

Work in the U.S.: injury and pain



We welcome B.A. Lastelle, a woman worker who has already contributed to this space, as a regular co-columnist of "Workshop Talks." — Felix Martin, John Marcotte, Gene Ford

by B. Ann Lastelle

Only when I injured my left wrist at work, and the company doctor diagnosed tendinitis as a result of repetitive motion, did I discover how many of my women co-workers labor in pain each day with swollen hands, wrists and arms. I didn't realize, until I was in pain, how often and in how many different ways I slam my fingers and hands, and twist my wrists and arms, just to perform my job.

I sat at the doctor's office, studying the charts on the wall showing the skeleton and muscles. I wondered why our hands and wrists are constructed as they are, obviously so easily injured. Then I caught myself: No, I have it backwards. The fault lies, not with our human physical structure, but with the way we are forced to work.

'MISERABLE ROUTINE'

Karl Marx wrote in 1867 in his book *Capital* about the development of the factory system under capitalism and its effect on workers: "This miserable routine of endless drudgery and toil in which the same mechanical process is gone through over and over again, is like the labor of Sisyphus. The burden of labor, like the rock, keeps ever falling back on the worn-out laborer. At the same time that factory work exhausts the nervous system to the uttermost, it does away with the many-sided play of the muscles, and confiscates every atom of freedom, both in bodily and intellectual activity."

The U.S. Department of Labor revealed in November (continued on page 3)

Black World

Political shift in Haiti



by Lou Turner

Any shift in politics in Haiti comes with a massacre. One week after the inauguration of the latest in a long line of alternating corrupt civilian and military governments, the death toll around the capital city of Port-au-Prince stood at 19. The same state-sponsored terrorism that had been the hallmark of the 30-year-rule of the Duvaliers, continues with the sponsorship of the military, four years after the overthrow of Jean-Claude Duvalier.

Like every crisis which marks political change within Haiti's ruling class and military, the one which brought Haiti's first woman president to power, Supreme Court Justice Ertha Pascal-Trouillot, on March 13, arose from below. The brutal slaying of 11-year-old Roseline Vaval by the military on March 5 precipitated spontaneous mass demonstrations of thousands of people. More than 10,000 people attended the martyred girl's funeral in Petit Goave, while thousands of others erected flaming barricades and demanded the ouster of Duvalierist Gen. Prosper Avril as head of the country.

'DECHOUKAJ' (UPROOTING) CONTINUES

By March 11, Avril had parted on a U.S. Air Force plane for Miami, and a group of 12 opposition leaders had negotiated with the military for an interim civilian president to rule until elections could be held. However, as the Brooklyn, New York-based *Haiti Report* noted in its first issue: "The U.S. has long promoted the notion worldwide that 'Democracy=Elections.' In Haiti, the elections were posed as the panacea to the country's political strife and were vigorously supported by the (continued on page 8)

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A threat to all of Latin America

Nicaragua's electoral result shows U.S.'s imperial might

by Eugene Walker

The electoral defeat of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua not only dealt a staggering blow to Nicaragua's ten-year-old revolution, as well as to the upheavals that had been occurring in Central America's El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras in the 1980s, but served as a warning to all of Latin America and the Caribbean: this remains the U.S.'s "backyard," the U.S.'s "lake." The boot heel of U.S. economic, political and military might had not only ground down Nicaragua. Indeed, the very **Idea of social revolution in Latin America, a Latin America which has lived under the impact of the U.S.'s imperial rule for almost a century, is what is now under attack.**

HOW "FREE" AN ELECTION?

The opposition coalition, UNO (National Opposition Union), headed by Violeta Chamorro, won over 50% of the vote, including majorities in some working class barrios of Nicaragua's cities. UNO represents a coalition of 14 parties ranging from outright contras through supporters of Chamorro to so-called Communists. In the U.S. the Bush administration could hardly contain its

glee about the result of this "exercise in democracy."

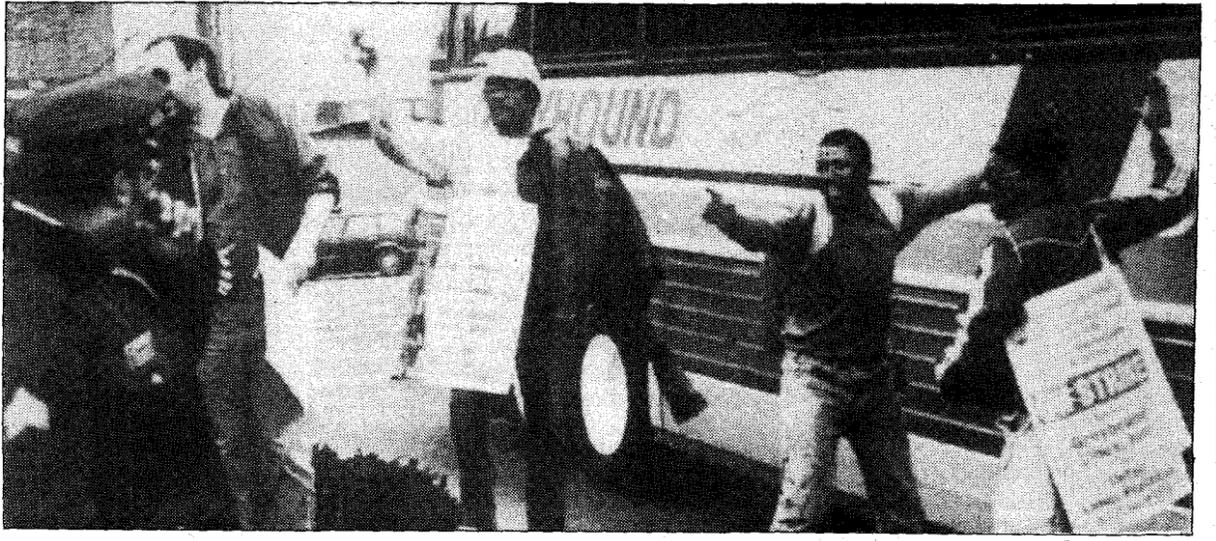
What can we possibly call "free" about an election in which the Nicaraguan people—after a decade of war and economic deprivation, of guns, starvation and blockade—were told you can have more of the same if you vote for the Sandinistas, but if you vote for Chamorro, the military-political-economic war will end and the U.S. government will give you millions?

What hypocrisy now oozes from the Bush administration that offers \$300 million in aid after the Sandinistas have been defeated at the polls, after hundreds of thousands suffered malnutrition stemming directly from U.S. policies, after an economy was crushed under the Reagan-Bush juggernaut.

To see behind this hypocrisy we need to examine the last decade of U.S.-Nicaragua relations as well as the developments and contradictions within Nicaragua's revolution. For ten long years—from the end of the Carter administration to the Reagan-Bush and now Bush-Quayle administrations—the U.S. government has worked to strangle Nicaragua's revolution, to deny its

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Greyhound strike: Voices from the picket line, p.3



In-Person from Czechoslovakia

The movement at an impasse?

Prague, Czechoslovakia—There is much ado here about "our velvet revolution"—these words being now nothing more than an abused slogan. While it is true the overthrow of the Communist regime was done in gloves, the revolution got grounded and lost its primeval force.

The Civic Forum—a really spontaneous movement headed by a loosely-knit assembly of divergent political forces—has as its core the small association mostly of Charter 77 signatories and members of other independent groupings. All of them are honorable men (with but a handful of women) of high moral principle which they try to translate into both tearing down the Communist edifice and building up what, in their view, would be a democratic society. What they lack is a common philosophy in the proper sense. Their vision has very much in common with the image of the First Republic (1918-1938) from where most of the reorganized political parties derive their roots.

BUREAUCRATIC STRUCTURES REIGN

The so-called Coordination Center of the Civic Forum (a rather chaotically-organized nucleus) is gradually losing much of its power to state institutions now slowly being filled with its former members. Students are represented in this center only by a handful of its leaders, while there are practically no workers at all. Discussions about a new electoral bill, about a shortening of military service, unfulfilled claims for a total dismantling of the secret service, etc., show clearly how far the situation has evolved away from what had been expected during the first weeks of revolution. Bureaucratic structures, though in a democratic veil, return to their invisible reign. Trade unions have split. The remains of the old Revolutionary TU movement (now calling itself TU Action Committee) has kept to its possessions—funds, buildings, apparatus. The newly-formed Coordi-

nation Center of the Strike Committees, built during the November strikes, has not won the battle so far. Besides, there are also industrial unions claiming independence from both of these organizations. An assembly called for the first week of March will have to decide how far all these unions will cooperate in the future. This is most important as the proposed economic reform will mean—as everybody agrees—some sort of unemployment. This is a phenomenon unknown for the last 40 years, and while some legal protection has already been prepared, there is no doubt the unions will have to protect their members from the worst consequences.

THE FORCES OF NOVEMBER RETREAT

The driving force of the November days, the students, having returned to their classes, and their main ally, the workers, now being occupied by the "working days" problems, the political field is free for all the political parties, new and old, who try to cut out their share... The "classical" right is only emerging, the center position is taken by the Civic Forum. The left is not only divided but weak in itself. If the Communist Party is excluded, as the Left Alternative consistently maintains—then the left consists only of splinter groups: The Independent Left trying to organize itself as a party, the Democratic Forum which also wishes to stand on its own feet while proclaiming itself Communist, and the Democratic Forum of Communists who do not want to split away from the Party. There is a tiny group of anarchists, mainly in Bohemia; the communist reformers of 1968 calling themselves Revival; and last but not least the Left Alternative.

All this refers only to the Western part of Czechoslovakia, the situation in Slovakia being rather different. I will try to sketch that out in a later letter...

Essay Article

A look at 20 years:

Women's Liberation and
the search for new beginnings

by Olga Domanski

The beginning of the 1990s has seen a wide number of new writings by women that look back at the two decades since a new and unique Women's Liberation Movement (WLM) burst forth at the end of the turbulent 1960s.¹ Far from being a mere chronological anniversary remembrance, they are a response to the worrisome state the movement had reached by the end of the 1980s, as it faced a retrogression so great that it seemed all the gains of 20 years were in danger of being ushered back.

It is a retrogression that is lethal, whether we look at the massacre of 14 young women in Montreal by a man raging against feminists, or the "ordinary" brutalization that goes on every day in every city, town, neighborhood in every country; whether we look at the enormous numbers of women and children joining the ranks of the homeless, or the constantly worsening conditions at the work place.

It is not that there has not been an exciting birth of new activism to fight this retrogression, bringing hundreds of thousands of new, young—often very young—women and men to the marches and demonstrations and abortion clinic defenses nationwide. It is that from its birth the WLM was distinguished from the rest of the New Left in knowing that "activism" alone was not enough.

What had, in fact, catalyzed the movement was the refusal of the women of the New Left to simply crank the theses off the mimeo machines or march with the leaflets the male leaders had written. They demanded an end to the separation of "thinkers" and "doers"—what Marx had called the separation of mental and manual labor that characterized not just capitalism but all class societies. And there had been a veritable explosion of writing of every kind as soon as the WLM burst forth.

This unique new movement was demanding not just "equality" with men, but totally new Man/Woman relations—totally new human relations—and they refused to wait until "after the revolution" to see them. A new humanism, indeed, seemed to be so much what characterized the uniqueness of their demands that Marxist-Humanists thought the spontaneous new move-

1. These retrospectives have appeared not only in such different types of books as the two we will take up here—Catherine A. MacKinnon, *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989) and Sheila Rowbotham, *The Past Is Before Us* (London: Pandora Press, 1989)—but in journals such as *off our backs* (see, in Feb. 1990 issue, Carol Anne Douglas' "Feminist Theory: Notes from the Third Decade"); and in a "Socialist-Feminist Reader" titled *Women, Class and the Feminist Imagination*, edited by Karen V. Hansen and Ilene J. Philipson (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), to mention only a few. Others are coming off the presses every month.



Reviews: women write on!

Lives of Courage: Women for a new South Africa by Diana E.H. Russell (Basic Books Inc., Publishers, New York, 1989).

Lives of Courage is a compilation of interviews conducted by Diana E.H. Russell, a white South African woman, over a two-year period while in South Africa. This unique book has 24 interviews of women activists fighting against apartheid, showing a wide-range of struggles from feminist activists to trade unionists and includes well-known political leaders from Emma Mashinini to Winnie Mandela and Sheena Duncan of Black Sash.

Russell makes a clear distinction between militant activists and reformists (who are not in this book) and she talked with women of many races and backgrounds. Especially striking to Russell was the concept of Black Consciousness and she was moved politically by that movement when Steve Biko led it in the 1970s.

This book is exciting to read because it clearly shows how women fight in so many creative ways and on a daily basis against the apartheid regime. Yet what is very painful to read are the descriptions of the prison conditions for women, especially when Mashinini tells of her experience when she could not remember her daughter's name.

This is a good work to read—to get an inside view of the South African struggle. The book's downfall is that it seriously lacks any theoretical perspective or analysis.

—Diane Lee

Gender at Work, by Anne Game and Rosemary Pringle (George Allen & Unwin, Sidney, 1983).

This is a serious contribution to both Marxist and feminist theory. The authors, both Australian sociologists, reject the possibility of a "nonpatriarchal" capitalism, and critique both feminists and Marxists for their overly narrow perspectives. Their most important, and provocative, contribution is their empirically derived conclusion that the sexual division of labor is not something simply used by capitalism, but rather is "a defining feature of it, as central as wage labour or surplus value." Thus "gender relations and class relations

would recognize itself at once in Karl Marx's philosophy, which he had called, not "Communism," but "a new Humanism." Instead, "...a term like Marxist-Humanism sounded like a funeral knell" to the WLM which saw itself as "a leap forward out of Marxism," as Adrienne Rich put it in her study, "Living the Revolution."²

Why then for 20 years have all the feminist theorists, in one way or another, had to continue to address Marxism—either to attack it, or to try to embrace it and "marry" it to feminism? Is it because there is one philosophy that "explains" an epoch and points the way to the future? Is Marxism "the one philosophy for our times which we cannot go beyond," as Jean-Paul Sartre was led to conclude in his "Existentialism and Marxism"? Or is there more to it than that?

Can a review of the relationship between Marxism and the WLM's theorists help us to work out the kind of retrospective of the past 20 years that could become a revolutionary perspective and a pathway to the future? To explore that, let's begin with a look at the two most recent books that best express the two ends of the spectrum of attitudes to Marxism.

CATHERINE MACKINNON VS. MARX

Catherine A. MacKinnon's *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State* is not called a "20-year summary" but it is a book, MacKinnon tells us, that was written over a whole 18-year period to explore the "connections, contradictions and conflict between the marxist and feminist theories of consciousness."

She makes what she calls her "intellectual odyssey" in three parts—by exploring "Feminism and Marxism," "Method," and "The State." Throughout all three, Marxism and feminism are posed as opposite theories of consciousness "as they grounded each theory's approach to social order and social change." (p. ix) It is the total distortion in Part I of what Marx's Marxism is that sets the ground for MacKinnon's declaration in Part II that "consciousness raising," not dialectics, is the "feminist method"; and in Part III for a "feminist theory of the State" that aims—after discussing rape, abortion and pornography—at nothing more than "sex equality." Thus, it is Part I that we have to look at the most closely.

It is important to see that MacKinnon's hostility to Marxism is not because Marx is a man, nor only be-

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2. See *Women's Review of Books*, Sept. 1986, in which Rich reviewed all four of Raya Dunayevskaya's major works: *Marxism and Freedom; Philosophy and Revolution; Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (the three Dunayevskaya called her "trilogy of revolution"); as well as the work which had just then come off the press, *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future* (WLDLR).

shape each other."

Throughout the book they demonstrate the strong relationship between sexual divisions of labor and the divisions into mental and manual, and recognize that technology is no ready solution as it is thoroughly class-oriented. Their conclusions mainly result from interviews with hundreds of workers in six major industries in Australia, some of which are excerpted here.

I would fault the authors for their utter lack of attention to aboriginal women in Australia, and think their call for building on the "strengths" of working class women falls well short of recognizing these women as Reason. Nonetheless, their work is very informative and deserves serious attention.

—Jan Kollwitz

Cannery Women, Cannery Lives: Mexican Women, Unionization, and the California Food Processing Industry, 1930-1950, by Vicki L. Ruiz (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987) 194 pp.

Ruiz's provocative study of the nearly forgotten United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA) offers important insights into recent struggles.

Founded in 1937, UCAPAWA quickly became the seventh largest CIO-affiliate. Chicana and Mexicana cannery workers joined by the thousands and scores became local leaders in a union which espoused democratic principles. Ruiz also gives a heart-breaking account of UCAPAWA's demise in the late 1940s, as Teamster leaders, helped by the National Labor Relations Board, forced their way into the canneries.

Ruiz argues however, that the rank-and-file women lacked class consciousness because many snubbed the organizers after learning of their Communist Party affiliation. This assertion conflicts with the powerful statements she quotes from oral histories throughout the book.

As this book went to press, Hispanic women, on strike at the Watsonville Frozen Food and Canning Company, were insisting that a rank-and-file committee represent them instead of the Teamsters.

—Laurie Cashdan

International
Women's Day

On International Women's Day (IWD) in Jerusalem, Palestinian women marched from the walled Old City towards the Damascus Gate leading into East Jerusalem. They were viciously attacked by Israeli police who fired rubber bullets and tear gas into the demonstration, injuring seven women and arresting eight. The police excuse for the attack was that the women had no permit for the march.

Two days later Palestinian and Israeli women demonstrated in Jerusalem demanding negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

* * *

On March 8 in Chicago, IWD, over 50 women—Jewish and Palestinian—marched around downtown's Daley Plaza to show our solidarity with Palestinian women fighting for freedom in the West Bank and Gaza. The demonstration had been called by the Jewish Women's Committee to End the Occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

* * *

In Algeria 5,000 women marched through central Algiers on IWD. Spokeswoman Meriem Hocine said: "We are demanding equality, the right to work, the right to divorce and we say 'No!' to discrimination in the schools." The women, chanting and singing, were threatened by dozens of young men shouting the name of Abbasi Madani, an Islamic Fundamentalist leader. Police kept the men from attacking the women.

* * *

Lola Bjorquist, a member of Sweden's parliament, introduced a motion on IWD that Bibles carry a note that the Old Testament's patriarchal view of women be seen in an historical perspective. Her motion was rejected by the Riksdag.

* * *

More than 150 chanting protesters demonstrated in East Oakland, Cal., March 9, against the appearance of anti-abortion fanatic Joseph Scheidler, charging him with being "racist, anti-women, anti-gay and anti-lesbian," while on the same day in Idaho, legislators enacted his ravings into law. The Idaho law will prohibit at least 95% of all abortions making Idaho what one woman called the "police pregnancy state." The even more repressive abortion law passed in Guam, on IWD, is already threatening an ACLU lawyer—who called its passage "Pearl Harbor for women"—with one year in prison for publicly stating that legal, low-cost abortions are still available in Hawaii. The Catholic archbishop threatened to excommunicate any Catholic senator who voted against it. Along with the governor, all but one of the 21 senators in the Guam legislature are Catholic. So much for separation of church and state!

* * *

In Mexico City, feminist, labor, neighborhood people and peasant women marched 20,000 strong on IWD to the offices of the Prosecutor General and the National Palace demanding justice in the case of the systematic rape of more than 21 women in Mexico City by members of the drug enforcement police force, much of whose funding comes from the U.S.

Red Contra la Violencia Hacia las Mujeres (Women's Anti-Violence Network), who called this demonstration and is coordinating action around this issue, has declared 1990 the Year for Action Against Violence Against Women. They are demanding prosecution of the rapists and the resignation of Javier Andres Coello Trejo and Fausto Valverde for freeing the men the women bravely identified as raping them. Send telegrams demanding justice to: Procurador Enrique Alvarez del Castillo, Procuraduría General de la Republica, Paseo de la Reforma y Violeta, Col. Guerrero, Deleg. Cuauhtemoc, 06300 Mexico D.F., MEXICO and to Pres. Carlos Salinas de Gortari, Palacio Nacional, Col. Centro, Deleg. Cuauhtemoc, Mexico D.F., MEXICO.

To show solidarity with Red Contra la Violencia Hacia las Mujeres write them at: Xola 1454, Colonia Narvarte, Deleg. Benito Juarez, C.P. 03020 Mexico D.F., MEXICO.

Greyhound strikers' jobs at stake

Los Angeles, Cal.—On March 2, Greyhound Lines Inc. forced out on strike 9,000 drivers and other workers. Since then, Greyhound management has created violence from the West Coast to the East Coast by hiring scab drivers as strike breakers.

This violence shows me that Greyhound is behind the violence, yet they use "violence" to show the union workers in a bad light to the public. I was on the picket line with the Greyhound drivers in Los Angeles on March 19, and talked with one union driver who had been knocked down by a scab who drove the bus right into him.

In the coal fields of Kentucky where I grew up, the mine operators used to hire scab miners and each was a gunman for the company. These hired gunmen would create all kinds of violence to make it look like the miners were creating havoc, to get the public feeling on the side of the corporation. It was easy then, as it is easy today, because the police and news media are all on the side of the capitalists.

I asked one Black driver with 24 years seniority what were they striking for. He said, "To try to get back some of the give-backs and take-backs in our last contracts! It now takes a new driver ten years to get paid what his classification calls for, where it used to be 90 days. This all began with President Reagan firing the PATCO strikers, but the union leadership are themselves to blame for much of what is happening to labor today. When Reagan did what he did to PATCO, labor should have closed this nation down!" He went on to say that Nixon, Reagan, and now Bush are America's greatest enemies, especially to labor.

I have been in the labor movement all my adult life. Capitalism will reform, so-called "give in"—but then always take back more and more of the workers' production, in the name of "competing," or any lie to get the worker to work as cheap as possible.

Today, the strikes here in the U.S. are getting longer and longer. One of the bus strikers at the picket line said to me: "I think this strike won't be a long strike." But an Eastern Airlines machinist said: "We have really grown up since our strike started. I thought it wouldn't last long, but we have been out more than a year now." The Pittston miners were out almost a year and were forced back to work with very few gains. (See March, 1990 N&L.)

Wages and job security are the particular demands the Greyhound bus drivers are out for. I remember a lifetime of strikes for wages and job security. In my lifetime I have learned there is no such thing as getting the wages you have earned and job security under capitalism.

Striking for wages and job security is the desperate reality of 1990, after all the give-backs of the 1980s. But what workers will need and begin to realize is that we can become men and women of the future, and ask: What is wealth, if not the needs and powers of each and all of us? Why doesn't it belong to us after our labor produces it? What does it take to lead a human life?

—Felix Martin, Labor Editor

Chicago, Ill.—Everything you read in the papers on Greyhound wages is bull. In 1983 we got 40

Solidarity on Eastern line

Los Angeles, Cal.—On March 3, 700 workers from other unions joined the picket line of striking Eastern Airlines mechanics, who have been out exactly one full year.

The solidarity here was very real for Greyhound bus drivers, who had begun their current strike just two days before, and garment workers at La Moda, who have been fighting employer harassment in their almost two-year struggle to get a union there. Eastern pickets and all other workers present promised to walk the Greyhound and La Moda picket lines in the near future.

The presence of all these workers, from postal workers and teachers to auto workers and longshoremen, did make a difference, especially when picketers noticed that the airline had smuggled a bunch of passengers through the basement, trying to avoid the line. Those passengers will probably never forget the angry crowd thundering "Fly Cheap, Die Cheap!" referring to Eastern's current low fares, while its planes are attended by dangerously inexperienced scab mechanics.

Likewise, no one will forget the battle cry of this long and complex strike: "How much longer? One day longer than Frank Lorenzo!"

Several workers said the length of the strike proves that workers just aren't going to take cutbacks anymore, even if they don't beat Lorenzo down. These workers criticized the old union establishment for not giving enough support to this strike, for although some leaders of the Eastern machinists managed to pull off the strike, some at other airlines and in other unions have stayed away.

And it isn't just fear of strikes. Two workers said they had to find out about this activity on their own, because it was "barely mentioned at our local." It's because, as one UAW workers said, "instead of confronting the company, our local leaders just bend over and take it!"

Hopefully this day of solidarity will be repeated and extend to these workers' participation in each other's struggles. The two ideas, to fight even when the outcome is so uncertain, and to organize independently of the company unions, are beginnings that the movement can build upon.

—Karl Armstrong

cents a mile, now it's 32 cents a mile, but only if you've been driving ten years. If you end the day in Milwaukee and have to return to Chicago the next morning for your first run, you get no pay for that dead time.

On shuttles in the city you get \$7.50 an hour—\$6.50 if you have less than ten years. The \$30,000 a year they say we get is nonsense, you make about \$20,000 if you get the work, and then you are spending so many hours and days away from home, from your family. Greyhound's "raise" is a fake—a penny or two bonus, but only after you drive 80,000 miles without an incident. That means if a passenger falls in the aisle there goes the bonus.

I don't know how this will end. But we had no choice. The company wants to eliminate arbitration which totally destroys the grievance procedure. If the company and the union can't agree then the company would be right, period. It would be insanity to bargain our arbitration away. We would have no protection if they wanted to fire someone.

The other big issue is subcontracting. This is another way to turn Greyhound into a non-union operation. The new proposal is that they can subcontract any route they want, any time they want. So they hire a non-union company to drive your route and regardless of your seniority where will you be?

The subcontracting has already gone pretty far. The ticket agents, baggage handlers and janitorial people are all working as subcontractors, not for Greyhound. Really the only workers at Greyhound who work for Greyhound now are the drivers and mechanics and maintenance. We are all in the same local—ATU Local 1303.

One big problem we have is the mechanics—most are working. The company offered them a raise. The company is trying to split us. But we have had support from the Chicago Transit Authority drivers.

We couldn't accept what Greyhound chairman Currey was offering, it would be like signing our own death sentence. I think the public will bring Greyhound to its knees when these new drivers, some trained less than a week instead of two months, start having accidents.

—Striking driver



Greyhound picket line in N.Y.

Oakland, Cal.—In solidarity with striking Greyhound employees, Alameda County Transit bus drivers briefly stopped working on March 8. The shutdown coincided with the funeral of Robert Waterhouse, who was killed March 3 when a scab-driven Greyhound bus smashed into a station wall, pinning him.

"At noon, they just shut off their engines and sat there for five minutes out of respect for the dead Greyhound striker," said one AC Transit driver, a member of the Amalgamated Transit Workers Union which is also the Greyhound workers' union. "I believe in what they're striking for. They have taken bad contracts since they went out last time, seven years ago. We just got a new contract that goes for three years. We were worried about going backward with it, too. We're fighting them on rough disciplinary process they set up."

—Strike supporter

Workshop Talks

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ber, 1989 that, of the 6.4 million workplace injuries and illnesses reported in 1988, nearly one-half were repetitive motion injuries. Workers in poultry processing, auto and meatpacking, telephone operators, grocery store clerks, typists and data processors are among those often harmed by the rapid pace and tedious, repetitive nature of their work.

Several women discussed this type of injury in the locker room after work one day. One woman emphasized cooperation among workers on a line so that the burden of a problem does not fall on one person. She also suggested rotating jobs, because when you do the same job all day every day, you exercise only one side of your body, which makes you more prone to injury.

When the supervisor in our department discovers that you are good at a particular job, there you stay, because that is most efficient and productive for the company. Workers sometimes do rotate informally to relieve boredom or aching muscles, or to help each other out, but almost every job that women do in this department requires quick, repeated motions. The pressure for production is so great that people may resist changing jobs for fear of slowing down the line, thereby forcing themselves into working overtime.

Experts in workplace safety focus on redesigning tools, machinery and work stations to reduce physical stress, as well as on training programs. I think most workers would propose slowing the pace of the work and hiring more people. Karl Marx envisioned a whole new relationship of human beings to labor in a whole new society where "...the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labor, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labor, has vanished..."

"In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms," Marx wrote, "we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all." For our safety and our health, don't we need to begin to work out how to get to that new society?

Toys-R-Us isolates workers

Chicago, Ill.—Toys-R-Us has hit us with one more give-back: they have changed the way we receive performance raises. It used to be that everyone got performance raises once a year at the same time, in February. Now we get them on the anniversary of our hiring date with the company. So where before everyone would be talking all at once of how piddling was the sum of money they were giving us, now they have it all divided up so it won't become a subject of discussion.

They are using "individuality" here to their advantage—to cut us into pieces. Even one worker who usually doesn't say anything against the boss complained about how the company is trying to divide the workers up with this, and asked why we don't have a union at Toys-R-Us. A lot of other workers are talking about the need to work together against the company.

Meanwhile, they are cutting away at our personal days. We used to have eight a year, which included holidays like Christmas and the Fourth of July. But now the number of personal days you get is based on the number of accredited hours worked. We work fewer hours this time of year, so it's hard to accumulate enough hours to earn all the credits. So most of us are ending up with only three or four personal days a year.

Most people who work here are youth, of two kinds: those who go to high school or college and are looking for a few months of work, and youth who have a family and work two or three jobs like this in order to make it. It's these youth who have no illusion that they're going to go anywhere in this society. Like the company often says, they have no "ambition."

—Dave Anderson

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

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

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

ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

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

News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time. In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.

From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya Marxist-Humanist Archives

by Raya Dunayevskaya

Founder of Marxist-Humanism

*Editor's note: We print below a document written by Raya Dunayevskaya on Jan. 21, 1987, which reflects her continually developing view of Lenin's philosophic ambivalence as she worked on her book-in-progress, "Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy: The 'Party' and Forms of Organization Born out of Spontaneity." This document can be found in The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, Vol. XIII, Section I.B. "Talking to Myself: Dunayevskaya's Notes for the 'book-to-be'" (microfilm #10848). Editor's annotations are in brackets and numbered footnotes. This letter presents further thoughts on the subject matter of her Jan. 3, 1987 presentation, "The Year of Only Eight Months," and her exchange of letters with non-Marxist Hegel scholars on her new perceptions of Lenin of Sept. 26 and Dec. 12, 1986 (#10690). These latter two letters now serve as the new Introduction to the 1989 edition of *Philosophy and Revolution*, a book which is currently the focus of the News and Letters Committees' nationwide class series on "Meeting the challenge of the 1990s: Marxist-Humanism's Philosophy of Revolution."*

"Talking to Myself"—Dear Colleagues,

The above title may sound strange but it is one way in which I make notes for future development, not only on the book-to-be on Organization, but in all of my works when I have not yet worked out a definitive form in which to present the issue....The focus is on page 2 of the May 12, 1953 Letter on the Absolute Idea, as excerpted in the 1982 edition of *Dialectics of Liberation*.¹ The point is to catch the dialectical flow of the Self-Determination of the Idea, paragraph by paragraph.

The first paragraph on p. 2 [TPMMH, p. 34] calls attention to p. 483 of the *Science of Logic*,² which shows how the stage of "exteriorization" is also that of intensification, i.e., "interiorization," i.e., objective manifestation makes the inward extension more intense.

The second paragraph on p. 2 [TPMMH, p. 35] which attacks impatience in "an absolutely uncompromising Bolshevik" manner, I attribute to Hegel, after which I quote from p. 484 of the *Science of Logic*:

That impatience whose only wish is to go beyond the determinate...to be immediately in the absolute, has nothing before it as object of its cognition but the empty negative...or else a would-be absolute, which is imaginary because it is neither posited nor comprehended.

The dialectic flow of this quotation is in no way related to the two names quoted in the preceding paragraph of the letter, but even if said unconsciously, has everything to do with what I follow the Hegel quotation with:

I am shaking all over for we have come to where we part from Lenin I mentioned that, although in the approach to the Absolute Idea Lenin had mentioned that man's cognition not only reflects the objective world but creates it, but that within the chapter he never developed it. Objective world connections, materialism, dialectical materialism, it is true, but not the object and subject as one fully developed. [TPMMH, p. 36]

Stop for a moment. Hold tightly to the fact that ever since 1948-49, when I first translated Lenin's *Abstract of the Science of Logic* [#1492], I have done nothing less than extol Lenin philosophically, specifically on the *Science of Logic*.

There is no question about the fact that it was Lenin who created the Great Divide in Marxism in 1914-17. Our present changed perception of Lenin's philosophic ambivalence shows here that I actually did have some philosophic differences as far back as the early 1950s.

The fact is that it was not only Lenin who, by keeping the Philosophic Notebooks to himself, separated philosophy from politics. When we broke politically with the concept of the vanguard party, we kept philosophy and politics in two separate compartments. What this 1953 Letter shows now, is that imbedded in it was a sharper critique of Lenin's philosophic ambivalence than shown in *Marxism & Freedom*. In 1953, on the other hand, as we saw above, I had stressed that in the chapter on The Idea of Cognition Lenin had not concretized the objectivity of Cognition.

* The references to Hegel's *Science of Logic* in 1953 were all to the Johnston & Struthers translation. The penultimate *Idea of Cognition*, which includes the *Idea of the Good*, is covered in Vol. II, pp. 460-465; in the A.V. Miller translation, it appears on pp. 818-824. The *Absolute Idea* in Johnston & Struthers is pp. 466-486; in Miller, pp. 828-844. The specific paragraph on impatience occurs on p. 483 in J&S; in Miller it is p. 841; while the "idea freely releasing itself" appears on p. 485 in J&S, and p. 843 in Miller. So far as Nature in the *Smaller Logic* is concerned, Paragraph 244 is the final paragraph of the *Encyclopedia* outline of the *Science of Logic*.

1. The full text of Dunayevskaya's May 12 and 20, 1953 Letters on Hegel's Absolutes are now available in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism*, hereafter referred to as TPMMH.



V.I. Lenin

Here I wish to introduce something totally new...a letter to me from Grace Lee² dated August 31, 1952. With her usual hyperbole, here is part of what she wrote me:

You have mastered Hegel. You write in your letter of August 29 as you have never written before. Instead of that one-to-one correspondence where you impose a movement on the Logic you are now inside the movement of the Logic, caught up in its rhythms. The number of people in the world who can do that can probably be counted on the fingers of one hand. You are absolutely right in characterizing Herman's (Johnny Zupan)³ search for the party as the Logic of the "Idea of the Good"—which stands in its own way and hence must in the end turn against itself.

WE HAVEN'T FOUND my letter of August 29, 1952 which produced that enthusiasm a year before I broke through on the Absolute, but it is clear from what she said on August 31 that I had evidently been writing on the penultimate chapter from the *Science of Logic*, "The Idea of Cognition." She further points to that specific chapter because, very clearly, I had been relating the Idea of Cognition to the concept of Organization. What was facing the JFT⁴ now that it finally broke fully with Trotskyism was the question: What kind of Organization now? This took a most ominous turn as I was coming to a break with Johnsonism, 1950-53. The specific objective event that precipitated the crisis in 1953 was Stalin's death. **

In March 1953 I felt very strongly that an incubus had been lifted from the heads of the Russian and East European masses (evidently also from my head) and that revolts were sure to happen. It was a very exciting day in Detroit, both because the Black production worker, Charles Denby, and the head of the Youth, Ben, had independently thought that, no doubt, I wished to write a political estimate of that world-shaking event; they volunteered to work with me all night. When Denby appeared after his day at Chrysler he concretized this further, laughing jubilantly and saying that

** The same type of crisis as occurred in March-April, 1953 over the JFT's attitude to Stalin's death reoccurred with the first issue of *Correspondence* in October, 1953, for which I had written the lead on the Beria Purge. Reexamining this in 1987, I realize that what looks like the "Russian Question"—that same old "Russian Question" which caused the first break with Trotskyism at the approach of World War II and reoccurred in 1950 on the Korean War—was, far from being on the "Russian Question," was actually on the decisive question of War and Revolution which has always marked that new continent of thought and revolution of Marxism from its birth. 1917 designated its move to the twentieth century. It was Stalin's counter-revolution that gave it a narrow nationalist stamp. Why the hell have all of us been caught in that linguistic web?

2. Co-leader with Dunayevskaya and C.L.R. James of Correspondence Committees.

3. Editor, at that time, of *Correspondence*.

4. Johnson-Forest Tendency within the Socialist Workers' Party, lead by C.L.R. James and Dunayevskaya.

The significance of Lenin's philosophic ambivalence

what all the workers were talking about, as the radio blared forth the news of Stalin's death, was: "I've got just the person to take his place—my foreman." Denby asked if I had that article I was always talking about on the great trade union debate between Lenin and Trotsky in 1920 (on which I had been working since the 1940s). Denby felt that the workers would now welcome such a revelation; he wished to distribute it to them.

Think of the unpleasant shock that then occurred when Grace, who was in California and the responsible editor for that issue of the mimeographed *Correspondence*, felt that the Lead article could not be on Stalin's death, but on the "new" women around Selma [James] who disregarded the blare from the radio announcing Stalin's death. Instead, they were exchanging recipes for hamburgers. Not only was that idiotic suggestion floated, but she undertook to censor my analysis on the significance of Stalin's death, so that it too sounded not so world-shaking. Such an attitude towards a world event produced such a struggle between me and Grace, that it actually affected the whole JFT.

WHAT WAS C.L.R. JAMES' "solution" to the crisis created by the different attitudes, both to Stalin's death and to the tasks of a Marxist newspaper? It was typically Jamesian: I was judged to be "politically" right, but nevertheless totally wrong because of my sharp attack on Grace. Grace was judged to be "politically" wrong, but absolutely right because she listened to the "new." After two months of this type of meaningless, diversionary, empty "solution" to both things happening in the objective world and attitudes to what are the tasks of a Marxist newspaper to objective events, I asked for a week off, left Detroit for Ann Arbor and out of me poured those Letters of May 12 and 20 on the Absolute Idea.

Now then, because the dialectic flow in the present singling out of p. 2 of the May 12, 1953 Letter points

also to the relevance of looking at it with eyes of 1987, let me examine the new find, the 1952 letter which shows I had made a plunge into the Idea of Cognition, especially on the section "The Idea of the Good." Clearly, I definitely had Organization in mind. This was not on the level of James and Grace and their dialectic of the "Party," but on the question of Dialectic "in and for itself." While I do not remember where I raised the question that I wasn't quite happy

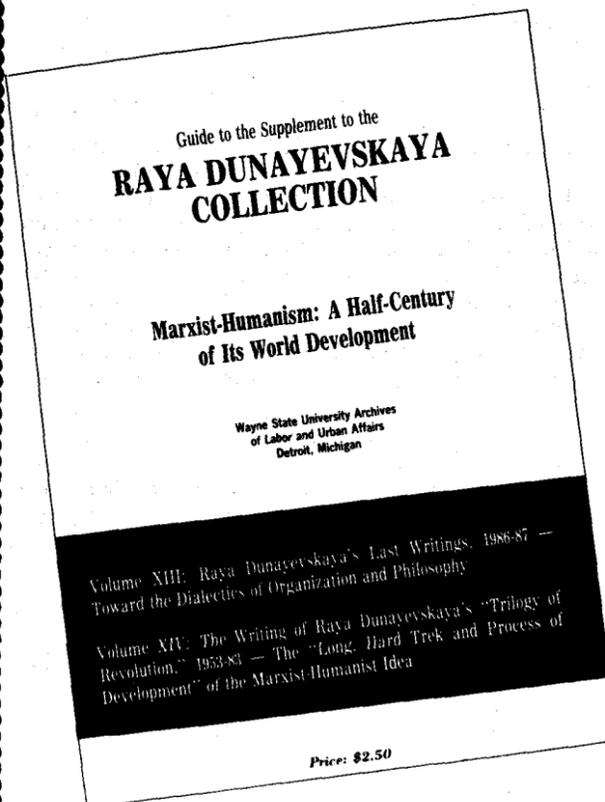
(continued on page 9)



G.W.F. Hegel

VOL. XIII: RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA'S LAST WRITINGS, 1986-87 — TOWARD THE DIALECTICS OF ORGANIZATION AND PHILOSOPHY

The writing by Raya Dunayevskaya on this page is one of a vast array of documents penned by her in her last year, as she explored anew the thought of Hegel, Marx and Lenin while re-examining her own development of the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism. These writings, contained in Vol. XIII of her Archives, are now available on microfilm.



Vol. XIII includes in part:

- Presentations on the book-to-be, "Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy: 'the Party' and forms of organization born out of spontaneity"
- "Talking to Myself": Dunayevskaya's Notes for the book-to-be — 48 writings of a new kind, from June, 1986 to June, 1987, ranging from new studies of Hegel's *Phenomenology* to her probing into "What is Marxist-Humanism?"
- The Battle of Ideas: Philosophic Correspondence and Reviews encompassing a dialogue with non-Marxist Hegel scholars, such as George Armstrong Kelly, Louis Dupre', Arnold V. Miller, Warren Steinkraus

All of these writings in Vol. XIII, along with Vol. XIV, are listed in the Guide to the Supplement to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—*Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development*

To obtain the Guide to the Collection, send \$2.50 plus 75¢ postage to News & Letters, 59 E. Van Buren, Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605

Microfilm of the Archives is available from Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Detroit, MI 48202

Women's Liberation and the search for new beginnings

(Continued from page 2)

cause she confuses post-Marx Marxism with Marx's Marxism. Her hostility is to Marx's philosophy of revolution. It is such a mindless hostility that she can discuss the magnificent pages in *Capital*, where Marx so passionately described the way capitalism had even destroyed all of the workers' family relationships, grinding men, women and children alike beneath its wheels—and footnote her incredible interpretation of those pages: "No distinction exists between these views of Marx and those of contemporary 'pro-family' conservatives"! (p. 256)

Even more revealing is her quoting the passage from Marx's 1844 Essay on "Private Property and Communism," that "The individual is the social being..." and concluding from it that "Marxist epistemology makes the isolated individual a person without consciousness, unthinkable to self as well as for theory, social order, and social change." (p. 53) It is the very section of Marx's Humanist Essays in which he had just insisted: "We should especially avoid re-establishing society as an abstraction, opposed to the individual. The individual is the social entity..."³

Clearly, for MacKinnon, the individual has to be above society. For Marx the masses in motion were never separated from the individual; theory came from "history and its process," from the masses in motion who were driving for freedom and creating new ideas and new human relations. For MacKinnon theory comes from the head of the individual theorist who, in her case, winds up with a vision of "new relations" limited only to what kind of laws we can get passed in this society to get us to "equality." All we need, she claims at the end of her odyssey, is "a new jurisprudence, a new relation between life and law." (p.249) It is her separation of the individual above society that leads her to conclude that the "law" is the active force. The revolt of women throughout history is nowhere. Woman's revolt is only in the realm of consciousness—her consciousness.

SHEILA ROWBOTHAM'S SOCIALIST-FEMINISM

At the other end of the spectrum, Sheila Rowbotham, far from rejecting Marxism, is still trying to bring Marxism and feminism "together." Her newest book, *The Past is Before Us*, is far from the magnificent work she did in *Women, Resistance and Revolution and Hidden from History*—still to this day, the most serious work of all the women theorists because she traced, not women's oppression, but women's resistance through 300 years of history.⁴

Although her current work has none of that depth, Rowbotham continues to be excellent at recording many of the "voices from below"—not only in the concrete British struggles of the past two decades, such as the 1984 miners' strike or the Greenham Common Peace Camp, but as women talk about childcare, or whether to have children, about everything women are concerned about. She has never fallen into the deadend trap of trying to make a separation between the "history of women" and the "history of feminism" that seems to be engaging many feminist theorists today. (See, for example, in the current, Fall 1989, *Journal of Women's History* the article by Sharon Sievers, "Dialogue: Six (or more) Feminists in Search of a Historian.")

Indeed, Rowbotham, insisting that "a rather general label like 'feminism' cannot convey the complexities of women's collective action for liberation," critiques that tendency directly: "It is somewhat owlish to ask ponderously 'but is it feminist?' The question sometimes has to be, Is feminism enough?" (p. 293)

That is not the question the WLM has to confront, however, because it is not a matter of "adding" Marxism. In trying to work out the relationship of Marxism and feminism, the question is: What is Marxism—Marx's Marxism? What is the relationship, not only between theory and practice, but between theory and philosophy?⁵

In Rowbotham's final chapter, called "Conclusion: The Future is Behind Us," she writes: "It may be because I incline to politics and history rather than appreciating philosophy for its own sake that I perceive concepts in movement as wider and deeper than the voice of the study alone." (p. 294) There is no question of the importance of history. But to think that history is concrete while philosophy means only a "voice in the study" is not to see that philosophy itself can be a motive force.

Marx's Marxism was rooted in history—the history of masses in motion—but it became a force for revolution itself because its rootedness in history is not all that Marx's Marxism is. Marx unchained the dialectic,

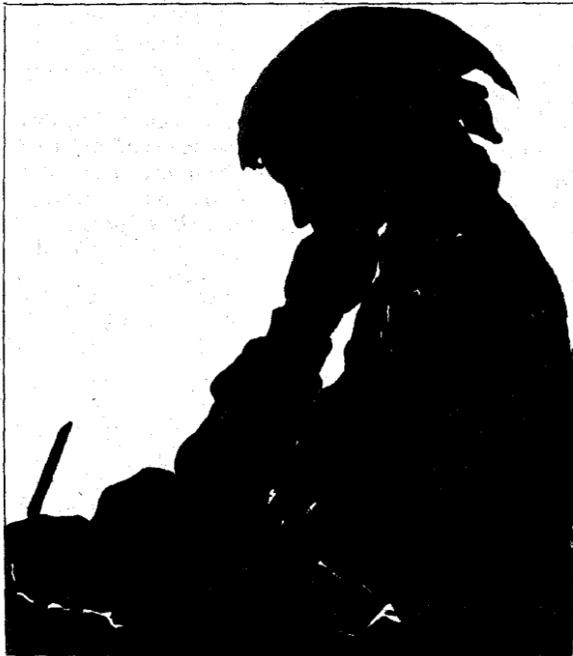
when he transformed the Hegelian Dialectic from a revolution in philosophy to a philosophy of revolution by giving the abstract Hegelian concept of Subject a name—the proletariat.

That does not mean that Marxism means just class opposition. At the very same moment, in those 1844 Manuscripts MacKinnon has so distorted, he also singled out the Man/Woman relationship as what shows how total the revolution must be if we are to ever reach a new Humanism. What that meant, further, was that the revolution must be continuous even after the overthrow of capitalism to reach "positive Humanism, beginning from itself."

UNCHAINING THE DIALECTIC—1844, 1953

Marx's Marxism demonstrated what Hegel called Absolute Method; what Hegel called "absolute negativity" Marx both practiced and called "revolution in permanence." In naming his philosophy "a new Humanism" Marx described both his vision of the new society the world was reaching for and the way to get it. That is the philosophy for our age that Sartre saw we cannot "go beyond" until we get there.

When we posed that as a question at the beginning of this essay, we also asked: "Is there more to it than that?" There is, because once that philosophy has been discovered, it demands constant re-stating for each new historic age, if it is to continue to be a force of revolution.



For our age, it was Raya Dunayevskaya, the founder of Marxist-Humanism, who was able to further unchain the dialectic Marx had first unchained when he refused to accept that Hegel's revolutionary discoveries were true only in the realm of thought. Just as Marx "demystified" the Hegelian Dialectic in 1844 by naming the Subject, so Dunayevskaya 100 years later in 1953, in two Letters on Hegel's Absolutes, "demystified" the Absolute Idea.

In seeing that the Absolute Idea's "unity of theory and practice" was not just unity, but a dual movement—both a movement from theory to practice and "a movement from practice that was itself a form of theory," she caught the specific nature of our post-World War II world.

That is more than being able to spell out "the new passions and forces" Marx could only intimate in the last chapter of *Capital* as the four forces we know today: workers, women, youth and the Black dimension. Great as that "spelling out" was, Dunayevskaya knew that before 1953. The new philosophic comprehension of what came from history, which was released when she returned to grapple directly with the Hegelian Dialectic that year, is what enabled her to see these forces as revolutionary Reason, a "form of theory itself."

That is the philosophic breakthrough that was further concretized at the very first emergence of a whole new kind of WLM in the late 1960s with the category she created: "Woman as Reason and as Revolutionary Force." Suddenly, what the new WLM had helped her to see was that woman, as both force and Reason, had been present at every historic period no matter how different the situation or the country you were looking at, and never more uniquely than in the new WLM.

OPENING DOORS FOR A NEEDED TRANSITION

It was precisely this category that Adrienne Rich said, in her review of all four of Dunayevskaya's major works in *The Women's Review of Books* in 1986, first drew her to Dunayevskaya's work. She was drawn by the title, "Woman as Reason and as Force of Revolution," she wrote, as she "was coming out of a period of increasing discontent with tendencies in feminism toward a kind of 'inner emigration.'" (Rich says she is using an expression Hannah Arendt used to describe "the withdrawal of many Germans during the Third Reich into an 'interior life...to ignore (the) world in favor of an imaginary world "as it ought to be" or as it once upon a time had been.")

Could Rich's discontent with feminism's "inner emigration" relate to the question of "private enclaves" Raya had talked about in the Introduction/Overview to *WLDR*? That is where Dunayevskaya warned: "The Absolute Method allows for no 'private enclaves'—i.e.,

exceptions to the principle of Marx's Dialectics, whether on the theoretical or the organizational questions." That is a question we have not yet even begun to work out, and it demands serious digging into. Here it is important to note that this warning from Raya comes shortly after she has discussed Hegel's chapter on "Life" from the *Science of Logic* and that there she related the chapter to the whole question of "transcendence" and "transition."

In asking and then trying to work out an answer to her own question: "But why do we need Marx, anyway?" is Rich opening the door to the transition the WLM so greatly needed to get out of its stagnation after such magnificent beginnings in the later 1960s and early 1970s? It is surely not only Marx's Marxism, as philosophy, but Dunayevskaya as the philosopher who has been able to "reclaim his ideas" and concretize them for our age that Rich insists "matters to our understanding of what and where the movement for women's liberation has been and might go."

Indeed, the very last paragraph of Rich's review could have become a new jumping off point for the whole WLM: "What I hear Dunayevskaya saying above all is that we have reached the point in history where real freedom is attainable, if we are willing to commit ourselves to a more inclusive definition of freedom than has ever been attempted. If, indeed, Marx was moving in such a direction, we can't leap forward from Marx without understanding where he left off, and what he left to us."

In a letter to Rich about her review, Raya wrote: "You have hit the nail on the head...That's what I thought I was doing when I concretized the task as the need to work out the new signalled by the 1950s that I had designated a movement from practice that is itself a form of theory..." In 1987 she designated those 1953 Letters on Hegel's Absolutes as "the philosophic moment" from which all of Marxist-Humanism had flowed.⁶

What has been exciting this year is that, from within the WLM, the Hegelian feminist Pat Johnson has gone directly to those 1953 Letters on Hegel's Absolutes and found in them what sent her "scurrying" to Hegel to find "the movements of transition" that are needed "to bring us to the point of liberation." This is what Johnson has developed further in an Essay soon to be published in the *Quarterly Journal of Ideology* where she pinpoints: "When she (Dunayevskaya) reads Hegel, she does so in order to explore these roots and to find ways to overcome problems that have arisen in the concrete working out of human freedom... It is her focus on the Absolutes that shows most clearly how we can call upon Hegel as we work out our freedom." The title of this Essay, "Following Dunayevskaya in Practicing Dialectics," indicates the kind of doors this sort of probing of Raya's Marxist-Humanism could open for Women's Liberation.

Open doors by themselves don't do any of the labor we have to do to move on in the struggle to freedom. They can give us a look at the contradictions from within we all have to overcome to get there.

At the end of Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, Raya wrote: "Only live human beings can recreate the revolutionary dialectic forever anew. And these live human beings must do so in theory as well as in practice. It is not a question only of meeting the challenge from practice but of being able to meet the challenge from the self-development of the Idea, and of deepening theory to the point where it reaches Marx's concept of the philosophy of 'revolution in permanence.'"

That is not only the unfinished task of the Women's Liberation Movement, but of all of us.

6. These 1953 Letters, together with the June 1, 1987 presentation in which she created this new philosophic category, have been published by News & Letters as *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism*. They are the core for our attempts to become continuators of Dunayevskaya's philosophy of revolution.

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3. The first English translation of these Essays were included as an Appendix to the 1958 edition of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Marxism and Freedom*.

4. Sheila Rowbotham as the socialist historian, Gerda Lerner as the academic historian, and Simone de Beauvoir as the Existentialist philosopher were discussed in a 1980 Essay called "Women's Liberation in Search of a Theory: the Summary of a Decade" (see *WLDR*, p. 101). These three tendencies continue to be expressed in a variety of forms by today's feminist theoreticians, though none reach those original writers.

5. In Barbara Christian's provocative essay, "The Race for Theory" in *Women, Class and the Feminist Imagination*, she sharply critiques the enormous separation that exists today between much of Women's Studies and a WLM that is looking for new beginnings: "When Theory is not rooted in practice, it becomes prescriptive, exclusive, elitist." As a Black feminist whose concentration is literature, she makes her point powerfully that literature often captures something crucial of life that the academics have not—Black literature especially, and Black women's writing most of all. This does not reach the fullness of the need for theory, however. Nor does it touch the need for philosophy.

THE CHANGED WORLD AND LATIN AMERICA

I'm not convinced that the defeat of the Sandinistas at the polls was a move towards counter-revolution, considering the fact that I also don't think the Sandinistas were models of revolutionary democracy. However, the victory of Chamorro also isn't going to move the country toward democracy, let alone reconciliation. No matter how fair the elections were, its results are just the latest in the series of events of the last ten years of East/West superpower politics, where the people have been put on the backburner.

D. B.
Florida

I have been very active in Central American solidarity activities for five years now, but what I don't understand is why the solidarity groups aren't saying anything about why the Sandinistas lost the election. It's like they either don't know or for some reason don't want to discuss why these things have happened. I look to News & Letters because you don't seem afraid to ask why.

Latina
Illinois

Of course the Sandinistas couldn't have built socialism in an underdeveloped country so near to the most powerful capitalist country in the world. But the war, the economic dislocations and the destruction of Nicaragua by the U.S. cannot be the complete justification for the recent turn of events. It isn't so much a difference between what the Sandinistas said and did, as much as how they made a virtue out of necessity. Nothing tells that more than their attitude to women. It seems that what they said in 1979 about full social and political equality for women not only had not been gained, but that the idea had been lost.

Solidarity activist
New York

In the past few years we have seen the election of Corazon Aquino in the Philippines, Benazir Bhutto in Pakistan, and now Chamorro in Nicaragua and Ertha Pascal-Trouillet in Haiti. To me even though these presidents are women, they represent not women's liberation but male dominance. They are more like puppets. Some people might say you have to work within the system to change it. But these examples show that when you work within the system, you can't change anything.

Jose
Chicago

It is already clear that the result of the elections in Nicaragua will spell out more suffering and despair for the Nicaraguan people, who will be forced to endure the kind of austerity measures that the masses in Mexico, Brazil and Argentina are now so familiar with. Latin America has forever been the U.S.'s "backyard" for pumping out untold hours of unpaid labor into U.S. coffers, and as the 1990s begin the hold of Reaganism over the continent is showing itself to be powerful. But we should also keep in mind one point Raya Dunayevskaya made in her 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes," when she noted that in Capital Marx connected the accumulation of capital in fewer and fewer hands to the release of "new passions and new forces" aspiring for liberation. As we enter this new stage in Latin American development, working out new paths to liberation will become ever-more crucial.

Student of Latin America
Illinois

I have been reading some of your literature, and have many, many questions. You talk about the gap between theory and practice, and yet you also say that the movement from practice is itself a form of theory. So what is the gap? Another question I have concerns the Marxist-Humanist discussion of the need for "new human relationships." Is that something that has to wait till after the revolution? How can Marxist-Humanism help the process?

Young Latina
California

The other day on television news I saw a lot of coverage on the sanctions the Soviets are planning to adopt against Lithuania. I heard no such reports when the U.S. decided to adopt

sanctions against Nicaragua. Is the news media's purpose to inform or divert?

Liberal Studies student
Los Angeles

You reported that West Coast dockers refused to unload ships carrying coffee from El Salvador, in order to protest the U.S. role in supporting that murderous regime. Your readers should know that the Salvadoran beans are headed for Folger's, and because of that there is a nation-wide boycott of Folger's, in addition to Hills Bros., MJB, Chase & Sanborn and Maxwell House going on.

Central America solidarity activist,
New York

WORKERS THINKING AND DOING



Computers are both a blessing and a sin. In Vancouver, British Columbia the entire subway system operated with no conductor, no motorman, totally without any workers. I'm not against progress. To me, progress means eliminating traffic jams. But the trick is to do it without putting people out of work.

Striking Greyhound driver
Chicago

While I was at the Greyhound picket line, I learned that "sympathizing drivers" from other bus lines, who do not wish to cross the picketline, could leave the bus in front of the terminal. A scab mechanic and a Greyhound supervisor then drove the bus into the terminal. No attempt is made by striking drivers to stop the bus.

This infuriates me. The fragmentation of the official labor "movement," the careful observation of legalities, makes the struggle between capital and labor a mere ritual and thus limits the active participation of the rank-and-file. Labor solidarity has to mean more than just the words of labor "leaders" at rallies and contributions to strike funds. Wasn't the Pittston Coal miners' strike, despite the defeat on work schedules contained in the settlement, different and important in this regard?

Meatpacker
Chicago

The federal agency where I work just did a survey of its employees, asking if we had any suggestions about what the agency could do to help them manage their dual responsibilities for job and family. One woman's reply said it all. "Work on changing male managers' attitudes toward working mothers. I've been told not to nurse my babies—even outside of normal working hours, not to take leave for their doctor appointments, to come in even if my baby and I are sick and she had been poisoned, that I must put work first even if my baby has a 104 degree fever, and 'if you can't handle it, you can always be demoted to a lower grade level.' Stuff that in your survey?" I'd say that sheds about 1,000 points of light on the subject.

Working woman
Chicago

I was talking to a couple of workers at my plant about the length of the working day, and one of them said, "When I go home I'm too tired to do anything but watch TV and start nodding out in my chair." Another worker said, "Me, too. Watching TV is just as boring as working on the line, cause all those shows are the same."

I had to grin when I heard this because of all the so-called radical intellectuals I've encountered at the university, who have developed intricate theories to "prove" that American workers aren't revolutionary because they have somehow been brainwashed by television. Now who's really brainwashed?

Jim Guthrie
Illinois

What I like about your paper is that you give the ordinary worker a voice and space in which to speak.

Black woman
New York

Readers' Views

CHINA'S FORGOTTEN SORROW

In China the government is now talking about "only China can save socialism." Again everything in the country is supposedly good. People are happy; the government has made great achievements. I wonder how long the people can stand living with these lies. More are struggling to get out of the country.

Dissident
China

This has become the year when the people in the Communist countries rebelled for freedom. It appears that in China it ended in tragedy—but things won't stop there.

Correspondent
Italy

We are asking for help in preserving the terrible truth of what really took place in Beijing's Tiananmen Square in June, and to broadcast the truth into China with modern communications technology. There has been an unprecedented attempt to rewrite history. Donations can be sent to:

June 4th Foundation
1300 19th St., NW, #350
Washington, D.C. 20036



WHERE IS SOUTH AFRICA GOING?

I thought it was very important that the Editorial on South Africa in the March N&L discussed Soweto and Biko and the Black Consciousness Movement. Neither Mandela nor the ANC mention Biko. And at the demonstrations here, you can't mention Biko to most of the ANC supporters.

Long-time activist
California

I felt sort of sad when I saw what Nelson Mandela looked like after leaving prison. It isn't that I don't think the masses are right to try to turn his release into a celebration of victory. It's that it was so shocking to see how different he looked from the last photos we saw of him some 25 years ago, after a quarter of a century of brutality in South African jails. And yet what is so beautiful is that he didn't collapse under that pressure, but maintained himself as a symbol of the movement. For that, we have every reason to celebrate.

Anti-apartheid activist
Chicago

The "politicians language" that Mandela has been expressing in interviews, saying he respects Bush and Thatcher, is a different language than that of the anti-apartheid movement—both in South Africa and abroad, where continual pressure against apartheid institutions and the dismissal of the "advice" of Reagan and Thatcher against sanctions, set the ground for Mandela's release.

Moreover, let us hope that Mandela's forgetting of the courageous activity of the East European masses, in his view that changes in Eastern Europe are all due to Gorbachev's good will, is not the presage to forget his own masses, as he tells them to "go back to school," while he announces in the Weekly Mail "everything is negotiable." The negotiation trail is a tricky one, any separation between the leaders and the masses (who are not synonymous with the ANC) will spell disasters.

Fred Shelley
New York

WOMEN'S LIBERATION

It is 13 years ago—March 22, 1977—that a young Latina who was trying to make a better life for herself and her five-year-old daughter, Rose Jimenez, died from an illegal abortion. She was the first woman we know of who died from an illegal abortion following the passage of the Hyde Amendment, which

cut off Medicaid funding for abortions. I wonder to myself, what was Mr. Hyde doing that day? Did he get up, have his morning coffee, kiss his wife? And how many women have died since?

For much of my adult life, I was not politically involved, though I supported the Democratic Party. But now, as I am beginning to understand what is happening, I do not support any party, any president. I see that one is no different than another. We need a much more total change, to bring fairness and equality and justice for everyone.

Chicana feminist
California

Even some non-Marxists in the Women's Liberation Movement are now starting to talk about the need to go beyond a "single issue" agenda. But "multi-issue" is still far from a view of Women as Reason. A total view means the full development of all people in a philosophy of revolution in permanence. There is a real pull of pragmatism in the battles we are waging against the misnamed "pro-lifers." You can get caught in it if you just try to stop them without having a broader view.

Ginny Adams
Los Angeles

I'm very glad you published Raya Dunayevskaya's 1975 talk on International Women's Day in the last issue. I was struck immediately by the fact that it was written 15 years ago, at a quite early stage in the modern Women's Liberation Movement, and yet it zeroes in on the problems that have afflicted the movement ever since—that is, what happens when you are without a philosophy of revolution.

Long-time feminist
New York

POLLUTION AS A WAY OF LIFE



Here in Arizona, 90% of the natural wild areas have already been destroyed. The mining corporations have such a big say. There was a wilderness hearing here, with environmentalists fighting to preserve part of our state, in its natural balance without development. A young teacher from Wilcox spoke out for the environmentalists and against the developers—and was threatened with losing his job! I thought to myself: This is the United States of America!

In Clifton-Morenci, developers are trying to run a community of older Chicanos out of "valuable" land in North Clifton, to turn this area into a money-making golf course and RV court. And the government, through "eminent domain," can actually force these people to relocate! I'm not against progress, but it should not be on people's backs.

Angry reader
Arizona

Your lead article on the environment in the March issue really got to the heart of the fact that pollution isn't just something that happens "in the wild" but that it includes the workplace as well. It also showed the non-rootedness of the intellectualistic environmentalists who ignore the workers' revolt against these conditions at the workplace.

Environmentalist
Florida

A READER RESPONDS

Like many, I am in awe of what is happening in the world today, from China to Eastern Europe, to Central and Latin America to Africa, etc. What an age we live in and what opportunity to re-examine and change the oppressive social relations that enslave most of the world! In the midst of all the activity I am in, I continue to rely on N&L for its revolutionary humanist perspective, and I carry the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism with me wherever I go and whatever I do.

Subscriber
Toronto, Canada

CAN MARX'S MARXISM BE BORN ANEW?

Someone in your organization should write a letter to the editor of the New York Times explaining the difference to them between genuine Marxism and state-capitalism. It's obvious that they have no idea that it isn't Marxism that has died. Russia is not a "Marxist state" it is a state-capitalist one. The New York Times needs to know the difference.

Margaret Hawaii

Everyone is running around saying that "Marxism is dead," but there's an unasked question here. There are about one billion people in the world living on under 500 calories a day in "free market" economies. So how come no one is talking about lynching Adam Smith?

Youth of the 1990s Chicago

Our rulers talk of democracy and "free enterprise" as if the two went together like strawberries and cream. Certainly, the reformist wing of the bureaucracy and many of the former East European dissidents now in government are mesmerized by Western capitalism and the market. Prosperity is promised for some vague future, meanwhile the workers are called upon to accept price rises and unemployment for the sake of "market reforms." As political life opens up, some terribly reactionary currents have surfaced; the recent Nazi propaganda in East Germany is presumably the work of a small minority, but the anti-Turkish demonstrations in Bulgaria do appear to have mass support.

Richard Bunting England

All moorings have been burst by the East European masses in the past month. Unfortunately, few philosophic moorings exist for them, after the utter disgrace of the very concept of socialism. Mountains of mush are being written and purveyed to the public.

Subscriber California

When we look at the objective situation today, we cannot deny that we are

entering a new stage. The real question is, what does Marxism mean today? What did Marx mean when he said the Hegelian dialectic is the source of all dialectics? Can we "translate" Dunayevskaya's designation of Marx's Marxism as a philosophy of "revolution in permanence" for the 1990s?

Azadkar Los Angeles

I have been learning a lot from reading Dunayevskaya, particularly in relationship to questions that I have as to how does Marxist-Humanism view the relationship between spontaneity and organization, between leadership and rank-and-file. I think you as Marxist-Humanists are very fortunate to have the opportunity to study Dunayevskaya's philosophy. When I was in Iran, after the crisis when Khomeini took over the revolution, you could be sentenced to life in prison for reading Marx or Lenin. We went through so much to find and study Vol. 38 of Lenin's *Collected Works*, his *Philosophic Notebooks* on Hegel. But after five years of intense study we only first got to the question of the relationship between philosophy and organization.

Iranian revolutionary-in-exile Illinois

I have recently become politically active because I feel a responsibility as a human being to change this world. One thing that bothers me about a lot of radicals is that they are so cynical. It seems like so many of them just want to replace one cancer with another cancer; I mean another repressive state. What is attractive in Marxist-Humanism is the idea of revolution in permanence.

Young Chicano Chicago

I am missing from the "Workshop Talks" column the quote from the great Irish revolutionary James Connolly, from whom we took the column's title. The quote that Raya always pointed to from Connolly's "Workshop Talks" was: "Revolution is never practical until the

hour of revolution strikes. Then it alone is practical, and all the efforts of the conservatives and compromisers become the most futile and visionary of human language." And that is also the way I think of a philosophy of revolution: it may not seem "practical," but when the hour of revolution strikes, there is nothing more needed or concrete.

Gene Ford Los Angeles



ISRAEL'S CONSTANT CRISES

The Likud is splitting now, and that's a good sign. The "Labour" Party might get back into power, but it's not a Left party, it's at most a party that stands in the middle. Most politicians here are interested in their seats rather than any idealism. The U.S. and West Europe will have to put pressure on the Israeli government to stop settling in the West Bank and finally begin talking with the Palestinians.

Subscriber Tel Aviv, Israel

Our Likud-Labor government collapsed because of the issue of peace. The party-political game proved that the Shamir government cannot reach a peace settlement with the Palestinians. Because the temporary government today will be comprised only with Likud and its extreme Right associate members (because the Labour ministers resigned after Peres was dismissed by Shamir) let's hope it shall not survive too long and that a new, less obstinate government will come in their stead. What is definite and can be reckoned as an achievement today is that this operation succeeded in separating the Siamese twins—Shamir and Rabin.

Sara Tel-Aviv, Israel

THE BLACK DIMENSION

Anthony Thompson said apathy and disunity are our biggest problems and allow the university administration at large to take advantage of us. ("NYU

Black Grievances," March N&L). When he said people are apathetic, he may have meant that people are not doing anything. But even for the people who have been doing things we need to be more aggressive. There was a recent study that found in the '60s, most of the things we got was by rioting, after the earlier marches and protests. It has been too long since that progress. The point where Black people stopped rioting is when the establishment started taking away what it had given in to. They don't feel threatened by our tactics any longer.

Black woman activist U. of Cal., Berkeley

In the ever-present reality of weakening Black leadership and the simultaneous rise of Black separatism, our consciousness must begin to shape our activity not only against the system but against the narrow, equally racist, sexist separatist movement, such as the Nation of Islam headed by Louis Farrakhan. The Nation of Islam is being praised in the Black community because it teaches young Black brothers the counter-productiveness of smoking, alcohol and drug abuse. But it doesn't touch the question that the revolutionary Black nature is against the whole racist, capitalist system. The organizing we need to be doing includes the organization of revolutionary thought, for perspectives of overthrowing our present conditions and creating new human relations.

Maurice Miller Los Angeles

As an activist in the Black community, I have to confront the nationalists who focus on wanting Blacks to identify with the "kings and queens that we once were." I think those activists, because they are middle class, seek their own class when they look at history, no matter what the era. However, because these are the organizations that are fighting racism right now, I still think we must participate with them. Once we revolutionaries do that, we can find some in those groups who will listen, to revolutionary theory.

Participant Coalition Against Black Exploitation Los Angeles

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—BOOKS—

- Marxism and Freedom ...from 1776 until today**
1989 Columbia University Press edition. New 1980s introduction by author 381 pp.
by Raya Dunayevskaya \$17.50 per copy
- Philosophy and Revolution from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao**
1989 edition. New introduction by author. 372 pp.
by Raya Dunayevskaya \$14.95 per copy
- Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution** 234 pp.
by Raya Dunayevskaya \$10.95 per copy
- Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future** 294 pp.
by Raya Dunayevskaya \$15.95
- The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism: Two Historic-Philosophic Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya.** Contains "Presentation on Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy of June 1, 1987," and 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes." 52 pp.
\$3.00 paperback, \$10.00 hardcover
- Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal**
1989 Wayne State University Press edition includes Afterword by Raya Dunayevskaya, "Charles Denby 1907-83" 303 pp.
by Charles Denby \$14.95

—PAMPHLETS—

- Constitution of News & Letters Committees** 25¢ postage
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An African-American in Africa

After a recent two month stay in the West African countries of Senegal, Mali and the Gambia, I was asked by *News & Letters* to write about my thoughts and experiences—as an African-American, what was it like to return home?

My first impression was that I hadn't left America at all. I thought I had just moved to another part of the ghetto. So many things are the same: high youth unemployment, inadequate housing, lack of health care, delapidated neighborhoods.

Everywhere you looked people were on the street selling something, anything to survive. Almost every young man that I met wanted me to help him get a visa to the U.S. They think they can get work over here and are desperate to do anything. They don't know about the high unemployment rate or the lack of opportunities due to racism.

Looking at all the youth with nothing to do, I couldn't help but think about youth in the ghettos back home—no job, no money, no place to go from day to day. But there's a difference, the Senegalese and Malian youth haven't turned their anger inwards to the degree that we have. Nor have they become revolutionary yet.

The attitude of most of the youth is one of disgust. There was not a lot of discussion about how to change things. Most of the talk was how can I get the hell out of here! Before independence people talked of change, but now most of what I heard was disillusionment.

The economy has changed little from colonial times and has probably gotten worse. Both Senegal and Mali supply Europe with raw materials, principally cotton and ground nuts, and receive finished goods. I think the most obscene thing I saw was in the villages. I saw villagers dressed in rags that even some homeless Americans would have thrown away. In the same villages you could see huge bins full of raw cotton waiting to be exported to Europe where it would be manufactured into clothing and shipped back to West Africa. Once returned as finished products most peasants couldn't even

afford to buy them.

In Senegal, this situation is allowed to continue by the corrupt neo-colonial regime of Abdou Diouf. At the same time that the government says there's no money for schools to have more text books, chairs, tables and teachers, Abdou Diouf purchases over \$1.5 million worth of new Mercedes Benz cars. I guess colonialism isn't bad for all Africans.

One thing I noticed was that the "House Negroes" in West Africa and the "House Negroes" in America are beginning to make more business contacts, usually in the interests of multinational firms or organizations like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, as well as more political contacts. I met several Senegalese who had been to the U.S., and had dealings with Black mayoral administrations in Los Angeles and Wash., D.C. In the sixties, it was Black militants and leftists from the U.S. who were making contacts with radical governments in Africa.

Probably one of the most interesting things that I learned was the power of American propaganda. Most people think that race relations are just fine, that our government is actually trying to stop drugs, and that the wealth in America is evenly distributed. This made me realize how important it is for the oppressed in America to put up vigorous and vocal opposition to what goes on here and to make links with other struggles abroad. If we don't, people in other countries will only know the lies our government spreads.

For more than 300 years now we African-Americans have been separated physically from the land of our ancestors. Now our culture and history is different from Black people in Africa. But I think that as long as we have common oppressors we will always be brothers and sisters, not just by skin but by class. As long as we exist as a people, we will always have two homes, one in America and one in Africa.

—Robert Reed

Black/Red View

by John Alan

Last month the Oakland, Cal. City Council and the Alameda Board of Supervisors voted to spend a whopping \$689 million to get Al Davis to bring his professional football team, the Raiders, back to Oakland.

More than a thousand people came to this joint meeting of the two major government bodies in Alameda County. For the most part they were white suburbanites who came to support the politicians who were pro-Raiders and to heckle those who were anti. The Black and Hispanic majority in Oakland was hardly noticeable.

The decision to spend this incredible sum of money on a football team came after 14 months of negotiations with Al Davis. During that time Davis wheeled and dealt with other bidders, thus setting the final price for the Raiders up to more than half a billion dollars.

Africans march in Poland

Wroclaw, Poland—On Feb. 24 the African students studying in Poland commemorated the release of Nelson Mandela from prison. This was organized by the African Students Union in Wroclaw.

At 10 a.m. African students assembled at the Medical Academy for a march. The poor African students marched along the streets of Wroclaw singing liberation songs and displaying placards with their slogans. Along the street the gathering met with other Africans at Plac Grunwaldski who happily joined them in the march. What a pity to see young Africans struggling for freedom in speeches, demonstrations and songs, who still cannot free their motherland.

The peace was broken when a group of racist Poles came to disorganize the African commemoration. Missiles were thrown, but still the poor African students maintained their non-violent stance. The African students called for police assistance. They tried to defend themselves against these racists but could not. Then suddenly, a young African man was grabbed by these racists and seriously wounded on the head.

This caused the poor African students to withdraw from their non-violent stance. Then the battle started between the Blacks and the Polish racists. For a short while things started to go for worse on the side of the racists. Then came the so-called police to the rescue of the poor African students, when it was almost too late.

For a while things were silent, and the chairman of the Solidarnosc committee at Wroclaw came to express his solidarity with the African students by condemning the uncultured and mischievous intruders.

After different delegations gave speeches, lastly came the poor wounded African student who said, "Because I am Black I was beaten for showing my joy at the release of our freedom fighters. I am Black and proud of my color and nation." He ended by saying that the struggle shall continue till freedom is attained. The African students started to play their freedom music and songs, and danced proudly.

All of a sudden the power went off, and no one knew who switched off the connection. It is sad when Africans are not free to express their joy towards their own freedom. Sadly, they packed their instruments up to go back to the Academy to prepare for the film show that night.

—African Student

Oakland penalized by Raiders deal

This is more than twice the amount of money President Bush is offering Nicaragua and half the amount of aid Washington is sending to Black Africa.

ONE-SIDED DEAL

From a one-sided financial deal, Al Davis not only gets a \$54.9 million franchise fee but is guaranteed \$24.6 million in annual ticket sales for the life of the contract. If there is a shortfall in ticket sales the City of Oakland and the County of Alameda will have to make it up out of taxes. Added to this is the \$53.5 million to be spent on modernizing the Oakland Coliseum. All of this money is projected to come from revenue bonds the City of Oakland and the County of Alameda will sell.

What is so irrational and contradictory about this deal is that Oakland can't raise the funds to keep schools open or to reverse the Third World conditions at Highland Hospital, the only public hospital serving the poor Black neighborhood of East Oakland.

At the very moment Oakland's Black mayor, Lionel Wilson, was cheering because the Raiders were returning to Oakland, the staff at Highland Hospital made the announcement that they could not accept emergency cases because of lack of facilities.

The crisis in the public school system and the notoriously bad conditions at Highland Hospital are the most glaring problems facing Oakland. Oakland is the "inner city" of Alameda county, and like all American inner cities it suffers from widespread urban decay, permanent unemployment amongst its majority non-white population and a high crime rate. Last year's earthquake added a whole new dimension to these problems when it created a new group of homeless people. Many Blacks and Hispanics believe that the money should be spent on these human needs first!

DEVELOPMENT FOR WHOM?

The issue of the Raiders has become the major political issue among the Black contenders seeking to replace the incumbent, Lionel Wilson, in the coming mayoral election. And at the same time it has revealed the extent of the difference between the aims of the Black political leadership in City Hall and the concerns and interests of the Black working class and poor in Oakland. As a Black councilman, Carter Gilmore from East Oakland who voted for the Raiders put it: "I voted my conscience, but I could not find anyone among my constituents who wanted to bring the Raiders back to Oakland; they were mostly concerned with the problems of homelessness and drug-related crimes."

The Black political leadership is committed to the development of downtown Oakland. Mayor Wilson is so devoted to that goal that he proposed that the earthquake-destroyed Black neighborhood, adjacent to the downtown area, be re-built in such a manner that it would lure the middle class back as a viable element in the development of downtown.

This "changing image" of Oakland, as everyone knows, means hiding the reality that Oakland is largely made up of poor Black and Brown people. It also means hiding the fact that crime and use of drugs is directly related to poverty. But precisely because that reality is specifically a human reality, it will not remain quiet as the battle rages around the issue of the Raiders.

Black World

(continued from page 1)

U.S. Administration and Congress...

"However, the National Popular Assembly (APN), in particular, rejected those 'elections' as a trick....In short, the APN and other popular organizations predicted either tragedy or a farce. Haiti experienced both."

The Haitian masses have shown how unrelenting is their determination to dechoukaj (uproot) their native ruling class which has amassed some of the greatest personal wealth in the Caribbean on the backs of the poorest population in the Western hemisphere. This latest incarnation of a civilian government backed by the military can no more hide its oppressive class nature, than did Francois Duvalier's corruption of *negritude* as the state ideology hide the neo-fascist features of his rule. Nor can it hide the hand of U.S. imperialism.

It was the U.S. State Department which flew Duvalier safely out of Port-au-Prince on Feb. 7, 1986. It was the Reagan Administration which increased military aid to the Army despite its drug charges against leading military officials and despite its own eye-witness reports of military collusion with death-squads. The U.S. backed the corrupt military-cum-civilian-cum-military rule of Gen. Namphy, Leslie Manigat, and Gen. Avril. And now there is the installation of Pascal-Trouillot through the arbitration of U.S. Ambassador Alvin Adams.



Haitians celebrate Avril's ouster

In each case, the Haitian ruling class performed its caricature of bourgeois democracy to the tune of Duvalierist military despotism and American imperialism. So entrenched in the ruling oligarchy, urban bourgeoisie and military is the U.S., so steeped in the blood of the Haitian masses, that American civilization is as much on trial in Haiti as it is here at home.

Because the Haitian bourgeoisie has historically lacked the will to carry out its own bourgeois revolution, it has fallen to the peasant and urban masses to bring about even the most elemental democratic change. That is why the critique of the political treachery of the Haitian bourgeoisie can be found in Frantz Fanon's observation in *Wretched of the Earth*: "History teaches us that the battle against colonialism does not run straight away along the lines of nationalism....It so happens that the unpreparedness of the educated classes, the lack of practical links between them and the mass of the people, their laziness, and let it be said, their cowardice at the decisive moment of the struggle, will give rise to tragic mishaps."

FARCICAL VS. REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRACY

Frankly, the prospects for economic development by any of the political leaders hardly go beyond the narrow horizon of Reaganomics. Under the watchful auspices of the U.S. AID (Agency for International Development), investments poured into Haiti following the February 1986 overthrow. However, while it fueled the military and the ruling class elite, it totally by-passed the masses. No jobs were created, dozens of foreign companies which had located there in the 1970's and early 1980s left, eliminating 12,000 jobs, and the closing of state enterprises threw hundreds of workers into the streets. The "American Plan" to keep Haiti underdeveloped for American capitalists seeking low-wage labor became the subject of widespread political discussion by Haitians in both Haiti and the U.S. Thus, the political despotism of the military and ruling elite was cynically matched by the economic despotism of American imperialism.

That is why the election of any of the 12 opposition parties responsible for the installation of Pascal-Trouillot would only assure more of the same. However, there is another reality created by the Haitian masses. It was they who, after all, overthrew Duvalier and who are determined to dechoukaj all the remnants of Duvalierism, who, more than any other sector of Haitian society, have fought for a revolutionary democracy. And their greatest working achievement has been the self-organization of their communities, work places and land.

As against the numerous political parties formed in the aftermath of Duvalier's overthrow, the Haitian masses, especially outside of Port-au-Prince, remain drawn to their own indigenous forms of organizations—trade unions, peasant cooperatives, women and youth committees, neighborhood and grass-roots church organizations. Electoral politics have not eclipsed what the masses have created themselves. The challenge ahead for the Haitian revolution will be whether the masses will allow the limitless horizon of their own self-organization to be subordinated by the self-limiting political parties of a new elite. Otherwise, Haiti will continue to go from dictator to dictator.

Nicaragua's electoral result shows U.S. imperial might

(continued from page 1)

people a means of economic survival, to deprive them of their very lives.

TEN YEARS OF REAGANISM IN CENTRAL AMERICA

First came the U.S.-sponsored military intervention: the creation, arming and equipping of counter-revolutionaries, the contras, born from Somoza's hated National Guard. Not only did Reagan again and again arm the contras both behind the backs of the American people through secret military shipments and the Iran-contras arms deal, but he received the cooperation again and again of the Democratic Congress who openly sponsored military aid and then so-called "non-lethal" aid.

Reagan worked to turn Honduras into a veritable U.S. military base which housed and allowed the contras to launch attacks into Nicaragua from its soil and was home to thousands upon thousands of U.S. troops who were forever on military maneuvers close to Nicaragua's borders. When the contras were incapable of carrying out a specific military action, the CIA took over, as with the mining of Nicaragua's harbors.

The contras and the constant threat of U.S. military intervention forced the Sandinista government to divert vast amounts of its resources and more than 50% of its budget to defense. To fight the contras, a military draft was instituted which became increasingly unpopular. Some 65,000 died in ten years—more than the total number of U.S. troops who died in the Vietnam War. This in a country of less than four million.

Military intervention was only one weapon the U.S. used. Soon after the revolution all economic aid from the U.S. was cut off to this impoverished Third World country which had lived for more than four decades under a U.S.-sponsored dictatorship of one or another member of the Somoza family.

Not only was aid cut off shortly after the 1979 revolution, but in 1985 a total trade embargo was organized. What the contras were unable to do alone because they had little indigenous support within Nicaragua, the boycott began to do—wreck havoc with Nicaragua's economy.

Between 1981 and 1989 the real wages of Nicaraguan workers plummeted by more than 90%. Where in 1979 the average daily salary was enough to buy 30 eggs or

12 liters of milk, by the end of 1988, it would buy only two eggs or two liters of milk.

The U.S. acted to stop the World Bank and the InterAmerican Development Bank, the main sources for development loans, from making any loans to Nicaragua. By the end of the 1980s a survey of several thousand children by the Ministry of Health showed that two-thirds were suffering from malnutrition. Even the devastation of Hurricane Joan in the fall of 1988 did not change the U.S. government position. Although some 300,000 people were left homeless—almost 10% of Nicaragua's population—the U.S. refused to extend emergency assistance.

Nicaragua was now a devastated nation whose per capita output had fallen to \$300 a year, less than Haiti's \$330 a year, the Western Hemisphere's poorest nation. The U.S. war on Nicaragua—military, economic, political—had put Nicaragua on par with such poverty-stricken nations as Somalia, the Sudan and the Central African Republic.

The U.S. was not alone in its boycott. West Europe's social-democratic governments proceeded to cut down on their economic aid. Far from being independent of the U.S., they either marched in-step with or remained silent about Reagan's hot and cold war maneuverings, leaving Nicaragua further isolated. In 1987 foreign aid and credits to Nicaragua were only \$387 million, one-third of what they had been in 1985.

Russia not only failed to give sufficient aid to halt the U.S.-produced downward spiral of Nicaragua's economy, but in the later part of the 1980s Gorbachev essentially abandoned Nicaragua's revolution as he set off on a path toward new relations with the U.S.

NICARAGUA'S REVOLUTION: ACHIEVEMENTS...

What was this revolution that the U.S. was determined to destroy and that Russia abandoned? In 1979 the Nicaraguan revolution released many creative dimensions. Whether it was the literacy campaign or the vast redistribution of much of Somoza's lands to tens of thousands of landless peasants; whether it was the vast participation of women in the revolution's uprisings or their determination to help build a new Nicaragua in

every area from the formation of sewing cooperatives to health care; whether it was the organizing of hospital workers in a union or workers' view that health and safety was not only something for on the job, but as well within the community where all must have clean water—all these were seen not as an isolated series of particulars, but as dimensions of the living, developing, totality of the revolution.

Nicaragua did not "export revolution." But it did become a catalyst for Central American upheavals by working to concretize the Idea of revolution at home. It was precisely for this reason that Reagan was determined to war on all of Central America, particularly El Salvador. The fires that encompassed a movement of indigenous peoples and guerrilla warfare in Guatemala, full civil war and mass opposition in El Salvador, unrest in Honduras, were what Reagan sought to extinguish.

...AND CONTRADICTIONS

However, from the beginning there were deep contradictions within Nicaragua's revolution, and not only the threat of U.S. imperialism from the outside. The leaders had from early on confined the revolution with a narrow ideological view. First came the debate over what kind of economy should Nicaragua have, which failed to recognize state-capitalism as a world stage of development, including the Third World. The ground for the debate became one of forms of property, as if Nicaragua was choosing between different degrees of state vs. private ownership, rather than posing a new human society vs. capitalist class rule, whether in state or private form.

Second, the idea of revolution became continually narrowed to that of only anti-imperialism. There is no doubt that U.S. imperialism bears the greatest responsibility for destroying the Nicaraguan revolution. But the only way to have gained any breathing space against the Colossus of the North would have been if the idea of an ongoing revolution, both for deepening the revolution within Nicaragua and as a banner for revolution in Central and all of Latin America, would have been presented so comprehensively that the masses would have grasped it as theirs, and thus would have deepened and extended it.

But once different versions of a "mixed economy" and anti-imperialism become the ground of the revolution, the leaders' relation to the masses in Nicaragua could not become one which could lead toward working out new pathways to freedom.

- Thus, though there were serious attempts to elicit workers participation, both in mass organizations and within the work place, the framework of that participation was limited to ways of increasing productivity, not to encompassing the masses in a discussion of life and labor, the future direction of the revolution.

- Thus, though self-determination has always been a principle of genuine social revolution, in Nicaragua's revolution the Native Americans on the Atlantic Coast were at first denied self-determination by the Sandinista government.

- Thus, though the rights of women were spoken of in general, and certainly women were encouraged to participate in the movement, when it came to a woman's right to control her own body, the practice was different. Despite the fact that illegal back alley abortions are among the major causes of women's death in Nicaragua, the Sandinistas tried to stifle any discussion of women's right to safe, legal abortions, seeing it as "divisive."

Once the ground of the revolution was not one of working out and concretizing the Idea of revolution, of freedom, as the task of the Nicaraguan masses, the door was open to the ideological pollution of reducing the revolution to only fighting U.S. imperialism, to only economic survival. Necessity had become a virtue.

Reagan-Bush set the ground and the revolution went into a deepening downward spiral, whether it was the draconian austerity measures implemented by the Sandinistas (as stiff as any demanded by the International Monetary Fund imposing its banker-policies on Third World nations); or whether it became Costa Rican President Arias' peace plan, whose interest was more in decapitating the revolution than in ever disarming the contras. Today, even after the electoral defeat of the Sandinistas, and even after Chamorro has requested their disbanding, the contras remain. Will they end up continuing as the death squads of Nicaragua?

THE IDEA OF FREEDOM

But the Idea of revolution, the Idea of freedom in Latin America cannot be crushed. Revolutionary struggles in Central America, indeed in all of Latin America and the Caribbean have always had to be conducted under the whip of counter-revolution: from Spanish occupation, to British imperialism, to the "American century." The struggle had to be anti-imperialist, as well as against its own ruling class propped up by the imperialists.

The key today is not whether new revolutionary movements will emerge in Latin America after this defeat in Nicaragua. They surely will. The question is whether new pathways of revolutionary transformation can be worked out in light of the experiences of the 1980s.

Can the Idea of revolution, the Idea of freedom, undergo such a deep self-development, that it truly becomes one with the self-bringing forth of liberty on the Latin American continent? Only then can U.S. imperialism, or any class concept of society, be rooted out, swept aside by the new human beginnings in thought and action.

New perceptions on Lenin

(continued from page 4)

py with Lenin's 16 point definition of the Dialectic, I had called attention to the fact that Lenin says its final two points (15 and 16) are "examples of point 9." This, I felt, was a step back from proceeding with the Absolute Idea and returning to the Doctrine of Essence, Form and Content specifically.

At the same time—and that's when I did get brave and started arguing with Lenin as if he were right there—I began arguing with Lenin because he asked the readers to disregard the last half paragraph of the chapter on the Absolute Idea while I insisted that had he suffered from Stalinism for three long decades he would have seen the relevance of following Hegel's Absolutes to the end. (This of course is taken up in the May 20, 1953 Letter, where I deal with the three final syllogisms, but for the present what is compelling is to trace the many ways of the development of the Self-Determination of the Idea.)

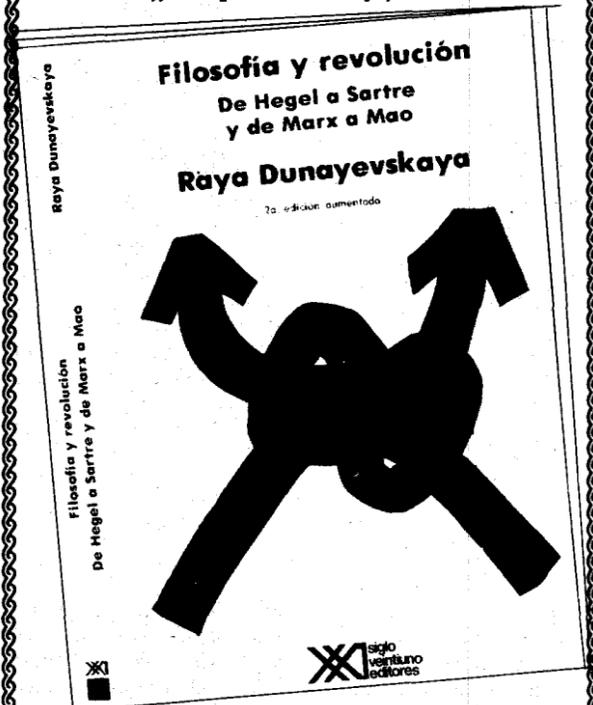
Here is how the May 12, 1953 Letter manifested the dialectical flow on p. 2: from exteriorization/interiorization it lapsed into a would-be "absolute" which led Lenin to remain at the "approach to," i.e., on the threshold of, the Absolute Idea. This is the reason why Lenin preferred to let the Absolute Idea stop at Nature (Practice), crediting Hegel with "stretching a hand to materialism," instead of following Hegel to the last part of that paragraph when Hegel insists that the Absolutes had not been completed with the Absolute Idea, and must still go through the Philosophy of Nature and Philosophy of Mind before completion is reached with Absolute Mind. Put another way, in place of any self-criticism, or objectivity, Lenin left future generations without full illumination of what may befall them—Stalinism. It is the generation that followed, our age that suffered through those three decades of Stalinism, that had to face the reality of what happens after. It is this point, this objectivity, this concreteness that emboldened me not to stop where Lenin stopped at the approach to the Absolute Idea, but to follow Hegel to the Philosophy of Mind. The Absolute Method opened new doors already in the Absolute Idea, which Hegel defined as:

The pure Idea, in which the determinateness or reality of the Notion is itself raised to the level of Notion, is an absolute liberation, having no further immediate determination which is not equally posited and equally Notion. Consequently there is no transition in this freedom...The transition here therefore must rather be taken to mean that the Idea freely releases itself...

Now stand up and shout: "The Idea freely releases itself." Shout this while a flashing light illuminates Reality and its meaning, philosophy and revolution.

Instead of placing a "No Entrance" sign over organization as "pure politics," we finally are in the process of working out dialectics of philosophy and organization.

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Gay and lesbian movement in Mexico

Editor's note: Below we print excerpts from a letter we received from a group of activists in Mexico.

Mexico City, Mexico—We are members of a small political team of working class lesbians and homosexual men formed recently in Mexico City. Our team was formed as a Marxist study group, with the purpose of engaging in rigorous and fast-paced study of the current situation in Mexico, in order to draw conclusions as to how to participate in the most correct and effectively revolutionary ways in the political process here. At the same time, we have been driven by the need to overcome, both in theory and in practice, the intense fragmentation that as proletarian Marxist lesbians and homosexual men we are subjected to simultaneously by bourgeois society, our proletarian communities, the gay movement and gay culture, the feminist movement, and the revolutionary left, as well as in our interpersonal relationships.

IN OUR COUNTRY, the laboring classes—workers, peasants and service workers—are suffering from severe blows caused by the International Monetary Fund (IMF)-imposed politic based on the payment by the people of the debt acquired by the governing classes. Unemployment is well over 40%. The level of malnutrition and lack of resources of all kinds for the majority is alarming. Dispossessed peasants emigrate to the city by the thousands every day, guided by false hopes of finding work, only to see themselves caught in the greatest misery. The ones who survive do so miraculously, with salaries barely amounting to \$140 a month. Meanwhile, the administration of the current president Salinas de Gortari, in complicity with imperialism, carries out a politic of privatization and repression sustained by corruption and fraud (spiked with sophisticated rhetoric) and geared towards enlarging the pockets of a mere few...

We know that the situation of the oppressed classes in Mexico is essentially similar to that of the other countries under the yoke of imperialism, as well as that of the oppressed races and nationalities (particularly Blacks and Hispanics) in the exploiting countries. Specifically, since World War II a small number of countries led by the U.S. and the Soviet Union (the so-called first world) has maintained a position of economic, political and administrative global control, as well as a high standard of living for most of its inhabitants—all made possible through the super exploitation and impoverishment of hundreds of millions of human beings...

As working class lesbians and homosexual men, we cannot blind ourselves to this reality. Any political project not contemplating our liberation from the standpoint of our experience as a class cannot be a truly liberating project, and in fact would serve to deny our very existence. That is why without hesitation we define as the objective of our political project to thoroughly transform the economic relations which make our degradation possible.

Nevertheless, it's clear to us that those relations not only determine our role in the mental/manual division of labor, but also the roles socially imposed on us as women and men, lesbians and homosexual men and oppressed races and ethnicities.

IT'S OUR BELIEF that our situation of oppression as women and homosexually-oriented people is based historically on the emergence of property relations—specifically the mental/manual division of the labor which gave rise to the first class divisions, institutionalized the sexual division of labor through the establishment of rigid sex roles, gave the activities corresponding to men greater importance than to those corresponding to women, and initiated the split between production and consumption.

We see the family, which arose as the social structure through which classes and sex roles are reproduced, as the nucleus in which our specific oppression is located. As women, the family ensures that we carry out the role of domestic slaves, sex objects, and biological and social reproducers, as well as guardians of the "moral" values of the dominant classes. As lesbians and homosexual men, the family imposes on us pre-established social roles—femininity and masculinity—thus severely limiting our human potential. Homosexuality is dissident inasmuch as it fails to comply with these roles, designed to complement one another, mainly through

compulsive heterosexuality, to ensure the smooth functioning of class society. We know we are punished precisely because, insofar as we do not submit to our socially established roles as women and men, we objectively threaten the economic base of class structure...

These aspects which define the situation of our class, race, sex, nationality, etc., as well as our personal experiences, compel us to create a revolutionary alternative, despite the fact that it hasn't been easy to arrive at the understanding that such an alternative truly represents our interests, particularly in the face of social movements seeming to address our oppression. For example, in general, in the nationalist and national liberation movements, we have been marginalized as women, being limited in our development and participation while the brothers speak eloquently in the name of our oppressed nations; while the lesbians and homosexual men we have been discarded as a disgrace to our races and to the movements, homosexuality being regarded as a "white" or "American" disease, and as the product of bourgeois decadence. At the other extreme, within the feminist and gay liberation movements, we have lived through the most insidious class oppression, racism and chauvinism, as reflected specifically in the reformist demands made by self-proclaimed leaders in the name of liberation of all women and lesbians and homosexual men...

THE LEFT GENERALLY has regarded, from a dogmatic and incorrect point of view, women's struggle as a secondary struggle, and homosexuality as a bourgeois aberration—but we believe that such positions can be changed through serious and consistent political work.

We are working in Mexico to help bring about real social transformations. We see as the main social contradiction in the world the struggle between the exploited countries and peoples, and imperialism. This is why we think our effort has to be coordinated on a global level with those of other groups and organizations like ours. For history has shown that each country by itself will not be able to advance very far due to the strategic political control and technological and military development of the exploiting countries...

Nonetheless, this project must not subordinate all of our other experiences of oppression; it must create an alternative for an integrated struggle whose aim is to free us not only as a class and as nations, but also as women, as races and ethnicities, and as lesbians and homosexual men. In our group we are not settling for less.

—Lesbianas y Homosexuales Comunistas Feministas
Admon de Correos No. 20
Aptdo. Postal 20-080
Dr. Gálvez 16
Mexico, D.F. 01000

Panama invasion aftermath

New York, N.Y.—Three months after the U.S. invaded Panama, that country remains occupied and terrorized and the facts about the invasion remain hidden. We learned about Panama at a "Day of International Solidarity with the People of Panama, Latin America and the Caribbean" held March 17 in a heavily Caribbean section of Brooklyn, New York.

Far from the U.S. claim that "only" 205 Panamanians were killed, researchers estimate there were 3,000-5,000 deaths, with more people injured and disappeared. Over 20,000 people remain homeless after U.S. troops destroyed whole working-class neighborhoods in a reign of terror that included dropping 2,000-pound bombs from the Stealth bomber and firing on poor neighborhoods from helicopter gunships. Hundreds who resisted the invasion remain in jail and press censorship and government repression prevent people from telling the truth. U.S. troops are still sweeping the countryside, arresting unionists, community leaders, and directors of farm-workers' organizations and cooperatives.

Damage is estimated at \$1.5 billion in an economy already devastated by two years of "starvation diplomacy" by the U.S. The new government, said one speaker, "has no place for workers, Blacks or peasants; it has declared the whole country is for private enterprise." Over 10,000 unionized public service workers have been summarily fired, and Panamanians of African and Indian descent are being pushed out of government posts by the new all-white government, whose top officials have ties to the banking and drug cartels.

The most interesting speakers were the neighborhood people who had recently visited their homeland and told of the resistance as well as the devastation. One Panamanian described his shock at finding that the entire working-class town of El Chorrillo, just outside Panama City, no longer exists. Its residents blocked a bridge for three hours to demonstrate their demands. A group, called the War Refugees Commission, occupied new luxury housing and demanded it be rented to the poor at controlled rents instead of being sold as condos. The union movement is organizing economic and political resistance.

We were disappointed in the Left and academic expert speakers, however, who offered little new by way of analysis or solution. In limiting our task to making the U.S. government respect the sovereignty of other nations, they reduce anti-imperialism to morality—and the U.S. can always manufacture a good reason to invade a country it doesn't like.

—Anne Jaclard

El Salvador demonstration

On Saturday, March 24, 10,000 people braved snow and sleet in Washington, D.C. to commemorate the anniversary of the death of Oscar Romero. On the same day, 30,000 protesters in San Salvador braved possible slaughter at the hands of the death squad goons of the Christiani regime also to commemorate the memory of the brutally slain Archbishop and the deaths of over 70,000 Salvadorans.

The crowd of Washington protesters (which included everyone from youth activists to workers to concerned senior citizens, to nuns and priests) remained passionately indignant at the imperialist policies of the Bush administration. Amid cries of "U.S. out of El Salvador!" were also cries of "U.S. out of Korea, Guatemala, Nicaragua...etc." and even "U.S. out of the U.S.!" There was wide recognition of the global dimension of freedom struggles. The day before, there was a student rally which focused on these issues as well as the need for more educational funds.

There was rampant talk of revolution, but only revolution to fight the "imperialist pigs." As one solidarity activist put it: "What was lacking during the demonstration was any talk of ideas. No one seemed to ask what the demonstration meant. You had the Maoists and the Young Communists and the ISO etc., but you didn't have open discussion of what these so-called Left groups stand for. Often activists are drawn into these groups without either realizing or caring about the implications of that group's 'philosophy' or rather its lack of philosophy." Bush-bashing is not enough.

For me, the protest pointed to the need to fill the philosophical void that threatens to engulf the Left. That is why it is no abstraction to realize, after the Nicaraguan elections and my experience in the March 24 demonstration, that an altogether new beginning must be made in thought, as well as in solidarity activity.

—Maya Morrison

Control of Namibia

On March 21, the Southern African nation of Namibia finally gained independence in a ceremony covered by the world press. The liberation movement, SWAPO, now controls the state with its leader, Sam Nujoma, as President. As great an achievement as this is after 30 years of resistance to its former ruler, apartheid South Africa—as well as nearly a century of earlier Black resistance—it should be stressed that political independence does not mean total liberation, as the Namibian people know very well.

For example, whites, who are only 6% of the population, nonetheless own and control the key sectors of the economy, and at present have an average income 20 times that of Blacks. In addition, apartheid South Africa continues to control both Walvis Bay, Namibia's only port, and the only railroad line linking Namibia to the outside world. South African and other multinational firms own the diamond and uranium mines, which are the backbone of the economy. So far, political independence has not changed very much the conditions of life and labor of the African masses. That battle lies ahead.

—Kevin A. Barry

Youth in Revolt

by Franklin Dmitryev

Historically-Black Morgan State University in Maryland saw a week-long sit-in in March by 500 students protesting a tuition increase and poor campus conditions. Most of the school's 4,300 students boycotted classes for three days to back demands for more state funds for new faculty and staff, pay raises, dormitory renovations and increased campus security.

At Tennessee State, another historically-Black university, 200 students held a sit-in to demand repair of campus buildings, longer computer center hours and study rooms in some dormitories. The protesters refused to end their sit-in, and nine students stayed on hunger strike, until the administration granted amnesty.

Students at several colleges in Quebec, Canada, held a series of strikes, sit-ins and rallies to protest the provincial government's proposed two-year 130% tuition increase. Dozens of students occupied government offices, from the University of Montreal to the legislature, from the CBC-TV network to Concordia University.

Throughout Nepal, thousands of students were at the forefront of demonstrations for democracy and human rights and against King Birendra's repressive rule. Two students and two policemen were killed in clashes in the countryside, while 10,000 marchers in Katmandu were attacked by police.

Three Yale women students have filed a sexual-harassment grievance, charging that the Connecticut university's "French in Action" course is so sexist it interferes with learning. More than half the students in the course, which is used nationwide, have signed a petition supporting the grievance. They want class discussions of the course's sexism; removal of demeaning and anatomically-obsessed scenes from videotapes used in the class, and replacement of such lessons as one requiring each student to identify with a man harassing a woman in a park.

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Editorial

Epidemic of child labor

Matthew Garvey, at age 13, lost his right leg when it was sucked into a drying machine at the car wash where he worked. For this, his employer was fined \$400. OSHA (Occupational Health and Safety Administration) reports that 59 youths were killed in workplace accidents in 1987-88. For these deaths, the average fine was \$740. Yes, this is the decrepit state of affairs in the U.S.—\$400 for a youth's leg! And \$740 for a youth's life!

CHILD LABOR IN THE 1980S

Throughout the 1980s, child labor has been on the increase in this country. It could now be called an epidemic. Consider the following:

- Violations of the federal child labor laws have doubled since 1982, reaching 22,308 cases in 1989. This is the highest total since the laws were enacted in 1938! And all agree this figure is but the tip of the iceberg.

- Sweatshops have increased throughout the U.S., and these are characterized by the abuse of child labor, according to the government's own study. In New York City in 1989, most child labor violations were in the garment trade, long known for its sweatshop conditions.

- Most home work is performed by women and children who work long hours and end up with wages averaging \$1.45 per hour. The Labor Dept. recently lifted its ban on home work, and no one is saying it will be reinstated.

- Measures of child labor disregard many youth. Agriculture is the deadliest of industries, and many of those maimed are children. Yet it is exempted from almost all labor laws. Drug peddling by children is pervasive, but this is dismissed as a "non-registered" industry.

This epidemic of child labor has reached such proportions that the U.S. Labor Department was forced to make a show of enforcement activity. With much press fanfare, it assigned half its investigators to conduct "Operation Child Watch" for three days in March. They found 7,000 child labor law violations at 43% of the 3,400 businesses they visited. Names of violators have yet to be released, nor have any penalties been announced. Historically, penalties have been so minimal that many companies prefer to pay fines than to change illegal practices.

The increasing public outrage also forced Congress to begin subcommittee hearings on March 16. Educators are arguing for increased restrictions on the hours youths can work, to better force students to do their schoolwork. They say too many students have jobs that interfere with their homework and some are so tired they fall asleep in class. They are conducting various studies into the problem. In Milwaukee, 55% of teachers surveyed reported knowing students working past 11:45 p.m. on school nights.

CHILD LABOR AND CAPITALIST PRODUCTION TODAY

Some employer associations are arguing for eased restrictions on child labor. They say the laws were written for a sweatshop era which no longer exists! Somehow we are supposed to believe that late and long hours in car washes, fast food restaurants, and door-to-door or street sales jobs are beneficial to youth!

The truth is that the current epidemic is but a reflection—horrible as it is—of this specific stage of capitalist production relations, where the 1980s saw roll-backs in workers rights on every front. This encompasses union-busting, declining wages, loss of benefits, worsened job safety, increased working hours, changes in work rules, and lack of enforcement of what laws do exist. For example, not only did the Illinois Labor Dept. fail to fine even one employer for 10,000 child labor violations in the last six years, it also failed to fine anyone for the 9,000 violations of failing to give workers one day off out of every seven!

Labor of the entire family is again becoming a necessity of survival for many working class families. The conditions today are not that far removed from when Marx traced the abuse of child labor in the "Working Day" chapter of Capital. It is there that he wrote:

...Time for education, for intellectual development, for the fulfilling of social functions and for social intercourse, for the free-play of his bodily and mental activity, even the rest time of Sunday (and that in a country of Sabbatharians!)—moonshine! But in its blind unrestrainable passion, its were-wolf hunger for surplus-labour, capital oversteps not only the moral, but even the merely physical maximum bounds of the working day. It usurps the time for growth, development, and healthy maintenance of the body. It steals the time required for the consumption of fresh air and sunlight...

Marx saw that the "establishment of a normal working day is the result of centuries of struggle between capitalist and labour." Indeed, this "protracted civil war" is continuing yet today. Every advance for working people—including the passage of all the child labor legislation—has been only because of the agitation of a mass movement.

The real need is to transform work and education into the Marxist vision of time as the space for human development. The youth themselves—as students and as workers—can touch the heart of the question. Let us work with them for the needed uprooting.

Whitney Young walkout



Chicago, Ill.—On March 22, at 9:25 a.m., students walked out of Whitney Young High School. The causes: to get more students on the Local School Council (LSC), to give them voting rights, to have more minority history in the textbooks, more history books with America and white people not doing everything right, and more than one person deciding the social science curriculum.

On Tuesday after school, students passed out flyers to every student leaving the building. It notified them of the day, time and why. I didn't notice one flyer thrown on the ground.

The next day, everyone was whispering about the walkout. Statements like, "Are you doing it?" and "I'll go if you go" were heard down the halls. The time passed quickly.

At 9:18 everyone went to division (homeroom). Everyone could tell who was going to walk out. Five of us stood by the doorway with our coats and bags. When the division teacher threatened to mark us absent if we left, only one sat down.

When we entered the halls we noticed two teachers near every stairwell. Luckily we got past and tried to get out. There were also two teachers and teacher aids for almost every door. When we tried to exit, one woman said, "I don't want you guys in trouble, so please go out another door."

We were able to exit through an unguarded door and walked to the Arts Building. We were worried we'd be the only ones but were relieved to see about 150 students. Later we found out that 80-100 of them were out there because somebody pulled the fire alarm in the gym building.

Then, police pulled up. Big, old, white, police. Luckily TV station cameras were there to protect us. Many students spoke including the LSC member. They mentioned all the walkout reasons and then told us to get back to class. It only took about 30 minutes.

As we were entering the Academic Building, we heard the fire alarm again. Somebody heard it was freshman orientation day and thought it would be good to get the future high school students out there.

We all would have gotten five-day Out House Suspension if it weren't for the TV and press there. Instead, we might get charged with just cutting class. We'll have to see.

—Student, Whitney Young High

Berkeley Campus sit-in



Students at the University of California at Berkeley sit-in at administration offices to focus attention on the issues of student and faculty diversity.

Morgan Park High School

Police attack Black youth

Chicago, Ill.—Our school, Morgan Park High, has a majority of Black and Latino students. Principal Walter Pilditch was voted out by the new school council. Black students wanted Pilditch out because he constantly harassed us and kicked us out of school for missing class or being outside the school building.

On Thursday, March 1, after Pilditch was voted out, white students, supporting Pilditch, set off the fire alarms on the campus for the walk out. The students rushed outside the building. Soon the cops showed up. One student hit a cop with a snow ball, and the cop began hitting him with her billy club. The cops started beating and knocking the Black students right and left and pulled a gun on one woman student. They arrested ten students for "mob action," and nine of them were Black.

All the violence was done to the Black students. Eight of the students were badly hurt and some ended up in the hospital. Four days later, 75 students and parents marched in front of the police department to protest police brutality. We asked for a written apology and the dismissal of the charges against the students who were arrested.

Yes, Black students want Pilditch out. But what happened wasn't only about Pilditch. In February, before the police attack, Black students had a sit-in at Morgan Park, because our school wasn't playing the Black national anthem during Black History Month. If they can play the national anthem of exchange students, they can play ours too, especially because it honors Blacks, whites and Latinos who participated in the Civil Rights Movement.

At Morgan Park, a lot of white teachers make racial insults about Black and Latino students. One Black woman student who was wearing the T-shirt "Black by Popular Demand," was told by a white teacher: "You can't wear that" and was sent to the principal's office. Some white teachers were also encouraging white students to have a sit-in to bring back Pilditch.

We don't have anything against white students. In fact many Black, white and Latino students are good friends. But we question why is it mandatory for all of us to take U.S. history that excludes Afro-American history. Our Afro-American history class is one of the best classes we have ever taken.

We need discussion among the students about what to do now. We need to counsel together. What can we do when adults don't listen to us? Next year the school is going to make Morgan Park a closed campus. They'll give the junior high school students a half period to eat lunch, and a half period to go to gym. And none of us will be able to leave the campus for lunch. All hell will break loose. They are stripping us of all our rights. We think the school will only get better if the students are allowed to make their own choices.

—A Group of students at Morgan Park High School

Rally to ban ROTC

DeKalb, Ill.—The newly-formed Ban ROTC Immediately Coalition (B.R.I.C.) held a rally and protest on March 21 to kick ROTC off campus. ROTC has a stated policy which bars lesbians and gays from full participation in their program. At the rally many students spoke in favor of human rights and against militarism. Later that day about 20 B.R.I.C. members marched into the Student Affairs Committee of the Regents and spoke for ten minutes about how the university's refusal to take a stand against ROTC sends a message that it's okay to discriminate against homosexuals.

When the Regents refused to discuss the issue, the protesters began chanting, "We demand, take a stand!" and, "Regents, Regents, is it true? Are you homophobic too?" The Regents' response was to call the cops in to remove the protesters. The police used force against us and shoved a number of people to the ground. One protester got kicked in the head by one cop while another was choked. Four protesters were arrested.

Before the protest, B.R.I.C. had posted fliers and chalked the sidewalks to promote the event. Many homophobic students tore down the fliers and wrote nasty things on them, and the university sent out special clean-up crews to wash off the chalk.

B.R.I.C. intends to keep fighting to ban ROTC despite this homophobic backlash.

—Participant

High school protests

Los Angeles, Cal.—On Monday, March 5, 2,000 mostly Black and Latino students from Leuzinger High School marched a mile and a half to Hawthorne High School to join the others in a demonstration to protest the resignation of Hawthorne's Black principal, Ken Crowe. A pattern of racism in the school district had been deemed as the cause for the students' demand to "Get the school board out!" and replace it with one that will foster an environment of equal opportunity for all students and all administrators.

Over the last ten years the Centinela Valley School District has had a 30% increase in minority students; presently less than 20% of the students are white. A Black administration, including a Black Superintendent of Schools and others in key posts has been installed. Crowe had launched a campaign to end racism within the school district. Surprisingly the Board of Trustees, who had planned to relocate Crowe to an unknown position for which he had decided to resign, has four Latino members out of a total of five. One white teacher at Hawthorne High had brought a mutilated Black mannequin to school allegedly referring to it as Ken Crowe. Racist cartoons speaking of the demise of Hawthorne High had been circulated throughout the district.

One Black student at Hawthorne High said, "We demonstrated because there was no other effective way for us to express our feelings to the school board. We want to see Blacks and Latinos in administrative positions and not succumb to pressures by a small group of white teachers."

At Leuzinger High School another Black student remarked that he may even be kicked out of school because of his involvement in the protest: "My parents went to a school board meeting and found it to be racist. When my friends and I found out about the Black principal at Hawthorne we decided we would fight for a better school system."

"This very morning someone had painted on the wall of the main building 'Get those N---s out of here.'"

On the day I spoke to these students, the Board had decided to meet with them at Leuzinger High, allowing only 30 at a time to enter the session.

—Maurice Miller

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

In the East German elections, March 18, the conservative Alliance for Germany received about 48% of the vote, and won close to a majority of the seats in the new legislature. The Alliance was organized and run mainly by West German Chancellor Kohl's Christian Democrats. The Social Democrats received 22% and the Free Democrats 6%—each of these parties also organized by their established West German counterparts. The old East German Communist Party (CP), now "reformed" and renamed as the Gorbachevite Party of Democratic Socialism, received 16%. Thus, 92% of the vote went to groups tied to either established West German parties or to the old CP.

Much of the remaining 8% of the vote went to the grassroots and independent Left groups such as Alliance 90, which included the New Forum opposition group which was so prominent in the Fall, 1989 demonstrations, as well as to a coalition of Greens and the Independent Women's Association, and to the Action Alliance United Left, which consisted of the United Left and the Red Carnation Marxist Party.

The biggest shock to many observers was the strong showing of the conservative Alliance for Germany. The Alliance ran a demagogic campaign calling for "immediate" reunification, something which their real leader, Kohl, backed away from as soon as the election was over. Kohl's demagoguery during the election also in-

East German elections—where to now?

cluded refusing to rule out an expansion of Germany's borders on the East into Silesia, now part of Poland. This played well no doubt among die-hard nationalists and even Nazis.

Both Gorbachev and Bush rebuked him only mildly, and he eventually backed away from this position. But this ominous issue for world peace has now been reopened, something which bodes ill for the future of Germany's relations with East Europe, especially Poland.

Kohl's other tactics included outright red-baiting, not so much against the discredited CP as against the Social Democrats who had been favored to win, and especially against the independent Left. The red-baiting was exemplified by Alliance campaign slogans such as "Never again socialism" and "No more socialist experiments." The Alliance was also helped by the fact that the prominent dissident, Rev. Rainer Eppleman, and his Democratic Reawakening movement joined the Alliance for Germany. Events had moved quickly since last fall when Democratic Reawakening stated in their Draft Program of Oct. 2 that their "critical attitude towards many features of actually existing socialism does not imply rejection of the vision of a socialist society."

But the sobering election outcome in East Germany was not the work of Kohl alone, or even that of Kohl, Bush and Gorbachev. The West German Social Democrats also played a large part, despite their meager election results in the end. In 1989, they recruited a leading

dissident lawyer, Ibrahim Boehme, as their East German leader, and in early 1990 they outdid even the conservatives in their calls for immediate reunification and their attacks on the "utopianism" of the independent Left.

The independent Left, ecological and peace groups who formed the core of the East German opposition all through the 1980s until the Berlin Wall came down in 1989—many of whom had and still have some type of vision of a new society different from either bourgeois democracy or Communism—were not able to unfurl a new banner in 1989-90 which could become a significant point of attraction for the masses who rose up in 1989. This does not mean, however, that all is lost, despite the severe election setback.

Some independent grassroots actions are taking place, as are debates over where to go from here. On March 11, for example, 1,000 ecologists from both East and West Germany demonstrated at the construction site of a nuclear power plant in East Germany.

There are also underlying crises in West Germany itself, despite its portrayal in the media as a showcase of economic strength and prosperity. West German unemployment has approached 10% all through the 1980s, and today stands at 8%. This spring, the 2.6 million-member Metalworkers Union is likely to go on strike for the 35-hour week plus a 9% pay raise in what its leadership is calling the toughest labor dispute "since the existence of the Federal Republic."

Challenges to Gorbachev

As Russian tanks on "maneuvers" clattered through the streets of Vilnius, the newly-elected Lithuanian President, Vyautas Landsbergis, cried out to the world: "The ghost of Stalinism is walking in the Kremlin and the shadow of it lies far to the West." Ever since March 11, when Lithuania's new legislature voted 124-0 for national independence now, Gorbachev has huffed, puffed and threatened. Independence was lost in 1940 when Stalin invaded and occupied the Baltics during the Hitler-Stalin Pact.

Like any British imperialist in Africa (or the South African whites for that matter), Gorbachev is placing so many conditions and delays on independence that it really means continued bondage. He wants the following: control of Lithuania's ports, the "right" to have military bases and transit, and \$33 billion "compensation!" His allies in the Moscow legislature are drafting a new law which in the abstract may allow national republics to secede if they first negotiate for five years, and if the Russian-dominated national legislature does not veto it in the end.

In the center of Russia itself, Gorbachev also faces severe challenges. In elections on March 18, opposition forces, many of them critical of Gorbachev, routed the Party establishment in the Russian, Ukrainian and Byelorussian republics. Little-noticed but equally important was a demonstration of 100,000 calling for radical change in Moscow on Feb. 26.

This demonstration took place despite threats by the government that there would be violence, and warning people to stay away. There was no violence, but instead a full panorama of opposition tendencies took to the streets. While a few were Gorbachevite and others such as Democratic Union advocated Western liberalism, there were also in attendance many Left groups, ranging from New Socialists to anarcho-syndicalists, as well as the newly organized Movement for a Democratic Military.

Iran human rights protest

Hundreds of people sat-in in Iran during the week-long visit of the UN Human Rights Commissioner in February. The Commission refused to meet with the relatives of the thousands and thousands of imprisoned and disappeared Iranians. Several Iranian opposition groups, who requested forcefully that the commissioner's report be made public, have called it a whitewash of the Islamic republic.

The invitation extended to the commissioner by the Islamic Republic is yet one more attempt by Rafsanjani/Khomeini to put a smooth face on the horrible criminal and endless executions and torture of anyone daring to raise their voices against the government.

Thousands have been executed during the last year. Seven Kurdish cities have been put under a state of siege since Feb. 22, after 17 Kurds were publicly executed and mass protests erupted in those cities. Public stonings of women for "adultery" are regularly reported. Numerous outbreaks of riots have recently been reported. The latest, at the Amjadih Sports Stadium, resulted in the burning of 13 police vehicles and the tearing up of pictures of Khomeini by youths calling for "Death to the Islamic Republic!"

During the last year, "stability" has become the catch word used by both superpowers to justify their continued support for this barbaric regime in Iran. Neither Gorbachev's rush to help Rafsanjani with arms and goods, nor Bush's focus on the Iranian "moderates" alleged wish to secure the release of the hostages held in Lebanon, have been able to lessen the crises that permeate Iran's ruling regime. These attempts to put a smiling face on the gory Islamic Republic will not solve the question of the freedom of the masses.

—Cyrus Noveen

Taiwan sit-in



In one of the largest mass actions in Taiwan since the 1940s, 6,000 students sat in, March 20-22, in a Taipei public square demanding democratization of the political system and announcing the formation of a national student union. Ruled under an iron hand by the corrupt, aged leadership of the Kuomintang, the party overthrown on mainland China in the 1949 Revolution, the Taiwanese saw martial law lifted for the first time only in 1987. Even today, while opposition parties are allowed to exist, their power is severely limited. The 1990 student movement has begun to draw support from the urban working and middle classes in a way that the opposition parties, such as the Democratic Progressives, have not been able to do.

New president in Chile

In Chile, Patricio Aylwin of the Christian Democratic Party was sworn in as President on March 11. While over 16 years of military dictatorship have ended, the former ruler Pinochet and the military still retain significant influence. Spectators shouted "Murderer!" as Pinochet entered the inaugural hall.

Pinochet surrendered the Presidency but has retained control of the Army, despite Aylwin's request that he resign. Pinochet's 1980 Constitution gives the military power to define and maintain "institutional order" in Chile. Many of Pinochet's government appointees have been guaranteed to keep their jobs thanks to laws passed under this rule.

One of Aylwin's first acts as President was to pardon 40 of some 450 political prisoners who remain in jail. But he has been ambiguous on whether he will prosecute the military for the crimes they committed—the kidnapping, torture and murder of thousands—in the period since the 1973 coup. He has indicated no intention of changing the anything-goes capitalist practices instituted during Pinochet's regime.

Forced removal in Burma

The latest horror story to emerge from the military regime of Myanmar, formerly known by its British colonial name Burma, is the forced removal of no less than 500,000 people from the cities and into the countryside. Often forced to live in malarial swamps far from their workplaces, the victims deny government claims that they were all squatters. Many of the new "towns" lack even the most basic sanitation or transport facilities.

One purpose of the government action is said to be the disorientation of the opposition on the eve of elections this May, but they have already jailed the three potential opposition presidential candidates: U Tin Oo, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and U Nu. Another purpose may be to break up the urban neighborhoods which were the core of the 1988 uprising against the regime, an uprising in which tens of thousands were killed by the military. Myanmar is said to be like a powder keg, ready to burst out against the hated regime.

Protests in Ivory Coast

Since February, students have been protesting against the Ivory Coast's 84-year-old President, Felix Houphouët-Boigny, who has been in power ever since independence was granted by France in 1960. Widely praised by France and other Western powers for his "moderation" and "free market" economic policies, Houphouët-Boigny has in fact created corruption, authoritarianism and economic stagnation under a veneer of prosperity.

In the 1980s, for example, he began constructing an incredible monument to himself: a Catholic cathedral bigger than St. Peter's in Rome, which would be able to hold 300,000 people. This in a country which is only 15% Catholic, with the majority practicing traditional West African religions!

This year, as construction continued, Houphouët-Boigny slapped an economic austerity plan on the masses, a plan which included both wage cuts and tax increases. By March, the student protesters had succeeded in gaining the support of many workers and shop owners, who shut down the economic life of the capital, Abidjan, in a labor and business strike.

British poll tax revolt

As local governments across England and Wales began to publish new rates for Prime Minister Thatcher's "poll tax"—which she titled a "community charge" to replace property taxes that help to support local services including education—hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated against these new taxes being levied on all registered persons between the ages of 18 and 65.

Among the absurd results is that the Duke of Westminster, who used to pay \$16,600 in rates on his estate, will now pay the same tax as his driver and housekeeper, around \$675. All the poll tax rates have come in around 33% higher than the Thatcher government's original forecasts (\$450).

Whether or not the "poll tax" becomes Thatcher's political undoing remains to be seen. With typical shopkeeper mentality, Thatcher has blamed the higher rates on "profligate" local councils. In Scotland, where the "poll tax" has been in effect a year, none in Thatcher's party have won the elections that have been held.

More to the point, hundreds of thousands of Scots have not paid the tax. In parts of Glasgow, reportedly one of every three residents has not paid, and 700,000 Scots are behind three months and more. This is far ahead of the number who didn't pay under the old rate system. And while "debtors' prisons" no longer exist in Scotland, over 4,000 people who have not paid their taxes have been sent to prison in England over the last decade.

Strike in Malaysia

Laborers in the National Union of Plantation Workers (NUPW) struck nearly 1,000 estates in Malaysia last Jan. 31. The 65,000 rubber tappers, oil palm mill and general workers were demanding to be paid a regular monthly wage instead of pay according to the current day rate system.

The day rate system means rubber tappers earn basic pay of \$2.92 a day, with additional pay for latex over the minimum quota. Workers lose pay on the day rate system for absences due to sickness, holidays, or bad weather, and they have no pensions.

The NUPW proposed an end to day rates, and the institution of a basic monthly wage; a greater share of profits for workers when rubber prices are high, and steady 24-day-a-month employment.

The strike was called off after three days when the government declared it illegal. But it showed the seriousness of the plantation workers to have gone on strike at all in a society where unions and other forms of workers' activity have been suppressed.