found the letter from the Indian Marxist very powerful. But I think he missed Dunayevskaya's point, when he discusses Marx and the Paris Commune, and says Marx didn't consider the Commune to be socialism. Dunayevskaya always emphasized that Marx had singled out as the greatness of the Commune "its own working existence," the concept of human relationships being changed. The same is true of the Soviets. They illuminated something new within the present, and how to make a future.

Gene Ford
Los Angeles

It is exciting that *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* has begun to be discussed by revolutionaries around the world. As part of that international dialogue I would like to respond to Paul Trehwela's critique of the category of state-capitalism (March N&L). He argues that the journal *Critique* has a much more sophisticated notion of Russia. Don't all the theories of Russia that they espouse—from bureaucratic collectivist to degenerated workers state—suffer from the complete lack of the "differentia specifica" that Trehwela is concerned about? Those theories are so preoccupied with the empirical that they remain caught up in the realm of circulation and forms of rule rather than digging into actual relations at the point of production.

It is there that the truth is found, the differentia specifica of capitalist society.

That is why it is not just a case of "the vast mass of empirical material" that Marx brings together in *Capital* but the form and the method whereby he works things out. Dunayevskaya is still the only Marxist who has related Hegel's Absolutes to Marx's *Capital*.

What's more, Dunayevskaya designates the post-World War II age as "an age of absolutes" not only because capitalism has become nuclear-armed state-capitalism but also because of the Reason of the revolt against it. It is no accident that Dunayevskaya's 1953 Letters presaged actual revolt against state-capitalist speed-up in East Germany.

Fred Shelley
New York

I wondered what you mean by Humanism in "Marxist-Humanism." Does it mainly mean anti-religion, centering on the human being, excluding God? These questions made me reread Marx's *Introduction to a Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*. The humanism is right there! What you're saying seems like what Marx said: that when philosophy grips the masses, you can see a new unity, a new humanism.

New subscriber
New York

What I learned most from Dunayevskaya's work is her discussion of Lenin's return to Hegel. You never hear anyone else discuss that, whether they are pro or anti-Lenin. I, too, want to see a kind of socialism that's different than the bureaucraticism of Russia, but I don't agree with a lot of other Dunayevskaya ideas—how are you going to make a revolution without a political party?

Reader
Illinois

So much of the U.S. "revolutionary" Left have commemorated the tenth anniversary of the Grenadian revolution with a "conspiracy of silence." If it's mentioned at all, it is reduced to a diatribe solely on "anti-imperialism." The past two "Black World" columns by Lou Turner have thus been exceedingly welcome. The interview with the Trinidadian revolutionary trade unionist (Jan.-Feb. N&L) was quite exciting and Turner's return in the March issue to Dunayevskaya's 1983 Political-Philosophic Letter, "Counter-Revolution and Revolution: Grenada, the Caribbean Today, and the Challenge from 30 Years of Movements from Practice that were Themselves Forms of Theory," is quite important. In that revolution, the very concept of dialectics of philosophy and of organization had no place in the organization or its practice. The tragic results open a door to understanding the urgency of publishing *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism*.

Stuart Quinn
California

Dear Reader: At every point in our history—from our founding in 1955 in the midst of McCarthyism to today when Reaganism runs rampant under a new name—we have turned to you, our readers to keep us going. We need your help again. Our bills for all the new publications of Raya Dunayevskaya's works are staggering for our small budget. SO IS THE 30% RENT INCREASE WE HAVE JUST RECEIVED! And now the printing cost for N&L has also been raised. We thank all our friends who have sent in their donations. If you haven't yet mailed yours—we need your help!

I am not renewing my print subscription to N&L, because I want to renew my sub to the cassette-taped version. Please accept my check for \$15 for N&L, however, so that many more people can benefit from Marx's humanistic message as I have. N&L has allowed me to envision new human relationships and to live each day dreaming, hoping and struggling for that to come true.

Student
De Kalb

Editor's note: Subscriptions on cassette-tape are available from Our Right to Know Braille Press, 640 Bayside, Detroit, MI 48217 for \$2.50 a year.

We like N&L a lot because it's full of common sense and rank-and-file orientation. We find the optimism somewhat forced as things just keep sliding from bad to worse, but we really do need voices saying what you are saying. We'd like to see lots more Hegel articles. That's dynamite stuff! (Enclosed is a two-year renewal, an extra

donation, and names of five friends to send a sample copy to.)

Two Wobblies
Massachusetts

Enclosed is a check I'm sorry I wasn't able to send sooner. I had to wait to get my check for the weeks I was working 50-plus hours.... Giving this check means I'm trying to turn long months of alienation into something I believe in—the ideas of Raya Dunayevskaya.

Young worker
New York

Your articles are clear and penetrating. The moves made by the ruling classes as well as the reactions of the ruled are made comprehensible because they're presented in a direct narrative that answers the question: Why? Please renew my sub for two years and expect a further check on payday.

Working woman
Chicago

Readers' Views

DIALOGUE WITH AFRICA

I have been reading N&L through a Sierra Leonean subscriber. I appreciate very much the content and the grass-root awareness it is generating among workers and students. I found the article on the "Ideological Pollution of Reaganism Continues with Bush's Victory" (Dec. 1988) very illuminating. We in the so-called Third World need not passively wait by while "the new imperialist dimension Bush brings to Reaganism" sucks the life from us. Apart from workers and students, the peasants are very much vital in our struggle for a better world order.

New reader
Ghana

It is good that you are keeping Raya's great works going, and wonderful news that her books are being published in new editions by Columbia University Press. I am glad to see that correspondence from The Gambia and from South Africa also keeps growing. I am struggling to keep *The Nation* going here.

Dixon Colley
The Gambia

I have already started to introduce N&L to my friends who are not yet readers here. I have been hearing about Charles Denby's autobiography and would like to read it. I would also like to read about Raya Dunayevskaya's analysis of Stalin's Russia as a state-capitalist society. In return I have started working on an article about the political situation here in West Africa. You are right that "the development of a revolution is not a one-sided affair."

Lamin Soba
The Gambia



There's a lot of forced overtime on my job. Sometimes I have to work 25 hours overtime in one week. And then I have nothing to show for it, because the government takes half my paycheck in taxes! What do they do with my money? Send five men up in the air with a multi-million dollar satellite—for what purpose? I think the rulers are getting ready to wipe us out down here, through pollution or through war, and those with money and power can leave and go live somewhere else in space.

If you don't have money in this society, your life is worth nothing. If you get hit by a car—the hospital won't even accept you if you don't have insurance! When you're working at the job, you're just a number. If you're not producing, you're out the door. This system doesn't care about the human person. If you asked me "What is capitalism?" that is what I would say.

Production worker
Los Angeles

At the same time that a capital-dominated government is in power, a strike has taken place in which two groups whose division of labor would normally separate them (machinists and pilots) have come together as a class against capital. Will the rest of the working class see this strike as an act which affects their lives as members of that class? Once again the union is speaking only of give-backs and wages—the language of capital. But if nothing else comes about from this Eastern strike, we have been shown that the division of labor, in all its stuntedness of human growth, cannot stop workers from making the attempt to become universal. If only for a moment.

J. Kilbane
New York

The U.S. Constitution is a good but failed attempt at addressing the needs and aspirations of humanity. The proof of its failure lies all around us each day: over 20% of U.S. adults are judged functionally illiterates; 35 million Americans are without health care, even the substandard "welfare" variety; over 2 mil-

lion Americans have no home; over 50 million are considered malnourished, and thereby impaired in how they function within society.

What relationship does the Constitution have to its suffering people? Have they reason for feelings of betrayal and cynicism? As one of the legion of sufferers, I plead: "Why are we overlooked by the mainstream American conscience?" Apparently the ranks of the American underprivileged must swell to a majority before economic justice becomes the law of the land...

Tom Taggart
Alaska

THE VANGUARDIST LEFT

Jim Guthrie's Youth column was excellent. I read it after attending my first major rally in L.A., on El Salvador, where I was confronted with many vanguardist groups of just the type he critiques in his article. It is frightening how these vanguardists come across. They're not promoting the thought process. And they submerge the whole Black dimension. I can't help but think that if they had state power these parties would do even worse to suppress ideas.

Student
Los Angeles

I was getting involved with the "vanguard parties." But with them, one gets the feeling of an elitist atmosphere and a tunnel vision attitude. They talk at you and work on you, rather than with you. In their support for supposed leftist movements around the world, they pay no attention to the problems these movements have. They don't deal with the success of a better society after the struggle for change—to keep the change alive, to make a true success. What I like about News and Letters Committees is that the members are looking for a human solution that will continue after the overthrow of the old.

New friend of N&L
California

INDIGNANT HEART:

A BLACK WORKER'S JOURNAL

Every year UAW Local 659 in Flint, Mich. publishes a special February issue of their paper, *The Searchlight*, to celebrate the victory of the Sitdown on Feb. 11, 1937. This year they published, on page 1, a reproduction of the very first UAW-GM agreement signed that day. It is only eight short paragraphs long. It simply recognizes the workers' right to the union. Every line added since then has taken something away from those eight short paragraphs. By now it takes a lawyer to even read the contract. I remember Charles Denby pointing that out.

So many workers see his autobiography as their own. One Marxist-Humanist worker at a meatpacking plant here asked N&L to distribute a leaflet to his fellow workers as they went into a recent union meeting (where their current contract was to be discussed) that would simply reprint a page from *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal* under the heading: "Something to think about today." It was pages 256-257 from the chapter "Challenging the Bureaucrats."

N&L Committee Member
Chicago

IN MEMORIAM: JOHN DWYER

We wish to express our sorrow upon learning of the death of John Dwyer, who represented the spirit of the great generation of revolutionary socialists that built the CIO and that worked for decades to keep alive the dream of human freedom through workers' democracy. Today that dream has become a living force for new movements of workers and the oppressed from El Salvador to South Korea, from South Africa to the Philippines and within the Stalinist states. John's work is part of the legacy that will enable today's movements to reclaim their links to the revolutionary tradition and to focus their vision of the future.

Against the Current
Detroit



WOMEN'S LIBERATION

It's clear that in both the U.S. and the USSR, women's "choice" still depends too much on the decisions of the men in charge. We women in the U.S. are discovering that we can't take for granted our right to have an abortion. Opposition to our wills by the legal, religious, and medical patriarchies is becoming more and more acute. At the same time, I have been hearing about the lack of simple birth-control products in technologically advanced USSR, which results in absurdly high rates of abortion. And is even that "right" secure, when Gorbachev has expressed his ideology in favor of women's traditional roles?

Feminist
California

I went to an abortion rights rally—the first rally I had ever gone to. I am new to the perspective of Marxist-Humanism, and I have a lot of questions about the philosophy. My most basic question is: What is revolution? I have a hard time aligning something that's a necessary action—like clinic defenses against "Operation Rescue"—with the concept of revolution. I don't know how things change in this country. I was a child during the Civil Rights Movement and I guess I need to know more of that history. But I see so much racism and sexism around me today that it seems things have changed very little.

Young Women's Liberationist
Los Angeles

A group of women called Colectivo Kollontai are seeking funds for Mexico's first shelter for battered women in Nezahualcoyotl, one of the most economically depressed and crime-ridden communities of Mexico City. They want to destroy myths which tend to justify the violent behavior of men and blame the woman for "provoking" or "putting up with" the violence of which she is the object; to create self-help groups for victims; and to offer psychological support, legal advocacy and medical attention to battered women. Please tell your readers they can send help to:

Ana Maria Cuellar,
Colectivo Kollontai,
Apartado Postal 211,
C.P. 06000, Mexico D.F. Mexico

The Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press (WIFP) has been publishing the **Directory of Women's Media** annually since 1975. The 120-page 1989 edition now has a 30-page section on "Women Working Toward a Radical Restructuring of the Communication System," part of the attempt to get the media into the hands of all people, not just wealthy and predominantly male media owners. The Directory has a periodicals section with 702 listings, describes 111 women's presses and publishers, as well as women's news services, radio-TV groups, video, film, music, art/graphics/theater, writers and speakers groups, bookstores, library collections and selected directories and catalogues. Readers can order a copy for \$15 from:

WIFP
3306 Ross Place, N.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20008

THE BLACK DIMENSION

The students at Howard University wasted no time in demanding the immediate resignation of Lee Atwater from his newly appointed position on the Board of Trustees at Howard because of the openly racist campaign he ran for George Bush. And when the former head of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission called them "short-sighted" and "impractical" for not recognizing how much money Atwater could have brought to the university, they told him, "We don't need to stoop that low." Unlike their short-minded critic from the EEOC they knew the real relationship between practical and impractical. The only money Lee Atwater could bring to Howard University is blood money.

Jan Kollwitz
Chicago

Convoluted racist "logic" asserts that Black violence has made us unemployable, rather than admit that prolonged unemployment has made some of us violent.

Black activist
California

John Alan's article in the March issue was eye-opening for me. I was supportive of the new movement to change "Black" to "African-American," because I saw the new term as linking Africa and all of the Americas. It seemed a way for Blacks in the U.S. to build better relationships with Blacks in Central

and South America and the Caribbean. But Alan brings out that the new drive for the term "African-American" comes from Black intellectuals who are looking for more acculturation into American society. I found stimulating his discussion of "our long, continuing mass struggle to finish the American Revolution." The idea that the American Revolution didn't end with the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution opened my eyes to see the history of Black America. There is a necessity for us to confront our past.

Black student
California

I don't see why we have to start call-



Please tell all N&L readers to boycott GE! GE's corporate image is "We Bring Good Things to Life," but GE makes critical components to more nuclear weapons systems than any other corporation! GE makes parts for the MX Missile, the Trident Submarine, and the B-1B Bomber; it manufactures the neutron generator, the "trigger," that primes the reaction in every nuclear bomb; it is a prime contractor in charge of designing the first phase of Star Wars.

I'm active with INFAC's national GE boycott campaign, and spend a lot of time leafletting in parking lots of shopping malls. I can't help but notice the different reactions of women and men when I approach. Often, with a couple, the man will say, "We love nuclear weapons" (whether or not he means it); and the woman says, "We do not!"

Activist
California

We may not be fully aware of the ex-

ing ourselves "African-American" just because Jesse Jackson says so. In the Chicago area a lot of activists are suddenly starting to use the term—but I don't see it catching on in the Black community. This isn't coming from the roots.

Anti-war activist
Illinois

The question "can man be free...?" is more urgent now than ever. After eight years of Reaganism we have a klansman elected in Louisiana. They have illusions that they can use racism (as in Bush's campaign), but control it so it doesn't get too bad. But the election in Louisiana shows you can't control it.

Concerned
California

tent of militarized state-capitalism, East and West. Along with our \$1.7 trillion five-year plan has come the deterioration of life, from homelessness to more complete replacement/domination of the human being. The situation in Russia is much the same where workers say glasnost is for the bosses to get the workers to work harder and harder. Any "realignment" is not for peace but so each can modernize with a new generation of "intelligent weapons." All intelligence is going into the machinery of death at the expense of life and what people really need.

Bush's budget not only extends Reagan's social policy but goes further than Reagan's fetish of high tech, raising the status of Office of Science and Technology to assistant to the President with as much status as the National Security Advisor. This is the secret government, like the Pentagon's "black budget" that is over everyone and accountable to no one.

Computer analyst
Bay Area

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS FROM NEWS & LETTERS

BOOKS

- Marxism and Freedom ...from 1776 until today**
1989 Columbia University Press edition. New 1980s introduction by author 381 pp.
by Raya Dunayevskaya \$17.50 per copy
- Philosophy and Revolution from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao**
1982 edition. New introduction by author. 372 pp.
by Raya Dunayevskaya \$10.95 per copy
- Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution** 234 pp.
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- Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future** 294 pp.
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- The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism: Two Historic-Philosophic Writings** by Raya Dunayevskaya. Contains "Presentation on Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy of June 1, 1987," and 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes." 52 pp.
\$3.00 paperback, \$10.00 hardcover
- Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal** by Charles Denby
1989 Wayne State University Press edition includes Afterword by Raya Dunayevskaya, "Charles Denby 1907-83" \$14.95

PAMPHLETS

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Direct from South Africa Freedom Journal

Editor's note: The following is the communiqué issued by the trade union delegates attending the historic workers summit of the major union federations, COSATU (Congress of South Africa Trade Unions) and NACTU (National Council of Trade Unions), along with representatives of independent unions.

Johannesburg, South Africa—More than 700 delegates attended the historic workers summit on March 4-5, 1989, held at the University of Witwatersrand. The summit was opened by Comrade Elijah Barayi from COSATU, Comrade Longwe Kwelemtini representing the NACTU affiliates, and Comrade Lawrence Phate representing the independent unions. Their introductory speeches focused on the need to build maximum unity of organized workers in South Africa.

These sentiments were echoed over the next two days as delegates engaged in rigorous debate over the need for united action. Spirits were very high and delegate after delegate emphasized the need for united action against the backdrop of increasing state repression and attacks from employers.

While rejecting the monstrous LRA (Labour Relations Act) the summit stressed not only the need to regain the rights removed by the recent amendment to the Labour Relations Act, but also the denial of trade union rights to millions of farm workers, domestic workers, public sector workers and forestry workers.

The summit transcended the differences existing between the various unions attending. While recognizing the different histories in the traditions and policies of the unions attending, the overriding objective was always to emphasize the need for unity in action.

The summit defied the speculation of critics who felt that workers were not yet ready to discuss their differences and to seek ways to achieve unity. In fact, it was one of the most significant demonstrations of worker unity in our history.

Most remarkable is the fact that more than 700 shop-floor worker representatives were engrossed in rigorous, sometimes sharp, but always constructive debate, on what represents a fundamental attack on the organized workers of our country today.

Black World

(continued from page 1)

Valkenier, "The developing countries are not seen as an important revolutionary force; their role in the demise of capitalism is not mentioned. Moreover, the emphasis on the ongoing process of national liberation has been dropped altogether." What has replaced it is a new abstraction called countries of "socialist orientation." Where Lenin had so regarded national liberation in the Third World as indispensable to the socialist revolution that his perspective had been "if not through Berlin, then perhaps through Peking," Gorbachev's perspective has become, if not through the Third World, then perhaps through the capitalist West.

Gorbachev's "integral world" is truly a "changed world." "No longer is the Third World used as an example of capitalism's ravages so much as it is treated as a factor contributing to international instability," according to Valkenier. By now, I believe it is not difficult to grasp the meaning behind Raya Dunayevskaya's analysis of the superpower summits when she asked, why wasn't the Third World invited.

However, there is another more compelling reason why the Third World wasn't invited, and why Gorbachev's "new thinking" on the Third World represents Russia's "constructive dis-engagement." More than any other factor of the past decade, what has impelled Russia's re-evaluation of its relations to the Third World has been the revolution and counter-revolution in Iran, according to the Russian Third World specialists who authored the most significant study on the Third World to come out of the Oriental Institute, entitled, *Evolution of Eastern Socialist Societies: Synthesis of Tradition and Modern Structures* (1984).

MARXIST-HUMANISM VS. GORBACHEVISM

What is altogether clear is that while Marxist-Humanism projected Marx as indigenous to the Third World throughout this decade, especially Raya Dunayevskaya's projection of Marx's *Ethnological Notebooks* and his writings from the 1880s as a pathway to the 1980s, Russian Third World policy has ceaselessly attempted to abolish that relationship.

Gorbachev's "new thinking," like all forms of synthetic positivism, is objective inasmuch as it comes on the scene after the revolution to embrace such new phenomena as the failure of the "vanguard party" in the Third World, the decline of economic development and subsequent debt crisis, the emergence of reactionary religious fundamentalism to supplant genuine revolution, and counter-revolution within the revolution, as in Grenada. In other words, "What happens after the revolution?" reveals that administrative attitude which immediately arises to "organize" the results of the revolution because it sees no further need for dialectical development.

Despite the intellectuals' desire to find their way to the masses, at home or abroad, via Marxism, they often find themselves more separated from the masses than ever by conceptions which were no expression of Marx's. It is the totality of Marx's philosophy of revolution that is most concrete. For us, its re-creation as Marxist-Humanism has determined our concentration in this period on Marxist-Humanism as a body of ideas.

Historic union summit

All full-time officials were excluded from the summit with the exception of a small secretariat whose only task was to record and translate the minutes of the proceedings. To our knowledge, this was significant—not only for South African workers—but (for) workers internationally.

Trinidad mass strike

Editor's note: The following is a direct communication from David Abdulah, treasurer of the Oilfield Workers Trade Union of Trinidad-Tobago, on the massive, historic general strike which brought Trinidad to a halt on March 6, following the spontaneous mass demonstrations that rocked neighboring Venezuela.

Port of Spain, Trinidad—The one-day general strike which we called "Day of Resistance" has been fantastic. We have been mobilizing since December, ever since the government of Prime Minister H.N.R. Robinson presented its budget with its IMF (International Monetary Fund) austerity measures. There's been a big hue and cry among the people against the budget. Preparations for the general strike brought together the two major trade unions, the Congress of Progressive Trade Unions and the Trinidad and Tobago Labour Congress.

We asked people to stay at home, and the result is that the strike has been 80% effective. There is absolutely no transport in Trinidad today. Nothing is moving—buses, taxis, mini-buses. In San Fernando, the second largest city, everything has come to a stop. Across the country schools are closed, utility workers, manufacturing and oil workers stayed away, as did government workers and sanitation workers. Most retail stores are closed, and while the banks are open, there's no business being done. Hospital workers and nurses stayed away, and the sugar industry has been affected.

This is only the third general strike to occur in Trinidad in this century. The first was in 1919 and the second happened in 1937, giving birth to the trade union movement. Today's is the first general strike of the modern trade union movement.

We had only expected that 40-60% would strike, and considered that successful. Workers went out under great intimidation from employers. But the success of today's general strike is a great manifestation of the people's power. What you saw in the Venezuela demonstration is related to us in Trinidad through the IMF situation. People in Venezuela reacted more immediately.

Although we will see what the Prime Minister has to say, it must be noted that our CLS (Committee for Labour Solidarity) has come under particular attack by the Prime Minister. We see this as a political move to shift the responsibility for the consequences of the strike onto us, when, in fact, it was the trade union movement as a whole who mobilized for today's historic general strike.

'Mississippi Burning'—two views

As though timed to follow some cue, *Mississippi Burning* arrived in movie theaters during the transition (so-called) from the Reagan to the Bush administration. What better reply, after eight years of B-movie politics, than a film in which the FBI takes on the Klan in Mississippi a quarter century ago?

To be fair, *Mississippi Burning* is no grade-B effort. The actors carry their roles well, and the editing and music are consistently well-done. The visual symbolism used throughout the movie is often deftly managed. For instance, the opening shot lingers on "white" and "colored" drinking fountains, side by side, then cuts to footage of a house burning at night. And I have no doubt that the film's makers intended it to make a clear anti-racist statement, in addition to providing a fictionalized but recognizable version of an important event in the voter-registration drive of the early 1960s.

Burning recounts the federal investigation into the disappearance of three civil rights activists (one Black, two white) in a small Mississippi town in 1964. Two FBI agents are the protagonists—one being young and idealistic (and clumsy, in his Northern ways), the other more cynical and knowing about the ways of Southern gentility and violence. The local Klan, which overlaps in membership and function with the police, is eventually brought to justice. There are some Black people in the story, too. They suffer, die, grow desperate or angry, and usually reply to the heroes briefly: "Yes sir," "No sir," "Don't know sir."

The only conscious, active beings in the tale are white—racists and FBI agents. The Black community, while not totally silent, comprises mainly the backdrop, an essential plot element perhaps but nothing to be confused with a human subject. The unmistakable impression is that they lack the freedom to act, as well as the freedom to escape. It is true that at one point the community is shown marching—in a funeral procession, on the way to

Haitian women march



On March 8, 1,500 women in Haiti demonstrated for International Women's Day with slogans also against the military and U.S. imperialism.

Black death under Reagan

In the swirl of news releases issued by government agencies every day, the annual report of the National Center of Health Statistics, made public March 15, may have been overlooked. It didn't make the front pages of the newspapers. But it revealed the horrible truth about Black life—and death—in this white, racist America in a way that cuts through the rhetoric of liberals and conservatives alike.

For the first time since records on life expectancy began to be kept, Black life expectancy actually fell from 1986 to 1987. What was new is that not only did the gap between Black and white life expectancy grow, as it has throughout the 1980s, but Black life expectancy fell in absolute terms.

A Black child born in America today can expect to live nearly eight years less than a white child, according to Dr. Manning Feinleib, director of the Center for Health Statistics. He also revealed that Black children are twice as likely to die in infancy as whites, and three times as likely to suffer from early childhood malnutrition. By the time the report was presented on the TV news, however, the fall in Black life expectancy was pinned on "life style"—on drugs, crime and AIDS.

Over 100 years ago Marx demonstrated that this one simple "statistic"—life expectancy—exposed the torrent of government and industry lies about the alleged benefits of capitalism. Life expectancy for workers in Britain fell as industrial production soared; the middle class could expect to live twice as long as the working class.

After a full decade of Reagan's retrogressionism, the results of his assaults on workers, when added to America's virulent racism, spell out ever-earlier Black death in white America. No Reagan-Bush public relations campaign can explain that fact away.

—Michael Connolly

bury the Black activist, once the bodies have been uncovered.

In the movement for civil rights, as *Mississippi Burning* has it, Blacks were the victims or the beneficiaries of white action, the objects of white terrorism or compassion. There is no moment when the film reveals the drive for voter registration to be a struggle by Black people, self-organized and fighting for their own emancipation. And in this respect, the movie offers anything but an historically valid account of the social conflicts in Mississippi in 1964.

—Scott McLemee

This is not a "movie review." It is a cry of outrage at the perversion of history Hollywood has perpetrated in *Mississippi Burning*—carefully covering its flanks with an afterword that admits to its fictional character but giving credence to its fiction by claiming that the story was "inspired" by real events.

The rewriting of history was two-fold: Never seen for one moment was the powerful, spontaneous, creative Black revolt that took the whole world by surprise when it erupted, not in the North, but in the depths of the deep South. Nowhere are the Black masses seen as vanguard and not just as "victim." No wonder American Civilization on Trial was seized with such joy by the freedom fighters to study in the Freedom Schools, both South and North.

But it is not only the revolution, it is the counter-revolution that is twisted beyond all recognition. And this is the more dangerous of the rewriting *Mississippi Burning* represents. It is not only that the FBI was not the "hero." The Civil Rights Movement knew them as the enemy. In the early 1960s, civil rights workers heading for the South were routinely given a phone list of what people to call if trouble arose. On the top of the list was the closest office of the FBI. Incident after incident was dutifully reported to them, and time after time the FBI proved totally useless. But by 1964 even the most naive civil rights worker knew that it wasn't simply that the FBI was "useless," but that it was on the other side—spying on the movement, disrupting its activities, helping the racist powers-that-be.

No more powerful indictment of this enemy was ever written than the front page Editorial by Raya Dunayev-

(continued on page 11)

Philosophic Dialogue

Editor's note: We continue to receive contributions from the readers of News & Letters on Raya Dunayevskaya's 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes," published in The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism (see ad this page). Your participation is welcome in this ongoing discussion.

From a Marxist scholar

Hegel's view of the endless self-development of the Idea and eternal conversion of antagonism into assimilated contradiction so faithfully expresses capital's own aspirations to immortality as to provide no analysis of how antagonism might avoid synthesis and so rupture the dialectic of capital as to destroy it. In short, while his analysis can sometimes help us understand the mechanisms of domination and the processes that would have to be broken to end them, his totally self-contained and unified cosmology fails to provide insight into the diverse forces which might not only produce such a result but which have the potentiality to construct a new society. Although I still think reading Hegel through Marx can be useful and still refer to him when I think doing so might clarify something, I have shifted my own activities in other directions. I'm afraid I no longer share Dunayevskaya's 1953 propensity to "scurry" to the Logic as she says, in the face of every "concrete problem that I meet daily, no matter how minor."

This said, let me make just a few comments on the "1953 letters" as they appeared in *News & Letters*, November, 1988. First, a reservation: Dunayevskaya's interpretation in these letters of the relationship between vanguard party leaders and the "third layer" does not seem to represent the decisive break with Leninist conceptions of the party which I have always considered to be one of the essential conquests of the Johnson-Forest Tendency which was carried into the organizations which grew out of it (e.g. *News and Letters Committees and Facing Reality*). Indeed, she prefaces the first letter by explaining that she will deal exclusively with the "dialectic of the vanguard party." Comments such as "the party is the identity or unity of the activity of the leadership and the activity of the ranks" or "syllogistically speaking, the party is the totality, the mediated result of the three layers" are more believable as assertions of what ought to be than as descriptions of what is. It is reminiscent of Luxemburg's theory of what the party should be—more tightly connected to and expressive of the creativity of the working class—but she did not assume this, she sought ways to achieve it.

SIMILARLY, DUNAYEVSKAYA'S cogitations on the distinction between "the immediate of sensuous intuition" which she associates with the way "the third layer lives" and "the internal intuition" with she associates with the way the leader "thinks," smacks of the traditional Leninist attribution of correct perception and understanding to the party which alone can mediate the relationship between the concrete daily interests of the workers and their class interest. The "jamming of these two opposites together" into the hypothetical totality of the party doesn't overcome this dichotomy which appears, frankly, elitist—more so, perhaps, than was intended. Nor does her perception of the possibilities of various mediations among the three "layers" resolve the very real problems of organization without domination. Her realistic outline, in the second letter, of the various roles the "vanguard party" has played, from working class instrument to destroyer of revolutionism, shows how important the issue is, but I'm afraid I don't see that her mining of Hegel has turned up nuggets which reveal how the negative roles can be avoided.

On Marxist-Humanism's view of Hegel

Second, an affirmation: Dunayevskaya's perception of the new society emerging within the old, a perception and theoretical position which she shared with others of the Correspondence Committees such as C.L.R. James, provided her, and them, and us, with an indispensable corrective to the Leninist concept of a teleological transition managed by the dictatorship of the party. To see, as she does, that "the new society...is all round us, in the lives of the workers..." is both vital and a *retour aux sources*, to Marx's basic insights into the very possibility of real revolution. This was, after all, the essential message of James and Dunayevskaya's 1947 work *The Invading Socialist Society*, as its title suggests. Frankly, I'm not persuaded by her equation of Hegel's "Mind" with "the new society gestating in the old." Yet, my skepticism about this interpretation doesn't detract from my appreciation of the ability to perceive that gestation. Similarly, the self-development of multiple revolutionary subjectivities capable of constituting prefigurations, then spaces and finally, through revolutionary rupture, whole systems of new social relations, could I suppose, be characterized in terms of "the Idea" freely releasing itself, as Hegel says. Certainly the philosophi-

way "the" Idea (or "the" Truth) and Hegel's treatment of it, seems to suggest precisely the kind of totalizing unity which capital seeks to impose rather than the kind of explosion of freedom in difference that Marx evokes in the *Grundrisse* in his discussion of the crisis of value—a metaphor and theoretical perspective I find more attractive. There certainly was an appreciation, among the members of the Johnson-Forest tendency, of difference and autonomy within the working class, of rank and file and grassroots movements both within the factory and without—it was one of the many reasons they broke with a Trotskyism that gave only lip service to such concerns. However, despite all their fascination with it and the respect that I hold for them, Hegel's concept of the Absolute Idea strikes me as more appropriate to an attempt to resubordinate such autonomy within the party (as Lenin did) than as a conceptual tool to illuminate the possibilities of multiplicity, which I think is one of the most pressing tasks facing us.

—Harry Cleaver
University of Texas, Austin

From production workers

What Raya Dunayevskaya found in the writings of the German philosopher Hegel, who traced the development of the Idea of Freedom through history, was the vision of a new society. That vision is needed now, more than ever, because of the lives working people face: layoffs and plant closings, reductions in wages and benefits, increasing rates of work-related injuries and illnesses, lack of adequate child care, and the rising costs of housing and health care. At the same time, the labor "movement" has never been in a bigger mess: only 17% of workers are organized, and few of them see their unions as true workers' organizations.

WE DON'T have to live this way if we don't want to. When the companies bring us into factories to work together, they create a powerful force for production. They can't do anything without us. We're the ones who make these plants run. Nothing moves without us. No profit, no production of any kind. That same force—all of us together—can also be a powerful force for change. We have the power to change things.

In "The Letter of May 12, 1953" Dunayevskaya wrote that, in the post-World War II world, whether we look at Russia or the United States, both theoreticians and ordinary workers ask the same question: Can man be free? "I will return to freedom, and where our age proves it has abolished the distinction between theory and practice and that which is the preoccupation of the theorists freedom out of one-party totalitarianism is the preoccupation of the great masses."

The Idea of Freedom appears again and again in the thoughts and activities of workers throughout the world. In "The Letter of May 20, 1953" Dunayevskaya quoted Hegel: "When individuals and nations have once got in their heads the abstract concept of full-blown liberty, there is nothing like it in its uncontrollable strength, just because it is the very essence of mind, and that as its very actuality."

AND AGAIN: "If to be aware of the idea—to be aware, that is, that men are aware of freedom as their essence, aim and object—is a matter of speculation, still this very idea itself is the actuality of men—not something which they have as men, but which they are."

The "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes" are about a vision of a new society and what it means to be a human being. They are not for intellectuals only, but for workers. We hope other workers will write.

—B. A. Lastelle and Martin Almora

From a writer in Italy

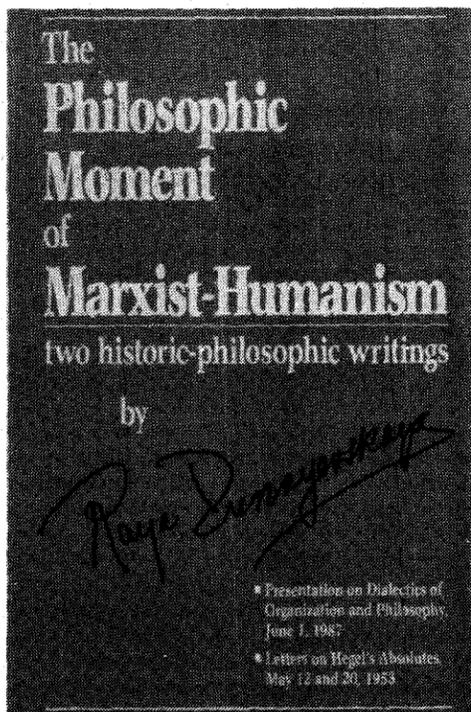
Dunayevskaya's 1953 Letters cleared up some questions I had about her recent writings, especially her Rosa Luxemburg book (*Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*), in which it had seemed to me she was at times proposing a reformist theory of gradual transformation instead of her usual dialectical, revolutionary theory. I now see that the dialectic is continually in action to create a transformation in society.

The decisions we make here and now will determine whether the social and economic changes and political organization in a future society will have as their base the humanist values that will give us personal freedom—or whether the society will continue to enforce old laws and customs. Each person has a role in creating the new society, no matter how "humble" his social position. On the job and in one's discussions with others, one can influence and direct the path towards a new and human society. The roots of the new society are in the making right now. "Internalization" means that every person should accept personal responsibility.

Raya explains this, I believe, when she writes of "Others," in the 1953 Letters. Who are the others? The "leaders" or those who support them? I think of my experience with the small Leftist groups in Italy where people, who belong to one group or another, go to demonstrations, sit for endless hours around tables to talk about the revolution, and after their failures give all the fault to the leaders and their errors. That does not mean the leaders are not to blame. They treat their supporters as irresponsible children, while the workers are just people one talks about as a class but with whom one hardly has anything to do personally.

—Margaret Ellingham

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cal language he uses such as the "self-determination of the Idea" or the "self-bringing forth of liberty" must be evocative for and appealing to those of us, such as Dunayevskaya, who self-consciously seek to be sensitive to the autonomous activities of the working class struggling to transform itself into a new society.

MY RESISTANCE TO Dunayevskaya's interpretation of Hegel's work as a philosophical expression of the possibilities of revolution and liberation derives from the

Black/Red View

(continued from page 2)

brazen," she said, as to raise the question of integrating the buses.

From her own personal experience of having been threatened physically and verbally abused by a white bus driver when she accidentally sat in one of the ten rows of seats reserved for whites only, plus the growing number of incidents of Black women being similarly treated, Robinson was compelled to conclude that the whole system of segregation had to go.

As Robinson describes it, it was indeed an absurd, calculated, humiliating system that caused Black women with young children in their arms to hover over empty seats reserved for whites only in lurching buses driven by racist drivers. It was a system which made Black passengers pay their fare at the front door of the bus and then race fearfully to enter at the rear door before the driver drove off and left them. No negotiated respect for Black passengers could come out of such a system.

On the eve of Rosa Parks' arrest, Robinson was confronted with the futility of her own efforts to reform this demeaning segregation. In her *Memoir* she writes that she asked herself out loud when would it end and

Women in 1955 bus boycott

from "all corners, all voices: As long as Black Americans will allow it."

It was at this moment that Jo Ann Gibson Robinson made a dramatic connection between her own subjectivity and the subjectivity of Montgomery's Black masses. The news of Rosa Parks' arrest "traveled like wildfire into every Black home." They telephoned each other, talked about it on street corners and waited "for someone to do something."

Mrs. Robinson understood this waiting tension as an unspoken challenge to bus segregation and verbalized it in a simple half page leaflet calling for the boycott. She took this leaflet, which she calls a "notice," not only to the masses but to the Black leadership who were very cautious about supporting a boycott.

After an apprehensive weekend of doubt, on Monday, Dec. 5, 1955, Mrs. Robinson's "little notice" was actualized: no Blacks rode the buses, "...they passed empty trailed by white-capped cops." Mrs. Robinson compared it to the "voice of the liberty-seeking colonists of 1776, the Minutemen of Lexington..."

The unfolding of that boycott, this self organization of Black masses, has come down to us as the birth of the Civil Rights Movement.

Mrs. Robinson, in her story of that historic unfolding, makes no attempt to give it a "theoretical analysis." But she does recognize that nothing would change, the segregated bus system, if the masses were not ready to overturn it. Thus we learn in her *Memoir* the boycott was not a preacher's show, but the show of 45,000 Black Montgerians, the show of all Black Americans and freedom-loving people.

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In-person report: Mexico in crisis and revolt

(continued from page 1)

"The union is like a trampoline. If you're part of the state, you're not going to fight the state."

Over and over again the economic crisis, the struggle to just survive became the center of discussion:

A printing worker: *"Salaries are low for all workers, skilled or unskilled, unless you have a high-level government job. I've worked for this publishing house for 15 years, and I have to work 14 hours to earn the price of one of our books. Mexico shouldn't pay the foreign debt, because we need the money here to live on. Everyone knows Cárdenas [opposition Presidential candidate last fall] won the election but the PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party—ruling party for 60 years in Mexico] fixed the figures. No one voted for the PRI because of the economic crisis."*

A young radical economics teacher: *"The economic crisis is so bad that most people are struggling just to survive, working ten hours a day. The Cárdenas movement brought out much fervor. Workers seized highways and city halls. The oil workers union and street vendors supported Cárdenas. The campaign caused discussions on technological development, the world market, imperialism. Now there are movements within many of the government-controlled unions for democratization as well as demands for pay increases. But the Left all gave up their principles to join Cárdenas."*

A professor at giant UNAM (National Autonomous University of Mexico): *"Cárdenas is not the only mass movement. The urban poor people's movement and rural organizations have hundreds of thousands of members. The economic crisis has lowered everyone's standard of living. In the countryside, many people are dying of malnutrition."*

WORKING WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Perhaps the most profound changes occurring within Mexico today are those among the women, especially the working class women of the poor colonias (neighborhoods).

You climb the stairs of an old building only a couple of blocks off the Zocalo, and you are suddenly in the midst of a discussion of women from CONAMUP (Women's Network of the Urban Poor People's Movement). They meet weekly to report on the activities that are occurring in their colonias.

Two of the women come out to speak to us: *"In the colonias, most of the time it is the women who are at home. We are the ones who need the services such as water and electricity because we are traditionally relegated to housework. So as women, we need to learn how to confront the problems of the colonia."*

The second woman gave a wonderfully concrete expression to the word democracy that both the ruling party and the opposition often have on their lips: *"The women have discussed democracy from three points of view: democracy in the home, at the level of the mass organization and democracy in the government. In the home, women should have the right to decide what they want to do with their bodies and how many children they should have. If they want to do the work of bearing and raising children or if they don't want to do the work. They should be consulted. It should not be seen as their daily life that they have to reproduce generation after generation just because they are women."* [See page 2 for story of the eviction of the women's center]

A few days later these women of CONAMUP joined close to 10,000 women for a magnificent march and rally for International Women's Day, March 8. The colonia women had come to participate in the hundreds, indeed thousands. In poor clothes, often carrying babies or with children in hand, they marched down Reforma toward the Zocalo. Slogans demanded the right to abortion, jobs with dignity. Chants were far-ranging, calling for a new nation and for liberation.

DIALOGUE ON MARXIST-HUMANISM

It was while participating in these kind of demonstrations and hearing many voices from the other Mexico, that we had a chance to discuss the ideas of Marxist-Humanism. One reason for coming to Mexico City was to arrange for new editions of Raya Dunayevskaya's works in Spanish, which would include two of her 1980s essays translated into Spanish for the first time. It certainly is no accident that it is in Latin America, in Mexico, that all three of her major books—*Marxism and Freedom*, *Philosophy and Revolution* and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*—have already been translated and published.

As the new editions were being arranged we had a chance to talk about our ideas to a wide variety of audiences. This began with the daily Left press in Mexico which both granted us interviews and gladly accepted articles discussing Marxist-Humanism.

It was the openness to ideas, to a dialogue, from so many areas within Mexico, which we found tremendously exciting. At several departments within the major universities in Mexico City we were able to speak in classes and in conferences. We were greeted with animated discussions on the meaning of Marxist-Humanism, on whether Marx spoke to revolutions in the Third World and in particular to Latin America, on what might be pathways to work out non-elitist forms of organization, on ways to halt the souring of revolutions after the conquest of power.

Everywhere people were interested in hearing of the "other U.S.," of those who did not support the Reaganism of the 1980s that has had such a devastating effect on Latin America.

This is no small point. For so long it has been the

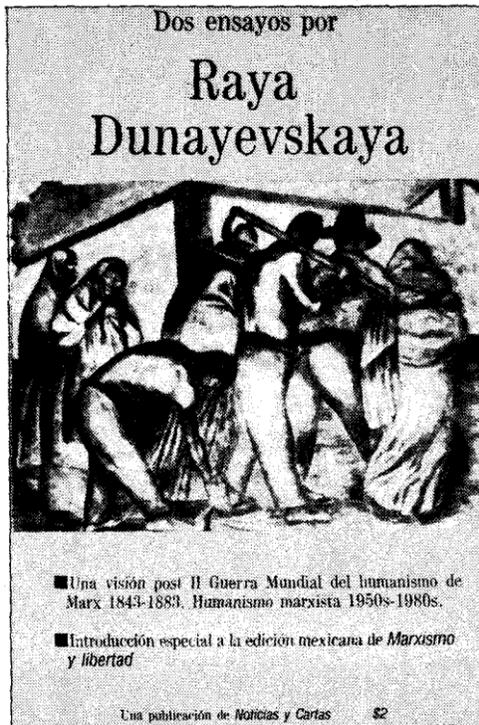
U.S. which has imposed an economic-political-military "solution" upon Latin America. In the 1980s the huge Latin American debt—now over \$400 billion dollars—has kept Latin America as an indentured servant, primarily bound to the U.S., and has meant devastation of much of the region, an absolute drop in the standard of living of the Latin American masses.

In fact it has been the great fear of revolt, as in "stable" Venezuela, indeed fear of full revolution within Latin America, that has finally made the Bush administration put forth a "new" economic plan, the Brady Plan, to reduce the debt that Latin America owes the banks and governments of the West.

"OTHER" IN LATIN AMERICA

And yet among many of the Latin American compañeros and compañeras we spoke with there was a great desire to communicate with this other "second" U.S. seeking a separation from Reaganism and Bush abroad and at home. In hearing from U.S. revolutionaries, one section of our presentation on the Philosophic

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Moment of Marxist-Humanism was of special interest—our discussion of the concept of "Other."

"Other" has been a crucial concept within Latin America, for Latin America has always been "Other" for the capitalist world, especially the United States, while for Latin America, the U.S. has been "Other." When we discussed "Other" not alone as outside, as enemy, or as exploiter, but within a revolutionary movement, and thus part of both a human revolutionary subject and a philosophic category on the pathway to liberation—it struck a special resonance for a Latin American audience.

We stress Latin American audience because to travel and speak in Mexico is to realize what an international center Mexico City is for the activities and ideas of freedom that are present in all of Latin America. Among those we had the opportunity to talk with were women and men from Chile and Colombia, Brazil and Guatemala.

Indeed, it was with a group of Guatemalans who publish a magazine called *Otra Guatemala* (Other Guatemala) that we had one of our most important discussions on the concept of "Other" as a dimension of freedom activities and freedom ideas: *"We are called Otra Guatemala because there is the official Guatemala of the governing class and then there are the mass struggles of indigenous people, students, Christians, workers and women. 'Otra Guatemala' also refers to the Guatemala we hope will exist one day, and to the Guatemala that is emerging now. There is much repression that seeks to destroy the history of these new forces. Guatemala is a closed, exclusive society in its government and wealth. We don't want to be a part of this society which so often destroys indigenous people by 'incorporating' them. We face a process of construction, of wanting, of building toward permanence."*

In face of what the U.S. under Bush is continuing to do in Latin America—continuing the funding of the contras in Central America, continuing and working out new racist immigration policies and activities against the people of both Central America and Mexico (and these in concert with the Salinas' government in coordinating border patrol sweeps!)—we want to end by sharing what to us was a most exciting and revealing part of our trip. This was our opportunity to have a relationship with the other Mexico and an interchange on the Ideas of Marxist-Humanism with one very special audience in one of the very poorest, and at the same time, most creative colonias in Mexico City.

COLONIA FELIPE ANGELES

On the outskirts of Mexico City lies the very small colonia of Felipe Angeles. It is a colonia created by a

land seizure in 1983. Thirty-five families live there, in shacks of corrugated tin and piled-up stones with dirt floors. At Saturday meetings they decide how to run the colonia, and at Monday meetings the women work out additional projects which include campaigns for child care facilities, communal kitchens, water—the entire colonia has only one faucet, and it is working only part of the day.

We had met one of the women from the colonia who took us around to show us the conditions. And then several women and children gathered in a community building. *"The land seizure was the 18th of June, at four in the afternoon. It wasn't so much started by the people who had been preparing for two months, as it was by the many women who arrived with blankets, pieces of plastic and cardboard—whatever they could find. They brought their children because they had no place to leave them. The idea was just to set ourselves up here. The majority of those who were roughed up in the process were women."*

This small piece of land, with terrible conditions, with devastating impoverishment of its residents, is at the same time a place of such passion and creativity. They have suffered the kidnapping and torture of two students who helped them in the land seizure. One returned, the other has disappeared and may be dead.

Several of the women were tremendously excited to hear about our paper and our ideas and made connections between their fight and all of Mexico, indeed, all countries. They wanted us to return to attend one of their Saturday meetings.

Thus it was that on March 18—the 118th anniversary of the Paris Commune and the 51st anniversary of the expropriation of U.S. oil interests in Mexico (a day Raya Dunayevskaya experienced in 1938, living in Mexico, and wrote about in the Mexican introduction to *Marxism and Freedom*)—we returned to Colonia Felipe Angeles. There were 50 men, women and children assembled in their simple shack meeting hall that day. They asked to hear what a North American had to say. We spoke briefly about Marxist-Humanism about the relation of struggle and philosophy. And then one after another, the women we had spoken with the week before added their own words of solidarity between us. One older woman spoke for all of us: *"All governments only tell you what they want you to know. No one hears about the poverty. Here many think all the people in the U.S. and Europe are the ones impoverishing Mexico and killing us. But we in these movements know this is not true. Even in the U.S. there are people who are very poor. There are people who are also struggling like us, and only by face-to-face dialogue, without any interference by the politicians, can we know that we are all human and have the same needs and failures and desires to form a more united, more human, more sensible future, and to live in peace."*

Undocumented fight back

Los Angeles, Cal.—The deadline has now passed in the limited amnesty program for undocumented workers in the U.S. Now it is harder than ever for recent immigrants from Mexico and Central America, fleeing poverty and persecution at home, to find work here. According to Fr. Michael Kennedy, a priest involved in the sanctuary movement, five years ago undocumented workers reported problems of employer abuse and exploitation approximately twice a month. Now reports have increased to 20 a week—sometimes 20 in one day.

A typical report is that of Martin Hidalgo, who agreed to work at a bookstore for one-half of the minimum wage. When he later learned his rights and demanded full pay, the manager refused and commented that Hidalgo was lucky to be working anywhere.

There is Concepcion Paredes, who worked for seven months as a family's housekeeper and babysitter, sometimes working up to 13 hours a day, and frequently working on her day off without pay. When she asked for her money, her boss insisted that she didn't owe her anything. Paredes sought legal help, but the judge closed the case when the boss offered to pay her \$700 of the \$4000 actually owed.

Three men who worked two days for a pizza chain were paid only in pizzas; and the worst abuses are in the hundreds of small sweatshops of the garment industry. When there's no work at all, life on the street means prostitution and selling drugs.

Throughout the city, undocumented men wait in groups on street corners, hoping to be offered at least a day of work. In January, City Councilwoman Joan Flores proposed a law prohibiting them from soliciting for work. On Feb. 1, 100 day-laborers held a protest against the implementation of such a law as "closing the doors on us. First it was the Simpson-Rodino law, which put us out of the factory onto the street to look for work, and now they want to take that from us."

On Feb. 16, culminating a campaign of police harassment, 50 day-laborers were made by police to get down on their knees for "blocking the sidewalk." Forty were taken into police custody, many kept up to 27 hours.

On Feb. 20, 300 demonstrators held another protest in front of the main police station, with the support of human rights groups from the sanctuary movement. Some of those who had been arrested spoke up and demanded to be treated with human dignity.

This is a moment when the intentions and content of U.S. capitalism, and the faces of its guardians, the police and the immigration officers, become clear. Yet even in the most oppressive moments, our undocumented friends are finding the strength to project their voices and ideas.

—Ana Maillon

Youth

Fight bill to militarize education

by Sheila Fuller

Recently, another retrogressionist attack on youth and education has been made by the National Service Act. Proposed by Sam Nunn, Democratic chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, it requires anyone who applies for financial aid—grants and loans—to work for the U.S. government and/or join the military for two years in order to be considered for aid. After two years of such work, with the sub-minimum wage of \$400 a month, we will supposedly receive a maximum of \$20,000, or \$24,000 if the two-year service has been done for the military.

This bill is a legalization of forced labor, another racist and exploitative move to deprive Black and working-class youth of a college education, and a further militarization of American education. We have seen that trend toward militarization in Reaganism's retrogressionist drive, which continues with the Bush administration. Human needs and creativities are not the priorities; war preparations are.

Even now, financial aid has been cut to the bone. Most students have experienced its effects personally, or see the enormous decline in Black and Latino students' enrollment on campuses. Today, the only "option" available to most youth is a dead-end job or the military.

One young Black graduate student at the University of Illinois told me: "This bill is ridiculous. It is another Reaganite attempt to indoctrinate U.S. students into current military policies. Even now, the requirements for financial aid are very stringent. This bill would not only eliminate poor students but it will also keep only those who fit into the needs of military technology or corporate structures.

"I have had many friends who dropped out of school and joined the army. Even those students who are in school and are getting financial aid are desperate. You have to work part-time or full-time. You are forced to major in an area such as business or engineering in which you can get a job. You take only the required classes for your major and nothing that challenges your mind. And if you don't graduate in four years, you lose your financial aid. At my school, the number of Black students has dropped by 50% because of aid cuts."

'Mississippi Burning'

(continued from page 8)

skaya in the December, 1964 issue of N&L, entitled "J. Edgar Hoover and Civil Rights." Written after Hoover had vented his spleen in a venomous attack on Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., whom he had dared to call "the most notorious liar in the country," the Editorial made clear this was no means only a personal vendetta:

"As against his vitriolic attack on Rev. King, Hoover singled out for praise none other than the racist Governor of that magnolia jungle, the state of Mississippi: 'I cannot speak in too high terms of his (Paul Johnson's) maturity.' This considered judgment of the ruler of a state where they get away, literally, with murder very nearly every day of the year..."

Thus, the SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) organ in Atlanta, Ga. *The Student Voice*, spoke out editorially: "The FBI under Hoover has come to mean an organization that stands and watches as Negroes are beaten in Selma, Ala., because it is an 'investigatory agency.' The FBI under Hoover has come mean 'the man' and the police state to Southern Negroes."

The last scene of Mississippi Burning shows us a graveyard where a headstone stands half demolished. All one can read are two lines: "1964—Not Forgotten." Is that, too, a lie? Have the 25 years since 1964 so erased the true history of that bloody struggle that such a total distortion can pass for a "fictionalized" version "inspired" by the real events of the murder of Andrew Goodman, James Chaney and Michael Schwerner?

—Olga Domanski

Another young college student told me: "This bill is a crushing blow against middle-and lower-class students who are getting the squeeze on everything. I do get financial aid but had to register for the draft in order to be eligible for it. One of my friends at school joined the army to go to school, but he was horrified by the violence and the combat training. The way the army sergeants break you down mentally, makes you feel that you are nothing. What makes me mad is that in our high school, army and navy recruiters were always around to tell you about the military, but you had to struggle to get information about college. To this day, I get calls from army recruiters every few months."

These students are expressing the rage of many American youth toward the U.S. government's denial of our right to education and its attempt to control our minds. This month, students at several campuses around the country have scheduled the third annual Day of Action against cuts in education. Opposition to the National Service Act will be prominent at these protests. And I hope that we can schedule protests against this bill at many other campuses as well. When this bill is part of the continuing retrogressionist drive of Reaganism on all aspects of life, it becomes crucial to fight it by battling the whole ideological pollution of Reaganism.



Students demonstrate at the main administration building of Howard University in Washington, D.C., protesting the election of Lee Atwater, Republican National Committee chairman, to the Howard board of trustees.

Nationwide marches vs. U.S. war in El Salvador

Los Angeles, Cal.—On Saturday, March 18, about 3,000 people marched through downtown to protest the U.S. government's continued support for the repressive government of El Salvador. This was simultaneous with demonstrations in New York, Washington, D.C., Chicago and other cities. On the following Monday 100 people successfully shut down an armed services recruiting office in Hollywood to protest both current military advisers and the possibility of U.S. troops being sent to El Salvador.

While solidarity activists have kept up continuous opposition to U.S. participation in that 10-year-long counter-revolution which has cost the lives of 70,000 Salvadorans, this protest was marked by a vehement, desperate rage at this government's stubborn rejection of all recent efforts by Central Americans to end the war. The U.S. government, after arrogantly dismissing the Arias and Eskipoulos agreements which sought to de-escalate outside intervention, now also dismisses the rebel FMLN's offer to lay down their arms if they are permitted to enter the political process of the country.

The rally drew hundreds of youth, with vigorous contingents from every major college campus in Southern California. One young woman said, "I'm sick of this government trying to boss other countries around, especially as, at the same time, they neglect the poor in this country."

That must have been the sentiment of all present, as the audience cheered when Ron Kovick, a paralyzed Vietnam veteran, cried out that "all American foreign policy is driven by big money and privilege...our fight isn't only for the people of El Salvador; it's for the Black people in South Africa, it's for the poor of South Central Los Angeles!"

Now, in face of the victory of the treacherous ARENA party in the fraudulent "elections," let us keep high our activism and our thinking for the self-determination of the Salvadoran people and ourselves.

—Karl Armstrong

Chicago, Ill.—On a damp, chilly day 1,000 people marched on icy sidewalks here demonstrating against U.S. policy in El Salvador. Above all, we came out to protest U.S. complicity in the war waged by the rulers of that country against the people.

The march started at the Tribune Tower, where that infamous newspaper was blasted for its biased coverage that never fully reports the terrorism and massacres perpetrated by the right-wing death squads. A few days earlier, someone had stuffed some newspaper vending machines with replicas of the Tribune—only with the banner headline "U.S. at War in El Salvador," with the truth about that war and information on the march.

We marched to the National Guard Armory to protest the use of National Guard troops to help the murderous regime with "construction" projects. Suddenly, two policemen rushed into the crowd and

Youth in Revolt

by Franklin Dmitryev

Black athletes began a boycott of Water Valley (Miss.) High School after several white students waved Confederate flags during a Black history program Feb. 27. After hearing complaints from dozens of Black students and parents, officials closed the school the following week, but did not even suspend all of the racist students.

Most Indian- and Inuk-operated elementary and high schools in Canada closed on March 22 as students, teachers and staff rallied to protest a new federal policy on financial aid to Native Canadian college students. The new policy cuts off students after four years (or less) and limits the total amount of aid given per year.

Students at Pennsylvania State University held a series of protests in February and March, responding to continual racist incidents there. In one incident, 10 white men yelling racial slurs, attacked five Black women and tried to abduct one of them.

Still angry over the police killing of a student and a campus worker in February, students played an important part in the Feb. 27-March 1 revolt in Venezuela sparked by government-mandated price increases. Confronted by doubled bus fares, students and other passengers barricaded streets and burned buses, inspiring a nationwide uprising in which stockpiled food was expropriated by the impoverished masses. The social-democratic government sent in troops, which killed hundreds, injured thousands and detained many others.

A multi-racial coalition of New York University Law School students has been holding sit-ins and rallies that they intend to continue until their demands for a better climate for minority group members are met. Their eleven demands include establishing a committee to investigate racial bias, a detailed affirmative action plan for students and faculty, and new courses taking up race relations.

A five-day sit-in was held by students at Sarah Lawrence College in New York in March. The students won commitments by the school to increase minority faculty hiring and "Afro-American and other multi-cultural" courses.

roughly dragged two young women away. They had been arrested for placing stickers on the Armory building. Later, more people were arrested for sitting down on Michigan Avenue and blocking traffic.

Many anti-Bush chants were voiced. The mood of most of the people I spoke with was total defiance, and most agreed that nothing short of a revolution in the U.S. will stop this government from trying to crush freedom movements throughout Latin America, and that by revolution we didn't mean ending up with another Russia or Cuba. None of this, however, came out in the speeches.

—Participant

A Canadian death sentence

Ontario, Canada—Minnie Sutherland was a 40-year-old visually-impaired Cree woman who worked at an Ottawa community centre. She died in a hospital ten days after being hit by a car New Year's Eve in the downtown bar strip area of Hull, Quebec, just across the river from Ottawa, Ontario.

A recent inquest revealed the racist procedures of the Hull and Ottawa police forces which resulted in Minnie's death. The jury heard from Minnie's cousin, Joyce Wesley, how Hull police dragged Minnie from the middle of the road where the accident occurred and ignored bystanders who told them there had been an accident and an ambulance should be called.

Earlier, a witness testified that he had driven the women back to Ottawa. He said Minnie did not appear well and once in Ottawa he stopped and called 911 for help. Enter Ottawa constable Sabrina Corneanu who checked Minnie and found the odor of alcohol on her breath. The ambulance arrived and, instead of following police procedure and taking the victim to the hospital, placed her in the back of the police car to be taken to a detox centre.

Asked at this point what official procedure is in such a situation, the constable admitted in the inquest that standard procedure is, "you should bring her to hospital from the scene...if the person is unconscious and cannot be awakened." Instead, Minnie was taken to a detox centre where she was refused admittance because she could not walk. Finally she was taken to hospital but it was three days before the hospital was told that Minnie had been hit by a car.

Many people are just now beginning to understand that in Canada the most blatant forms of racism victimize native peoples. If a person fits an image regardless of the situation they will receive inferior treatment accordingly. In Minnie's case it was because she was an Indian who smelled of alcohol; had she been a white bag lady it probably would have been similar. Had she been the white mayor of Ottawa or Hull she probably would be alive today.

—Correspondant

News & Letters readers come to a series of four classes on—

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Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

Three events so far in 1989 have already placed Germany at the center of the crisis of West European capitalism. In January in West Berlin and then in March in the Frankfurt area, neo-Nazi parties scored unprecedented returns in local West German elections. In February, the Pentagon revealed that Reagan and Bush had developed plans in late 1988 to deploy a whole new set of nuclear missiles in Germany. In March, Social Democrat (SPD)-Green Party coalitions took office in both Frankfurt and West Berlin, posing the possibility of a nationwide shift away from the conservative Christian Democrats, who have been in power throughout the Reagan era.

Massive Budapest march

Tens of thousands of Hungarians marched in Budapest on March 15, the date commemorating the start of the 1848 Revolution against Austrian domination which was suppressed only after the Russian Tsar sent troops to help Austria crush the revolt.

This year the Communist Party (CP) government of Koroly Grosz returned the historic date to its previous place as the national day of independence. Where in past years demonstrators were attacked on March 15, this time schools and shops were closed, and the Party and military joined in the observances.

However, an opposition coalition broke off to hold their own commemoration and some 30,000 people participated. By the time demonstrators marched back to the statue of Kossuth, hero of 1848, their numbers had swelled to 100,000. As one participant expressed the meaning of March 15 for 1989, "Our background was and is 1956."

The massiveness of the demonstrations suggest the depth of dissatisfaction in Hungary, and the unease the rulers must feel. Within the CP, a debate has surfaced with some now calling 1956 a "popular revolt" as opposed to the official line of "counter-revolution."

In February, government statistics officially demolished the myth of "goulash" Communism in Hungary, when it was reported that at least 25% of the people live in poverty. That month the government also raised basic food prices 40%, and the cost of medicine shot up 82%! At present, 15,000 workers—and probably many more—are "officially" unemployed. The planned shut down of state enterprises this year will throw many more into unemployment lines.

For the first time since it came to power, the CP government has begun to institute unemployment benefits. Even the previously docile official union federation has demanded to negotiate a higher minimum wage, as workers struggle to keep up a human living standard.

Ongoing protest in Haiti

Strikes, demonstrations and other actions continue against Haiti's latest military ruler, General Prosper Avril. While two general strikes called in 1989 did not gain the near-unanimous support the November, 1988 one did, this was due more to divisions within the movement against Avril—between the Left and the liberal-reformist elements—than to a lessening of popular feeling against the regime. Even the New York Times asked recently (Feb. 26, 1989) if present developments "recall the storm that brought down the dictatorship of Jean-Claude Duvalier in 1986."

On March 4, a demonstration by the Committee of Revolutionary Unemployed was brutally attacked by the police. The same day, a nationwide peasant women's conference drew 400 people.

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that 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 new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today*; *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* 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. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her re-creation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time. In opposing this 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 mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.

Rightist gains reveal West Germany's crisis

The neo-Nazi election returns are not merely local. In Berlin and Frankfurt, two very different cities, they polled 7% of the vote. Even more serious, several of these outright fascists will now automatically take seats in the national parliament in Bonn, the first time this has happened since World War II.

The neo-Nazis, some of whose leaders are former SS officers, have centered their campaign around anti-foreigner racism. Today, four million out of West Germany's 60 million people are foreigners, many of them Turkish immigrant workers or political refugees. They have become a target of physical and verbal racist attacks as well as police and government harassment. The "moderate" Christian Democrats have not separated themselves in any serious way from the centerpoint of the neo-Nazi anti-foreigner campaign, and have tried instead to compete with them in anti-foreigner hysteria.

Even the Left victories in Frankfurt and Berlin could be seen in the context of an overall move to the Right. The Green Party of 1989 is dominated by a

"realo" wing that, while so far continuing to counter the anti-foreigner rhetoric on the Right with street demonstrations, has become increasingly similar in its overall policies to the SPD and the liberals, committed to managing rather than fundamentally altering West German capitalism.

Thus, former 1968 French student leader Daniel Cohn-Bendit, then an "anarcho-Marxist," has today moved toward social democracy to the point where, as a key "realo" Green in Frankfurt, he will become head of "culture" in the new SPD government there. The "realo" Greens have accepted every condition laid down by SPD leaders in order to enter these new "coalitions."

But the terrain to the Left of the Greens is not without its problems either. One point of attraction for youth alienated by the Greens' moderation is the so-called Autonomes. Centered in Berlin's Kreuzberg district, these groupings engage in such "revolutionary" actions as looting and attacking counter-cultural restaurants and theaters which do not pay them "taxes."

On May Day, 1988, Autonomes were briefly joined by working-class and Turkish residents of Kreuzberg in pitched battles with 800 of Berlin's notorious riot police, who had invaded and brutalized the whole neighborhood in response to the firebombing of two police cars by youths. A few days earlier, Autonomes had covered the city with Rosa Luxemburg's famous words: "The revolution is magnificent, everything else is bilge." But they are more an indicator of the level of youth alienation from the system than a serious challenge to it. With such disarray on the Left, and the rise of the neo-Nazi Right, the defeat of the Christian Democrats in national elections would hardly usher in a new era in any positive sense.

Meanwhile Bush and the Pentagon grind forward with their plans to bring new mobile short-range nuclear weapons into Germany in the 1990s. These "modernized" missiles will have a range of 280 miles, just under the limit allowed by the current disarmament treaties signed by Reagan and Gorbachev. From U.S. Senator Sam Nunn to West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, however, other leaders figure are wary of the new missiles, while supporting them of course "in principle." They fear resurgence of the mass anti-nuke movement.

South Korean strikes



South Koreans protested in Seoul, March 12, against a government suppression of labor.

On March 20, South Korean president General Roh Tae Woo cancelled a planned referendum on his rule, blaming his change of mind on current strikes by workers and student protests. A week earlier, striking transport workers halted the Seoul subways until police forced them back to work, and 10,000 students and workers demonstrated in support of striking Hyundai shipyard workers. The Hyundai workers stopped the company from reopening in mid-February, after a two-month strike and lock out.

Workers at the Samsung Heavy Industries shipyard and machinery plants have shut down operations in their strike over winning union recognition. Samsung is the only remaining conglomerate that has so far held out against recognizing the independent union the workers have demanded. At Motorola, a bitter and often bloody conflict over union recognition and improved benefits and working conditions is not over.

At the huge Daewoo shipyards, workers have rejected a concession package supported by the government, to keep wages low and lay off thousands of workers. In the past two years, Daewoo's profits have sunk and its debts risen. Daewoo workers have rejected plans by company and some union leaders who propose they pay the price with a no-strike pledge and wage freeze.

Martial law in Tibet

On the eve of the 30th anniversary of the massive 1959 uprising, new riots broke out in Tibet against their Chinese overlords, March 5. Shouting "independence for Tibet," the demonstrators, including Buddhist monks and nuns, clashed with police. At least 12 people were killed on the first day. Virtually every Chinese-owned shop in the old quarter of Lhasa, the capitol, was ransacked. Since 1987, when a new round of independence protests broke out, Tibetans have been massively brutalized, tortured and killed by Chinese authorities.

Still more ominously, on March 8 China admitted officially that it had put Tibet under martial law, deploying thousands of heavily armed troops. By this time, when Tibet was sealed off from the world, at least 75 people had been killed.

Philippines repression

Three years after the fall of Marcos in the Philippines, the Aquino regime is moving further and further to the Right, and away from the promises made in 1986. This was seen last fall in the signing of another treaty to keep the huge U.S. bases in place until 1991. But the signs are found not only in those major events, but also in the daily poverty and repression that is the lot of the Filipino masses. From student and worker strikes to rural rebellion, resistance continues to the U.S.-backed capitalist system.

Recently, the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, a human rights group, released some shocking figures on repression during the Aquino era. They revealed that 1987 and 1988 levels of "salvaging" (brutal death squad type killings) and disappearances of activists have begun to approach those of the Marcos years, after having sharply declined in 1986. Over 500 salvagings and 160 disappearances have taken place since 1986! In the same period, over 10,000 people have been arrested and tortured for political reasons.

Attempt to end the intifada

The so-called Baker plan for Middle East peace, coupled with George Bush's plans to personally get involved, may be in the end an even more serious attack on the Palestinian movement than the earlier implacable hostility of the U.S. toward any form of dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Today, Secretary of State James A. Baker is "only" asking that the PLO stop the *intifada* in exchange for the "possibility" of negotiations with Israel, a possibility Israel denies in any case!

So far, the PLO leadership has rejected calls to end the *intifada*, over which it does not necessarily exercise control anyway. In the occupied territories that revolt continues, and even deepens. On the weekend of March 18-19, four Palestinians were killed by Israeli forces in the Gaza strip. One of them was a 12-year-old throwing rocks at troops. Another general strike was held to protest these killings. Despite the death of over 400 people since the uprising began, 16 of them Jews and the rest Arabs, the *intifada* continues.