

Theory/ Practice News & LETTERS

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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Where will capitalists run to next?



by Felix Martin, Labor Editor

I have been reading and thinking a lot about the workers in South Korea, their lives and working conditions. Did you know that in late March, more than 10,000 riot police dressed in green combat fatigues invaded a shipyard in the port city of Ulsan, attacking the plant from the land, the sea, and the air? The enemy was the workers—union shipyard workers at Hyundai Heavy Industries (South Korea's largest shipbuilder) who had been engaged in a sit-in during a 109-day wild-cat strike.

These police acted like military troops in combat training. It made me think of why U.S. troops are stationed in South Korea and all around the world—to protect the interests of the capitalist class, including American capitalists who have run away from U.S. workers because we have fought for and won "too high" wages.

WORKERS BATTLE COMPANIES, POLICE

With all the tear gas, clubs, and arrests, Hyundai with its armies still hasn't put labor "in its place." Students joined with workers in mass demonstrations after the attack. In the first three months of 1989, South Korea has already had 320 labor disputes, a 44% increase over the same period last year. The Federation of Korean Trade Unions, representing 1.6 million workers, is calling for a 26.8% increase in basic wages. The country's Economic Planning Board estimated that the capitalists lost \$2.4 billion in production and sales so far this year.

The union officials have also had to admit that they haven't paid enough attention to another great problem of the Korean workers: too long work hours and the world's worst record for industrial safety. The cost of South Korea's so-called "economic miracle" has been 142,596 workers maimed and killed on the job each year (1987 figure). This figure has been increasing through the 1980s. And the average work week of the South Korean factory worker is 54.7 hours.

This is the reality that the workers are fighting back

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Black World

Crisis in Chicago's Black politics



by Lou Turner

A new retrogressive political reality reigns in Chicago after the April 4 election of Richard M. Daley, son and political heir of the man who ruled the city for more than two decades—especially the decade of the turbulent '60s—like an urban plantation. Split against itself by warring factions in the Black political leadership, the Black mass movement which swept Harold Washington into office in 1983 and again in 1987 has once again had to face the political crisis that emerged at his death on Nov. 25, 1987. (See "Black World", January-February, 1988 *News & Letters*, "Black Chicago after Washington".)

As in the Democratic primary election which saw Daley defeat Black acting Mayor Eugene Sawyer, the second largest vote total in the general election—between Daley, Tim Evans of the independent Harold Washington Party and Republican Eddie Vrdolyak—represented those who stayed home. Of the 1.5 million registered to vote, 575,900 voted for Daley, 430,000 voted for Evans, while some 497,000 abstained.

DALEY ELECTION, BLACK RETROGRESSION

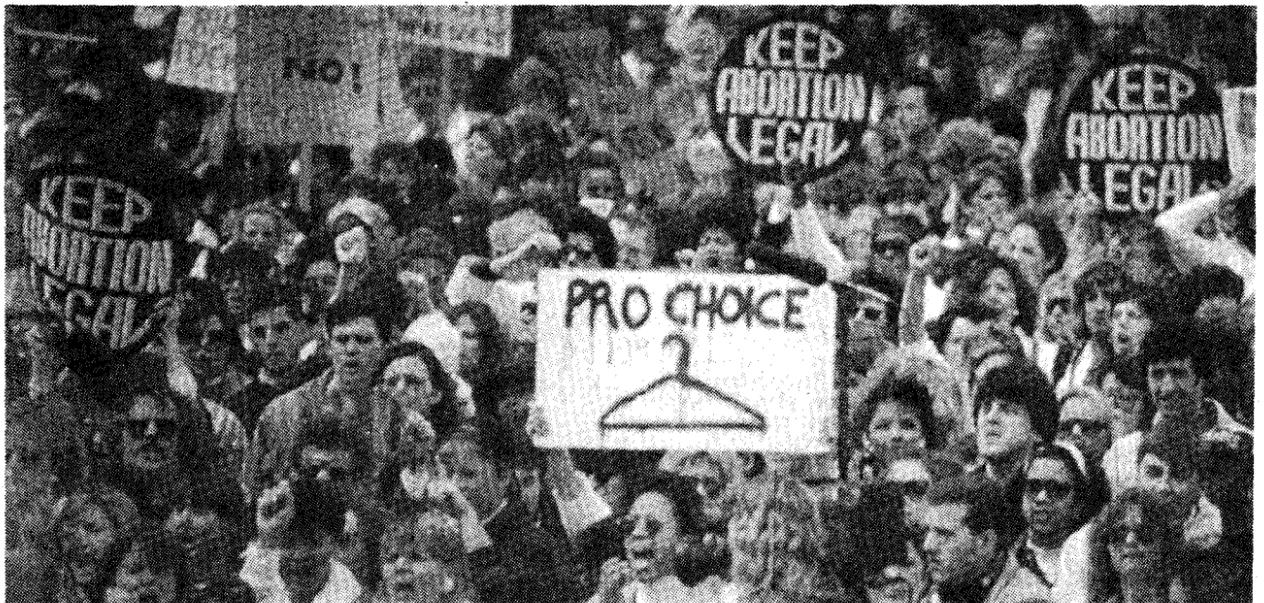
The process which led to the current fragmentation of Black politics in Chicago goes back to the death of Harold Washington. However, its present manifestation 18 months after Washington's death has all the earmarks of a more general political retrogression. Thus, Daley employed all the ideological tools of Reaganism to get elected: 30-second commercial sound bites; flag waving and innocuous rhetoric about "strong leadership"; avoiding any political confrontation or debate; and focusing his campaign toward that white electorate which deserted the Democratic Party when Harold Washington became its nominee.

Moreover, the fragmentation was not confined to

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500,000 in Washington, D.C.

Abortion rights march challenges anti-woman retrogression in U.S.



by Terry Moon

The Women's Liberation Movement made history on April 9 when a half million people marched on Washington, D.C. to show this Bush administration that we are determined to keep abortion legal. Women, including mothers and daughters, along with their sons, husbands and friends, came from all over the United States as well as from around the world to create the largest women's demonstration in U.S. history. Washington, D.C. hasn't seen an outpouring of this size since the American people helped force this country out of the Vietnam War.

Women rightly fear that the Supreme Court will use a new case, *Webster vs. Reproductive Health Services*, to either gut or overturn *Roe vs. Wade*, the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. The voices of the women we heard at the march revealed their determination to stop the rollback of one of our most basic rights:

● A young student said, "I recognize that the anti-abortionists are not just after the abortion decision—that's just the beginning of the whole thing. If they get their way on this it's just one more thing after another in terms of women's rights, women's bodies."

● An older Iranian woman, in the U.S. for two years: "When Khomeini came, every woman's rights were taken away. Abortion is illegal. The country has become

poor and you can't care for many children. So abortion is going on in my country illegally and people are going underground. I have seen with my own eyes many women abort themselves. Many young women have lost their lives. If they can make abortion illegal in a country like America, with this much freedom, it will have great influence on other countries—especially Third World countries. I'm trying my best to do something."

● "I'm 14 years old and when I grow up and have children, if my child gets pregnant, then I would want her to have a choice on whether to have a child or not. I will have children but I want to have them when it's my time."

Over and over women we spoke to said if they can take away our right to legal abortion then no freedom is safe. Women talked of being scared, of

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On the Inside

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Direct from South Africa Freedom Journal

Empondweni, Natal—My wife is presently residing here as a teacher at Empondweni Aided School. The school is approximately 14 kilometers from Ladysmith, Natal and at least 10 kilometers from Winterton.

She was requested by the Zulu Government (Education Department) because of the shortage of the teaching staff in the area. This school is presently run by the Kwa-Zulu Department of Education, under the umbrella of Inkatha.

CONDITIONS IN THE SCHOOL

Empondweni Lower Primary School consists of approximately 300 students catered to by only two lady teachers, excluding the Head Master, who are expected to cater to three separate class rooms. The school caters Sub A students to Standard four. Just imagine only two teachers expected to accommodate all these different classes. One teacher is presently teaching from Sub A to Standard I children in one class and the other from Standard 2 to Standard 4. How difficult and disturbing to teach in this kind of situation with interference from other students of a different class or Standard. This means that every class room has more than 90 students of different Standards. This also makes it difficult for the teachers to maintain discipline among such a crowd of students divided into three categories in one class.

During the festive season of 1988, I went to pick up my wife and daughter who is also a Standard 1 pupil in the same school. I spent only two days in the place. On March 4, 1989 I arrived at Empondweni with a clear

People of Empondweni

goal in mind to find out how our people survive in such a place dominated by the Boers and the Zulu Government. I was deadly shocked by the miseries caused by the farm owners to our people without protection of any form. Empondweni residents and workers are subjected to the inhuman arbitrary whims of an old white man (Afrikaner), known to them as Matekisi.

ENSLAVED TO CAPTAINS OF THE FIELDS

The Matekisi owns a fleet of land and retains the sole right to dismiss, punish, or expel any person in Empondweni without seeking authority from the Empondweni local authorities. Matekisi is also referred to as the "King" by his old staff, and his son as Nkosana (king's

BULLETIN! As we go to press we have received news that Black South African trade union leader Moses Mayekiso and his five co-defendants have been acquitted of all charges. They had been imprisoned for 2½ years for alleged "treason" against the apartheid regime.

son). Matekisi has a reputation for introducing oppressive and exploitative working conditions. Further he relies on his two fists to punish anyone who refuses to carry out his orders. I would prefer to refer to these people as slaves not workers, because of the humiliating conditions they are subjected to in the place of their birth by the farmers and the government.

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Women meet to discuss racism

Iowa City, Iowa—More than 1,500 women, and some men, came together at the University of Iowa (U of I) April 6-9, for a conference titled "Parallels and Intersections: Racism and Other Forms of Oppression." The gathering was sponsored by the U of I Women's Resource and Action Center and the Women Against Racism Committee.

Conference events and exhibits covered a broad spectrum, that went even as far afield as tarot cards, crystals, incense and spiritualism. But most of the people we met at both the News & Letters (N&L) workshops and literature table were interested in ideas and philosophy as a way to address different forms of oppression.

More than 50 people literally jammed into a small classroom, with many more turned away for lack of space, for our workshop on "Philosophic Foundations for Organizing Against Racism and Sexism." In it, Terry Moon took up "The Origins of the Women's Liberation Movement out of the Civil Rights Movement: Questions of the Relationship of Philosophy to Forms of Organization," Diane Lee presented "Black Women and the Two-Way Road between Black American and African Liberation Movements," and Mary Jo Grey talked about "Working Women, Women's Liberation and Union Activities."

The lively, non-stop discussion that followed began with the question "How do you define Marxism?" and included a moving account of the experiences of one woman's mother as an early union organizer, and a back and forth among many in the audience on the need for philosophy.

Many people came to talk further at the N&L literature table, and the next day attended Gene Ford's discussion of "Black Workers as Reason: the Hunger for Freedom, A 1980s View of Charles Denby's *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*." Another standing room only crowd heard Gene relate the importance of this "biography of an Idea of Freedom" to today's Black

and labor struggles, as we face the 1990s after eight years of Reagan retrogression and the promise of four more under Bush.

"Even when there is no mass movement," he said, "there is a need to clear our heads, to rethink and deepen our theory to philosophic concepts." But to Denby, philosophy was not left alone to the intellectuals as he "gives voice to the concept of Worker as Reason and Subjects of revolution."

Other workshops, too, attempted to break through the overwhelmingly academic approach to looking at racism that dominated this conference. Three 16-year-old high school women from Iowa City talked about their experiences organizing a group—Students Against Intolerance and Discrimination—at their predominantly white and supposedly liberal school. They have fought both harassment of gay students and actual physical attacks on Vietnamese students.

A group of welfare mothers from Milwaukee challenged the fact that classism was not being addressed at the conference, and called a spontaneous workshop where they wrote their own statement on "The Invisibility of Impoverished Mothers," which they delivered and distributed at the last plenary session.

Their statement said: "We applaud the conference planners for their serious efforts...but our voices have not been heard—nor our numbers felt. And yet impoverished women are the majority of the world's population and we include ALL races, ages, and even different class backgrounds....Impoverished mothers...are wise without book-learning—we learn our lessons the hard way. We want to share our knowledge with women at future conferences."

Accepting all workshop proposals, as conference planners did this year, is not the way to increase the diversity of voices and ideas heard, unless they also seek out people beyond the academic world. Our experience here showed the women we met were interested in this kind of diversity, and in talking about ideas and philosophy in our fight against oppression. That's the dialogue we want to continue.

—Mary Jo Grey

Asian women rebel

More than 1,000 women marched in Istanbul on April 11 to oppose religious fundamentalists who are calling for Turkey to shed its secular nationalist roots in the 1928 Constitution and return to Islamic law.

The right-wing Motherland Party passed a law lifting a long-standing ban against women students at state universities wearing chadors. Even though the law was overturned in court as inimical with the constitutional separation of religion and state, a significant number of students continue to wear chadors and authorities have not intervened.

In Pakistan, several women's groups have openly criticized Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. They charge that Bhutto's release of women political prisoners has involved mostly supporters of her own Peoples Party and that she has shown no intent to repeal the draconian "Haddood" decrees instituted by former dictator Zia which bound women's legal rights to Islamic law. Nor did Bhutto take part, as promised, in the government's celebration of International Women's Day in March.

The women activists have also criticized Bhutto for not releasing, also as promised, the report conducted under the Zia regime in 1985 by the Pakistani Commission on the Status of Women. The vast majority of women face oppression, from brutality against women prisoners to forced child marriages.

As the report admitted, "The average rural woman of Pakistan is born near slavery, leads a life of drudgery and dies invariably in oblivion...This grim condition is not fantasy, but the stark reality of nearly 30 million Pakistani citizens who happen to have been born female." It should be remembered that "the rural women of Pakistan" protested against these conditions during the Zia era.

—Mary Holmes

Israeli women for peace

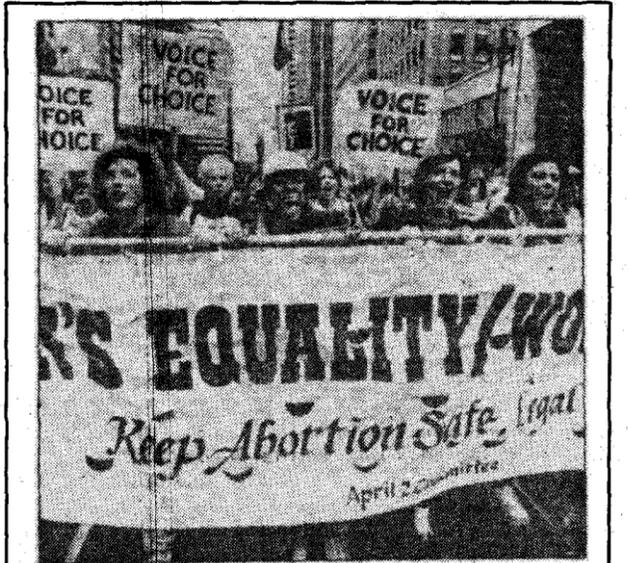
Tel Aviv, Israel—There won't be peace as long as there's the occupation so I do what I can against it. Women have a big part in the struggle for peace. But altogether the number of Israeli women and men in the peace movements is small. People are afraid of the "enemy" because Jews and Arabs are isolated from each other in Israel and when they meet it's never on equal terms—it's usually boss-worker.

In Israel now there are about 30 movements for peace. I am involved in two mixed peace movements and two women's movements against the occupation. Apart from that, I try to get to any demonstration where they say what I believe in. As there are a lot of demonstrations—although not enough—and I'm not rich enough to get baby sitters all the time, my son comes with me and you can be sure he is not the youngest child to come to demonstrations.

Every Friday there's a demonstration in the three big towns, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Haifa. We've heard they're also having this demonstration not far from Khadera. These four permanent demonstrations are women dressed in black. We were glad to hear that demonstrations like that are taking place in London, New York, Geneva and maybe a few more places in the world.

Another women's movement I'm active in is "Women for Political Prisoners" as there are so many political prisoners. Since we are only two dozen, we only help women prisoners. We have contacts with prisons and lawyers. We find out who is the new prisoner—some people "disappeared" in the past after being taken to an unknown place. We find her occupation, address, family, health, etc. We make sure she has a lawyer, that her baby, if she has one, will be brought to her. We visit the prisons and we give information to the newspapers, which is very important.

—Israeli feminist



In San Francisco on April 2, 25,000 protesters marched in support of abortion rights in solidarity with the march in Washington, D.C., that took place a week later.

College boys cheer rape

DeKalb, Ill.—At a recent showing at Northern Illinois University (NIU) of the film "The Accused," for which Jodie Foster just won an Oscar, men students in the audience guffawed, clapped and cheered on the men raping the woman in the film. The film is disturbing in its accurate portrayal of gang rape, an act which is far from foreign on the NIU campus. Conservative estimates indicate approximately 30 gang rapes occur on the NIU campus every year!

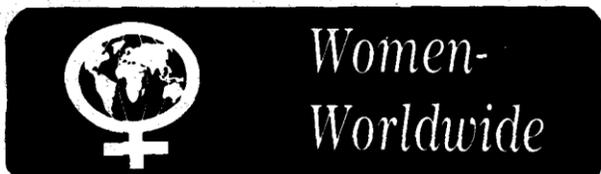
At "The Accused" when a group of men joined the actors in cheering on the rapist, it became apparent that even two years of activism and consciousness raising about sexual assault had not changed the attitudes of many men on campus. This whole incident sends a message loud and clear: rape is OK, it's even funny, and it's a normal part of our society.

In response, our conservative student newspaper, *The Northern Star*, ran an editorial which concluded: "violations of basic human dignity, such as rape should not be treated lightly." What an understatement! It is apparent that many NIU students view sexist actions and sexist/racist activities (like the Sig Chi skit last semester where fraternity boys, dressed in blackface, engaged in obscene gesturing before mocking an offstage rape) as acceptable behavior indicative of a great sense of humor.

This horrible scene reminded me of what Karl Marx said in 1844, that if you want to see how far the human race is from its pure essence look at how badly men treat women, because the most blatant, unhidden expression of human to human can be seen in the relations between men and women. If the showing of "The Accused" is used as our marker for 1989 we can say our student body is dangerously alienated from its humanity.

This fiasco makes clear the need for a strong Women's Liberation Movement TODAY because we have not achieved freedom. Now more than ever we need to have dialogue and actions which can lead us into a society where the mere idea of the objectification of another human does not even cross one's mind. Humans created our society. We can re-create it.

—Julia



Women in England and Ireland commemorated International Women's Day by visiting each other's countries to discuss their individual and common struggles.

● Women's Year of Action on Ireland Group sponsored a speaking tour in six English cities for Irish women who asked audiences to go back to their communities and raise the rights of Irish people because "the techniques used against us are used against you."

● The Women and Ireland Network organized a delegation of English women's trip to Belfast and Derry, which included meetings with community groups and women's centres, and climaxed with a picket of Maghaberry women's prison, which houses 11 women prisoners of war.

Also, on March 12, over 100 people from all over England picketed Durham Gaol in solidarity with Irish POW's Ella Ni Phuibhir and Martina nic Aindrea in their fourth year of imprisonment. Picketers demanded the repatriation of Irish political prisoners and an end to strip searching.

The Iowa City, Iowa Reproductive Rights Coalition is protesting the firing of Regenia Bailey, a Regina Catholic school music teacher, for writing a letter to a local newspaper (not identifying herself as a Regina teacher) expressing a pro-choice view on abortion. The group picketed the school's fund-raising dinner, April 8, and called for a boycott of all Regina fundraisers—which rely on more than just Catholic financial support—until "they develop and implement an employment policy that reflects the nature of the community in which they work."

Close to 60,000 people marched through the streets of downtown Rome, Italy, April 15, protesting restrictions in Italy's abortion law as well as a growing threat to repeal it. The law was passed in 1978 and overwhelmingly upheld in a referendum three years later, despite constant attack from the Catholic Church.

Amnesty International is conducting an urgent campaign to save the lives of eight women political prisoners in Iran facing imminent execution. You can ask for an end to all executions and the commutation of the death sentences imposed on: Zoreh Ghaeni, Fatemeh Izadi, Dr. Mitra Ameli, Getti Azarang, Sorraya Kiani, Fatemeh Housenzadeh-tussi Moghadam, Nahid Dourudiah and Malakeh Mahammadi by writing to: Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, Majles-e Shouray-e Eslami, Imam Khomeini Avenue, Tehran, Iran.

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Labor joins protest in Anchorage

Exxon turns Alaska into dying ground

Anchorage, Alaska—In a beautifully emotional Candlelight Vigil for Prince William Sound on April 9, people in Anchorage expressed their sorrow and rage about the March 24 oil spill. Those in attendance were a cross-section of the concerned community—teachers, park rangers, state and government workers, nurses, lawyers, environmentalists, preachers and long time community activists. They were Indian, Eskimo, Black, White. A reading from Chief Seattle on the significance of Indian land reiterated what we needed to hear: We are the guardians of the earth, not its conquerors; land is not something that can be bought, exploited and plundered. It belongs to everyone.

Prince William Sound is one of the many lovely areas of Alaska, a medley of forested mountains rising above islands and bays where violent Pacific storms can shroud the coast in clouds and rain; a wilderness coast populated with incalculable numbers of fish, sea birds, mammals and a diverse array of marine life.

Now it is a dying ground, filled with thousands of animals who will not survive the 11-million-gallon oil spill. Brown globs of emulsified oil in the waters of Prince William Sound mingle with the aroma of Prudhoe Bay Crude, destroying the livelihood of independent fishermen and ruining inlets and bays.

Responsibility for the oil spill doesn't rest with the captain of the Exxon Valdez alone. First, the arrogant oil industry is interested only in maximizing profit. Its employees are expendable and concern over environmental protection minimal. The state has been ineffective in regulating the massive industry and the Coast Guard is unresponsive and not doing its share.

OIL COMPANIES SAY 'ME FIRST'

Since North Slope operations began 20 years ago, the seven major oil companies in Alaska, including Arco, Exxon, British Petroleum and Standard, earned \$42 billion from oil production. In addition they make money from the transportation of oil through Alyeska Pipeline Service Co., the most profitable business in Alaska. In the last 11 years this has amounted to \$12.4 billion. They also collect more money from the final sale of the oil when you and I buy it at the pumps.

The Valdez Terminal, which Alyeska runs, is the largest single shipping point for oil in the world, sending out two million barrels of crude a day. The ill-fated Exxon Valdez carried 53 million gallons of North Slope Crude, 11 million of which spilled. Exxon management in Houston decided to remove the rest of the oil from the tanker first, before starting vital cleanup which would have protected the valuable fish hatcheries in the area. Exxon and Alyeska said, "Me first."

Most of the massive cleanup is being handled by Veco, an oil field service company created by, and

subservient to, Standard Oil and Arco. Veco is non-union, notorious for hiring people who do not live in Alaska, paying low hourly wages and no benefits. Workers doing cleanup will use dispersants, burn the oil, or work skimmers to mop the oil up. Dispersants will not work in Alaska waters, but Exxon owns the company that makes them so they're always a factor in oil spill cleanups.

Alyeska was allowed to make its own oil spill contingency plan. The state then assumed it had the equipment, manpower and know-how to clean up a spill, but because profits came first, the barges needed to haul gear to the sites were inoperable, and the skimmers, booms and other equipment listed in the contingency plan were nowhere to be found.

Senator Murkowski, who according to rumor wants to run for governor next year, said of the spill: "It's not as bad as it looks." He wants to go ahead with the proposed leasing in the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve mostly because he's invested money in a drilling company that will profit hugely from work done there.

Governor Steve Cowper, who will not run for office again, has been active during the disaster, particularly when it became obvious that the oil companies and Alyeska were dragging their feet.

RAGS VS. OIL SPILL

Citizens groups of environmentalists, students, fishermen and community activists have expressed their desire to help with the cleanup, but only those who live close to the endangered areas have been encouraged to go out to work. Some folks simply acted independently to save hatcheries and clean up beaches.

Seven big oil companies here have united to overwhelm people with their public relations patter repeating ad nauseum how much they contribute to the state's well being and how proud they are of their "outstanding record" in Alaska. They conveniently overlook 40 documented oil spills in Alaska waters.

The March 24 accident was the nation's worst oil spill. Exxon concentrated on saving the oil still aboard the ship and allowed the spilled oil to spread to an area larger than the state of Delaware. They even thought that with enough people, buckets and rags, everything would soon be as good as new. Then they spent money for TV ads and, finally, they had the gall to raise the price of gas, forcing workers and consumers to pay for their mismanagement.

—Ruth Sheridan

South Africa: Call for Workers' Manifesto

Editor's note: the following are excerpts from a speech given by Mindelwa Kwelemtini, a representative of the National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU), at the historic workers summit, March 5-6, 1989. In coming issues we will print excerpts of speeches given by Elijah Barayi, president of COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions), and by Il Phate, representing the independent unions.

INTRODUCTION

Let me begin my speech by three remarks. Firstly the NACTU delegation represented in the summit today consists of workers who are deeply committed to the unity of workers and worker control. We are here on principle and we believe the unity of workers in South Africa is of utmost importance both politically and economically. We are therefore here as full-blooded NACTU affiliates and not as "rebels."

Secondly, we differentiate between uniting with other federations and unions and the unity of workers. Unity between NACTU and COSATU is not identical to worker unity. It is an important start; but worker unity extends beyond the unity of the two federations.

For example, there are unions that are independent, i.e., outside the two federations. Again, the total number of organized workers is less than 30% of all workers in the Republic. Hence speaking of worker unity goes beyond our present limits as represented by the two federations and the independent unions.

Thirdly and last, our efforts today and tomorrow should be directed towards laying the foundation for unity. We must ensure that our discussions ensure that the trade unions become a vehicle of liberation and not an imprisonment of workers...

POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS VS. UNIONS

One of the greatest failings of the liberation movement in this country thus far has been that the leadership of all major political organisations which constitute the liberation movement has been in the hands of "non-working class" groups. All major political organisations have virtually adopted a non-class approach to the liberatory struggle. All have claimed that they represented sectors of the oppressed and exploited whether they are workers or not. The absence of a strong working class, organising independently, has meant that the class struggle has never been properly identified in practical terms, in the day-to-day struggles of the people.

However, it must be emphasized that a working class leadership does not mean that the persons who are at the helm of things must be workers only. What working class leadership means in addition is that those who steer the direction of the organisation are aware of the independent aspirations of the workers and are able to share these aspirations and direct them towards realisation. The present situation among political organisations is that they differ on whether the society workers want should be free of capitalist exploitation and oppression.

May Day anniversary



In 1884, the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions (the predecessor of the AFL) declared that "eight hours shall constitute a legal day's labor from and after May 1, 1886." That first May Day saw 350,000 U.S. workers strike for the eight-hour day, with 80,000 workers marching through the streets of Chicago in support. That general strike was to be a first step, to be followed by one trade or industry striking at a time, financially supported by the rest of labor, staying out until they gained the eight-hour day, and in turn helping support the general strike of the next trade.

The May Day demonstration of workers' power frightened the capitalists, because it was clear that nothing short of social revolution had been raised. By May 1, 1890, May Day became an international workers' holiday in the battle for the eight-hour day.

Their perspectives are not the same on these vital issues...

Today we are witnessing the beginning of a workers' programme. Hitherto political organisations had programmes based on the attainment of democratic rights, i.e., bourgeois democratic rights. While the achievement of such rights is important for workers, their interests dictate that they should formulate independent demands in terms of problems facing them today.

Such demands transcend the democratic rights as defined above. It is vitally necessary for the workers to develop their own independent structures, their own independent political demands and their own political programme. We support a Workers' Manifesto for this purpose.

Armed with the Workers' Manifesto, the working class struggle will be given an independent direction and workers' organisations will take their rightful place in the forefront of the liberation movement.

Speed-up at Eckrich

Chicago, Ill.—The brand new, computerized bun-size hot dog packaging machine that we have been hearing about since last fall has finally arrived at Eckrich. It cost almost a million dollars and can package up to 90,000 pounds of meat per shift, more than twice as much as the other bun-size line.

It is exciting, in a way. Some people feel that their jobs depend on this machine, that if it runs, it will keep this plant open. The company, though, obviously has only one interest: packaging more meat with fewer people in less time.

But didn't the speed-up begin long before the arrival of this new machine? The chain (the line that moves hot dogs from the processing department through the oven to packaging), which a few years ago ran at 6½ feet per minute, now runs at 9 feet per minute. Aren't the frank-a-matic operators, peelers and rackers already working faster to keep up with it?

The company can spend a million dollars on a new machine, but can't provide us with the equipment we need to do our jobs. Supervisors ration the cotton gloves. Sometimes there are no plastic aprons. Smok-ys (sausage) processing stops production because there aren't enough racks and sticks to hang the meat on. The wheels on carts, racks and meat tubs don't roll. As long as we get the work out, the company doesn't care.

We will have to wait to see how the new machine will affect the people who work on it, and how it will affect other products, other lines and employment at this plant. The rumors circulating among Eckrich workers reflect our anxiety about the future. That fear and uncertainty is the way the company tries to keep us in line.

—Eckrich worker

Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

against, very militantly, and now some American capitalists that ran away from the "high cost" of U.S. labor to "cheap labor" in South Korea are getting worried. They are saying that rising labor costs are ruining the purpose for which they ran away to South Korea and Third World countries in the first place.

American owners of Pico Korea Ltd., makers of cable television components, decided in February to close their plant in South Korea and run back to the U.S. They left owing the Korean workers, as well as some creditors, \$1.15 million!

At Motorola Korea Ltd., wholly owned by the U.S. electronics giant Motorola Inc., the workers who organized themselves into a union are being harassed and roughed up by kusadae, or company goons. Motorola has 60 years of operating in the U.S. without a union, but now in Korea they have to put up with workers who have demanded a say!

Herman Rebhan, general secretary of the International Metalworkers' Federation, declared: "The use of kusadae is a throwback to Chicago-type violence of the 1930s. Motorola in Korea is behaving as if Koreans were second-class inhabitants of the world and Korea was an economic colony for multinational companies."

LABOR IS ONE CLASS WORLDWIDE

He is right that that is the way U.S. capitalism views Korean workers—second-class—but what is also true is that is the way all capitalists view all workers. That has been my own personal experience on the assembly line at GM and every job I have held as a worker in this capitalist system.

As long as capitalism lasts, the working people will be looked upon as second-class citizens, as slaves to the system. But because we are slaves, we want our freedom.

Workers in countries like South Korea see this and are fighting for this clearly. Workers in the U.S. are not always so clear in their thinking—which is why the capitalists are starting to run back here again, to open low-wage, non-union plants.

But I think that American workers will start to fight back more strongly than we did over the past eight years, because we can't live on these minimum wages the capitalists want to lower us all to.

And once we recognize that labor is one class all over the world, fighting the same struggles, whether in South Korea or the U.S., then where will the capitalists run?

From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya Marxist-Humanist Archives

by Raya Dunayevskaya
Founder of Marxist-Humanism

Editor's note: We print here one of Raya Dunayevskaya's letters to Herbert Marcuse, written in 1964 while she was working out ideas for her book, Philosophy and Revolution. The "chapter" on Hegel, Marx, Lenin and the "philosophic problems of our age," which Dunayevskaya refers to here, developed into Part I of the book, titled "Why Hegel? Why Now?" We print this letter now because it addresses some of the questions posed over the last few months in the pages of N&L, especially in the "Philosophic Dialogue" column, and the questions we are grappling with in our series of classes on "Marxist-Humanism as a Body of Ideas."

Oct. 27, 1964

Dear HM:

Since you once asked me why I "translate" Hegel when I know "the original" (Marx) well enough, I assume you thought that since my writings and activity were political my veritable obsession with Hegel's Absolute Idea was...an obsession. I am exaggerating, of course, but it is only because I hope you'll permit me to write in this informal way an outline of a chapter of my new work (which I now lean to calling "Philosophy and Revolution") that deals with "Why Hegel? Why Now?"

The chapter is to have three sub-sections: Marx's Debt to Hegel; Lenin's Ambivalence toward Hegel and Shock of Recognition; the philosophical problems of our age. The first sub-section will connect with Marxism and Freedom but greatly expand why Marx couldn't "shake off" Hegel as easily as he shook off classical political economy; once he transcended it, then his "economics" became, not a new political economy, but Marxism, a philosophy of human activity. This was true in every single respect from the theory of value and surplus value, through rent as a "derivative" rather than making the landlord class as fundamental a one as the new capitalist class, to capital accumulation and the "law of motion" bringing about its "collapse." In all these labor was seen as the living subject bringing all contradictions to a head and making socialism "inevitable"; at no point were economic laws independent of human activity. Regarding the Hegelian dialectic, on the other hand, despite its recreation in Marxism, or what you laughingly refer to as "subversion," that is to say, transformation of dialectic from "a science of logic" to "a science" of revolution, his "attachment" to Hegel remained. This was not because Marx began as a "Left Hegelian," nor even because the Hegelian dialectic speeded him on his own voyage of discovery ("thoroughgoing Naturalism or Humanism"). Indeed, when his break first came from Hegel, he used classical political economy to counterpose reality to "idealism," especially of the Proudhonian variety. Yet the adieu to classical political economy was complete; the adieu to Hegelianism was not.

TAKE THE VERY FIRST, and most thorough and profound attack on Hegel's Philosophy of Right—the very critique which led to nothing short of his greatest discovery—the materialist conception of history—a lesser man, a lesser Hegelian than Marx, would at that point have finished with Hegel. Marx, on the contrary, proceeded to the critique of the Phenomenology and the Encyclopaedia, and when he broke off at the last section on "The Philosophy of Mind" to stick with what he called "that dismal science"—political economy—and engage in class struggle activities, revolutions, First International, which took the rest of his life, he still hungered to return to a presentation of "the rational form of the dialectic." Indeed, at every turning point, he returned to "the dialectic." You recall how happy he sounded, in 1858, in his letter to Engels when he explained that he "accidentally" came upon his library of Hegel's works and there got some "new developments" which are helping him complete Critique of Political Economy (and of course you can see the results all through the Grundrisse). Again, in 1861-63 when he first reworked it as Capital and makes the most crucial decision on the economics presentation—not merely to break with Ricardo on land rent but to take out from

Volume I all that would become Volume III and thus eliminate all relations between landlords and workers, leaving them "pure" with capitalists alone. And yet again, in 1866, when he restructured Capital to include "The Working Day" and actually break with the very concept of theory, both the move to the profound analysis of reification at the point of production and the fetishism of commodities, again illumined by the real Paris Commune, were still in the tightest wrappings of Hegelianism.

This is exactly why Lenin wrote that it was impossible to understand Capital, "especially its first chapter" without the whole of the Science of Logic. And in that first chapter, when you need Hegel most is where Stalin, in 1943, decided to make his theoretical break by asking that that chapter be eliminated in the "teaching" of Capital. And, again, the last writing we have from the pen of Marx (Notes on Wagner and the analysis of the critique of his own economics) the constant repetition is to "the dialectic." In a word, Marx never forgot his indebtedness to Hegel because it was not a debt to the past, but a vital, living present expressing as well the pull of the future.

THE NEW I WISH TO BRING IN HERE will bring in a justification for the abstractness of Hegel since there are points, critical points, turning points, when the abstract suddenly can become the concretely universal. Capital is concrete, an empiric study, a phenomenological as well as logical-economic analysis which "exhausts itself" in the one topic it is concerned with: capitalism. But Logic is "without concretion of sense," "applies" to all sciences, factual studies, so that when a sudden new stage is reached, and the old categories won't do, there is always a new set of categories in Logic as you move from Being to Essence to Notion. That is why Lenin, who long before he knew the whole of the Logic, knew the whole of Capital, and wrote most profoundly of all the three volumes, nevertheless, suddenly, when the ground gave way before him as the Second [International] collapsed, found new "only" in Logic. That is to say, that abstract category "unity, identity, transformation into opposite," and such others as "self-transcendence" meant something so new to him also in the understanding of Capital and its latest stage, imperialism, that he was willing to say none, including himself, had understood Capital at all before that specific moment of grasping the Doctrine of the Notion in general, and the breakdown of opposition between objective and subjective that he got from the Syllogism in particular.

What I am trying to say is that the minute the actual cannot be expressed in old terms, even when these terms are Marxian ones, it is because a new stage of cognition has not kept up with the new challenge from practice which only philosophy seems capable of illuminating—old, abstruse, abstract Hegelianism made Lenin see what the concrete terms in Capital did not—that monopoly capital was not only a "stage" of centralization of capital, but a "transformation into opposite" which demanded a total reorganization and undermining of old categories, including that of labor.

This section should lead to the second sub-section on Lenin's ambivalence to Hegel, both before the shock of recognition in 1914 and, unfortunately, after that shock, at least publicly. The duality in Lenin's philosophic heritage can no longer be put into a footnote, as I did in Marxism and Freedom. This ambivalence has allowed the Chinese as well as Russian Communists to pervert Marx's Humanism by quoting both Lenins alongside of each other as if they were one unchangeable Lenin who never experienced a sharp break with his own philosophic past. Once, however, this is cleared, it is precisely Lenin, the Lenin of 1915-24, who allows us to jump off from the 20th rather than the 19th century precisely

1964 Letter to Herbert Marcuse

'Freedom demands the unity of philosophy and revolution'

because his most startling and most meaningful aphorisms were expressed in "Subjective" Logic and he is so enthusiastic as he equates (with literal equation signs) subjectivity with freedom. You'll recall also that Lenin's [Philosophic Notebooks] stress that philosophy (Hegel's Logic, 1813) expressed "the universal movement of change" first, and only afterwards (1847) did Marx express it in politics (The Communist Manifesto) whereas natural science (Darwin's Origin of the Species, 1859) came still later. And while it remains for the age to concretize Lenin's restatement of Hegel's appreciation of the Practical Idea "precisely in the theory of knowledge" for "Cognition not only reflects the objective world, but creates it," it is Lenin who put out the marker: "The continuation of the work of Hegel and Marx consists in working out dialectically the history of human thought, science and technology."

It is obvious to you, I am sure, that I do not take your position on technology. I am so Hegelian that I still consider that subject absorbs object, and not object subject which then becomes its extension. My preference of "ontology" to "technology" in the age of automation may be said to be due to the awe I feel when confronted with the dialectic of human thought, but this would not be the whole truth since human thought is inseparable from human activity and both result from the overpowering urge to freedom. Allow me, please, to express this within the range of the types of cognition in the dialectic itself:

In inquiring cognition we face an objective world without the subjectivity of the Notion. In synthetic cognition, the objective world and subjectivity co-exist (and like the fragility of "peaceful co-existence" which fears movement, so in this laying of the objective world and subjectivity side by side, there can be no transcendence.) But now watch, the idea of cognition and the practical idea no sooner unite, then we are ready for the plunge to freedom. Hegel begins at the bottom of page 475 (Science of Logic, Vol. II) [translated by W.H. Johnston and L.G. Struthers, New York: MacMillan, 1929] to review again, not dialectic "cognition" but the Absolute Method, the form of the Absolute Idea, the new stage of identity of theory and practice that we have reached as we leave behind the previous forms of cognition. (Don't forget, either, that two short pages after we view "the objective world whose inner ground and actual persistence is Notion," we reach "the turning point" (p. 477) and learn that the "Transcendence...between Notion and Reality...rests upon this subjectivity alone.")

IT APPEARS TO ME ALSO that Hegel is right when he feels it absolutely necessary that the Method begin with abstract universality, abstract self-relation, the in-itselfness of the Absolute (pp. 469-472), which leads, though "the concrete totality which...contains as such the beginning of the progress and of development," to differentiation within what I would call the achieved revolution. I might as well here continue politically for I see Hegel as he finishes with subjective idealism to be finishing with reformism for whom the goal is always in the future, and shifting all his attack on the intuitionists—Jacobi, Schelling, Fichte, especially Jacobi whom he calls a "reactionary" (Encyclopaedia, par. 76)—or the type of abstract revolutionism for whom, once an "end," a revolution has been reached, there is no more negative development or mediation. All that, to them, that seems to be done is an organization of what has been achieved and they go at this organization in so total a way they choke the spontaneous revolution, and with it all further development, to death.

Hegel, on the other hand, moves from the overcoming of the opposition between Notion and Reality, resting on subjectivity alone, to paeans about "personal and

(continued on page 10)

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The Untrodden Path: Working Out Full Philosophic-Organizational Responsibility for Marxist-Humanism's Philosophic Moment

"...The Reagan retrogression...has polluted the ideological air, not only of the ruling class, but has penetrated the Left itself. Such a deep retrogression urgently demands that, along with the economic and political task facing us, we look for philosophic new beginnings." — Raya Dunayevskaya, June 6, 1987

We invite all readers and friends of News & Letters to join us in exploring crucial dimensions of Raya Dunayevskaya's 1986-1987 work on "Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy: The 'Party' and Forms of Organization Born out of Spontaneity."

All of the questions we confront—whether as activists in the struggles of Women's Liberation, Youth, the Black Dimension, and rank-and-file Labor, or intellectuals struggling to break free from the ideological pollution of Reaganism—demand revolutionary new beginnings in thought as well as in action. Join us in exploring The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism as the Idea of Freedom for our age.

- CHICAGO: Saturday, May 13, 6 p.m.
59 East Van Buren, Room 707
- DETROIT: Wednesday, May 24, 7 p.m.
Central United Methodist Church,
Woodward at Adams
- LOS ANGELES: Sunday, June 4, 6 p.m.
People's College of Law,
660 Bonnie Brae St.
- NEW YORK: Sunday, June 4, 7 p.m.
Outer Space Gallery,
2710 Broadway, Manhattan
- SAN FRANCISCO/BAY AREA: Wednesday, May 24, 7 p.m.
Black Oak Rm., Martin Luther
King Jr. Student Center
U of California—Berkeley

Philosophic Dialogue

From Hegel translator

Since Raya Dunayevskaya is a materialist I assume that for her the Idea is a being such that the individual has no personal relationship with it and is merely a tool, an instrument for the realization of whatever end the Idea may have in mind. Hegel on the contrary has a diametrically opposite view. In the introduction to his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* he declares: "Strictly speaking, philosophy's topic is God alone, or its aim is to know God." It is evident then that the topic of central importance in his philosophy is the God-man relation, that is, the relationship between God and the individual. Now in a genuine relationship each side must receive its due: God is to be not merely an idea in our minds but a self-knowing, absolute actuality; nor is the individual to be "absorbed" or "swallowed up" in the relationship, but his individuality is preserved.

The question of personal immortality in Hegel is affirmatively answered in his exposition of the Concept of the individual. He remarks that when I say "I," I undoubtedly mean my own single self and no one else, but I have not said what I Mean, for everyone is such an "I." Consequently when I say "I," I give expression to my essential, if unrealized, universality. Now the study of the Science of Logic, says Hegel, "is the absolute education and discipline of consciousness" and will help the student to become conscious of his own pure essence, that is, his essential universality. His Concept of individuality reads as follows: "The true, infinite universal which, in itself, is as much particularity as individuality, we have next to consider as *particularity*. It determines itself freely; the process by which it makes itself finite is not a transition [i.e. into an Other], for this occurs only in the sphere of Being; it is *creative power* as the absolute negativity which relates itself to its own self. As such, it differentiates itself internally, and this is a *determining* [of itself], because the differentiation is one with the universality. Accordingly, the universal is a process in which it posits the differences [particularities] themselves as universal and self-related. They thereby become *fixed*, isolated differences. The isolated *subsistence* of the finite [individual]...is, in its truth, universality, the form with which the infinite Notion clothes its differences... Herein consists the *creative power* of the Notion, a power which is to be comprehended only in this, the Notion's innermost core." (Science of Logic p. 605. Emphasis is Hegel's.)

It is important to notice Hegel's use of the term "reality": "Reality is quality, determinate being." "The indefinite expression 'reality' means in general nothing else but determinate being..." (Science of Logic pp. 112 and 758).

—Arnold Miller

Editor's note: The author is the English translator of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* and *Science of Logic*.

Letter to a labor militant

A former longshoreman I know asked my views on the publication of a bulletin to report "on the thinking and acting of the militant strata in Longshore." I know the internal struggles he chronicled that were the "reality" of intra-union politics in the late 1940s and early '50s, but told him they could not be the ground for a really new rank-and-file bulletin in Longshore, because nothing new in theory or practice springs from those factional struggles of elitist organizations. The new only emerges in thought and in action when workers challenge capitalist production relationships, as hundreds of thousands of American workers did when they created a strike wave that culminated in the 1949-50 miners' general strike against the introduction of automation in the form of the "continuous miner," raising questions about the very nature of labor itself.

Raya Dunayevskaya, the founder of Marxist-Humanism, saw these strikes as a new stage of cognition among American workers, a new objective/subjective situation that challenged theoreticians to work out a new synthesis of theory to practice that would include philosophy, organization and politics. She found the road to that synthesis in the dialectic of Hegel's Absolute Idea.

This was no spontaneous overnight chore; she had spent a decade in studying the Hegelian dialectic, including the way Lenin rediscovered it in his 1914 notes on Hegel's Doctrine of the Notion and how Marx recreated it in his *Humanist Essays* and in *Capital*.

In her May 12, 1953, Letter she announces that the dialectics of organization is the dialectics of the Absolute Idea. Here she was not speaking of existing elitist parties, but of organizations that were consciously trying to resolve the problem of the dichotomy between theory and practice. In Hegel's philosophy of dialectics of the Absolute Idea appears as the identity of the Theoretical Idea and the Practical Idea. The Idea is incomplete without this unity, "...each of these by itself is one-sided and contains the Idea itself only as a sought Beyond and an unattained goal; each consequently is a synthesis of the tendency, and both contains and does not contain the Idea..." How did she recreate it concretely for our time?

First of all, Raya saw the Absolute Idea as having two distinct but dependent movements interpenetrating each other. A movement from practice that is a form of theory, thus recognizing that the thinking, the ideas and the activities of the masses in struggles to re-arrange social relationships is an indispensable element of theo-

ry which demands a new movement from theory, a new unity of theory and practice. Raya, I think, sees this as the crucial problem of our age in this present period of total crisis and failed revolutions and not simply "a big breakthrough in method of thought."

Second, because the Absolute Idea "contains the highest opposition within," Raya understood it not as end but as a new beginning of the ceaseless movement of the dialectic, other manifestations and modes of the Absolute Idea. If we read closely her 1953 philosophic letters, we will discover that she moves from the *Phenomenology*, to the *Science of Logic*, to Absolute Mind to establish the subject, more precisely the subjective notion of the subject as the determinant which transcends the opposition between the Notion and Reality. Raya's singling out the subjective creativity of the subject of revolution as the turning point in the dialectic is what separated her from Lenin's concept of the dialectic and C.L.R. James' "Nevada Document"...

—John Alan Black/Red columnist

From a French professor

The Letters of May 12 and May 20, 1953, are interesting in that they present the essential of what Raya Dunayevskaya developed later on in a more pedagogical and less passionate form—or rather in a less lyrical style. But it seems to me that there are also fundamental differences. I am troubled especially by the paragraph on the party, especially by the formulation: "There is no content outside of that." What is that? Like Marcuse, I have some reservations with regard to the Absolute Idea, as (I do) towards the Christian image of the Golgotha of this absolute where the new society would have to suffer.

To put it plainly: as much as I approve of the demonstration of the close relationship of Marx and Hegel; as much as I regard it to be indispensable to show the insertion of the thought of Marx and of Hegel in the Judeo-Christian tradition—despite the "materialism" and the atheism; just as much, I think that for us today—that is today in countries like France where the Christi-

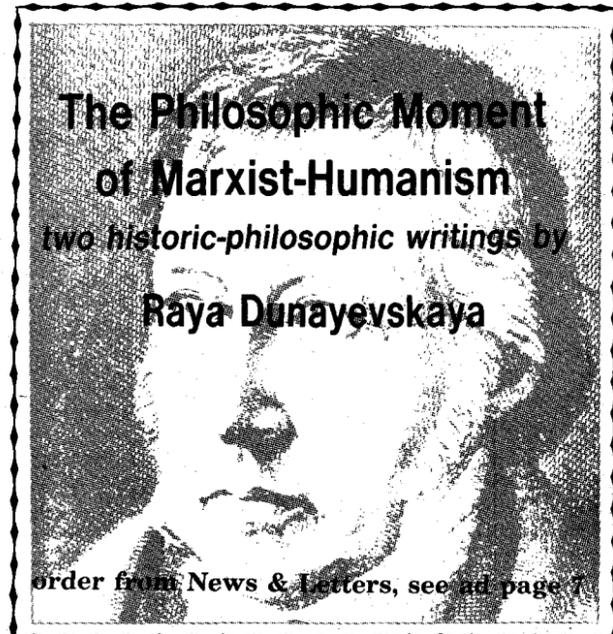
an tradition is weakened—Marxist eschatology is precisely what no longer makes sense. The whole question involves refusing it (eschatology) without falling back into a vulgar or scientific materialism which, for all its greater prevalence, brings nothing to "socialist" humanism (to speak succinctly by use of this label).

Professor Pierre Lantz,
Universite de Paris VIII

(translated from the French)

* Grammatically, it speaks of the "form-determinations" between leaders and ranks, between the various layers." What does that mean?

Editor's note: The full paragraph referred to reads: "In the party both as political organization and as the realization of the theory of knowledge, the 'form-determinations' or form of relations between leaders and ranks, between the various layers, and within each layer tells the whole story. There is no content outside of that. Or, once again to stick close to Hegel, 'The method therefore is both soul and substance, and nothing is either conceived or known in its truth except in so far as it is completely subject to the method.'"



The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism

Two historic-philosophic writings by

Raya Dunayevskaya

order from News & Letters, see ad page 7

Editorial

Congress falls into Bush's trap on contra aid

With much fanfare and little debate, Congress voted overwhelmingly April 13 to approve \$49.7 million in new aid to the Nicaraguan contras, a move hailed by George Bush as heralding "a new era of bipartisan foreign relations." Whether or not that turns out to be true, the near unanimity with which Democrats and Republicans alike rushed to embrace Bush's contra-aid proposal has ominous implications for Nicaragua and Latin America as a whole.

What helped lull many former critics of contra aid into supporting Bush's proposal was his declaration that the U.S. no longer seeks the military overthrow of the Sandinistas, but only "non-military" aid for the contras as a way to "pressure" Nicaragua. What motivated that declaration is the fact that what stands in the way of a military solution is the opposition of masses of people in the U.S. to direct military action against Nicaragua and the fact that the contras proved totally ineffective militarily. That does not mean, however, that Bush has in any way departed from the long-standing goal of undermining social revolution at any cost in order to promote policies favorable to "private" capitalist "development."

BUSH'S CONTRAS

Thus, Bush refused to include any call for the demobilization of the contras in his aid proposal, even though that violated the February, 1989 accord of the five Central American presidents that called for free elections in Nicaragua in February, 1990 in exchange for dismantling the contras. And conspicuously absent from any of Bush's pronouncements was mention of lifting the U.S. trade embargo and economic sanctions against Nicaragua, which have been in force since 1985. Bush intends to hold the club of economic sanctions over Nicaragua in order to further drive its economy into chaos and thereby force whatever group holds power after February, 1990 to adhere to U.S. dictates.

Indeed, eight years of contra war and U.S. economic warfare have already helped disfigure the Nicaraguan Revolution from the vision of freedom embraced by the masses who brought the Sandinistas to power and defended them from contra attacks. The austerity measures imposed last February by the Sandinistas have had a devastating impact: 10,000 public employees have been laid off in the past three months, adding to the swelling unemployment and impoverishment, and total government spending was slashed 44%. Direct military intervention, either by U.S. troops or by contra proxies, is not the only mechanism available to the U.S. for thwarting social revolution.

Now that Bush has covered his counter-revolutionary Central American policies under a more "moderate" cloak, will the illusion take hold that his acts do not possess the destructive power of Reagan's?

What largely motivates Bush's effort to put a "new" face on an old Latin American policy is the seething discontent of the Latin American masses, whose living conditions have plummeted in the face of the astronomical debt owed by Latin America to Western banks. The depth of the continent-wide revolt was shown in March, when mass protests erupted throughout Venezuela against a new austerity program imposed by the government to meet its debt payments. Bush responded ten days later by announcing a "new" plan to deal with the debt crisis.

THE LATIN AMERICAN DEBT

This plan, named after Treasury Secretary Brady, was touted as a "more humane" alternative to the Baker Plan of the Reagan administration, because it calls for re-scheduling some of Latin America's debt instead of just piling up new unpayable loans. However, just as with the Baker Plan, in exchange the Latin American nations will be required to open up their economies to U.S. imports, cut government spending, and encourage "privatization" of the economy. As Secretary of State Baker put it, the U.S. will support debt re-servicing "only if the difficult steps to restructure" their economies are made.

The "Brady Plan" thus amounts to no more than a "kinder, gentler" formula for imposing additional economic austerity and restructuring upon Latin America—a restructuring that has forced countries such as Mexico to drastically cut spending on social services. In the last four years the percentage of Mexico's Gross National Product (GNP) spent on education fell from 5% to 3%, while the percentage spent on health care fell from 2.5% to 1.5%—this in a nation where half the population is under 15!

As Gorbachev's April visit to Cuba showed, it isn't only the "private" capitalist West that has imposed a debt crisis upon Latin America. Although Gorbachev was expected to forgive much of Cuba's massive \$9 billion debt to Russia during his trip, in the end he said not a word about it. Neither "private" capitalism nor state-capitalism calling itself "Communism" is in any rush to lift the burden of debt from the backs of the Latin American masses. Whether it is Castro's version of Communism or Gorbachev's "restructured" Stalinism or Bush's "moderate" Reaganism, none are able to offer a human solution to the problems of Latin America.

Our opposition to the rulers calls for solidarity with the struggles of the Latin American masses, beginning with the clearing of our minds. For we must not allow the ideological pollution of Reaganism to seep into us by thinking any of Bush's recent moves represent a fundamental departure from the standard U.S. approach to Latin America. That clearing of the mind is an essential preparation for the struggles that lie ahead.

ON MARXIST-HUMANIST REVOLUTIONARY JOURNALISM: CAPTURING THE MEANING OF EVENTS

There seems to me to be a difference in the writing in N&L since the publication of *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism*. You can see the analysis of an event or situation within an article, rather than tacked on at the end, which I used to feel. And articles seem to "speak to each other" now. The lead article on Mexico, in the April N&L, may not have been specifically mentioned in other articles, but, to me, I could see—in everything from the column of Raya's writings to some of the articles on concrete events—a discussion of the concepts that Marxist-Humanists took with them to Mexico. Or is it that I am now reading everything with new eyes?

Working woman
Detroit

John Marcotte ends his column on the Eastern strikers by writing "I hope they will have the self-confidence to recognize how deep their questions are." To me, he is talking about workers taking responsibility for ideas, vs. schemes such as Employee Stock Ownership Plans that divert and truncate the strivings of revolutionary forces. Felix Martin's column also brings out that idea of freedom. This capitalist system wants to reduce our minds to the point where we think just having any job at all is better than none, that that is freedom.

New reader
California

People at the plant ask, What is the point of this *News & Letters*? It's not helping us. Nobody reads it but us. What is it going to do for us? I would like to say that this paper is to let you know that there are other people in this plant who feel the way you do, and you are not by yourself. Maybe if you know that, you won't be so afraid. If you contact *News & Letters*, then you can get together with those other people who wrote the story and do something. It seems to me that people expect the paper to solve their problems, but they have to do it themselves.

Eckrich worker
Chicago

The Editorial in the April N&L on "Our two-tier society" made me think of where I work, in aerospace production, which is even worse than two-tier. There are workers doing the same job who make \$12/hour, \$8/hour, and \$7/hour. Some say that these cutbacks in workers' wages are necessary to keep the American economy competitive and healthy. I say, the hell with the "economy"! What about people?

Black worker
Inglewood, Cal.

Raya Dunayevskaya's column in the April N&L on "What is philosophy? What is revolution?" is very important to me, because to me philosophy is very much a part of what being human is: thinking, and that not separate from politics and society as a whole. She says that Marx's view of Hegel, vs. the young Hegelians who were becoming materialists, was that "Hegel's dialectic was not just any idea, but the Idea of freedom." I want to discuss this with other Youth—the Idea of freedom not separate from understanding the forces of revolution.

Black student
Los Angeles

What does the "Humanism" in Marxist-Humanism mean? I think maybe it means the way that in workers' struggles, strikes, experiences, there is a form of the new society trying to be born. But I was also wondering if humanism means something like *News & Letters* publishing Dunayevskaya's "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes" so there won't be a separation between philosophy and organization. I feel very cynical about other Left organizations I've met. Sometimes I ask someone at a literature table if they discuss theory and if they say no I take off.

Student activist
New York City

The mind of the worker is like fire. From a capitalist's point of view, fire is

helpful for you, but if you let it get out of control, it could kill you. That's how they think of the human mind. They've got us working our asses off for them so they can make their profits and live their lives the way they do. But if we got out of control, which from our point of view would be getting in control, all of that would change.

Meatpacking worker
Chicago

Ever since Raya used the expression in her Presentation of June 1, 1987 about the need to capture "meaning, i.e., philosophy" in ongoing events, I have been thinking that it is the philosophical context or the meaning in a philosophical sense that is the most important thing to address.

Erica Rae
Illinois

SOLIDARITY'S COMPROMISE



When you look at the new agreement where Solidarnosc will become part of the State, what seems like an important concession is really a big step toward its demise. One of the most magnificent aspects of Solidarnosc was its concept of "horizontal solidarity." That challenged every aspect of society. But now Walesa is giving all of this up in exchange for the illusions of Gorbachev.

Miriam
Detroit

The Polish government recognized Solidarity to get into the good graces of the U.S. so it will lend Poland money. Poland wants to get into the very situation of indebtedness to the West that the Third World is trying to get out of. Our age thus sees the merger not only of government policy and "private" capitalism, but also merged into them the half-way houses that arise in the face of revolts.

Anne Jaclard
New York

Thanks for the sharp statement you put together on "Mississippi Burning." I've been selling the paper and discussing it at showings of the movie. There's a lot of rewriting of history going on—from the French Revolution to the 1960s. The more brutal this society gets, the more we get this barrage against revolution as an alternative. In Poland, too, Kuron's latest statement answering the movement from below is titled "Instead of Revolution."

Ron Brokmeyer
Oakland

YOUTH IN SEARCH OF FREEDOM IDEAS

At Cal. State University-L.A. several weeks ago there was an annual "career day" during which 50 representatives were on hand to discuss career opportunities with people as they passed through the main walkway. I walked through and looked at each table, feeling myself swept up into a frenzy of "promising" job pitches: there was a woman wearing a man's suit telling someone why they ought to work for the bomb factories of Lockheed or Hughes Aircraft; some old cheery gentleman looking for people to process IRS forms; a dynamic duo of the Los Angeles police force, the California Highway Patrol, as well as the California Youth Authority; and many young men smelling of Brut and looking for prospective CPAs to manage millions of IRAs at thousands of S&Ls across the state. Is this all education is good for now?

Graduate student
Los Angeles

Sheila Fuller's Youth column, on the militarization of education, really hit home. I've had personal experiences with military recruiters. In the 11th and 12th grades they were always at my school—the Navy, Marines, Air Force,

Readers' Views

Coast Guard—but college representatives weren't there. The way they run their programs, I think those recruiters must get a commission for each person they sign up; and it's a temptation for young people who have no other future or employment. One recruiter came over to my house. He was pushing for my signature; then my life would have belonged to the military. I call it a form of entrapment.

Young and unemployed
Los Angeles

The trouble I am having studying philosophy in college is that it is so disconnected from history and reality. So many of the professors have given up on everything, and are acting as if Foucault and Derrida are the greatest thing around, but these ideas don't give me much more than skepticism. Raya's thought is very difficult to grasp, but what I like is that *News & Letters* tries to relate philosophy to historic problems and revolutions.

Northwestern U. Student
Evanston, Ill.

I'm currently taking a course on Marxism and what I've been most excited about is Marx's 1844 *Humanist Essays*. They've helped me see that when Marx wrote in the *Communist Manifesto* about the goal of a classless society, he was serious about that—it's not what the so-called "Communist" countries have. What does N&L think about Marx's concept of alienation and alienated labor? How do you think we can overcome that? I'm glad somebody's conscious of Marx's relationship to Hegel. It's not so mysterious; Hegel said right out in one of his lectures that the "Geist" of the world is Freedom, and it's the task of man's actions to unite with that.

College student
Utah



CHARLES DENBY AND BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS TODAY

I was grateful to receive some copies of N&L, and I have already started to introduce N&L to some friends of mine. What I would like to know more about is who is Charles Denby? I have heard his name as the author of a book I have not come across here, and would like to know how to receive a copy.

New subscriber
The Gambia, West Africa

The universality of the life of the individual Charles Denby, through the particular of Marxist-Humanism and a lifetime of struggle, again illuminates Hegel's concept that only that which is an object of freedom may be called an Idea. I had read Denby's column in the pages of N&L before meeting him at the 1966 Convention of *News and Letters Committees*, and I identified with what he wrote, being a young machinist recently fired and working full-time in the Maryland Freedom Union. I had been to gatherings of SDS, SWP and IS, all of whom had no Blacks, and I had the feeling they didn't want any, since they only talked at, not to me. But when I met N&L and Denby, I said to myself this is me.

Ray McKay
New York

REMEMBERING PETER MALLORY

I always enjoyed Peter Mallory's articles. Your In Memoriam cast light on facets of his life I knew nothing about. He was a remarkably talented, sympathetic, wise, modest, committed person. I wish Hegel's Absolutes were such that he and Raya Dunayevskaya could be reunited therein.

Morgan Gibson
Japan

Although I am not a revolutionary, nor a Marxist, I admire Raya Dunayevskaya and John Dwyer, and support the cause of their fight for the oppressed. I enclose a check to continue that work.

Chinese dissident
California

IRAN/IRAQ

I recently spoke at a conference of the Iranian Left in New York City, and although I was asked to speak on "Marxist-Humanism and the Iranian Revolution" I tried not to sum up all Marxist-Humanism has developed on that question over the past ten years. That is because when we Iranian revolutionaries first got active in the movement and wanted to know about Marxism, the Leftists gave us not Marx to read, but other Marxist theorists. It took years for us to get that post-Marx Marxist distortion of Marx's ideas out of our system. So in my talk, instead of letting them know what Marxist-Humanism is on the basis of what I could say alone, I told them most of all they have to read the works of Raya Dunayevskaya for themselves.

Iranian revolutionary-in-exile
Illinois

In referring to the spate of public executions in Iraq in 1967, Raya Dunayevskaya said in *U.S. and Russia Enter Middle East Cockpit*, "The barbaric act of hanging 14 men from their necks in the public square in Baghdad has riveted attention, not so much on the alleged 'Jewish spies' as on the degeneracy of the Iraqi Revolution." Twenty years on, the degeneracy and barbarism have deepened. Public executions are a frequent spectacle and the racist (Arab supremacist) oppression that fell first of all on the Jews has extended to the Chaldean and Assyrian minorities, and of course the Kurds. The committee Against Repression and for Democratic Rights in Iraq has been active in Britain exposing these conditions.

Richard Bunting
Oxford, England

OUR READERS RESPOND

We salute those who work on *News & Letters* and wish them further success. It is very informative. We will be sending you information about the intrigues of Russia and China in Malta, assisted by their Maltese friends.

Anti-imperialists
Malta

I think the paper you put out is fine because the reasons for the action of the rulers as well as reasons for how the ruled react to them are presented in a simple, direct narrative that helps to answer the question, "Why?" I am enclosing a contribution of \$10 to keep you going.

Long-time subscriber
Chicago

As a relatively new reader of N&L, I challenged myself to read the entire April issue in a short period of time. It was then, for the first time, that I was able to fully appreciate the uniqueness and importance of this publication. For when I finished, there were many beautiful, human voices echoing in my thoughts—most specifically the many voices from Mexico in the Lead; the striking workers in the "Workshop Talks" column; the students in the abortion rights article; and the Kansas farmer. They were saying things I have just begun to study in theory, things they know from their lives. This led me to also further appreciate why Raya Dunayevskaya singled out workers, Blacks, women and youth as forces and Reason of revolution.

Young woman student
Long Beach, Cal.

I am a student in cultural and political science in Holland and am active in the political group "Daad en Gedachte." Is it possible to send me some more copies of N&L?

New reader
The Netherlands

WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE

The way I look at it, it's my body and I'm the only one who can decide what I do with it.

Black woman Illinois

At the Washington, D.C. march a group of youth from Northern Illinois University began to chant "Woman as Force, Woman as Reason, Revolution is Now in Season!"

Activist New Jersey

There is always a feeling of excitement whenever there is a march on Washington, D.C. You get a real concrete sense of purpose when you are surrounded by hundreds of thousands of people who are present for the same reasons you are.

Student Purchase, New York

At the abortion rights rally in San Francisco on April 2 that about 20,000 attended, I found it was much harder to sell copies of N&L than usual.

the future, any ground for further discussion/activity.

Urszula Wislanka California

I think no one has a right to tell a woman that she can or can't have an abortion. I think the main people behind the anti-abortion movement are men.

Woman high school student Los Angeles

It was unfortunate that at the march on Washington the direction given from the podium and in the NOW-arranged buses was to write to Sandra Day O'Connor, who has made her critical view of Roe V. Wade well known.

Angela Terrano New York

The New York Times recently carried articles on abortion research. The results of hundred of studies had shown that there were no lasting harmful effects of abortions on the women who had experienced them.

women have the right to choose the directions of their lives, and to bear the results of those decisions.

Health care worker New York City



ONGOING PHILOSOPHIC DIALOGUE

What has been exciting to me so far in our classes on "How to Prepare for the 1990s? Marxist-Humanism as a Body of Ideas" is to see how Dunayevskaya's writings of 1986-87 have so many things to say about her 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes."

Marxist-Humanist Chicago

The 1953 Letters spoke to my experience with "the Party" in the Philippines. The Party recognizes that there is such a thing as subjectivity, but it's a mere fact. Subjectivity is subordinated to objectivity—how many contacts and organizations do you have in your movement.

In the 1970s there were a lot of study groups at the height of the Philippines student activism. We had the Red Book of Mao and texts on Marx's economic doctrine which computed the "rate of exploitation," as if exploitation could be just quantified.

led those groups still claims it's based on Marx and Lenin. But how many of us went into Marx himself? How many asked how Marx was related to Hegel?

Philippine revolutionary New York

Can "experiencing the negative" be positive? Compare the "voyage of discoveries" between Marx and Raya Dunayevskaya: Marx's journey began in 1844 with the writing of the "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts," and during the same period, June, 1844, the Silesian weavers uprising occurred.

In 1953, Raya Dunayevskaya reached the philosophic moment of her journey with the working out of the May, 1953 Letters. Six weeks after the letters were written the East German workers' strike occurred, on June 17, 1953. The uprising was the first revolt by the working class under state-capitalist tyranny calling itself Communism.

Jerry K. Chicago

I have been reading some of the works of Raya Dunayevskaya and attending your classes on "Marxist-Humanism as a Body of Ideas." Her first book, Marxism and Freedom, is a wonderful study of Marxism, although I found Philosophy and Revolution very difficult.

Feminist Chicago

Editor's note: For information on dates and places of our ongoing classes on "How to Prepare for the 1990s? Marxist-Humanism as a Body of Ideas" see ad, page 4.

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

—PAMPHLETS—

- Constitution of News & Letters Committees 25¢ postage
- Dialectics of Revolution: American Roots and World Humanist Concepts Special bulletin on Marxist-Humanism as a body of ideas by Raya Dunayevskaya, Eugene Walker, Michael Connolly and Olga Domanski \$1 per copy

—ARCHIVES—

- The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—A Half-Century of Its World Development A 12,000-page microfilm collection on six reels \$120

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Black/Red View

by John Alan

The Bush administration's new \$80 million emergency plan to stamp-out drugs and violence in predominantly-Black Washington, D.C. is a veiled attack on Black home rule in that city without any certainty that the Federal government's intervention into local law enforcement can seriously stem the tide of drugs.

According to William Bennett, Bush's so-called drug czar, the plan calls for the construction of two new Federal prisons in the D.C. area to hold the increasing number of people arrested for drug-related crimes. Many of those charged with such crimes will have their cases transferred from the local courts, which Bennett believes are too lenient, to the U.S. district court whose Federal law calls for mandatory prison terms. The focus of the U.S. court will be on those drug-related crimes which are subject to capital punishment, because the District of Columbia has no capital punishment law.

BENNETT'S 'WAR ON DRUGS'

Not only does the Bennett plan call for relieving the local D.C. government of the prosecution of drug crimes, it essentially places drug enforcement under the supervision of FBI and Federal Drug Enforcement Administration agents, and the coordinating of all drug enforcement activity by Defense Department intelligence analysts.

Singling out Washington, D.C. as a model of Federal intervention into local government sends a message to

Black World

(continued from page 1)

Black politics alone. The city's Latino vote also retrogressed. Because the Black and white population is equally divided, the importance of the Latino vote to any coalition is patently clear. Nevertheless, Alderman Luis Gutierrez was the first from the Washington coalition to endorse Daley for mayor.

However, there is no doubt that the major reason for Daley's election is the Black political crisis in Chicago. Whether or not it is true that Blacks have entered a "racial twilight zone" as political activist Thomas Todd concluded of the April 4 election results, it is true that Black Chicago has entered a political twilight zone. It is a twilight zone in which the Black leadership and the Black masses confront each other, where beneath the spectacle of "leadership competition" coalesces an opportunistic unity of Black leadership motivated by fear of being turned out of office by an angry Black electorate.

That such a "unified leadership" would be more subject to political pressure by the Daley administration than by its own Black constituency is already apparent from the enthusiastic responses of Black leaders to Daley's so-called "rainbow" cabinet.

Along with this political opportunism, we have seen the pathetic spectacle of Black leaders and bourgeois spokesmen blaming the electoral loss on the Black masses. From Jesse Jackson to Eugene Sawyer, the refrain has been that the Black masses are to blame for the current political crisis. In an embarrassing front-page interview in the *Chicago Tribune* (April 7, 1989), Sawyer, the man who shamelessly conspired with the racist white power bloc in the City Council to become mayor, complained that "he holds the black community responsible for the loss of an office it once worked so hard to attain."

Naturally, Sawyer and the city's Black political leadership would refuse to admit that the poor Black turnout from the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) residents—unlike the unprecedented political phenomenon that Harold Washington was able to elicit—had anything to do with the CHA "lock-down" and police sweeps that the Sawyer administration carried out during the primary campaign. Nor are Sawyer and Chicago's Black leadership likely to admit that it is no accident that Daley has retained the two Black administrators directly responsible for the CHA "lock-down," Vince Lane as director of the CHA, and Leroy Martin as chief of police.

ESCAPISM OF BLACK LEADERSHIP

The Black leadership's moralizing about its decline in political power as the fault of the Black masses is not only hypocritical, it's an evasion of the stubborn fact that the ill-resolved contradictions of Black life in Chicago have remained unaffected by political reformism.

The grass-roots movement that elected Harold Washington had been pushed aside by Chicago's Black leadership long before the recent elections. There is no better proof of that than the comment of Bob Lucas, head of the Kenwood-Oakland Community Organization and a leading supporter of Tim Evans, who said of Daley: "All he has to do is work with us. We've got better things to do than protest."

Chicago's Black leadership and its Black masses have never been farther apart than at this moment. This explains why the legacy that has assumed political power is not that of Harold Washington, but that of "Boss" Richard J. Daley. What it doesn't explain is: how can the Black leadership, responsible for the current fragmentation of Black politics, be expected to re-unite it? Instead, it is only when Black masses are viewed as reason—and that is what brought Harold Washington to power—that the imperative to write Black political action with a philosophy of revolution arises.

Politics of repression, race and drugs

the country that the administration has shifted the political focus of the "war on drugs" from interdiction into its international trade to a war against drug users and drug dealers in the Black ghettos. Bennett has made the racial aspect of this "war" quite clear by focusing on "crack cocaine." "Crack" is the drug of the ghetto and by its very nature is the drug of poverty. It is the cheap, harsh residue that is left after cocaine has been processed.

What looms large behind this targeting of "crack" in the District of Columbia is that it offers an ideal political opportunity for this retrogressive, Reagan-type administration, to carry on its war against Blacks in general. Washington, D.C., is not only Black, but its unpopular Black mayor, Marion Barry, has alleged connections with known drug traffickers, thus providing the administration with a "ready-made" Willie Horton-type case to turn drug and violence into a metaphor for Black.

What this administration is doing politically is plastering over the myriad problems that the Black urban centers have, such as a 45% rate of unemployment among Black youth; and where the only real economic alternatives, outside of crime, are permanent unemployment or a minimum wage job. Black youth have often revolted against this permanent crisis—which is inseparable from the total crisis of American capitalism—as in Liberty City and Overtown, Miami.

BLACK REALITY BENEATH THE DRUGS

Bush's "new war on crack" hides the nature of Black reality and at the same time blunts the real opposition to this reality. Thus we find that the ultra-conservative Jack Kemp, Housing and Urban Development Secretary, can ignore decades of neglect and deterioration in public housing by moving to rid the housing projects of drug dealers and users.

The draconian nature of Kemp's anti-drug campaign is tantamount to a war against poor Black tenants. If a member of a housing project family gets involved in a drug-related crime, the entire family will be evicted regardless of the fact that they are not involved.

We, who are struggling to create a new society with-



Demonstrators at 35 U.S. campuses marked National Black Student Action Day, April 20.

Black student strike

Detroit, Mich.—Over 100 Black students at Wayne State University (WSU) occupied the Student Services Center in a "study-in" that lasted over 11 days. Students had sent a letter with 17 demands to WSU President David Adamany, and began their occupation after he replied that he needed more time to study the demands. Demands included upgrading of the Center for Black Studies to a department, 30% more Black faculty, and more financial aid for Black students.

Widespread community support was evident in the rally of about 400 parents and friends, and the messages, along with food and drink provided to the students, by the Black community.

Darrell Dawsey, a spokesperson for the protesters, said, "This is also a vehicle to make a statement about the racist nature of the university...They have a course on Aristotle worth four credits. Why don't they have a course on Malcolm X worth four credits? Because they don't respect you."

Another Black student told *News & Letters*: "The students are upset and angry. The Center for Black Studies has been a bone of contention since the 1970s. It is not a department, it cannot grant tenure, and has never had a director committed to Black Studies. One of the 'last straws' was the recent denial of tenure to Black activist Professor Schavi Mali Ali. (She resigned.)"

"Virtually no Black professors support the Center. The better professors don't want their classes to be in the Center, even when they are related. Women's Studies at Wayne has also been gradually disappearing. Black studies at Wayne was never seriously academic."

"Darrell Dawsey is quoted as 'the spokesperson' but he is President of the Black Students Organization, and has been organizing for some time. This protest represents what the students saw as needing to be done."

As we go to press, the student protest has ended with the university's agreement to the following demands: 1) establishment of an Africana Studies Department; 2) a subsidy of \$472,000 for the new department, as opposed to the \$103,000 previous funding for the Center; 3) ten full-time scholarships for Black students; and 4) increasing the number of full-time Black faculty.

out exploitative human relationships, in no way condone or support the exploitation of the poor Black community by drug lords. But, at the same time, we must expose the fact that Bush's selective war on crack is an implementation of his retrogressive, racist politics.

War on drugs and Blacks

Los Angeles, Cal.—On April 6, Nancy Reagan stood by while the Los Angeles Police Department SWAT team raided a South Central Los Angeles crack house. She had been invited on the raid by Police Chief Daryl Gates, who spoke of her "courage" in her fight against drugs. But her concept of how to fight drug addiction—"Just Say No"—is far removed from reality and I think the state concept which Nancy Reagan reflects goes much deeper than that small phrase.

This high-profile war on drugs is an attempt to confine the epidemic of drugs and violence to the ghettos and barrios nationwide and save the white suburbs. Now this epidemic is getting out of control; it is threatening the tourist trade of the nation's capital, Washington, D.C., where \$80 million is being projected to build more prisons and deploy federal agents in an attempt to cap the overflow of violence. If they can't confine us to the ghetto, then they build more prisons or shoot us down in the street.

While Nancy took a tour of the crack house, she spoke of how "These people in here are beyond the point of rehabilitating. There is no life, and that's very discouraging." It's as if she is calling for the death of a people. The L.A. Spanish language paper *La Opinion* showed a picture of four Black women being shackled and chained and led away like murderers or animals, while Nancy Reagan sat in an air-conditioned mobile home, "The Establishment," eating fruit cocktail, far removed from the reality of the dark streets.

There is a plague sweeping this country, America, whether it takes the form of cocaine, heroin, alcoholism or suicide. But when someone asks you what is the greatest killer of young Black adults tell them alienation, found within the structures of this society. There is no amount of police that can stop this rampage so they will attempt to eliminate us.

This system of capitalism makes us poor, and drives us to the point where we only feel comfortable with ourselves when we are so full of dope we don't know who we are as a people. We need to find ourselves and get back to a self-movement for identity and away from this systematic self-destruction, robbing and killing one another. We are striking out against the closest thing to us, ourselves.

Many of the Black youth in Los Angeles are searching for that identity, wearing Africa around their necks and reading Malcolm X and Frantz Fanon. We do need to clear our heads for the next stage of social movement.

—Gene Ford

Iran in aftermath of war

New York, N.Y.—The cessation of war has taken away a very useful pretense from the counter-revolution in Iran. It now has to directly face the subjective/objective burdens that weigh down on the realities of life.

First there was the attempt to create another "holy war," this time against a "satanic representative" of the West, the author of the *Satanic Verses*. Then came the dethronement of the Pan-Islamist faction's "Crown Prince"—the Ayatollah Montazeri. Many believe this reflects that Khomeini's Pan-Islamist faction is losing ground after having thrived on ideological hysteria. And in the past few days, we have seen the broadly touted discovery of a major coup attempt in the armed forces.

However interpreted, these incidents bespeak a new tortured and squeamish wave within the counter-revolution in Iran.

It was within this context that CIRA (Center for Iranian Research and Analysis) convened its annual conference in New York City on April 7-9. This Western university-style academic center no longer holds the promise of a radical and serious center of thought that it once did when, at its 1983 conference, Raya Dunayevskaya spoke. The conference had scheduled workshops by professors from Iranian universities and by an Islamic Republic regime's minister, which reveals the direction this center is now taking. Iranian radical intellectuals in New York decided to hold their own discussion on the same weekend outside of the conference, where they openly expressed their non-support.

There, by invitation of the Association of the Iranian Left, this writer spoke on "Marxist-Humanism and its relationship to the Iranian Revolution" to a group of Iranian intellectuals. Among the audience, there were those, especially women, who responded open-mindedly, manifesting a need and a search for ideas and philosophy. There was as well, among some, an attitude of indiscriminate disbelief and vulgarization. Finally, there was a participant who, in my opinion, spoke on behalf of many intellectual activists with experience before the revolution of 1979. He verbalized his search for ideas and philosophy, while conveying his distrust for the follow-the-vanguard attitude of the past.

Now, more than ever, is the time for new ideas and a philosophy of liberation to surge forth and enliven the movement from theory in Iran with new beginnings.

—Ali Atefeh

Direct from South Africa Freedom Journal

A trip to a rural area

People of Empondweni

(continued from page 1)

These Blacks are treated as less than animals, and used as machines to provide profits to the Boers. These masters, as they are also called, presently rest on the huge incomes made by the slaves in the fields through their strength, loyalty and dedication, without being given anything in return to survive with their families. They are not allowed to own fields or plough crops, they are not allowed to own more than ten cows, sheep and goats in the area, they are not allowed to leave the area to find alternative employment without the approval of the Matekisi.

Another reason why I decided to refer to these people of Empondweni as slaves is because of the amount paid to them as wages by these ignorant whites in the homelands. Women workers in the fields are paid R2 (one rand=40¢) on each day, from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. without lunch or tea breaks.

Men workers are each paid R5 on each day for the same hours as women workers. They are expected to perform duties whenever the Matekisi wants them to, whether or not it is between these hours.

Whenever the master needs them, he drives his car to each family and uses his car horn as a signal for them to come to work, even on Sundays. No one has established the amount paid to the Indunas, the supervisors whose duty it is to look after the slaves and report to the masters any irregularities. I was told that some who tried to question the land issue were expelled from Empondweni. This was done to create fear among others who had the same complaints. This mechanism has been designed to force the workers and their families to rely solely on the captains of the fields for accommodations and living itself. God knows, these families are nearly all crazed with hunger almost daily.

When the system was implemented by the captains these people were informed that they would receive free rations of mealies and other things like pumpkins, peaches, etc. To their surprise this ration is only given to the Indunas to distribute among their families.

I came across three little girls ranging from 11 to 15 years of age. They all looked hopeless with cracked and swollen lips. When I asked who they were and why they had cracked lips, they told me it is because of the shortage of food in their homes. I offered them chips and bread which I had in my bag, they simply tore the bread as hungry lions. After that they offered to help me with my luggage to where I was going, some 18 kilometers away.

On our journey we traveled in grass higher than my height. These children told me to watch for dangerous snakes, which they called by name. They told me to take off my shoes because of the mist and wet grass which is everywhere under the mountain. I was shivering because of the shadow cast by the trees, like any visitor would do. They pointed out Black Mountain to me, which looked so dark that you could never find your way at night. Before we parted I donated R1 to them to share.

On my arrival I related this story to my wife who told me that most of the people of Empondweni had fled or been expelled by the Matekisi. The reason most are expelled is because they refused to render themselves to the cheap labour system adopted by Matekisi and his brothers on the farms.

LAND OF ANGUISH, TIME OF SHAME

During my third day at Empondweni I witnessed an old Black man of about 65 years of age, bending to mix cement and sand for the farmer's wife (Nkosazana). He used a rope to pull up a drum of water from the Tugela River tied onto two wooden poles. I saw the old man trying all he could to pull up the heavy drum unsuccessfully, until he could no longer lift his own body up, or stand astride after he let loose the rope. He breathed very heavily just like an ox when pulling a heavy wagon. You should know that there was no way I could help him because of the strict laws subjected on him.

I again reported this to my wife. She told me that if the old man did not cope as instructed, no matter how heavy the burden, he would be subjected to a severe and humiliating disciplinary action. She told me that when the moment comes for one to be disciplined, it becomes a mournful and gruesome occasion for his family and loved ones. It becomes a time to weep and watch in anguish the inhuman punishment given out by any drunken Boer.

If Matekisi is very cross, he uses his fist, feet, or even any object like a hammer to punish any person he believes is an offender. Those whose crimes are not regarded very serious are sometimes subjected to the sjambok. Matekisi instructs his strong slaves to hold the accused and to take off his clothes, including under-



—David Turnley

wear. He will be thrashed until he cannot feel the pain.

Matekisi usually takes a gulp of alcohol before he punishes anyone. Women usually pray for mercy, which in turn makes the punisher exceed the severity of the punishment. All this is done in the presence of small children, their parents' private parts exposed to them and everyone around. How insulting this conduct is. Without protection from the government, which is fully aware of such happenings, there is no intervention to calm these inhuman practices.

All manner of disciplined restraint by the farm workers and their families have been exhausted. Once the punishment is furnished and the Matekisi gone, people gather to discuss what can be done to eliminate this behaviour. Mind you, these discussions are not held openly because certain individuals are trusted by Matekisi. Those found to be inducing others to do something about the treatment are also brought to punishment, after the head slave has reported the conversation.

YOUTH'S DETERMINATION TO BE FREE

The youth I met have great enthusiasm, courage and determination to be free from this bondage. They have had enough of the system and are doing all in their power without Inkatha to eliminate the system of slavery. They will not forget their desire for revenge once they can get their hands on anything that will help them and their parents to stop the humiliating domination by the Afrikaners and their stooges.

They told me further that they would make sure that their fathers and brothers, who fear to come back to this place because of the degrading punishment, will come back once the battle they are preparing is over. I heard them singing the familiar and stirring lament, "Thula Mama Thula" (stop crying mama, stop), whilst their mothers wept uncontrollably after an incident.

I told them to hold discussions among themselves in the mountains and to seek assistance from other people of other fields to form a force against the system. I offered to introduce them to the Farm Workers Union under the umbrella of COSATU.

These people desperately need help to free them from this slave system. Thousands of people are starving while Inkatha, which claims to represent them, is not even worried or concerned about them. If these people formed any organization to fight the slave system, Inkatha would use its forces to crush the peaceful opposition, because it would expose their neutral stand against the injustices perpetrated against the people. I fear an outbreak of war between Inkatha and the youth.

The following questions must be asked:

- Where is the Zulu Government and Inkatha when the racism is meted out to the homeland people in the land of their birth by the Matekisi?
- Where is the Zulu Government and Inkatha when people are expelled from their own homes and land?
- Where is UWUSA (United Workers Union of South Africa), an affiliate of Inkatha, when the farm workers are paid R2 and R5 and when those who resist are forced to flee their homes?
- Where is Inkatha on the silence maintained by the white masters regarding the land of Empondweni and other places in Natal?

It is appalling to these people that Gatsha Buthelezi and his Inkatha slander this just struggle as subversion. How weak-minded is this organization and its leaders. They view the mild opposition against the slave system as terrorism. You see, Inkatha is part and parcel of this system which has brought suffering to Blacks in their own land. That is why Inkatha cannot fight the system, but directs its anger at those who resist.

The once feared "Divide and Rule" machine, so deadly accurate in annihilating any obstruction in its path, has lost its roar. This machine which the South African government relied on is cracking fast and badly. I am led to believe that within the next two years it will backfire, choking and pleading for help. When the Boers and the South African regimes start loving, they will find us hating and gunning for revenge. When the regime and its allies decided to implement this system, they had not counted on the shock of resistance from the side of the oppressed. They intended not only to minimize the revolution but to crush it by the use of force and stooges like Inkatha leaders.

This slavery and its conditions have given the slave only one option, to be organized as a force as the only mechanism to fight slavery, because most have nowhere else to go. In Natal and other nearby areas controlled by the Zulu Government, its acts of violence and its allies who suppress other organizations with different aims and objectives have backfired. This is because of active people in those areas who stand against Inkatha and UWUSA. Active people will always find the means to express their grievances and shock towards the killings and acts of intimidation by Inkatha supporters.

The oppressors are aware of the danger coming their way. What tomorrow holds for South Africa nobody knows. Whilst the country is dominated by racial discrimination no peace can be maintained whether through killings, detention, or bannings. I am not only talking about this generation but of those who come after us. The time has arrived for new social relations to be established in the rural areas.

Coming next issue: Solidarnosc's retreat in Poland



Solidarnosc's Lech Walesa meeting April 18, 1989 with Wojciech Jaruzelski, the man who imposed martial law in Poland in 1981 to try and break the Solidarnosc-led revolt. We will have more on this retreat in Poland next issue.

How can one live with dignity?

Editor's Note: During the negotiations between the government and Walesa, strikes continued. Below we print a report of a strike in Lodz, excerpted from Tygodnik Mazowsze (Mazowsze Weekly) No. 285.

"Let Lech come and feed our children" say women from the weaving hall in answer to my question about their attitude to Walesa's appeal to stop striking during the round table discussions.

"Marchlewski" is the biggest factory in Lodz. It's light industry, but the work is very hard. Conditions are right out of "The Promised Land," I saw a machine from 1896. The occupation strike started on February 28.

In January the director received money for raises. Not much, the average was 16,000 zlotys per worker. He divided it himself, without any consultation with the workers and with a marked preference for those who earn a lot already. The raises varied from 4,000 zl to 22,000 zl.

On February 15 a large number of workers refused to accept their pay because it included the unjust raise. Strike was in the air.

People spontaneously started to turn off machines. They elected 38 representatives to the Strike Committee. "The rank-and-file chose to strike," said the President of the Strike Committee. "The 17 people negotiating with the director had no chance to control the almost 4,000."

The majority working in "Marchlewski" are women. For them it's not an occupation strike but a "rotation" strike. They strike for 16 hours, then for 8 hours they go home to wash clothes, cook, get their children ready for school, shop.

"If we tried to propose to them to accept the director's offer," says one of the members of the Strike Committee, "they would wheel us out in a wheel-barrow together with the director." "The government is provoking us with price raises. How can we live with dignity?"

"It was supposed to be an example for all of Lodz's factories," said one advisor to the Strike Committee. "Marchlewski was going to take care of its demands without striking. Then it got out of our hands. Marchlewski is a symbol for Lodz, like the shipyards are for Gdansk."

The night of March 7 the Strike Committee held a referendum; 65% voted to continue.

Abortion rights march challenges anti-woman retrogression

(continued from page 1)

coming to the march because they had to do something; mothers brought their daughters and daughters their mothers. Being among the throngs of marchers, there was no way that you could think this was only about keeping abortion legal—it was about what it means to be a woman in this society.

Yet despite such determination, what was so telling was what women said when we asked if they thought this historic march would make any difference. While some said they hoped it would, or that it should, many said no—no, they didn't think this march would save abortion rights. Yet they were there. Doesn't such an attitude reveal women's realization that we are in for a long fight, and that these demonstrating thousands have no illusions that Bush is any break from the eight long years of Reaganism?

UNDER WHIP OF COUNTER-REVOLUTION

It isn't only the counter-revolutionary character created by Reaganism in the U.S. that we are struggling to get out from under. We have been fighting under the whip of counter-revolution worldwide since the mid-1970s. Whether it was the Portuguese Revolution of 1974-75—where women peasants, factory workers, domestic workers, and women's liberationists were key to creating the revolution—or the Iranian Revolution of 1979—where women were the first to demonstrate against the anti-freedom of Khomeini—these last 15 years are ones where we have seen emerging revolutions stopped in their tracks. They have never developed to total freedom, to new human relations, which was the original goal of the Women's Liberation Movement.

In the U.S., eight years of Reaganism have brought the greatest threat to women's right to control our own bodies since we won legalized abortion in 1973. That no one at this march was fooled by Bush's "kinder, gentler America" was seen in the fact that a best-selling T-shirt at the demonstration had a picture of a gory coat-hanger combined with Bush's slogan—and the words, "kinder, gentler America," were dripping with blood.

After getting a green light from the White House, anti-abortion fanatics have intensified their harassment of women who seek to control their own bodies: they scream murderer at women walking into clinics, and then hypocritically claim to be concerned over a supposed post-abortion trauma. On April 4, less than a week before the march, Norma McCorvey, the plaintiff in the *Roe vs. Wade* abortion case decided by the Supreme Court in 1973, had the windows of her home and car shattered by three blasts of a shotgun. The very morning of the demonstration, arsonists struck two women's clinics in Ocala and Fort Myers, Fla.—one, which had been torched before, was totally gutted.

What is revealed by the March for Women's Lives and women's determination to be there—even when they think it will make no immediate difference—is that what counter-revolution breeds, besides misery, destruction and death, is revolt. It was revolt against existing

society and for a new human one that brought women into the streets 20 years ago and helped us win the limited right to abortion in 1973. But the question in the air today is why do we have to fight for this all over again so many years later?

WHAT WAS MISSING ON APRIL 9?

A partial answer to that question could be seen in the very makeup of the April 9 march. While the youth at the demonstration revealed an exciting new dimension of the Women's Liberation Movement (WLM), what urgently needs to be addressed is that this march was mostly white and mostly middle-class. Even the planners of the demonstration had to admit that it appeared to be about 95% white.

How can this be after 20 years of the WLM? The question is not do Blacks and working women care about the right to control their bodies. Of course they do! The question is, is this new emerging movement going to so narrow its vision of what it is fighting for that Black and working women will see that it is not a



News & Letters photo

Black, working class and poor women, abortion has already become inaccessible. Now 41 states refuse to pay for abortions for poor women, and this didn't just start yesterday—it began happening immediately after *Roe vs. Wade* was decided in 1973.

Marxist-Humanism's contribution to the WLM for the past 20 years has been threefold—to bring out both the Black and working class dimension of our freedom struggle—but never to separate that from what else our movement must root itself in—a philosophy of revolution.

Far from being an abstraction, philosophy is what can give our movement a direction when it is seen as your vision of a new society, of what it means to be a total human being. That is what fighting for the right to control our bodies is about—being a complete human being with control over our lives, our bodies, our minds.

It is precisely when we are faced with having to fight

From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya

(continued from page 4)

free" and "self-liberation" in the *Philosophy of Mind*, which, to me, is the new society and not the return to metaphysics. I'm not saying that Hegel may not have consciously striven to return to metaphysics (he certainly did so personally in his apology for the Prussian state) but neither those who have tried to make him out a complete reactionary as a statist, nor those who have welcomed his glorification of "revealed religion" (Christianity in general, Lutheranism in particular, or, as Bochenki, the angry Thomist, to "deism" if not veritable atheism), can explain away why his Absolute is always Idea and Mind and not just God. Very obviously, the ideal toward which humanity, the humanity of the French Revolution, was striving toward, and the ideal toward which the philosopher Hegel who wished thought to be so great a determinant in the transformation of reality, were not so far apart as either the ordinary or scientific mind wish to make out. For Notion is revolutionary politics, not in the narrowly political sense as "the organizational vanguardists" would have us believe, but in the sense of 1917: free creative power.

(When Marx is in the market he laughs at, and links, "Liberty, Equality and Bentham"; when he is in proletarian politics, it is "thinking, bleeding Paris," so flushed with excitement at the "incubation of a new society," that it fails to see the counter-revolution, etc., etc.)

THE GREATNESS OF The "Absolute Method," the Hegelian dialectic, is its universals, and their distinction from the generalizations of abstract understanding, so that each universal—Being as such, Essence as such, Notion as such—is a new category, a leap into individuality "purified of all that interferes with its universalism." As Lenin put it in his Notebooks: "The forming of abstract notions already includes consciousness of law so that the simplest forming of notions (judgments, syllogisms, etc.) signifies ever deeper knowledge of objec-

tive world connections. Here the significance of the Hegelian Logic." The important point, it seems to me, is that the new categories arise at certain turning points in history when men have such overwhelming experience that they are sure also they have found "the truth," so that, as Lenin put it, "the consciousness of the law of the objective world connections" becomes transmuted into "new categories of thoughts, or knots."

In a word, the Doctrine of Notion is revolutionary politics, contains the categories of Freedom, overcomes the opposition between subject and object, theory and practice, notion and reality, reaches "the second negation," not only "in general" as revolution against existing society, but in particular as the new society which has not merely the stigma of the old from which it came, but is too ready to transform the universal into a "fixed particular" (be that state property or plan or even soviet instead of moving forward to the abolition of the division between mental and manual work, the new human dimension.)

That is why the polemic in the Doctrine of the Notion is so contemporary, so relevant to our day. When Hegel strikes out against transforming the universal into a fixed particular, it doesn't really matter whether he has in mind, in one case, socialism, and in the other stified property; we gain an illumination when he speaks of the universal needing to be posited as particular, but if the particular is posited as the universal, it becomes isolated or, to use Marx's expression, gains "the fixity of a popular prejudice."

Even the bourgeois philosopher, John Findlay (whose book, despite its barbs against Marxists, I found fascinating), sees the revolutionary in Hegel as he concludes his praise of him "as the philosopher of 'absolute negativity,' the believer in nothing that does not spring from the free, uncommitted, self-committing human spirit." (Hegel, *A Re-Examination* [New York: MacMillan, 1958], p. 354.)

We certainly can no longer, as did Lenin, keep "our" philosophic notebooks private. We live in the age of absolutes, and freedom as the innermost dynamic of both life and thought demands the unity of philosophy and revolution.

Yours, Raya

movement that includes their freedom? For many for our rights in such a counter-revolutionary climate, that people are looking for the kinds of answers that philosophy can help us work out. Thus the very same weekend that we demonstrated in the streets of Washington, D.C., News and Letters Committees were also participating in two other important activities, both of which revealed a hunger for philosophy.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND A PHILOSOPHY OF REVOLUTION

In Iowa City, Iowa, 1,500 women met at a conference called "Parallels and Intersections: Racism and Other Forms of Oppression" to talk about what to do about racism (see story, page 2). Not only was it not all an academic discussion—especially for the women on welfare who were there—but the real hunger for philosophy was revealed when 50 women jammed into a very small room to participate in our workshop because they wanted to be part of a discussion on "Philosophic Foundations for Organizing Against Racism and Sexism." That conference was also mostly white, but one felt it was seriously trying to figure out how to have a truly representative women's movement.

We as well participated in a discussion in New York at the Association of the Iranian Left on "Marxist-Humanism and the Iranian Revolution" (see story, page 10). There too the question of philosophy was most concrete because participants—like the Iranian woman we had met at the march—had been a part of a revolution that was transformed into a horrible counter-revolution. The Iranian Revolution was where the women took to the streets against Khomeini ten years ago last month and chanted, "At the dawn of freedom, we have no freedom!" and the majority of the Left, of those who were supposed to be for freedom, ignored them, or worse, attacked them. At the New York meeting there was a reaching to philosophy—a deep questioning about how to have a revolution that can lead to freedom, not the counter-revolution of a Khomeini.

What needs a great deal more discussion, at conferences, at planning meetings for pro-choice activities, within the pages of *News & Letters*, is how to develop the new beginning this tremendous March for Women's Lives could become. That task is not a simple question of multiple issues rather than only the single issue of abortion rights. It is a question of finding the absolute opposite of this inhuman society if we are to move to a new stage.

Raya Dunayevskaya

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Youth in Revolt

by Franklin Dmitryev

In protest of cuts in the Canadian government's financial aid for Indian and Inuk students, 21 Indian students joined a hunger strike in March and April. Eight students began the hunger strike March 22 while occupying the Thunder Bay, Ontario, offices of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs whose head called the cuts a "generous and fair" policy.

A report smuggled out of Zaire says at least five students were killed and 100 injured in February when soldiers attacked 1,000 demonstrators in Kinshasa protesting bus fare increases. Students in Lubumbashi marched in support of those in Kinshasa. Several dozen students may have been killed in the two cities, and President Mobutu ordered the University of Kinshasa closed for a month. It was the first known sizable student protest in Zaire in more than a decade.

On the anniversary of the April 19, 1960, student uprising that brought down the dictator Syngman Rhee, tens of thousands of students and striking workers held rallies in at least ten cities in South Korea. Riot police attacked the rallies with tear gas and arrested many workers and students.

Students boycotted classes in dozens of U.S. law schools April 6 to protest inadequate representation of Blacks, Hispanics and women in their faculties. Over 200 students and a handful of professors set up picket lines at Yale, while Hispanic students organized a study-in of 125 at Harvard.

*The finest attack on organizational vanguardists I have read anywhere is in Hegel's *Philosophy of Religion*, in his attacks on the Church—and what a totalitarian, monolithic party medieval Catholicism was! Whoever it was who said that he who turns his back on history is doomed to relive it must have our age in mind!

Youth

Working: sub-minimum wage, longer hours, mutilated lives

by Sheila Fuller

My younger sister has a minimum wage job at a drive-through Burger King, to support her family. Every day she suffers from the deafening noise of the walkie-talkie and the burns at the kitchen. She used to think that the minimum wage was a 'training wage' and not a wage that you work up to. In my family, all the kids went to work when we were 14. Ever since I remember, the eight-hour day and the ban on homework were not enforced. But now after eight years of deterioration with Reaganism, Bush is making these legal. That is frightening.—A young worker

In the March issue of News & Letters, John Marcotte's "Workshop Talks" column had reported on the horrible facts of child labor in New York City's garment sweatshops and factories. This month, I have been re-



In Chicago, hundreds of youth lined up for the city's summer jobs program.

ceiving more reports on the increase in child labor in the U.S.

According to the conservative estimates of the Labor Department, child labor in the 1980s has doubled. These statistics include children as young as 13 who work in service sector jobs and handle dangerous machinery such as electric meat slicers and dough mixers. It also includes children who work in roofing and mining, two of the most dangerous job categories. These reports don't even include the skyrocketing rate of child labor among undocumented immigrant youth.

WILL CHILD LABOR LAWS BE WEAKENED?

The Labor Department has now set up a Child Labor Advisory Committee to relax child labor laws which were passed in 1938, after the labor revolts of the 1930s. This committee has tried to ease a ban on the use of dangerous machinery by youth under 18, and to extend the hours that children are allowed to work. This horrible reality of child labor today shows the depth of retrogression in this country in the 1980s.

At the same time, the U.S. Senate has just passed a minimum wage bill which only increases the minimum wage from \$3.35 to \$4.55 per hour by 1991, and

Anti-nuclear protest

Shoshone Indian Land, Nev.—In the middle of April, five of us, Marxist-Humanists and friends, drove to the U.S. government's Nevada nuclear bomb Test Site, some 60 miles north of Las Vegas, to participate in the Reclaim The Test Site II protest, attended by more than 2,000 people from no less than a dozen states. Although the main act of civil disobedience on Saturday, April 15, saw over 500 get arrested for "trespassing" on what was once Shoshone Indian land, by the time we arrived late Friday already 350 had been caught on U.S. bomb-testing property.

Many youth at this protest were trying to work out a deeper critique of both this system and the effectiveness of our opposition to it. One man told us: "The weapons they're testing out there are for the superpowers' control of a world economic order based on the exploitation of the Third World—what I'm looking forward to is a new international solution to this mess."

A 16-year-old youth said: "The capitalist system is about some people using others for their personal profit." While there were many who took the "peace" theme to extremes—several men and women were nearly naked just so we might catch a glimpse of the peace signs tattooed on their butts—others challenged their lack of effectiveness. One woman said: "It's not enough anymore to just parade around; even getting arrested has become no more than a joke for the police."

The need to question the depth of our theoretical and practical activity came from several people making connections between other struggles not unrelated to desert bomb testing on Indian property. A man from Waco, Texas, said: "When I think about what our government has done to the people of Central America in the last ten years I want to do something more radical, something that would make a difference."

Two lesbian women and an Asian-American man spoke to us of the need to make such powerful issues as the renewed fight for abortion rights explicit at this event, rather than keeping them in a separate world. However, for others, the pacifist approach meant also an offering of the olive branch to such world rulers as Gorbachev, whom they see as the new epitome of world tranquility. Several pointed to him as the one who has initiated abolition of nuclear weapons, even though he has raced to compete with the U.S. to create Star Wars.

It is clear that serious theoretical differences exist in the peace movement today and need to be worked out.

—Joe Weerth

allows for a sub-minimum "training" wage during the first two months after a worker is hired. George Bush has threatened to veto this bill to allow for a lower minimum wage and a longer (six months!) sub-minimum wage period. However, no matter which version of the bill is passed, the sub-minimum wage system will have been legalized.

None of the scant media reports about child labor or the minimum wage mention that it is young human lives that are being mutilated. A whole generation of youth is facing the experience of physically and mentally degrading labor. One worker told me: "I know a guy who works two minimum wage jobs. His wife works in a jewelry factory and brings in homework. Every day, when their ten-year-old son comes home from school, there are earrings waiting to be repacked by him. The whole family repacks jewelry at night."

'WHAT ARE THEY TRAINING US TO DO?'

A young worker who now works at Toys-R-Us had this to say about the minimum wage bill: "They use the term 'training wage.' But what are they training us to do? The work is so devoid of interest. They want to squeeze the most out of you and then kick you out. I started out at the minimum wage, and it took me a long time to get to the level of survival. With the sub-minimum wage, by the time you get to the minimum wage level, you are out the door. At Toys-R-Us, my young co-workers are getting their even younger brothers and sisters to work there to help the family.

"With the sub-minimum wage, the whole family has to work. It seems like a very horrible future. Most of us here work until 11 at night. For those who go to school the next day, what kind of studying can you get done when you leave your job at that time? Weekends are a rare commodity. I used to think of weekends as time for having fun. But now you have to work. You don't have time. There is no time to do anything but work. No time for rest, not to mention human self-development."

He was referring to Karl Marx's vision of humanism: "Time is the space for human development." To me, these youth, in speaking of their conditions of life and labor, are questioning the way this inhuman capitalist system deprives you of developing your capacities and talents as a human being. For many youth in America today, the period of youth, a time of enormous learning and discovery, has been transformed into drudgery. But far from passively accepting the moves backward to the child labor practices of 100 years ago, many youth are questioning this reality. What is needed now is a dialogue on the kind of life and labor that we are for.

Students protest tuition increases, racism

Northern Illinois University

DeKalb, Ill.—On April 19, students rallied against tuition increases at Northern Illinois University (NIU). The protest was sustained for over six hours and ended in an hour and a half sit-in at the Administration building.

Many of us who spoke-out at the rally, which was attended by over 200 students, expressed indignation at having tuition hikes imposed on us year after year by an impersonal board of business people who have the interests of corporations and the military at heart, as opposed to the interests of students. The tuition at NIU has doubled since Reagan took office in 1980. Many students said they were afraid they wouldn't be able to finish their education because of the increases.

Martha Palmer, the former employee of NIU whose firing sparked a multi-racial student movement last semester (see N&L October, 1988), gave a rousing speech about how students need to unify as one force to demand that their voices be heard. She said we can be sure that another increase in tuition would only go to administrative overhead as it has for the past few years. She also spoke about the problems Black students have at an institution like NIU where they get criticized for everything they do. "If they stand for their rights they're told they're crying racism. If they keep to themselves they're told they're apathetic." Many Black students enthusiastically cheered her speech.

Black Student Union president Tracy Deis spoke out against the tuition hikes as institutionally racist because they prevent Blacks and other minorities from getting an education. The attrition rate for Blacks at NIU is already over 85%.

In the planning of the protest, many students insisted that it should be a demonstration against tuition hikes, racism and sexism, but the Student Association refused to participate unless it was limited to the issue of tuition. A member of the John Lennon Society and the Forum for Marxist-Humanist Thought responded in his speech at the rally, "The Student Association does not want me to mention racism because it will 'confuse' you. But I know students have brains." He added that at this university education has become "an endurance test—a way to see how much you can take before you break down."

After a march through campus residence halls, 30 of us sat-in at the administration building and forced the administration to keep the building open an extra hour. While occupying the building, we made a phone call of

New youth journal

NEW BEGINNINGS

Editor's note: A youth paper is being published by News & Letters at California State University at Los Angeles (CSULA). Below we print excerpts from one article in their first issue. For a copy of New Beginnings write to CSULA News & Letters, P.O. Box 29194, Los Angeles, CA 90029.

Ethnic Studies in the '90s?

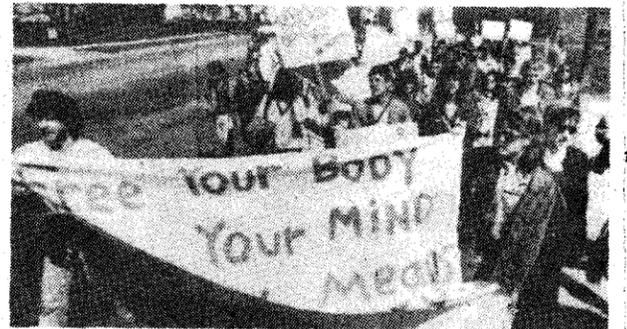
As a Black student majoring in Spanish, I am very disturbed by the gradual disappearance of the Ethnic Studies programs at Cal State L.A.—Pan-African, Latin American, and Chicano Studies. Campuses across the nation are experiencing vicious attacks on these programs that our brothers and sisters struggled to establish at U.S. universities and colleges during the revolutionary movements of the late sixties. These attacks are not just against the departments, nor the student initiators, but against all who insist on education for the empowerment of the individual and the community as a whole.

The aims of these programs—to increase the identity awareness of minority students; to raise the consciousness of minority issues on campus, as well as in the community; and to foster development in the latter—prove the need for their existence in the 1990s.

At Cal State L.A., our minority studies programs suffer from lack of personnel and funds, plus the inevitable low morale and divisions among faculty members, resulting in a hostile environment in which to achieve these goals. In line with the university's commitment to serve the community, the Chicano Studies Department upheld its end by sponsoring (now defunct) language and cultural workshops for teachers involved in schools that are predominantly Latino.

The Reagan administration's insensitivity towards education, aligned with racist tendencies, has denounced Ethnic Studies as useless. Cutting back on federal funding to educational institutions makes it easy to target minority programs as costly and not in the interest of the majority. A total commitment to knowledge as a means to preserve as well as develop the concept of freedom is most necessary today if we are to create a society in which we choose, act and think freely.

We, the students of the nineties, must voice our concerns, allowing none to speak for us but ourselves. The work does not stop at mere activism, but continues along the line of questioning the educational system that has been handed down to us. We students must take control of our future and the future of our communities, for if we do not, the control will rest in the hands of an "elite" that may or may not be able to respond to our needs. Is there any doubt for taking responsibility? —Ken



Student protest at Northern Illinois University

solidarity to students at the University of New Mexico who are also sitting-in. (See story below.)

We left the building when Vice President of Student Affairs Jon Dalton threatened to have us arrested. This protest was the third in a series of "Days of Action" against tuition hikes. —Participant

University of New Mexico

Albuquerque, N.M.—On April 10, 100 students at the University of New Mexico demonstrated to protest tuition increases, low minority retention and lack of student representation on the Board of Regents. A day later, students gave two hours of very moving testimony before the regents as to why they could not afford a tuition hike. But it took the regents only ten minutes of discussion before passing a \$100 increase.

Outraged at the regent's action, 100 students marched to the president's office and began a sit-in. The administration is allowing the sit-in to continue, and even the police say they support the students because they will not be able to afford sending their kids to college if tuition continues to skyrocket.

The students brought in computers and are sending FAX and phone messages to students all over the country. If you call them they answer, "Student protest, can I help you?"

The students are demanding that the \$100 tuition hike be rescinded, that before any future increases are implemented a study be conducted to assess the effect on single mothers, on minorities and poor students, and that the student representative on the Board of Regents have a vote. The activities of the students have forced the regents to plan a meeting to discuss the student demands. The protesters plan to sit-in until their demands are met. —Supporter

