

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

Vol. 41 — No. 10

DECEMBER 1996

25¢

Long nights feed capital's vampire thirst



by John Marcotte

When I went from evenings to midnights, I figure I went from sleeping 38 hours in five days to about 24 hours in those five days. I guess that's considered a lot of sleep in the trucking industry anyway. I'm on days now and I just worked 28 hours in two days, 49 hours in the last four. That's nothing for over-the-road drivers. They get paid pennies on the mile. They basically work night and day when they're on the road, which is weeks at a time. They get by on naps and a couple hours of sleep here and there.

I guess we're not supposed to complain about night work and the long hours. It seems to me it's taken for granted that that's the way the industry has to be. When I used to say I needed my eight hours sleep everyone thought that was really funny.

This is not just a problem in trucking. I read with great interest the Staley worker's story in the October N&L about how night work is detrimental to your health. You don't realize that when you're doing it. You're running on nervous energy and you feel you're doing all right. Years down the road it takes its toll. Like one over-the-road driver told me, those long hours "make you old fast."

Twelve-hour shifts that rotate between days and nights were major issues in some of the hardest fought labor battles of this decade, like at Staley and Bridge-stone-Firestone. Excessive overtime was the cause of strikes this year at GM. This is happening everywhere. I don't recognize the garment industry in NYC anymore. When I worked there in the 1970s, a 35½-hour week was the standard set by the unionized shops. Now, immigrant workers I know work ten hours or more a day, and the standard workweek is six days, even seven. This is the norm that cannot be questioned. Besides, the workers say they need the hours—their real wages have fallen so low, they'd die on 35½ hours a week.

What has changed in capitalism, where is the "progress" in our society, since the days of Karl Marx, when he wrote *Capital* in 1867? Nothing—not a damn thing. Listen to his explanation, 129 years ago, of the conditions we are living today:

"Constant capital, the means of production [whether a truck or a sewing machine]...only exist to absorb labour, and with every drop of labour a proportional quantity of surplus-labour. While they fail to do this [when the truck or machine lies idle], their mere existence causes a relative loss to the capitalist....The prolongation of the working day beyond the limits of the natural day, into the night, only acts as a palliative. It quenches only in a

(Continued on page 3)

Black World

Black World will return next month.

—Lou Turner



Zaire in the grip of Africa's greatest post-colonial crisis

by Lou Turner

A complex logic of genocide, refugee catastrophe, ethnic terror, war and repatriation, western imperialist maneuvering, and the historical ramifications of failed revolution has plunged Africa into its greatest post-colonial crisis. At the heart of it is the imminent pulling apart of Zaire, the most mineral-rich country in the world, and the ailing autocratic figure of its western-backed, counter-revolutionary dictator, Mobutu Sese Seko.

In a little more than six weeks after the fighting broke out that precipitated the present crisis, one-fourth of Zaire is in the hands of a coalition of rebel forces, the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire. The Alliance is made up primarily of the Banyamulenge and Banyarwanda (Zairean ethnic Tutsis who speak the languages of Burundi and Rwanda, respectively), joined by other ethnic groups like the Nande and Hunde, as well as four political parties, all opposed to Mobutu's regime. By the second week in December, they stand poised to take over the country's second most important city, the port center of Kisangani on the Zaire River.

The present crisis began Oct. 13 when the well-armed Alliance of Democratic Forces, under the leadership of Laurent Kabila, attacked Zairean army outposts and the Rwandan Hutu refugee camps at Bukavu and Goma. The camps were controlled by the former Rwandan Army (FAR) and the Interahamwe, the Hutu militias who perpetrated the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and then fled under the cover of the refugee exodus to eastern



Rebel of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire at mass meeting in Bukavu, eastern Zaire, after rebel take-over in early November.

Zaire after being defeated by the Tutsi-led Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF). Gerard Prunier, the French diplomat who oversaw the French intervention in Rwanda during the 1994 genocide which helped facilitate the escape of the Hutu *genocidaire*, has presented plans to the Chirac government to once again intervene.

Supported by French, British, South African, and Chinese arms, international food and medical aid, and Zairean military assistance, the FAR and Interahamwe regularly struck Rwandan villages and RPF positions. Whereupon the RPF Army responded with its own cross-border attacks. Once this cycle of cross-border incursions destabilized the entire Great Lakes region, the stage was

(Continued on page 9)

Black outrage over murder in the Delta

Leland, Miss.—On the evening of Oct. 17, Aaron White, a young 29-year-old TV repairman and father of two small children, was murdered. Initially, it was alleged that he was involved in a traffic accident, then that he was involved in a shootout with police, and then that he died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head. He was licensed to carry a firearm.

Other factors, however, led the community to doubt that his wounds were self-inflicted. Aaron was found in the more affluent part of town and was supposed to have driven into a tree. His truck was so totally demolished, we don't know how he was supposed to have gotten out of it alive, let alone run from police, hide behind some bushes and then shoot himself in the right side of the head though he was left-handed.

The night he was killed they didn't allow any of his family to identify his body. And instead of having either of Washington County's two Black coroners perform the autopsy on his body, the police called in a white coroner from 25 miles away. Given these and a number of other factors surrounding his death that point to foul play, the Black community wants someone to be held accountable and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. We will not accept anything less.

After consulting with Aaron's family, I called together a rally outside his TV repair shop on Oct. 26 to voice the community's concerns and demand answers to all the discrepancies in the police and coroner's reports. Some 400 to 500 people turned out.

Aaron was buried the following day, Oct. 27. His mother was still not allowed to see his body at the funeral home until just two hours before the funeral, and then it wasn't his whole body she was allowed to see, only his upper body. People suspect that he may have been castrated, like a Black man had been some years ago in Leland.

We then called a community meeting at Leland High School on Oct. 30 where 600 to 700 people attended, and invited town officials to come and explain the situation to us. None of them showed up. We were so insulted, that some youth broke a few windows of white owned businesses when they left the meeting. The next day, Halloween, Leland was put under a 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew enforced by 90 state highway patrolmen in full riot gear.

The curfew lasted for two days and led to the arrest of nearly 40 Black people. The biased enforcement of the curfew can be seen in the fact that though it was Halloween, white children were allowed to trick-or-treat and white owned businesses were allowed to stay open, but Black children and Black owned businesses were not.

On Nov. 1, we asked the U.S. Justice Dept. to get involved and asked again to meet with town officials. The next day, Nov. 2, we had a meeting at City Hall with Mayor Sam Thomas, State Representative Jimmy Thornton, Police Chief Mike Dees, local Black ministers and the two Black county coroners, George Hampton and Lisa Frye. At that meeting they agreed to lift the curfew, and the mayor apologized for calling Black Leland residents "crack heads."

Since the U.S. Justice Dept. began its investigation of the circumstances surrounding Aaron's death, town officials, especially Dees and other police officers, have tried to submit their resignations. The Justice Dept. refused to accept them, until Dec. 6 when Dees was allowed to resign. Dees has even put his house up for sale.

Leland is 65% Black but is sewed up by the white power structure. The Black community believes that Aaron White was murdered by a white, drug-dealing, corrupt police officer (not the one the police claim may have shot him). The policeman we believe murdered Aaron is known to confiscate drugs and property, and re-sell them on the street. Black officials and police officers may also know what actually happened to Aaron.

What town officials fear is that an investigation will dig up the real corruption in Leland and the backlog of Black people who have been unlawfully imprisoned. They also didn't dream that the people's outrage and persistence would go this far. The next step is the Justice Dept. report—we will see where we will go from there.

—Perry Dixon, community activist

SPECIAL FEATURE ON THE NEW EDITION OF

Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution:

Reaching for the Future

by RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

Marxist-Humanist Archives • Unchaining the power of negativity page 4

Preface and contents to the 1996 Wayne State University edition page 4

Dialogue • 'Women's Liberation and Dialectics of Revolution' today page 5

ON THE INSIDE

Editorial • Racism inside Texaco, sexism inside the Army page 10
Revolutionary lives celebrated • Meridel LeSueur page 2
Mario Savio page 11

New 'reforms' assault battered women

by Anna Maillon

Los Angeles—Those of us who work in programs assisting survivors of domestic violence are angry and worried about the implications of the new welfare "reform" for battered women. Designed presumably to reduce families' dependency on government assistance, it will in many cases increase women's dependency on men. These new measures prevent the autonomy of poor women and affect immigrant women the most.

Studies show 50-75% of women applying for government assistance are in or have been in abusive relationships. Teen mothers I work with often have been sexually abused; new requirements will push them to marry

Woman as Reason

their abusers. It will be harder for battered women and children to "disappear" to shelters from dangerous situations because stricter disclosure requirements will likely cause ongoing contact with the children's fathers once their names are revealed.

Most of the women who come to the shelter here use the welfare system as part of their empowerment in escaping a dependent relationship with a dangerous man. Because of increased public attention to domestic violence, programs like ours continue to receive some government funding. But our work seems futile when women who want to leave potentially fatal situations feel forced to remain with or return to partners whose income may keep the family from hunger and homelessness. If they come to our shelter, they can only stay about a month, after which the plan is for them to be self-sufficient.

NEW REFORMS INTENSIFY HARDSHIP

After completing her stay in our shelter, our client M. could not get AFDC for herself or her oldest child, who was born in Mexico, but she received assistance for the two youngest. She worked in a fish cannery seasonally and part-time at a bar. But when the gas bill was due, she had to call around to friends for help with food. She managed to stay away from her violent husband for over two years. Then the welfare system caught up with him for child support and he demanded to see the kids. He convinced her that her life would be easier if she returned.

Based on nationwide averages, minimum wage working women make \$8,840 annually; basic yearly expenses for a family of three amount to \$22,000. A woman on welfare with two children receives \$5,040 per year, not including food stamps. Now "Aid for Families with Dependent Children" (AFDC) will be reduced to "Temporary Assistance for Needy Families" (TANF). States are no longer required to provide assistance to eligible families but can design their own welfare programs. The federal government provides strict penalties for states that are overly generous.

The basis for the "Personal Responsibility and Work

♀ Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

Students at the State University of New York-Binghamton occupied the administration building for six days last month protesting the student government executive board's opposition to the school's affirmative action policy. The protesters demanded that the group's funds be frozen until the all-white male board is replaced.

Turkey's "Saturday Women" are being honored by the International League for Human Rights. The women have demonstrated weekly for over a year to call attention to close relatives who have "disappeared" in the government's repeated crackdowns on leftist and Kurdish activists. On Oct. 26, they were joined in an international day of action in Turkey by mothers of the disappeared from Bosnia, Lebanon, Argentina and Taiwan. Amnesty International reports 135 cases of "disappearances" in Turkey since 1991.

The parliament of the English Channel island of Guernsey has legalized abortion in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy (if two doctors approve), ending an 86-year-old law that made abortions punishable by life imprisonment! Irish women are still fighting for this right. The Irish Women's Abortion Support Group (IWASG) is organizing pro-choice activists in London to help Irish women travel to England for abortions. Formed in 1984, IWASG is a group of Irish women in London.

Opportunity Act" is that welfare perpetuates dependency, undermines the "work ethic," encourages unmarried teens to have children and increases taxes. However, an October 1996 *Scientific American* article points out that most poor and homeless women use welfare for short periods; that many mothers on AFDC supplement their grants with low paying jobs with no benefits; that only 7.6% of mothers on AFDC in 1993 were under 18 and unmarried; and that AFDC recipients make up less than 5% of "entitlement" spending and less than 3% of the total federal outlay.

The following groups are now ineligible for assistance: families who have received assistance for five years; pregnant women, until the birth of a child; most legal immigrant residents (undocumented immigrants have never been eligible). Women who do not provide names and whereabouts of their children's fathers may be denied TANF.

WOMEN'S INDEPENDENCE ATTACKED

The women and children I work with suffer physical and emotional symptoms originally identified in prisoners of war and other war veterans. Yet they are creative and courageous, and make good use of the support they get from staff and one another. Many leave jobs as well as homes and expect to work again once stabilized.

There is a 19-year-old Mexican woman in our shelter with three children. After years of sexual, emotional and physical abuse, she decided to leave her 30-year-old husband. She is on AFDC for the first time and expresses both shame for taking "charity" and despair over the tiny amount granted to her. Since she is undocumented only her children are eligible.

She does not believe she will be able to provide enough food for her children when living on her own. She has thought of suicide but would not want to hurt the children. She and two other shelter residents agreed that prostitution looks like the only option, "maybe just in emergencies, but it would be better than living with him again." Another resident, who is documented but not a citizen, told me her grant will be reduced by almost \$200 per month once the welfare reforms go into effect.

This capitalist system presumably applauds people for being independent and demanding and using all available resources to advantage. But women trying to be safe are treated like idiots and parasites. Welfare "reform" points poor mothers back into the hands of men with serious problems. It joins together with the general social and religious insistence on women trusting and supporting their men, "in kindness and in cruelty."

Women in Prison network

Pasadena, Cal.—In October, the National Network for Women in Prison held the first ever leadership training session for formerly incarcerated women. About 20 women from all over the U.S. participated in a two-day class series on becoming advocates and organizers for women prisoners.

I came away with an understanding that change can happen; it is a lot of work, but we can make a difference. We all share a commitment and passion for this work. I was caught by a revolutionary feeling among the formerly incarcerated women ready to speak out and fight back.

The Leadership Conference was followed by the 8th National Roundtable on Women in Prison, the largest gathering of formerly incarcerated women in the U.S. It also attracted some of the still-human members of the California Department of Corrections (CDC).

In a workshop on women who killed their abusers, I found out how insidious racism is. I personally know six women who killed their batterers. They are all doing life, and they are all white. There is a theory that judges identify with the white male victims and give white women very harsh sentences. However, the same judges don't find killing a Black man such a harshly punishable offense.

I had a problem with the designation "battered women's syndrome." I hope it helps women get lighter sentences for fighting back. But it labels women who fight abuse as "sick." It should be the other way around—the sickness is not fighting back when you're battered.

I did not care for the workshop called "lesbian prisoners." I felt this was a misnomer. The workshop brought out how heterosexism is played out in an all-woman environment: the stables of women, the obvious sex roles and so on. Then a woman minister spoke about the evil of lesbianism. A more appropriate name for this workshop would have been "chauvinism in prison."

There is a deceptive idea that California is very progressive. I learned that California is very archaic and punitive. Women who spent time in New York and Texas prisons were shocked by the stories from California prisons like the Corcoran scandal, where guards routinely stage cock fights between prisoners for their own amusement, frequently shooting the prisoners once they are bored with the fight; or stories from the federal prison in Dublin, where guards take money from male prisoners for the "privilege" to rape women prisoners.

There is a lot of frustration in working against the "justice" system. There are many hard people and it's a difficult political climate. Yet hammering away at the foundations of the criminal justice system is important.

—Dana Ryan

Meridel LeSueur, a lifetime of 'ripening'

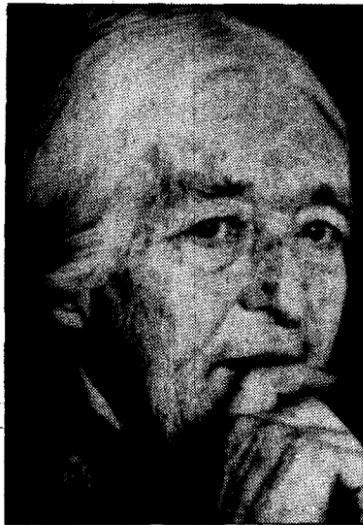
From its beginning right up to the last year of her life, which ended on Nov. 14 in Hudson, Wis., in her 96th year, Meridel Le Sueur looked steadily ahead to tomorrow. Never did she look at the past as "past," but always as it spoke to the future. "Ripening" was the title she gave to the collection of selections from her work that came out in a second edition in her 90th year, as the word that best expressed the continuous growth and unfolding she felt her writing represented. And she continued to write to the end.

HER ARDENTLY SOCIALIST mother and stepfather, and the struggles of the radical farmers and labor groups she grew up amidst in the Midwest—from the Populists and Farmers Alliance to the Wobblies of the IWW—helped to shape her thoughts. As a teenager she experienced the Palmer Raids and the persecution of pacifists and socialists after World War I. She was 27 when she was jailed for protesting the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti.

She once wrote to *News & Letters* that she had been "writing for radical papers since 1910!" The breadth and scope of her writing is legendary. She wrote in the 1920s and '30s for labor and left-wing journals like *The Worker* and *Masses*, and later for literary magazines, contributing everything from reports of strikes to book reviews and about the devastating effects of the drought on farmers. Most of all she wrote about the lives of women, in particular working-class women. Her work was praised by other writers, from Nelson Algren to Sinclair Lewis.

In 1945 her best known work, *North Star Country*, a poetic prose account of the settlement and growth of Minnesota, the Dakotas and Wisconsin, won special praise. But when McCarthyism descended on America, Meridel was blacklisted and very nearly dropped out of sight for 20 years until the 1960s and the emergence of a new Women's Liberation Movement "rediscovered" her. The revival was marked by the republication of *North Star Country* in 1984.

HER DIALOGUE WITH Raya Dunayevskaya began in 1986, when she discovered Dunayevskaya's *Rosa Lux-*



emburg, *Women's Liberation*, and *Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* and wrote Raya a letter passionately describing how all the socialist women like her mother knew Rosa Luxemburg. Meridel poured out a story of the Midwest radicals' "belief in the permanent revolution and the rising from below."

"This history is not known even by the radicals," she wrote, "the history of Socialism in the Midwest. (It) is now rising out of the furrow, the sod, the organic memory. The Hormel strike and the farmers movement now is the reappearance of history buried, the perpetual consciousness of freedom...I wish my mother could read your wonderful book, which is an illumination...This memory comes up green like corn found in caves for a thousand years, moisture and heat and they make cob again. This concept of revolution springing green and perpetual from the proletariat is now becoming a reality. Deepest solidarity."

Raya wrote back: "Your letter was to me an exciting demonstration of how retrospective, when one is so rich in history as you are, can become perspective," and went on to discuss her concept of "dialectical history (which) no matter how many natural leaps it undergoes, must know the continuity of history to assure that any new revolution doesn't retrogress, and that 'revolution in permanence' means continuing revolution in self-development. Women's Liberationists especially must not just be the opposite of male, but must strive for totally new human relations. Which is why Marx from the beginning in 1844 called his philosophy a 'new humanism.' And that is what we are aiming for." With her letter Raya sent her just published *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future*.

THIS DIALOGUE WAS INTERRUPTED by Raya's death the next year, but was renewed nearly a decade later when we wrote to Meridel Le Sueur, who continued to read and comment enthusiastically on *N&L* through the years, to tell her that *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution* would soon be published in a new edition and to ask for her comment. She wrote back: "I am what is called 'bed-ridden.' I was 94 this Spring, but flights of angels' visions accompany me. I published a book when I was 90 and now hope to make a collection of my work and write another poem. I have been reading Raya for many years, especially on the Woman Question and the theory of a perpetual revolution against the vanguard party...There is a wonderful spirit in this book, and it is badly needed in this time of questioning and new problems...We need the new moment, we need it badly."

It is that spirit of revolution and "reaching for the future" that characterized all of Meridel Le Sueur's life. We honor her memory and celebrate her life.

—Olga Domanski

NEWS & LETTERS

Vol. 41, No. 10 December 1996

News & Letters (ISSN 0028-8969) is published 10 times a year, monthly, except bi-monthly January-February and August-September for \$2.50 a year (bulk order of 5 or more, 15¢ each) by *News & Letters*, 59 E. Van Buren St., Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605. Telephone (312)663-0839. Fax (312)663-9069. Second class postage paid at Chicago, Illinois. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *News & Letters*, 59 E. Van Buren St., Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605. Articles may be reprinted verbatim if credited to "News & Letters."

Raya Dunayevskaya

Chairwoman, National Editorial Board (1955-1987)

Charles Denby

Editor (1955-1983)

Olga Domanski, Peter Wermuth, Co-National Organizers, *News and Letters* Committees. Lou Turner, Managing Editor. Felix Martin, Labor Editor.

News & Letters is printed in a union shop.



N7

Leaving Hood with fighting legacy

Jackson, Miss.—The employees at Hood Furniture stood for three years against Local 797, which was given to us by IUE International President William Bywater as a company local. This company went to Washington, taking three days to negotiate a contract for three years when they couldn't deal over the table in good faith with Local 282, Furniture Workers Division-IUE.

We had no part of the agreement. Ninety percent Black in the plant, and you are talking about white on white dealing with putting something on Black. And in these three years they added employees, the working facility grew, they bought new machines and everything.

When we had the chance to stand up and speak our opinion, we accepted Local 282. Then all of a sudden there's no overtime, business is so bad, there's a big lay-off and then a month later another big layoff. We reached agreement on a one-year contract on Sept. 20, and 17 days later we got the notice saying that the plant was going to close.

A PICTURE OF RACISM

Follow the history of that and you have to agree with me, that's racial. How in the world can you agree upon a contract with certain people for three years and everything goes fine, and then you agree upon one year with another color of skin and can't last 17 days? That is the picture.

They just don't want to deal with Black folk. They feel

UAW lets GM down size

Shreveport, La.—Retirement is what a lot of workers are talking about in the contract with General Motors the UAW signed in November. GM offered an extra \$6,000 and a \$10,000 voucher for a new car to workers who retired right away. Within a couple weeks 40,000 had signed up, and GM stopped the program.

Despite the talk, there was no guarantee of jobs in the new contract. The union sold out job security to get workers to retire. GM also removed the lid on how much retirees can make and still draw their full pension.

Because of widespread plant closings, GM has lots of workers scattered around the country but reluctant to move. So two years ago the GM unit that once helped supervisors move started paying workers to move to new plants.

At Shreveport, outside of a few new temporary hires last year who have been made permanent, the last workers hired were back in 1986.

For workers not retiring, about the only benefit is moving up in seniority. Here, with many transfers into the plant, a combination of companywide and plant seniority rules. Oddly enough, workers with the most plant seniority are in the once dirtiest departments like paint. It is all robots there now. It is not as unpleasant to work there—except for 1,000 jobs lost. Machines are not good or bad, it depends on who controls them.

The other thing GM is doing immediately is selling off more plants. Already workers have been transferring in here from the Monroe headlight plant which has been sold. You wonder how many UAW jobs will remain at GM at the end of the contract.

—Longtime GM worker

Somerville Mills secrets

Memphis, Tenn.—We were at Somerville Mills on Halloween day because, after stopping the production and lowering the Victoria's Secrets to Mexico to be made, they claimed that this plant was closed. Local 282 Furniture Workers Division-IUE members have been keeping an eye on the plant since January, and there's always somebody there.

Once I got enough charges down to the Labor Board, the company attorney said, "Well, we'll meet, because we have had a couple of people out there working. We've been using the building to house some leftover products. And if you don't believe me that there's just a little stuff up there, I'll take you up there, too."

We met in Somerville, and Somerville Mills is about three miles out of the town. He went on ahead of us. When we got out there, nobody was in the plant but him. Where are the people that you said worked here? "I don't know. When I came here, they were gone. Now come, look right over here." No, we want to go this way.

We went on around and came down through the warehouse. The warehouse was filled all the way to the back, packed full of rolls of material, all kinds. There were about 18 sewing machines, not a speck of dust on them. One of them was threaded up and turned on, ready to go. One had trimmings still down there on the pedal. They left so fast, they left their lunch and keys and all.

We went into the shipping area. The computer was plugged up, computer printout piled up there on the desk. So we started looking through the printout. The attorney came—"No, you all can't look through that"—and put it in his folder. So I got two pieces of paper out of the trash can and was looking at them. "You can't look at that; you can't see that." Yes I can, because this isn't anything but trash. I kept on looking.

So he came over there and he grabbed it. Broke my fingernail, longest fingernail I had. I started crying. And I told him, "And anyhow, I'm letting you know right now my back is hurting." You have to do what you have to do when you have to do it. I haven't been in a fight in years.

—Ida Leachman
Vice President, Local 282

like we should take what they give us and be satisfied. It doesn't work that way. I worked there four years and I was only making \$5.41 an hour. My kids are grown, but if they were at home and I was paying rent, trying to send these four kids to school, pay doctor bills, trying to pay for a car to get me back and forth to work, how far would that \$5.41 go?

A bedroom set that we made costs over \$4,000. It's just pitiful how expensive the product that we make for Hood is and how cheap our labor is. People with good skills, good intelligence who can make top quality get welfare pay. Here you're making a person filthy rich, and this person is trying to make you just as miserable as he can make you.

UNIONIZE, DON'T MOURN

You have to fight for something in order to get something. How am I going to work day after day for that same \$5.41 and prices are going up on everything? I can't go to the negotiating table and ask this white man for a 15¢ raise for one year? Then after he gave it to me, he says, well, she thinks she got something, she got 15¢, I'm going to close the plant. But you have to start somewhere to make it better for the young ones.

Nobody is sad or unhappy about the plant's closing, but yet and still everybody is concerned about their living, where are they going tomorrow. One thing I have to admire about these people that work for Hood: They know what they want and they stand their ground. We have proved to Hood and the whole world that we have faith that we are people that you just can't throw anything on and we accept it.

I would say to any workers, if you're not unionized, get unionized and stick together, because the company is not going to represent you. If you're not in a union, you don't have a voice, an opinion, I don't care whose job you're on. Don't get discouraged by what happened to us. We still have our dignity.

—Hood Furniture workers

Mural honors immigrant Jewish labor tradition



Part of the mural "Fabric of Our Lives" honoring radical traditions of Jewish labor.

Chicago—A rededication, of the Jewish labor mural that adorns the outside wall at the Bernard Horwich Jewish Community Center, 3003 W. Touhy, became a

Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

slight degree the vampire thirst for the living blood of labour. To appropriate labour during all the 24 hours of the day is, therefore, the inherent tendency of capitalist production...."

Marx then explains the "relay" system—what Staley calls rotation—of 12-hour shifts that rotate from day to night and which by the 1860s had already been abolished in England except in the "free," or unregulated industries! Marx continues:

"What is a working day? What is the length of time during which capital may consume the labour-power whose daily value it buys...?" To these questions capital replies: the working day contains the full 24 hours....Hence it is self-evident that the labourer is nothing else, his whole life through, than labour-power, that therefore all his disposable time is by nature and law labour-time....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—moonshine!

"Where higgles over a meal-time, incorporating it so that food is given to the labourer as to a mere means of production, as coal is supplied to the boiler, grease and oil to the machinery. It reduces the sound sleep needed for the restoration, repair, refreshment of the bodily powers to just so many hours of torpor as the revival of an organism, absolutely exhausted, renders essential....Capital cares nothing for the length of life of labour-power. All that concerns it is simply and solely the maximum of labour-power, that can be rendered fluent in a working day. It attains this end by shortening the extent of the labourer's life...."

*Capital, Vol. I, Kerr edition, pp. 282-83; Vintage edition; pp. 375-76.

'How to win strikes in '90s'

Detroit—Nearly 200 Detroit newspaper strikers and supporters participated in a conference titled "How to Win Strikes in the 1990s" at Wayne State University Dec. 7. Both invited speakers and audience took up the global and historic significance of the Detroit newspaper strike as well as concrete strategies flowing from convictions that the rank and file must direct the strike.

Invited speaker James Gibbs, a third-generation Virginia coal miner, learned in the 1992 Pittston strike to "learn from different situations and put it all together." Both he and Juan Guzales, who had weathered the New York Daily News strike, insisted that "no strike is small" because the entire labor movement can be engaged for support. Detroit steelworker Les Caulfield described Steelworkers helping Rubberworkers in the Bridgestone-Firestone 21-month strike: They sent 100 activists nationwide who reported back weekly via conference call. John Poquette of the Canadian Autoworkers Union said government cutbacks in Ontario "turned a coalition into a movement." He invited all to International Days of Protest in Windsor, Ont., June 12-13, 1997 to close the U.S.-Canada border.

The afternoon panel focused on Detroit and included U.S. Congressman and strike supporter John Conyers (the only politician invited). Striker Paul Kulka (Teamsters Local 372) declared, "We are fighting for the way we see this country...to change this country for the better." Kate DeSmet (Newspaper Guild Local 22) drew lessons from several ongoing struggles (including that of the Delta Pride catfish workers) to proclaim "every striker must be a leader."

Other speakers and participants from the floor offered ideas centering on mass direct action to disrupt production, or an expansion of the strikers' newspaper *The Detroit Sunday Journal*. An appeal to the AFL-CIO for a national labor in Detroit, signed by 840 newspaper strikers, has been faxed around the country. For a copy, fax (313) 963-6944 or call (810) 447-3716.

—Susan Van Gelder

celebration this fall of the often forgotten radical traditions and long labor history of the Jewish community, which the Jewish Labor Committee is trying to revive.

The beautiful tile mosaic entitled "Fabric of Our Lives" was created 16 years ago by school teachers Miriam Socoloff and Cynthia Weiss, and was assembled by over 100 community volunteers in a process that was described as "something like a quilting bee."

The mural's symbolism tells the story of the ghettos, pogroms and poverty the Jewish immigrants were trying to leave behind when they fled Europe at the beginning of the century. Instead of finding liberation, they wound up in sweatshops, working under brutal conditions. In the mural, the fabric the women are working on at their sewing machines becomes the familiar Chicago streets the immigrants lived on. Color posters are available from the Jewish Labor Committee, 847-381-1713.

The audience of which 150 was asked how many came from families in which someone had been involved in the struggles of the "needle trades." It seemed as if every hand went up. It made more significant the appeal from a young woman AFSCME organizer that it wasn't enough to sit there and "celebrate" history; we need to begin to make it again. A number at the meeting recognized that involves making links to the new immigrants, from very different lands, who are still struggling against discrimination and brutal working conditions today.

—Celebrant

European marches for jobs

Prague—"There are 20 million unemployed in the European Union where a further 50 million people live under the official poverty line," begins the Florence Appeal of various European labor organizations whose representatives gathered in Florence (Italy) last June.

The Florence Appeal points out: "The collapse of social security systems, unemployment and poverty attack human dignity. This can be seen in the decline of working conditions for labor, declining real incomes and pensions, and sinking social rights of the vast majority of the population as well as the emergence of racism. We see at the same time a concentration of capital, means of production and of land in a small number of persons. This situation must not be accepted."

The Appeal then goes on: "A massive reduction of the number of unemployed—above all in times of high productivity—can only be materialized by a radical shortening of working time with full wage and by making creation of new jobs a duty."

To achieve these goals the Appeal calls for a mobilization of all those who are concerned or endangered by unemployment and poverty: wage workers, unemployed, receivers of social assistance, pensioners and youth, and for their common organization. "It is for this reason we call for European marches against unemployment, job insecurity and social exclusion."

The participants at a follow-up conference in Paris in September agreed, too, that marches should not be limited to Western Europe but should be extended to Eastern Europe and some North African countries. While the original aim of a big all-European march/demonstration in Amsterdam (probably in May/June 1997) was not abandoned, the stress is now being laid on decentralized national marches and activities. Nevertheless, just because of the great number of countries participating we may be witness to the birth of a mass movement of European dimensions.

—Stephen Steiger

**From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya
MARXIST-HUMANIST
ARCHIVES**

Editor's Note

To celebrate the publication of the new edition of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution*, we publish here two writings which situate this work in the context of Dunayevskaya's overall approach to dialectical philosophy on the eve of the first edition of the book. The first selection is from a presentation given to the Resident Editorial Board of News and Letters Committees on Feb. 17, 1985 as she was preparing for her March 21, 1985 lecture on "Dialectics of Revolution: American Roots and Marx's World Humanist Concepts" sponsored by Wayne State University Archives of Urban and Labor Affairs. The second selection is an excerpt from that lecture, now published as an introduction to the 1988 Columbia edition of *Marxism and Freedom*, in which Dunayevskaya engages in what she calls a "retrospective/perspective" of the development of Marxist-Humanism.

MARX, BY UNCHAINING THE dialectic first, discovered a whole new continent of thought and of revolution. Read again those words of **thought** and of **revolution**. That is what concreteness means in a dialectical sense. This openness and totally new direction found constant proof of itself and its own correctness because Marx's critique of the Hegelian dialectic meant not merely a substitution of materialism for idealism, but an extension of the dialectic from its seeming burial in thought alone by the presence of the dialectic in the development of reality.

Not only that. Marx thereby revealed the historic barrier which none could cross over, not even a Hegel. It is this which exposed the need for Hegel to have that mystical covering spread over his revolutionary dialectic—the power of negativity. The greatness of the French Revolution was the dialectics in action of the **sans culottes**, who were the true discoverers and practitioners of democracy. They were artisans and not yet subjects that would successfully, totally transform the old society.

Marx, on the other hand, did see a revolutionary subject—the Proletariat—who could, and he said would, achieve the revolutionary transformation. Moreover, Marx made it clear that just as he was not separating thought from reality or the fundamental Man/Woman relationship, so he was uniting materialism with idealism, calling it a "new Humanism." With it, he separated himself from Feuerbach's mechanical materialism and what he called "vulgar communism."

Unchaining the power of negativity

Indeed, he praised Hegel for that most creative category "negation of negation" which Feuerbach had rejected as "mystical." Marx worked for a truly new world which we would call classless, non-sexist, non-racist, truly human relations.

Let me sum it up by repeating briefly the two true historic unchainings of the dialectic: (1) No separation between thought and reality—dialectics characterized both the subjective and objective development. (2) He was not keeping in totally separate departments materialism and idealism. **He was uniting them to create a totally new category—a "new Humanism."**

Each age has the laborious and unpostponable task of working out for its own era what, precisely, of the dialectic would achieve freedom. Lenin singled out "transformation into opposite" when he was confronted by the betrayal of the Second International. [The] most crucial aspect, and totally new, was that he didn't stop with betrayal, and he didn't leave the totally new aspect ["transformation into opposite"] at the economic stage when capitalism reached imperialism. Lenin showed that since every unit has its opposite within itself, it is also true of a section of labor itself which had become "the aristocracy of labor."

All this was done in his return to the encounter with the Hegelian dialectic "in and for itself" by having a totally new "additional" subject that was not just a helpmate. Rather it was the actual bacillus of the revolution—the national revolution, in his case the 1916 Irish Easter Uprising. Lenin, however, did not know the Humanist Essays of Marx, much less where Marx left off in his "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic," promising to return.¹

WHAT WE HAD TO DO for the mid-20th century when we were confronted with the shocking fact of counter-revolution arising from within the revolution itself, the transformation into opposite of the first workers' state into a state-capitalist society, was to catch the link of continuity with Marx when he unchained the Hegelian dialectic, transforming and extending it to the Marxian. The climax of what was churning in me in the immediate post-World War II period and came alive first in the simultaneity of my exchange of letters with [C.L.R.] James and [Grace] Lee [Boggs] on Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks* and my activity in the 1949-50 miners' general strike, were [my] letters of May 12 and May 20, 1953.²

The first unchaining of the dialectic for our age came with my [1953] breakthrough on the Absolute Idea: I held that there was a movement from Practice as well as from Theory. In a word, the consciousness in making a category of the movement from Practice was to expand with the added phrase: "which is itself a form of Theory." And it is this movement from Practice that is itself a form of Theory that created the challenge for the theo-

reticians to work out the new stage of cognition where philosophy would be rooted in this movement from Practice.

A second unchaining which revealed the specificity, originality and uniqueness of the whole body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism came to first bloom in 1973 when the return to Hegel meant both the grappling with all of Hegel's major philosophic works and the realization that I happened to have started the confrontation in Hegel's *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* at the very paragraph following where Marx left off in Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*.

In our case this resulted in the fact that not even Absolute as combining theory and practice, i.e., as totality really answered the task. The task first begins [there], or, to put it the way we expressed it in Chapter 1 of *Philosophy and Revolution*: It is Absolute Idea as new Beginning. By then plunging into the three final syllogisms of the *Philosophy of Mind* we discovered also a new Hegel. Thus Hegel in the last year of his life, in the final paragraph of the *Encyclopedia replaced Logic*, left it totally open for future generations.³

IN SO FAR AS MARX WAS CONCERNED, though he didn't comment on those specific syllogisms, he had so unified philosophy and revolution that, though his *Critique of the Gotha Program* did not contain the expression "revolution in permanence," it could nonetheless become ground for organization.

Indeed, our serious analysis of that work showed that no post-Marx Marxist unchained the dialectic, not even Lenin, who did penetrate the dialectic on revolution, but did not when it came to the Party. This led us to the creation of a category of post-Marx Marxism as [specifying those who do] not fully reconnect with Marx's Marxism.

In a word, even the Great Divide in Marxism which Lenin did create and which was concretized in his magnificent *State and Revolution* had, however, kept the Party as his own "private enclave" called the vanguard party. The two fields in which I did not follow Lenin were the vanguard party and his confined conception of women's liberation.

Two points are involved in [the] remembrance of things past: One is that embedded in the embryo of the past is the presence of the next step, whether or not one is fully conscious of it. Two is that presence of the future inherent in the "here and now" characterizes also the first instinctual reaction which is philosophically called "first negation." What makes you move to the second negation creates a new humus for future development.

Marx's magnificent, original, historic unchaining of the dialectic was the creation of such a new humus. This unchaining began, of course, with his refusal to consider

(Continued on page 5)

That *WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND THE DIALECTICS OF REVOLUTION* is even more important to a new generation of feminists in the 1990s than when this book first appeared a decade ago is due to the deepening of the retrogression the Women's Liberation Movement has suffered over this decade — not only from the forces of reaction without, but from the contradictions within the movement. What had first drawn Adrienne Rich to Dunayevskaya's work and a rethinking of the relationship of Women's Liberation to Marxism was the need to confront those contradictions, in particular the tendencies toward an "inner emigration." ("I'm talking not just about lesbian separatism but about versions of female oppression which neglect both female agency and female diversity," Rich wrote.) Her questioning resonated with the profound philosophic discussion Dunayevskaya initiated, in her *Introduction and Overview* to this book, of the "private enclaves" that had to be overcome for the Women's Liberation Movement to continue working out the dialectic to full freedom and a world of totally new human relations.

The Black feminist writer and theorist Gloria Joseph has likewise welcomed Dunayevskaya's discussion of the contradictions confronting feminists today. In a sharp critique of all those "leading feminist scholars" who "have excluded working-class women and Black women from their elite 'private enclave,'" what Joseph singled out was Dunayevskaya's powerful discussion of Sojourner Truth's phrase "shortminded," which she invented to criticize the great Black Abolitionist leader, Frederick Douglass, for not including women in the struggle for enfranchisement after the Civil War. What Dunayevskaya saw in

**New from
Wayne
State
University
Press**



Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution

**Reaching for
the Future**

**RAYA
DUNAYEVSKAYA**

Introduction and Overview

Part I. Women, Labor and the Black Dimension

Part II. Revolutionaries All

Part III. Sexism, Politics and Revolution — Japan, Portugal, Poland, China, Latin America, the U.S. — Is There an Organizational Answer?

Part IV. The Trail to the 1980s: The Missing Link — Philosophy — in the Relationship of Revolution to Organization

Sojourner Truth's phrase, Joseph stressed, was "a concept, one that had become a new language of thought against any who would impose a limitation to freedom." Any who today, she concluded, "put limitations on who the movement is for and (ignore) who remains exploited in the process of others being liberated," is similarly "shortminded."

Dunayevskaya wrote her *Introduction and Overview* to *WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND THE DIALECTICS OF REVOLUTION* after she had organized these 32 pieces written over 35 years into four parts, not chronologically but as what could show the various stages of the dialectics of revolution. In the 1980s, in the face of the profound worldwide retrogression which Dunayevskaya called a "Changed World," just as this book was coming off the press, she embarked on yet a new study of the relation of dialectics to organization, which she had tentatively titled "Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy: the 'party' and forms of organization born out of spontaneity."

Dunayevskaya did not live to see the collapse in 1989-91 of the state-capitalism that had called itself Communism in Russia and East Europe, nor the nearly complete collapse of the Left, including the anti-Stalinist Left, that followed those events. Yet her entire body of work speaks profoundly to these events because from the very beginning of her development of Marxist-Humanism Dunayevskaya's life had been devoted to liberating Marx's Marxism from the theoretical and organizational systems attributed to him. Margaret Randall, who has written widely on Cuba and Nicaragua, is among those who were brought to seriously "rethink Marxism" after these events. Her 1992 book, *GATHERING RAGE: THE*

FAILURE OF 20TH CENTURY REVOLUTIONS TO DEVELOP A FEMINIST AGENDA, is especially illuminating in finding in Dunayevskaya's work the "point of departure for those of us who seek answers in the multiple intersections of class, race, gender, and sexual orientation." Throughout Dunayevskaya's life and work, Randall stresses, "women's liberation was an unnegotiable concern."

It was Raya Dunayevskaya's unique re-creation of the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic "as new beginning" that allowed her to anticipate, as well, many of the current debates over particularity, difference and multiculturalism long before postmodern theories came to the fore in the late 1980s. By incorporating these issues within a unique dialectical perspective, she not only avoided the relativizing, demobilizing tendencies of postmodernism but was enabled to reach far beyond earlier versions of the dialectic.

The second part of the title of this collection, *REACHING FOR THE FUTURE*, is what speaks the most directly to today's new generation of "women's liberationists," whose task it becomes to continue working out the dialectic to full freedom. No one has said it better than Meridel LeSueur, the powerful woman writer from the Midwest, best known for her proletarian writings of the 1930s and her classic history of *NORTH STAR COUNTRY*, whose work for women's liberation has continued well into her 90s. When she heard of the plans for a new edition of *WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND THE DIALECTICS OF REVOLUTION* she wrote: "There is a wonderful spirit in this book, and it is badly needed in this time of questioning and new problems." She later framed this thought in one insistent sentence: "We need the new moment, we need it badly."

Olga Domanski, December 1995
From the Preface

PHILOSOPHIC DIALOGUE

Dialectics of revolution and women's liberation

Black women reach for freedom

After reading Raya Dunayevskaya's *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution*, I thought about how we are living under the whip of counter-revolution. To understand that, by being a dialectic, you always have to see the opposites as struggle. In each of our lives there has been a time when we thought the struggle was won, only to find it just begun.

Looking back over the Civil Rights Movement strikes, the slave mentality that we face each day as workers, proves that the struggle is always at hand. Looking back at 150 years of history in *WLDR* shows an adventurous journey of confrontations, forward moves, and yes, unfortunately, backward moves.

The year 1831 brings to mind one of the greatest slave revolts. Yes, we all know of Nat Turner, but who knows that in the same period Maria Stewart, one of the many great Black women in our history, was saying this to us:

"O, ye daughters of Africa, awake! awake! arise! No longer sleep nor slumber but distinguish yourselves. Show forth to the world that we are endowed with noble and exalted faculties...How long shall the fair daughters of Africa be compelled to bury their minds and talents beneath a load of iron pots and kettles?...How long shall a mean set of men flatter us with their smiles, and enrich themselves with our hard earnings: their wives' fingers sparkling with rings and they themselves laughing at our folly?" (*WLDR*, p. 203).

This takes us to the Black dimension which Dunayevskaya was always the vanguard in American history. But even as Black, it was the Black man who was recognized. It was Turner, not Stewart. This tells me that even though Blacks have always been willing to speak out and fight for freedom, we as women have not been given the credit for standing on the front line, willing to take a bullet, maybe even before the man—not behind him, but mostly in front of him.

The year 1841 finds the great philosopher, Marx, abruptly intermingling with his master, Hegel, when he posed to himself the question, is it possible to continue something as great as Hegel's dialectical philosophy after he is gone. How do we begin anew?

This brings to mind the death of Martin Luther King, Jr., the dreamer. But it's people like you and me who have struggled to make the dream a reality. Marx was accepting that self-development, self-transcendence, self-determination all comes from inside. It is the revolutionary nature—whether it's in you as an individual, or whether it's in the nations—that will fight for freedom.

This is where philosophy comes in as an everyday part of our being. Not as just another word that we as a people or a nation seem to cringe away from; but as a welcome reprieve that each in his or her own way becomes a philosopher for freedom, willing to challenge the masters of the world and to say, "No more. We have only just begun to make the dream a reality." —Anita Johnson

Revolution-in-permanence

Sharpley-Whiting's article on the new edition of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution* raised questions in my mind that more distinctly brought out the meaning and significance of the book for today (See October *N&L*).

To me, *WLDR* challenges us to delve more seriously into dialectics as a revolutionary methodology indispensable for women's liberation. The Women's Liberation Movement of the late 1960s was such a profound movement, Dunayevskaya argues, because it raised the question of "what happens after the revolution" before the revolution. Women refused to wait, refused to accept secondary status to vague notions of the class struggle, anti-imperialism, the Black revolution.

This is what Dunayevskaya meant when she said that in the late 1960s, women's liberation changed from "an Idea whose time has come" into a full-fledged, independent movement, declaring its centrality to all future revolutionary thought and action. By declaring that revolution has to be total from the start, women's liberation demanded that a deeper concept of liberation become the ground for revolutionary praxis.

Thus, to me it's not that *WLDR* critiques feminism for theorizing "as a form of practice," or for not doing both, as Sharpley-Whiting argues. Rather, it challenges feminism to develop theory into the totality of philosophy.

That's why Part IV of the book is so crucially important to grasping its meaning and significance. The essays in this part excavate the continuity between the young, idealist Marx of 1844 who declared his philosophy a "new Humanism" through the mature Marx of the last decade. Marx's last writings on women and the Third World show the great divide between the unilinear economism of post-Marx Marxism beginning with Engels and the multilinear dialectics of human history that Marx developed. Dunayevskaya soundly critiques feminists for accepting Engels' view as Marx's own.

Where Engels saw the advent of private property as signaling "the world historic defeat of female sex," Marx held close to the self-development of humanity from primitive communism through his own period.

So much of the beauty of *WLDR* lies in its illumination of women as Reason and revolutionary force throughout history, showing the lie to Engels' notion of "the world historic defeat of the female sex." This is crucially important for today's battles within feminism. How much

poststructuralist feminism, after all, relies on Engelsian anthropology descended through Levi-Strauss?

In delving into Marx's last writings, Dunayevskaya shows how Marx's original appropriation and transformation of the Hegelian dialectic of negativity determined his study of gender and the Third World at the end of his life, thus pointing out "the trail" for feminists and revolutionaries to re-create a "total, global and permanent" vision of human emancipation for today.

WLDR's challenge is not for feminists to grapple with male "theorists of oppression and revolution," in general, as important as that may be. I'm not, in any case, as sure as Sharpley-Whiting that the "excision and exorcism" of male theorists is a major tendency today, with the influence of theorists like Foucault, Derrida, Freud and Lacan on feminist theory. *WLDR*'s challenge is for feminists to work out and develop the total vision of freedom implicit in women's liberation into an explicit philosophy of revolution-in-permanence.

—Maya Jhansi

Organization and philosophy

The first crucial component to strike me in *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution* was the emphasis on organization. When I saw that reality and organization are both in need of philosophy, it struck me that organization was more than objectivity in some concrete sense.

Raya put it in the form of a question: "It became clear to me that the question 'Can there be an organizational answer?' could not be answered without dealing with the whole question of philosophy, the missing link not only for the pragmatists but for all post-Marx Marxists" (p.9).

One aspect Raya gets at here is the thorough way in which the Women's Liberation Movement questioned shibboleths of Left organizing and the ongoing concern for organizational process. But more crucial, as we look at the century of revolution-turned-into-opposite, is that all that concern for organization remained on a practical level only. How can we take responsibility for practicing that? How is *WLDR* part of that process?

This brings me to one of the saddest articles ever to disgrace the pages of *News & Letters* in my reading—although it speaks volumes to the depths of *N&L*'s commitment to philosophy. I refer to Teresa Ebert's response to Laurie Cashdan's review of her book, *Ludic Feminism and After* (See recent issues of *N&L* for Cashdan-Ebert debate).

Having accused Laurie of inventing multiple Marxes, Ebert creates a straw man, a false front for determinism, and names this bogey "Marx." Overlooking the fact that Marx's passion and thought is moved by masses in motion, from Abolitionism to 1848 to the Civil War to the Paris Commune, she goes the easy route of economic

From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES

(Continued from page 4)

that Hegel's Notion was related only to thought.

Once Marx discovered a new continent of thought and of revolution, the task he assigned to himself was that of uniting philosophy and reality. The proof of that unity came from uncovering the hidden Subject—the driving forces of the revolutions-to-be—the Proletariat—and at the same time focusing on Man/Woman, as alienated and alienating, which must be totally uprooted as the way to fully human relationships...

Between Marx and our age only Lenin seriously returned to Marx's roots in Hegel. But while Lenin commented profoundly and brilliantly on the whole of *Science of Logic*—including the Doctrine of the Notion, where he embraced and concretized Hegel's principle that, "Cognition not only reflects the world, but creates it"—he nevertheless concretized only the single dialectical principle of transformation into opposite; of every unit containing its opposite within itself.

Unfortunately, other questions, especially the one on organization, Lenin left untouched within the vanguardist confines of his 1902-03 *What is to be Done?*

OUR AGE HAS FOCUSED on the dialectics of revolution as the determinant. Nothing, including organization, the party, can find any escape route from that determinant. Even the Absolute Method itself is but the road to the Absolute Idea, Absolute Mind. When the Self-Thinking Idea comes with the Self-Bringing Forth of Freedom, we will have actual total freedom...

I wish to give you at least a brief view of my new book, *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future*. The first thing I noticed in rereading that thirty-five-year compilation of arti-

reductionism.

That such a vulgar Marxism could be alive in the face of the evidence of history is sad. But the real tragedy is that Ebert has no Reason—no reason for what she says, how she says it, or why she says it. Reason, to her, is more bourgeois creativity for the pampereed creature.

I raise her determinism here to contrast it with one of Raya's most central insights—that the creativity of masses in motion creates new consciousness. As Raya says in the Introduction/Overview to *WLDR*: "[E]very one of the historic periods recorded here discloses the existence of both a new revolutionary force and a new consciousness—Reason itself—no matter how different the situation or the country in which the events unravel, and no matter how hidden from history, past or in-the-making, it has remained" (3).

There is an interesting gloss on this passage later: "To see only that women have been 'Hidden from History' and not that they have been hidden from philosophy means that you have not grasped what it means that throughout history women have been not only force but Reason, revolutionaries in action and in thought" (108). Here Raya is maintaining that women have always been Reason, but that the male philosophers—who said women lacked philosophical ability and that they should keep silent—missed this dimension. She returns to this error in our own age:

"New forces of revolution were challenging the theoreticians to come up with nothing short of a new form of cognition, a new way of life. Instead, they were being saddled with new political tyrannies, new forms of mass destruction, a new stage of production, and a total way of nuclear terror and death" (11).

So if new forces of revolution and new consciousness are met by ideas that limit them, by oppressions that bind them, there is no unity of thought and activity as totality, but only scattered energies. This fragmentation has led to an apparent inability to bring about the kind of revolution the Women's Liberation Movement has aspired to. We must ask what went wrong.

We start from Raya's critique of delaying philosophy, picking it up en route, or scorning it altogether. The dialectics of philosophy and organization has to be explicit. Philosophy as academic abstraction is not what we want.

Throughout *WLDR*, Raya is recording, reflecting, and putting women's liberation into reformism or essentialism. These issues—of diversity, multiple identities, origins, allegiances, and so on—are crucial to all dimensions of freedom struggles.

WLDR addresses what happened in the past, with the immediacy of eye-witness participation, and yet poses the numerous contradictions which the movements still face today, more urgently and concretely. *WLDR* maintains the centrality of women to revolution and of organization as a question, not a predetermined cage.

—Jennifer Pen

Power of negativity

cles—with a focus on a single revolutionary force as Reason, women's liberation—is that the Dialectics of Revolution is characteristic of all the four forces we singled out in the United States—labor, Blacks, youth, as well as women. All are moments of revolution, and nobody can know before the event itself who will be the one in the concrete, particular revolution.

This determined my 1985 Introduction and Overview to this book, which culminated in what we call the "Trail to the 1980s." In a word, no matter who the specific revolutionary force turns out to be—labor, Blacks, youth, women—the whole truth is in the dual rhythm of any revolution: the overthrow of the old society and the creation of new human relations. It requires the spelling out of that dialectic in its totality with every individual subject.

This is true not just as a summation, but rather as a new beginning. Just as Marx's concept of "revolution in permanence" made it clear that the revolution does not end with the overthrow of the old but must continue to the new, so you begin to feel this presence of the future in the present. This is the time when every man, woman and child feels this newness precisely because it is now rooted in such new beginning.

1. Marx broke off his 1844 "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic" in commenting on para. 384 of Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*. In her 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes," Dunayevskaya began her commentary on para. 385.

2. See *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism: Two Historic-Philosophic Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya* (Chicago: News and Letters, 1989).

3. In the final paragraph of the 1831 edition of the *Philosophy of Mind*, Hegel passes beyond Logic as mediation in presenting "Self-Knowing Reason" as the unity-in-difference of Nature and Mind.



STATE OF THE NATION—AFTER THE ELECTIONS

The problem with Affirmative Action, the law passed in the 1970s, was that, like so many Civil Rights issues, it became stagnant after the legislation was passed and the movement went into the State. When the human spirit gets separated from bourgeois law, the ground gets shifted tremendously.

It wasn't the law that destroyed segregation in the South, but the actual new human relations created between Black and white youth. The humanism was slashed once the movement stopped and bourgeois law became the pacifier. It became easy for the Right to degrade Affirmative Action to a narrow concept, like "quotas." Only a social movement can determine freedom.

Freedom fighter
Los Angeles

* * *

I was assigned by workfare as a housekeeper in a hospital. They liked my work and gave me good recommendations, but workfare does not permit you to move into a permanent job at the same place. So I was forced to leave and to go into "job training," even though I already had skills. Now I am supposed to get a regular job and get off welfare. They are supposed to give me leads so I can find a job, but they don't give me any leads. So now I'm doing nothing.

Former WEP worker
New York City

* * *

The attack on welfare women has achieved the demonization of a segment of the population to be this system's "scapegoats." It puts the battle in the context of the degenerating world situation. That kind of demonization worked for the rulers in Bosnia. Are we going to allow it to happen here?

Women's liberationist
Memphis

* * *

Looking at the detailed voters polls published in the New York Times, I noticed the expected gender and racial gaps, with women and minorities voting heavily against Dole, but men and white people each giving a slight edge to Dole and the Republicans. Since I always look for signs of solidarity across race and gender lines, I also noticed a different pattern among whites aged 18 to 29, who were the only age group of whites to vote against Dole. The same pattern was found among all races aged 18 to 29, versus males 30 and older. While not too much should be made of an election in which Clinton hardly represented a clear alternative to Dole, still, it made me wonder about the possibility of youth movements in the coming period.

Sociologist
Indiana

* * *

We can see in the sweatshops today what automation has brought to the working class of this country—either being worked to death, slaving at jobs with low pay and no benefits, or being unemployed. All I can see left for the working class to do is make a revolution, where all people are the working class and have charge of the means of production.

Ready
California

* * *

The president of the Oklahoma City charity, "Feed the Children," has criticized welfare reform as having a harmful effect on children who are malnourished due to poverty. It is closely related to the sad state of health care in general. More than one in five Oklahoman children have no health insurance and people without coverage tend to postpone medical attention until it is absolutely necessary and the problem is so severe they have to go to the emergency room. In many cases these uninsured are the working poor, whose employers don't provide the insurance, and who earn "too much" to qualify for public assistance, but not enough to buy insurance or pay for a doctor.

In the face of this, the newly-elected state legislature has nonetheless promised to make Corrections, not health care, its priority during the current session, which just started.

Correspondent
Oklahoma

* * *

The Christian fundamentalist movement sees women as less than human, reduced to a function and role. They even call the pregnant woman "mother" when she has no children! Abortion is about the woman's life—her life—woman as human. We need to rethink the naming of our movement as "pro-choice" because "choice" leaves the door open for accusations of choosing to destroy "life" instead of recognizing what life really is, what being human really is.

Sonia Bergonzi
Chicago

* * *

It seems pretty clear to me that the stories are true about the CIA funding their predatory operations with drug money secured from what they brought into and sold in the States. I think the war on drugs is just a big pretense to put more military control in South and Central America. Manifest Destiny continues.

Prisoner
Texas

* * *

A study by the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice says the state of California has increased spending on prisons at the expense of African-American students. The study says that from 1980-81, 9.2% of the state's general fund went to higher education and 2.3% went to prisons. But in 1996-97, 9.4% went to prisons, with only 8.7% to education. The study sees a connection between those numbers and the increase of Blacks incarcerated in California.

Observer
Oakland, Cal.

* * *

In these days of retrogression and ideological pollution, it's not enough to merely invoke the word "revolution"—you must link your concept of revolution to a total uprooting, which means voicing the name of Karl Marx. Thus I was delighted when, in a recent poetry reading at San Jose State University, feminist lesbian poet Adrienne Rich said that she found herself often returning to Marx's observation that when the conditions of production normalize the exploitation of human beings, the fullness of what it means to be human is besieged. In a society which, as Rich said, seems "determined to deny art any control" she called for political engagement, commemoration of the lives of revolutionaries, and a creativity and poetry where we "must recall all we are in danger of letting go."

Feminist professor
California



MARX VS POST-MARX MARXISM

Laurie Cashdan's response—to my theoretical critique of her attempt to prove the correctness of Dunayevskaya's bourgeois reading of Marx as a humanist—does not develop an argument but keeps repeating the same point. Over and over, she claims I reduce Marxism to an economic determinism... Revolutionary feminism is not voluntaristic humanism but CLASS STRUGGLE to end the exploitation of people's labor and to transform the condition of oppression across differences.

Teresa Ebert
Guilderland, N.Y.

* * *

Ebert makes an abstraction out of class struggle, as if it doesn't involve individual workers as subjects. To find the subjectivity that can transform reality one would have to turn to an outside force. That force is what neither Cashdan nor Ebert mentioned—the vanguard party to lead. That is the logic of Ebert's arguments.

Women's Liberationist
Illinois

* * *

It is a sign of the theoretical innocence of the cult of Dunayevskaya that the slightest contact with "theory" confuses them. Jim Guthrie (Readers Views, November issue) posits a "break" in Ebert's career: a postmodern period and

Readers' Views

a post-postmodern phase. Is he familiar with Ebert's groundbreaking texts in which she theorized "resistance postmodernism"? There are no "breaks" in her writings but a historical development. It is not Ebert's (or any theorist's) responsibility to avoid rigorous thinking in order to protect the innocent members of the cult from confusion.

Mas'ud Zavarzadeh
Syracuse, N.Y.

* * *

Although the 1844 Manuscripts are great to show Marx's humanist beginnings, it's in Capital where Marx really shows how economic relations are human relations. Ebert claims sole rights over Capital as well as revolutionary praxis, neither of which she understands. Lenin was right when he wrote: "It is impossible completely to understand Marx's Capital, and especially its first chapter, without having thoroughly studied and understood the whole of Hegel's Logic. Consequently, half a century later none of the Marxists understood Marx!"

Julia
Berkeley, Cal.

* * *

Dunayevskaya's critique of Post-Marx Marxists was that they did not grasp the necessity of developing the dialectic, which was Marx's central preoccupation through four decades in the 19th century. Yet Dunayevskaya poses philosophy, in philosophic terms, as the divide. Many post-Marx Marxists will answer that Marx himself turned away from direct discussion of philosophy in his four-decade development, and ask how she could claim "continuity" with an obvious divergence from that pattern. The point is that at different historic periods "concrete" assumes various forms. Perhaps our greatest challenge is to fully understand what Dunayevskaya developed on the need to grasp the concreteness of philosophy of our age.

Victor Hart
New York

* * *

There are people dying, starving out there while Teresa Ebert is waging a battle to purge Marx of his humanist dimensions. What a deplorable battle.

T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting
Indiana

●

WEST PAPUA

The West Papuans are made up of many tribes, speaking many languages. Their struggle is against Suharto and Indonesia's U.S.-backed military apparatus, which is supported by a host of multinational corporations like Chevron, Shell and Arco, and numerous logging, paper and mining companies. Many of the Indonesians consider these indigenous people as primitive savages and detach themselves from their struggle, while the very existence of the West Papuans is threatened by Indonesians moving in mass numbers to West Papua and destroying an environment that supports their lifestyle.

As I see it, when a society sees trees as logs or paper, diverse people as savages, and both as commodities to be exploited by brute force, if necessary—that society can only be described as exploitative, racist and inhuman.

Student activist
Los Angeles

●

POLAND AND KRISTALLNACHT

For the first time in recent Polish history the demonstrations commemorating Kristallnacht were attended not "just" by youth, but joined by members of the Polish parliament, among them Jacek Kuron and Cezary Mizejewski. The day before the anniversary they presented in the Parliament a report documenting Polish fascists' attacks which resulted in 15 deaths, most recently a 14-year-old homeless youth in Kielce.

On Nov. 8 over a thousand mostly young demonstrators in Warsaw called for an end to racism. They chanted "One race, the human race" and carried banners with names of the recent fascists' victims. A similar demonstration in Lublin attracted 300 people.

At a time when Polish nationalism increasingly appeals to anti-semitism and xenophobia, as, for example, during the Nov. 11 Polish Independence Day rallies, such signs of opposition to racism are very much needed.

Urszula Wislanka
California

BRITISH ILLUSIONS

Dave Black, in the October N&L, lists anarcho-syndicalists among those with illusions that Scargill's Socialist Labor Party might turn into something valid. That is a misconception of what I said and as I am the only Syndicalist who argued this in print I assume he was referring to me.

I said that for many younger socialists, the Miners' Strike of the '80s, rightly or wrongly, made Scargill a mythical figure. That meant that there would be a number of potential revolutionaries who now have illusions about Scargill and that it is essential we reach these. In a variety of organizations, anarchists have found they needed to work among the rank and file of movements whose leaderships mix reformism with Stalinism... Clearly, once Labour is in power, a lot more careerists will be climbing on the SLP bandwagon and there will then, after a wave of disillusionment among present members, be no opportunities to make converts. But that is a few months off.

Laurens Otter
England



THREE REVOLUTIONS

I was incensed when I found buried on page 16 of the Vancouver Sun a tiny paragraph on the fact that, with the stroke of a pen from his hospital bed where he was recovering from heart surgery, Boris Yeltsin has "abolished" the Anniversary of the Great October Revolution and renamed the day the "Day of Accord and Reconciliation"! Perhaps the anniversary of the French Revolution should be changed to "A Friendly Visit to the Bastille"?

Trying to bury, along with the corpse of the defunct Stalinist states, even the idea of the attempt to reach a more humane future cannot change the historic fact of one of the most important milestones in humanity's search for that goal.

Witness to Hungary 1956
British Columbia

* * *

The articles on the Hungarian Revolution brought to mind the fact that in 1956, the large Western Communist Parties in France and Italy supported the Russian invasion, while Mao said Khrushchev had not acted quickly enough. It took all the way until 1989 for the Italian CP to publicly recognize Hungary 1956 as a democratic, anti-totalitarian revolution. To this day, the French CP has refused any fundamental self-critique of its earlier stance.

Kevin A. Barry
Illinois

* * *

What Raya Dunayevskaya took up in her November N&L column on the Hungarian Revolution reverberated in the rest of the paper. I am thinking of the battle of ideas it wages against those—like Teresa Ebert—who would reduce Marxism and see workers as backward. Maya Jhansi's article about Althusser's vulgar materialism also answers Ebert, without mentioning her, when she writes; "Thought (to Althusser) is still determined by the economic base, that is, capitalist production relations," and contrasts that to seeing the worker as a creative molder of history. In the same issue you can see that is what was played out in life in the Hungarian Revolution.

Terry Moon
Memphis

ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS



I saw on CNN the scenes of the march of the Palestinian and Israeli women Gila Svirsky wrote about in the November issue. It was every bit as inspiring as she described to see those women daring to stand up against the collective insanity of the settlers and their Likud supporters, whose myopic vision still sees the future through a re-establishment of the "Greater, Biblical Israel" irrespective of existing realities, to say nothing of human rights. It was the fear of the Arabs overwhelming Israel that kept the Israelis united all these years. Now the fear of an eventual peace keeps them increasingly divided.

Gyorgi Canada

priests, who are running amuck today, with the reins of government in hand. The friendship and solidarity we receive from sisters and brothers like ourselves is a life-giving source from which we draw the energy and will to push ahead in the struggle. More power to you! More power to us all!

Arnon Dunetz
Tel Aviv

Gila Svirsky's moving article shows how women's liberation can be transcendent. N&L talks a lot about how much easier it is to agree on what you oppose than on what you are for. That's what the Israeli and Palestinian women struggled with in finding slogans for their march. Gila's writing was a wonderful example of the category "woman as Reason as well as Force for revolution." These were women determined that their ideas will help to change the world.

Women's liberationist
Tennessee

I don't think Jewish opposition to Netanyahu is widely enough reported. It should be known that on Oct. 6, a declaration signed by 100 soldiers of the Israeli Defense Force reserves was published in Haaretz, saying that they could no longer bear the burden of shared responsibility for the retreat from the peace accords and continuing military control of the civilian population. They declared that they would take no part in the occupied territories or in guarding the settlements that serve the same purpose. At the same time, American Jews from the International Jewish Peace Union called for the U.S. government to press for withdrawal of the Israeli army from Hebron and a ban on settlement expansions in the West Bank.

Netanyahu opponent
San Francisco

I made my way to Jerusalem on the first anniversary of the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to join hands with thousands of sisters and brothers across the land. Our demonstration ran from the square in the center of where the sowers of hate amongst us gather together with their high

ON SUDAN

I have been reading in N&L about the offensive of Sudan. We have been following the developments from that end for some time now. Sudan is very involved in many West African countries, including the Gambia, through humanitarian projects. I don't think Sudan will be on the agenda too long. She must change her tactics to win allies and that does not seem real. They will have to defeat the Pan-Africanist forces in Sudan before I can destablize the Sudan and beyond. I love the articles you have been printing on the Sudan because you rarely see anything about these things. We must also not forget about the Ogoni people. It is now one year since their leader was liquidated and many more are now on trial.

Ba Karang
Gambia

In the November 1996 "Black World" column Robert Reed writes that "the absence of ideology is not the problem in Sudan. There is an ideology, an all-permeating one. It is Islam." He then goes on

to equate Islam with the ultra-reactionary and fundamentalist National Islamic Front of Sudan and its leader, Hasan al-Turabi. As a secular Middle Eastern feminist, I am generally not in the business of defending religious precepts, but I was quite stunned by this condemnation of an entire people because they belong to the Muslim culture.

There never has been a unified Islamic Christianity, just as there never has been a Christian, Jewish, Baha'i, Buddhist, etc. one. One manifestation of Christianity was the murderous Inquisition, and let's not forget that in 1492 Jews of Spain were saved by Muslim Ottomans who sent ships to rescue them. Another manifestation of Christianity is Liberation Theology which despite its many limitations has played an emancipatory role in Latin America for several decades. Likewise, progressive and conservative interpretations of Islam have always existed side by side.

Additionally, Sudan cannot simply be divided into a northern colonizer and southern colonized region. Many northern Sudanese, who consider themselves culturally Muslim, including Muslim feminists, are at the forefront of the opposition to Turabi and his retrogressive ideology and their voices must also be heard.

Neda Azad
Illinois

BOSNIA AND CENTRAL AFRICA

The similarities between events in Central Africa and Bosnia are striking and merit consideration in this context. I find it difficult to believe that these nationalities have always hated each other, that they have been at each other's throats for centuries and that any peaceful co-existence is hopelessly utopian. Both wars have one thing in common: reactionary politicians moving in to enrich themselves and consolidate their political power by using ethnicity as a basis to rebuild the collapse of the former Yugoslavia, Burundi, and Rwanda. It is a situation that seems to be a global problem.

Prisoner
Colorado

WHO READS N&L?



We are not only cut back on programs here but divided into cell houses and cut off from each other to the point of not really being able to see a friend in the camp for months or maybe even a year. Even though the camp is as small as a can of sardines we do not even eat in the same dining room or go to the same yard. I really do look for them to come in here one of these days and have a mass execution of the prisoners, or for them to take us back to the old ball-and-chain days, with open and public beatings. I thank N&L for your time and concern with our problems, and for listening to our voices behind these walls.

Prisoner
Illinois

Because N&L takes theory so seriously, it makes the discussion of current events more meaningful. Through such serious discussions I am finding that what I thought I knew, I did not know at all.

Longtime radical
Oakland, Cal.

Enclosed is \$3 for 20 copies of the November issue. I'm writing on behalf of a socialist student group at my college. We are very impressed with your paper and want to distribute it on campus and in the community. We will also try to get the campus and community libraries to carry it. Best of luck in your endeavors!

New supporter
Wisconsin

DON'T FORGET TO PUT NEW & LETTERS ON YOUR GIFT LIST!

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS FROM NEWS & LETTERS

BOOKS

BY RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

- Marxism and Freedom: From 1776 until today** 1988 edition. New author's introduction..... \$17.50
- Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao** 1989 edition. New author's introduction..... \$14.95
- Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution** 1991 edition. New author's introduction. Foreword by Adrienne Rich..... \$12.95
- Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future** (1996 edition) \$15.95
- The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism: Selected Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya** \$8.50
- 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." \$3 paperback, \$10 hardcover

BY CHARLES DENBY

- Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal** 1989 edition includes Afterword by Raya Dunayevskaya \$14.95

BY KEVIN ANDERSON

- Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism: A Critical Study** First full-length treatment of Lenin's studies of Hegel. \$15.95

PAMPHLETS

- American Civilization on Trial, Black Masses as Vanguard** Statement of the National Editorial Board. Includes "A 1980s View of the Two-Way Road between the U.S. and Africa" by Raya Dunayevskaya, and "Black Caucuses in the Unions" by Charles Denby \$2
- Harry McShane and the Scottish Roots of Marxist-Humanism** by Peter Hudis \$3
- Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western Civilization** (Expanded edition) \$5
- Marx's Capital and Today's Global Crisis** Includes critiques of Ernest Mandel and Tony Cliff \$2
- The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.** by Andy Phillips and Raya Dunayevskaya \$2
- 25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.: A History of Worldwide Revolutionary Developments** by Raya Dunayevskaya \$1.50
- Myriad Global Crises of the 1980s and the Nuclear World Since World War II** by Raya Dunayevskaya \$2
- Theory and Practice, by Rosa Luxemburg** First English translation..... \$2
- Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions** by Raya Dunayevskaya \$1.25
- Frantz Fanon, Soweto, and American Black Thought** by Lou Turner and John Alan \$3
- Working Women for Freedom** by Angela Terrano, Marie Dignan, and Mary Holmes \$2
- Dos ensayos por Raya Dunayevskaya** \$2
- News and Letters Committees Constitution** 32¢

Marxist-Humanist Literature Catalog

A full list of publications (many publications are not listed here) available from News and Letters Committees 55¢ postage

ARCHIVES

- Guides to Collection and Supplement to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection: Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development** Full description of 15,000-page microfilm collection \$4.50
- The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection -- Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development** A 15,000-page microfilm collection on 8 reels available from Wayne State University, Detroit, MI 48202 \$165

NEWSPAPER

- News & Letters subscription** Unique combination of worker and intellectual published 10 times a year (request information about gift subscriptions) \$2.50/year
- Bound Volumes of News & Letters** 1970-77, 1977-84, 1984-87, 1987-94 \$25 each N&L is also available on microfilm from University Microfilms International, 300 Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106. N&L as well as other Marxist-Humanist literature is available on audio tape.

Mail Orders To:

News & Letters, 59 East Van Buren St., Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605, Phone (312) 663-0839

Enclosed find \$_____ for the literature checked. Please add \$1.00 for each item for postage. Illinois residents add 7% sales tax.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Black/Red View

by John Alan

An apparent political anomaly occurred in the November election when five Southern Black incumbent Democrats in North Carolina, Georgia, Florida and Texas were re-elected to Congress from newly created districts mandated by the Supreme Court with a white majority of voters. Their original districts were, in the words of the court, "racially gerrymandered" to assure Black representation in Congress. None of these incumbents got a majority of white votes in their new districts; their victories were based upon 90% of the Black vote and a narrow 30% of the white vote.

Conservatives are now hailing the re-election of these Black Democrats as a leap forward in American race relations. But there is a serious need to emphasize that the Supreme Court, largely appointed by Reagan and Bush, has in actuality given to white voters the power to determine and shape African-American political activity in a bizarre and contradictory kind of legal reasoning.

On the one hand the court has declared that the predominantly Black electoral districts are unconstitutional

Cops attack Uhuru House

St. Petersburg, Fla.—Since the Oct. 24 rebellion broke out after Tyrone Lewis was murdered here, the police attacks on the community and the Uhuru Movement have intensified. Police have come to the Uhuru house just to harass us, saying things like, "We're Mark Furman," and members are arrested for passing out flyers.

At 8:00 p.m. the cops go to Bethel Heights and Jordan Park housing projects and say you can't go out, not even to go to work. They go every night and beat and arrest people just sitting on the porch.

On Nov. 13 the chief of police, Darrell Stevens, ordered the police to sweep Uhuru people off the streets before and after the Grand Jury verdict came out which let the killer cop off. In one case, 27 members of the Green-Team Swat Team arrested an Uhuru member for a minor traffic violation. Others were arrested and some were singled out and pepper-sprayed.

That night we had our weekly meeting at the Uhuru house. When those of us outside were attacked with pepper spray, people started coming out of their homes to see what was happening. The cops barricaded the streets and told the people they would be arrested if they went into the meeting. "We declare this meeting an unlawful assembly. You have five minutes to leave the building" and 30 seconds later, they fired tear gas. They used all the tear gas they had in the whole city of St. Petersburg. There were babies in there. Three-month-olds couldn't breathe. "It was like war." That's what the people were saying. It was terrible.

After that, they shot tear gas into a tree near the building and set it on fire. They were trying to burn down our building. The community tried to put it out, and were hit with canisters. They had bruises. The cops did burn down one house and one auto car place whose owner was a witness to Tyrone's murder.

We had to stay in safe houses because we were afraid of being attacked. My four-year-old daughter was there. I try to counsel her, but I'm a mother, not a counselor.

We've been sick and scared. The Sheriff's Department crank calls us saying all sorts of racist things. The media also attacks us. We formed a coalition of African leadership to defend the African community and the Uhuru movement. The idea is that if they put one in jail, we'll all go. The coalition consists of churches, community activists, and business owners.

We know they intended to kill us on Nov. 13, but the community protected us by throwing rocks and bottles. We are demanding amnesty for all arrested on Oct. 24 and Nov. 13 and for all those arrested in the police sweeps that have happened every day since the 24th. We want them to jail the killer cops and to make reparations, for the family.

—Kinara

Black politics whited out

because they violate the color-blind principles, in the words of Justice Sandra O'Connor, of a "system in which race no longer matters" and, on the other hand, the court sanctions the replacement of those Black districts with districts having a white majority as the constitutional habitat for Black politicians.

NON-RACIAL RACIAL REASONING

At stake here, in this kind of legal non-racial-but-racial reasoning, is not simply the career of this or that Black politician, but the continuity of the issue of Black freedom, a continuity that the court breaks under an alleged non-racial democratic abstraction.

George Will, the conservative columnist, thinks that the re-election of the five Black incumbents is "Good News." In his opinion it is proof that America does not "require remedial government" and does not need liberals encouraging "identity politics." He also adds that the "Civil Rights Movement was futile" because it created an "obsession with race."

On the contrary, the nation's "obsession with race" existed long before the Civil Rights Movement and can be found in the U.S. Constitution. Will is concerned with the hold that the Black masses have on Black politicians. The 1995 decision of the Supreme Court invalidating the Black majority congressional districts essentially weakens that hold.

BLACK MASSES PRESSURE LEADERS

In other words, the African-American politician, if he or she is to keep office, has to perform more as an ideal bourgeois politician, minimizing and manipulating the race and class conflicts in the interest of capitalism. The Supreme Court's decision finding "racial gerrymandering" defines this new relationship between Black leaders and Black masses. It is countered by the internal pressure of African-American masses to radicalize Black leadership, in other words, to force them into an open political fight against poverty, unemployment, bad housing and police brutality.

This has caused a dilemma for urban Black politicians: While they maintain that things will change, their constituencies shake their heads in doubt. They have waited too long for a change. Their doubts lead not to hopelessness nor cynicism, but express a desire for a new reality.

This was dramatically revealed when CIA Director Deutch last month told a Black audience in South Central Los Angeles that the CIA had no connection with the sale of crack cocaine in their community. His disclaimer was met over and over again with questions asking: "Why should we trust the CIA." This was followed by the explosive revolt of Black youth against murder by police in St. Petersburg, Fla.

For your holiday giving

offer the world... a gift subscription to
News & Letters...

For growth in the New Year
dig into Marxist-Humanist literature.

See ad on page 7.

Black Memphis vs. toxic Defense Depot

Memphis, Tenn.—I am the executive director of Defense Depot of Memphis, Tenn., Concerned Citizens Committee (DDMT-CCC). We formed it because in our community we're living on a toxic waste dump. The Defense Depot is a military base in the middle of the Black community in south Memphis.

In January 1995 I received a three-month-old newsletter from the Depot. It talked about all the chemicals spilled on the ground and getting in the groundwater. That same month, my grandmother became ill with cancer. She died on June 25, 1995. I lost my grandfather ten months later. I was wondering if there was a connection to the things in that newsletter. I went to the library to do research on the Defense Depot.

The Army had been dumping at the Depot for 54 years. The newsletter told of a RAB (Restoration Advisory Board) meeting. These boards are set up wherever there is a military base closure. The Depot is slated for closure in 1997. I tried to find out when there was going to be another meeting. I couldn't—the "public" meetings were secret!

After reading the public health assessment, by the Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry I knew we had a problem because there were things they were trying to cover up. I had done the research in the library, so I was anxious to try to get to one of their meetings.

I could never get a date of the meetings, so I scheduled a PTA meeting, called Joyce Peterson of Channel 5 and told her we may have a cancer cluster. In October 1995 she did an interview with the community near the Defense Depot. With other neighbors coming forward, we said we should have a meeting, and on Oct. 16, about 350 people came.

Some of the community had been informed, but the west side had been left out. We decided we would organize the east, west, north and south. We had a meeting later that week and named ourselves DDMT-CCC. We put a person on the RAB from the group so we could know what was going on with the Defense Depot.

We know that every time it rains, high amounts of

NYC unions and workfare

New York—The Workers' Rights Board of New York City Jobs with Justice, an organization which exposes work place abuses, conducted "hearings" on the Work Experience Program (New York's workfare) before a crowd of 350, Nov. 20. Eight WEP workers discussed their experiences and called for an end to the "slave labor" they must endure in order to receive meager government assistance.

Carmen Balesh and Sandra White described the dirty, unsafe and inhuman conditions of WEP workers assigned to the Sanitation Department to sweep the streets (see November N&L). White said, "They make it clear it's not job training, it's just to get your check. And it's not good for our bodies or our minds."

A fire department employee said many WEP workers have skills and are doing jobs that normally pay up to \$30,000. This not only saves money but scares regular workers from speaking out on the job. WEP workers, who work part-time at the rate of minimum wage to receive their assistance of cash and food stamps, can lose these "jobs" and welfare if they fail to come to work when ordered or to obey a command. "If the military can't protect its people from abuse," she said, "who will protect WEP workers?"

Epy Reyes does social work at a juvenile center. "I'm accepted by the other workers," he said. "The only problem is that I'm not paid." He receives \$109 every two weeks for himself and his daughter.

Ken Perez of the Communication Workers of America explained the economics of workfare for the city which has eliminated 22,100 regular jobs. A full-time clerical worker costs the city \$12.32 an hour plus benefits; a WEP worker with two children working 20 hours a week costs the City \$1.80 an hour (25% of the total) and no benefits. This figure will soon go down under the new federal and state laws to 30 hours work per week at 53¢ an hour.

Brenda Corbett receives \$214 every two weeks for her WEP work. The person working next to her gets \$12 per hour. "Welfare recipients are humiliated by people who say we just sit around, when in fact we're working and not getting paid for it. The money I receive is barely enough to care for my family. What kind of slavery is that?" In spite of a system designed to prevent it, she says. "I'm determined to get my education and won't let anyone tell me I can't, even though I need roller skates to do everything I do."

Brenda Stewart of WEP Workers Together! declared, "We're not going to be victims anymore. We're going to fight for our rights, including comparable wages, advancement and benefits. We're going from job site to job site to let all WEP workers know they are entitled to these things." WWT!'s larger demands include regular, permanent jobs and assistance for four years of college.

Brian McLaughlin, president of the New York City Central Labor Council, decried the WEP workers' exploitation and promised to work on the issue, but he was the one person in the room who has the power to stop it, and he has done nothing. If the municipal unions refused to permit WEP workers to replace laid-off city workers and to perform "union" work for slave wages, there could be a unity of employed and unemployed workers that would shake the work place at its core. As it is, the unions are perpetuating the stigma of being a welfare recipient and dividing the workers, hurting all.

—Anne Jaclard

How to contact

NEWS & LETTERS COMMITTEES

<p>CHICAGO</p> <p>59 E. Van Buren, Room 707 Chicago, IL 60605 Phone 312 663 0839 Fax 312 663 9069 Email nandl@igc.apc.org</p> <p>MEETINGS Call for information</p> <p>DETROIT</p> <p>P.O. Box 27205 Detroit MI 48227</p> <p>MEETINGS Thursdays, 7 p.m. Central Methodist Church Woodward and Adams</p> <p>LOS ANGELES</p> <p>P.O. Box 29194 Los Angeles, CA 90029 213 960 5607</p> <p>MEETINGS Sundays, 5:30 p.m. Echo Park United Methodist Church 1226 N. Alvarado (North of Sunset, side door)</p>	<p>P.O. Box 196 Grand Central Station New York, NY 10163 212 663 3631</p> <p>MEETINGS Sundays, 2:30 p.m. (Call for January meeting times) Washington Square Church 133 W. 4th St. (Parish House parlor), Manhattan</p> <p>OAKLAND</p> <p>P.O. Box 3345 Oakland, CA 94609 510 658 1448</p> <p>MEETINGS Sundays, 6:30 p.m. 2015 Center St. (at Milvia) Berkeley</p> <p>MEMPHIS</p> <p>1725B Madison Ave, #59 Memphis, TN 38104</p> <p>FLINT, MI</p> <p>P.O. Box 3384, Flint, MI 48502</p>
---	--

INTERNATIONAL MARXIST-HUMANISTS

ENGLAND

BCM Box 3514, London, England WC1N 3XX

Zaire in the grip of Africa's greatest post-colonial crisis

(Continued from page 1)

set for a fresh escalation of the crisis.

The Banyamulenge, who had lived in the Mulenge mountains in the eastern Kivu region of Zaire for 200 years, have suffered under government repression since the 1980s when Mobutu tried to strip them of their Zairean citizenship. Ironically, it was the Hutu extremists in the refugee camps who once again began to foment the kind of anti-Tutsi ethnic hatred which resulted in the 1994 genocide that drew the current rebel response which has routed the Hutu militias, the Zairean Army, and now threatens to topple the Mobutu government.

Hutu militias had driven Zairean Tutsis out of the Masisi and Rutshuru region in an ethnic cleansing campaign that involved a massacre at Masisi. The Rwandan government saw in the Masisi massacre a second phase of genocide that the international community would, as it did in 1994, again wring its hands in helplessness over.

So, this time the initiative came from the Africans themselves to do something about the imminent disaster. Kabila's Alliance, backed by the Rwandan government, accomplished what the UN and western powers could not—the separation of the Hutu militias from the Rwandan Hutu refugees whom they had used as hostages. Alliance guerrillas have created a corridor for some 500,000 returning refugees who have crossed over into Rwanda after 2½ years of exile. Another 100,000 remain displaced in Zaire, and 535,000 remain in massive refugee camps in Tanzania. For the most part, the process of repatriation is underway, and Rwanda has liberated its border from Zairean-backed Hutu incursions.

CONVERGING LEVELS OF CRISIS

To piece together the chaotic mosaic of Central Africa, and the centrifugal forces pulling it apart, we have to examine, however briefly, three converging levels at which the crisis is being played out, namely, the regional, historical, and the global.

In October, at the end of his tenure as U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher finally made his first trip to Africa. Despite being the most crisis-ridden and economically devastated continent on the planet, Christopher could offer nothing more than a proposal for creating a 10,000-man African peacekeeping military force to be bankrolled by the U.S. Thirty-six years after the U.S. sponsored the deployment of the same kind of "peacekeeping" force to the Congo, under the auspices of the UN, present day Zaire (formerly the Belgian Congo) is convulsed by a crisis that is again pulling it apart.

The UN intervention in the 1960 Congo crisis, and the CIA-backed murder of the radical nationalist leader Patrice Lumumba, represented a new form of Cold War struggle between the two superpowers, the U.S. and the Soviet Union. At the time, Frantz Fanon saw that "It is not true to say that the UN fails because the cases are difficult. In reality the UN is the legal card used by the imperialist interests when the card of brute force has failed."¹

Nevertheless, it was "Lumumba," wrote Raya Dunayevskaya, then, "who, across tribal lines, had built up a truly national movement for independence."² While it is also true that the anti-colonial revolution Lumumba led was betrayed by Africans themselves, and that inde-

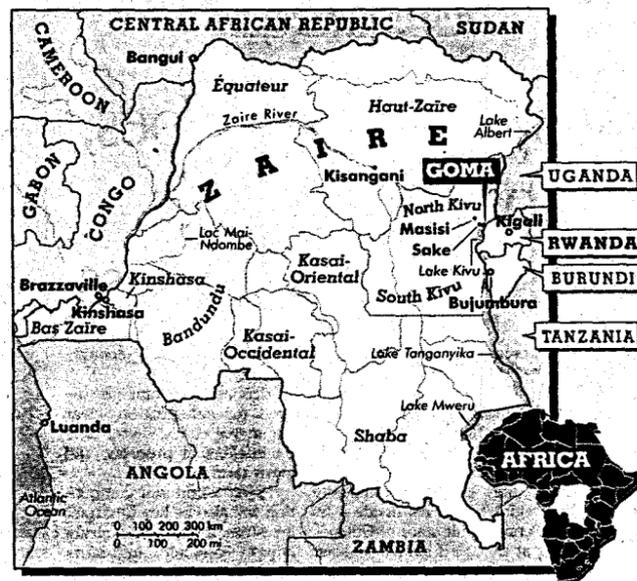
1. See "Lumumba's Death: Could We Do Otherwise," in *Toward the African Revolution*, pp. 194-95.

2. See *Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions*, p. 3.

pendent African nations like Nkrumah's Ghana ended up sending the Congo to participate in a "peateeking" force in the Congo that legitimized the imperialist counter-revolution, it is not true that the high point of the multi-ethnic national struggle singled out by Dunayevskaya perished with Lumumba.

When local Zairean officials tried to expel Zairean Tutsis this year the instigation of Hutu extremists, they stirred up old revolutionary forces going back to the original Congo crisis of the early 1960s, forces who have never stopped fighting the imperialist-backed Mobutu regime. Some of them, like Laurent Kabila, were followers of the late Marxist revolutionary Pierre Mulele, who had been Minister of Education and Art in Lumumba's cabinet, and represented the Parti de la Solidarite Africaine. As one African Marxist-Humanist observer noted:

There is a historical background to the situation in Central Africa that has been dominated by Pan-African sentiment. It is no accident that Uganda is deeply involved. Only a big military offensive, like the one France wants to engineer, can stop the war from getting to Kinshasa, now that it is in Rwanda and Uganda's Pan-Africanist backyard. The Lumumba forces [Kabila's Alliance of Democratic Forces] have their last chance of surviv-



ing. And as the U.S. is bound to see it as a war in which it is losing ground, I don't believe it will give up without venturing. However, I am not in anyway saying that these are the forces that are going to bring about a revolutionary change in the region.

PAN-AFRICANIST BACKYARD

The Ugandan regional connection is pivotal. Three years ago President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda hosted a Pan-African Congress at which the then-exiled RPF was quite prominent. Museveni, who is descended from Tutsis, came to power in 1986 in a military campaign strongly supported by exiled Rwandan Tutsis. With Museveni's support these Rwandan exiles fought a bitter four year war, 1990 to 1994, with the Hutu-dominated regime of Juvenal Habyarimana. It was only through their intervention that the 1994 genocide was halted.

Both OAU (Organization of African Unity) Secretary General Salim Ahmed Salim and Ugandan President

Museveni, have denounced the July military coup that replaced Burundian President Ntibantunganya with retired Colonel Pierre Buyoya, head of the Tutsi-dominated Union for Progress and National Unity (UPRONA). Sanctions against Buyoya's junta, drawn up by former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere, appointed by the OAU to mediate the conflicts in Rwanda and Burundi, gained momentum when Uganda and Rwanda joined in.

The history of Burundi's regional role in the crisis is also pivotal, and is inseparable from that of Rwanda. Throughout the post-colonial history of Hutus and Tutsis checking the perceived political advantage of one another, Rwanda and Burundi have degenerated into a logic of preemptive violence, meeting massacre with massacre. Extremist propaganda and rumor became, in short order, the vehicles for mobilizing ethnic hysteria, fear, and paranoia. Tens of thousands of Hutus and Tutsis were massacred and made refugees in the 1970s and 80s as a consequence of this logic of ethnic terror.

The genocide in Burundi in October 1993, following the assassination of Melchior Ndadaye, Burundi's first democratically elected Hutu president, foreshadowed the Rwanda genocide of 1994. Like Rwanda, the Burundi genocide was carried out against Tutsis, and against Hutu moderates who had sought to forge a multiethnic unity across tribal lines. Burundi, however, has seen genocidal onslaughts on the majority Hutu population by the Tutsi-dominated military both before and since 1993.

For its part, the Zairean military is plagued less by ethnic chauvinism than by a deep-running class disaffection with Zaire's corrupt elite, which is why Zairean troops have fled rebel advances. Made up of poor peasants and workers, most of Zaire's rank-and-file army has not been paid in three years. "We do not have any reason to fight," said one Zairean soldier after arriving in Uganda. "We do not have a central command and we have not heard from our bosses in three years."

ZAIRE IN THE CRUCIBLE OF CRISES

The threat of dismemberment has stalked Zaire. As the site of Africa's first major crisis of decolonization in 1960 when it was still the Belgian Congo, it has always been wracked by centrifugal forces pulling at it. Here too a perverse logic has been at work since a CIA-sponsored army sergeant by the name of Mobutu assumed power in 1965. In fact, so much has Mobutu's tenure in power depended on manipulating and suppressing Zaire's political and ethnic divisions, through use of a corrupt military establishment, there is neither the political will nor the military capability to fend off the present rebel onslaught.

Western powers have been the guarantor of Mobutu's rule and his survival against external threat. During the Cold War, the U.S. supported Mobutu, fearful that Russia would get its hands on Zaire's rich mineral resources, Israel supplied his body guard, and France and Morocco intervened twice militarily to save him. In the Southern African region, Mobutu helped launch the civil war in Angola, in the 1970s, by sending troops to aid the UNITA warlord Jonas Savimbi. Since then UNITA has used Zaire as a safe haven, and the U.S. has used it as a secret conduit to funnel arms to Savimbi.

Forced by the West and a democracy movement at home to democratize some aspects of the Zairean state in the early 1990s, Mobutu still controlled the political apparatus of the state through undermining opposition Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, and then hand-picking Zaire's current western-favored prime minister, Leon Kengo wa Dondo. Kengo, whose father is Polish and mother Rwandan Tutsi, was chosen by Mobutu because he represents no political threat. Though he is the West's favorite to replace Mobutu, due to his ethnic heritage Kengo is barred from becoming president by Zaire's narrow nationalistic constitution.

Virulent chauvinistic tendencies have surfaced since the crisis began, aimed at Kengo and other Zairean Tutsis. Zairean students have held demonstrations demanding Kengo's ouster because they believe his Tutsi ethnic background makes him a sympathizer of the Banyamulenge rebels. A man obsessed with stability in the region to insure a climate for western capitalist investment, Kengo wa Dondo is western capitalism's point man in Zaire.

He led an unsuccessful bid to privatize Zaire's copper and diamond industry for the British-South African mega-mining conglomerate Anglo-American last year. Anglo-American's privatization plans are also intertwined with the secessionist aims of Kasai and Shaba, the regions where Zaire's diamond and copper industries are most productive. Kengo's bid failed because Mobutu and the World Bank objected to the privatization of the country's main industries.

Although France has been the big political player in Central Africa, Britain dominates the economy of the region. Anglo-American and its subsidiaries depend heavily upon Kengo to keep Zaire's vast mineral wealth in its hands. In December, the magazine *African Business* reported that, the Kengo government granted an Anglo-American subsidiary, Cluff Mining Ltd., majority rights over the exploitation of the gold concessions in the Lake Kivu area, the storm center of the present refugee crisis and military conflict.

Thus, even so simple an imperialist transaction as this underscores why the convergence of the political and the economic, the local and the global, the contemporary and the historical, and the military and the diplomatic, in the Central African crisis cannot be viewed except in their dialectical totality, if we are to grasp the possibility of revolutionary new beginnings emerging from such a manifold crisis.

Capitalist science lethal to our future

by Franklin Dmitryev

Our Stolen Future: Are We Threatening Our Fertility, Intelligence, and Survival?—A Scientific Detective Story, by Theo Colborn, Dianne Dumanoski, and John Peterson Myers (Dutton, 1996).

This important new book's title refers to its contention that our future, as individuals and as society, is being undermined by synthetic chemicals that disrupt the body's hormone system. From the remotest Pacific island to the high arctic, all human beings and almost all animals carry a load of synthetic chemicals such as PCBs and DDT. They are the legacy of our current system of production.

One of the book's strengths is the picture it draws of how science operates. A chapter is devoted to "The Cancer Paradigm" which the authors consider the greatest conceptual barrier to recognizing the threat from hormone disruption. An "obsession with cancer" prevents scientists and regulators from considering other kinds of potential effects of substances.

Another recurring theme is our vast ignorance about the consequences of chemicals and other technologies due not only to scientific orthodoxy but to businesses' hoarding of knowledge under the pretext of "trade secrets." One wishes the authors had asked what is the source of this perversion of science—which is supposed to be the search for truth—into an orthodoxy resistant to new evidence and new ideas?

The transformation of the world by 20th century technology is a "global experiment," the authors declare, "with humanity and all life on Earth as the unwitting subjects." The very fabric of post-World War II society is woven around synthetic chemicals. For example, plastic has penetrated "every corner of our lives," including food packaging, sometimes causing hormone disruption.

To redesign the products and processes of industrial production, distribution and other arenas of the whole

society is a daunting task. Yet *Our Stolen Future* sees it as a necessity.

Clearly the book is more than an expose. The authors insist that "the framing of a problem limits solutions more than a lack of ingenuity or technology." This point captures a basic problem so well that it describes the authors' own barrier. Their concern is with "the problems technology has created" and with human "hubris" in using it. Left out are social relations and the forces that drive technology in certain directions.

The authors liken modern industrial society to an aircraft hurtling through the dark without instruments. Given our ignorance, they ask, should we stop, slow down, or press ahead? But how can we answer without facing the deeper question: What is the social dynamic that keeps us in the dark yet at the same time forces us to press ahead ever faster?

Without uprooting the capitalist system, there is no escape from capital's relentless drive to accumulate, to which all else is subordinated. What Marx showed 130 years ago, that "Capital is reckless of the health and length of life of the laborer, unless under compulsion from society," extends to the disregard of all life.

Our Stolen Future concludes that "the time has come to shift the discussion to the global experiment itself," and to "begin a broad discussion" of "the unavoidable question of whether to stop manufacturing and releasing synthetic chemicals altogether." This is vital, yet at the same time the "global experiment" must not be conceived as independent of the social system of which it is an integral part.

The root of the problem can be found not in technology alone but in the totality of human relationships, activities and concepts. That is what needs to be transformed for technology to enhance and not erode human potential.

Editorial

Racist and sexist 'military-industrial' complex

Secret tapes released last month exposed calculated efforts by Texaco Inc. executives to limit the hiring and advancement of Black employees. At the same time, a new telephone hotline has been flooded with thousands of reports of sexual assaults on women in the Army and all other branches of the military.

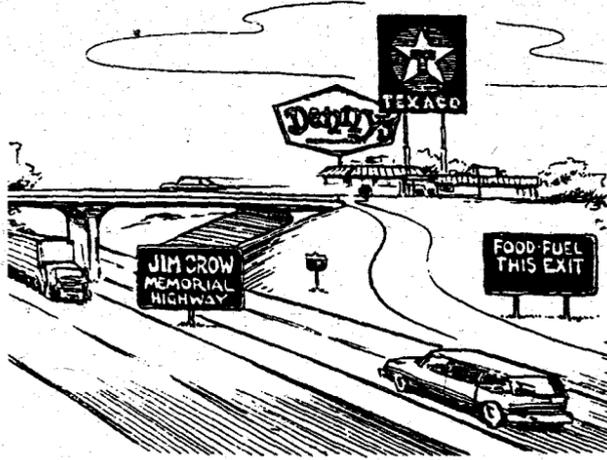
The Texaco and Army scandals exhumed long-standing practices of institutionalized prejudice, and each in its own way reveals the entrenched and virulent nature of discrimination pervading capitalism, well beyond boardrooms and barracks.

FROM TEXACO TO R.R. DONNELLEY

In the case of Texaco's secretly taped 1994 meeting, convened to respond to a discrimination case on behalf of 1,500 African-American employees at Texaco, executives referred to Blacks with racial slurs, mocked Kwanzaa and Jewish Hanukkah celebrations, and discussed destroying crucial documents on minority hiring. After the tapes became public, Texaco agreed to pay \$115 million to current minority employees and to spend some \$35 million on enhancing its employment policies for minorities.

Judging by the suits brought by Black employees at Shell Oil, Avis and other companies, they face similar though less well-documented racism which is returning to second-nature status in the U.S. Once-contrite executives now refuse to answer questions about minority hiring and the like, so complains Laura Washington whose *Chicago Reporter* had to drop its annual survey of local companies for lack of responses.

The Texaco revelation occurs at a time when California voters ended their state's affirmative action programs. This follows a string of court decisions curtailing legal remedy of discrimination in places where a pattern may exist, but proof of intent to discriminate does not.



The Texaco tapes were just that proof, and the settlement seems to institute an affirmative action program.

If proof of discrimination doesn't arise, companies have found that a track record of supposedly good intentions like sensitivity and diversity programs can substitute for real hiring and advancement of women and minorities. The Texaco tapes convey executives derisively talking about "black jelly beans," an analogy borrowed from diversity training sessions. The settlement at Texaco may turn out to be more "good intentions."

The blue-collar shade of racial and age discrimination came out when Black workers sued mega-publisher R.R. Donnelley and Sons in November. "I worked for Donnelley for 19 years and never was more than a temporary," one man bitterly explained as he and others picketed corporate headquarters in Chicago on Dec. 2.

"You work for 23 months and 29 days and then they lay you off. They'll hire you back as a temporary again in

a month. I lost years of service time and couldn't get vacation benefits or pension benefits. I worked all over, in the bindery, shipping, you name it and to say they worked the temporaries hard is an understatement." White workers on the other hand regularly cleared the two-and-a-half-year period for achieving job security and vesting in company benefits.

WOMEN'S FIGHT AGAINST THE ARMY

The current Army scandal broke when female recruits came forward with complaints of sexual assault and harassment at the Aberdeen Proving Ground near Baltimore, a training center for technical jobs in the Army. Nineteen men of superior rank to the women under them have been charged with those offenses as well as with "sexual misbehavior." This scandal exposed others at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri, Fort Jackson in South Carolina, and Lackland Air Force Base in Texas.

Some women had to overcome death threats to expose their superiors in the current scandal. Their charges also helped expose the institutional protection afforded to rapists and harassers in the past. In some instances, women who complained were silenced and even expelled from the military, accused of being lesbians under Clinton's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.

The reports out of Aberdeen and other facilities show that the Navy's Tailhook cover-up was no aberration—no more so than conditions at Mitsubishi's Normal, Ill., auto plant where current and former women employees recently sued the company for fostering sexual harassment. Each situation likewise shows the sexist greeting women have received in formerly male worlds they have entered out of necessity.

The present scandals involve working-class youth forced into the military in search of economic security. Under the rubric of an "all-volunteer Army," a poverty draft since 1973 has ensured a successful reservoir of enlistments when draft resistance and military revolts during the Vietnam War made conscription unviable.

Extending the poverty draft to women widened the base of recruitment. But while official promises of training, advancement, and even personal growth have drawn masses of young women into the armed forces, they have found no haven from subservience and domination. In a 1991 survey, fully 10% of women in the armed services reported that they had been raped and 55% reported they have been harassed sexually.

The Texaco and Army incidents strike a nerve so deep that they lend new meaning to "military-industrial complex." Texaco Chairman Peter I. Bijur admits the 1994 tapes showed just the tip of the iceberg, and military planners wring their hands over what they see as an unavoidable tension between modernization versus discipline with women participating in the services.

Such supposedly honest insights won't relieve the system of its authoritarian prerogatives translated into racism and sexism which a system in crisis breeds for its survival. Those women and men, soldiers and workers fed up with the military-industrial racist and sexist complex can point in a different direction.

VOICES FROM WITHIN THE PRISON WALLS

Support George Skatzes!

In 1993 there occurred an 11-day uprising at the Lucasville penitentiary in Lucasville, Ohio, over dehumanizing conditions during which two inmate informants and one guard lost their lives. George Skatzes acted as a spokesman for the prisoners at considerable risk to his own life in order to effect a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

His efforts saved the lives of prisoners and guards alike. As a result of his efforts, he has been sentenced to death. He refused to inform on the actual perpetrators of the deaths just to "get a lighter sentence." However, the actual perpetrators of the deeds (two known snitches) lied to prosecutors to ensure lighter sentences for themselves. They stated that Skatzes had ordered the murders.

Former guard hostage Jeffery Ratcliff asked that jurors spare George's life and stated under oath that George protected two guards and released one badly injured guard to receive medical treatment. He also said he would not be alive today were it not for George.

Skatzes was given a death sentence for daring to stand up against the tyranny of the state. He languishes on death row awaiting execution while the states' two inmate snitches reside in safety as a result of their treachery and collusion with the authorities.

Please help to do justice to this man who is a victim of this injustice system. His sister has helped form a defense committee for her brother. Anyone interested in making a financial contribution or organizing support should write to her:

Mrs. Jackie Bowers
P.O. Box 1591
Marion, OH 43301-1591

—Prisoner
Huntsville, Texas

'Factories with fences'

Currently it costs more to imprison a person for one year than to send him or her to Harvard University. While this country faces an economic crisis and has slashed basic social services for Third World and poor people, it has poured billions of dollars into the criminal justice system.

Ominously, new plans such as prison-for-profit options are being developed. Using the slogan "Factories with fences," Warren Burger, former U.S. Supreme Court justice, has publicly called for the dismantling of present rules governing prisoner-made goods and advocates the privatization of prisons and making prisons into profit-generating enterprises.

In the coming years we may see textile plants, foundries, and even high-tech industries springing forth in and around prisons. These industries will super-exploit prisoners as laborers and yield super-profits. Already the prison system contracts out prison labor to the state, military, and private industry at near-slave wages. (Federal prisoner wages begin at 22 cents per hour.) Along the way, in 1984, after 14 years of Congressional wrangling, the Sentencing Reform Act was passed to institute longer terms and stricter parole.

After all of this they wonder about the changes in prisoners who are marching out of those slave camps with

the slogan "All power to the people" and acting like Stokely Carmichael, Bobby Seale, Huey Newton, Angela Davis and others whose political beliefs put American civilization on trial.

Here in Illinois a Black representative from the 26th District of the state of Illinois, Peggy Smith Martin, openly stated that Illinois prisons are festering with racism. Resident development and rehabilitation in the true sense of the words were the exception. Extreme disciplinary action was found to be more emphasized than preparation for return to the outside community.

Also a former Black warden of the Joliet old prison, Mr. Charles A. Felton, told the *Chicago Sun-Times*: "The actual truth about the Illinois prison system is that it tends to reward incompetence and brutality and stifles creativity and humaneness."

COLOR OF THE LAW

Here in Menard they are systemically killing the prisoner's mind and body, and all is done under the color of the law. We have been on lockdown for over four months and after the shakedown here, I found my cell clean of most of my personal property—fan, radio, television, a carpet, a back brace, cassette tapes, an old stamp photo book. I do not see how any of those things are threatening to the prison population or staff. They even took the chairs so that now we have to sit on our beds.

I'm a veteran and a part of the incarcerated veterans program we have here—or I should say had here because they took my veteran's t-shirt and P.O.W. pin, and I'm told that I'll have to mail them to my family because these things do not go along with the program they have in mind: crime and punishment.

The new law cries for crime and punishment, but I do not see what that has to do with me and other prisoners who have done 25 years or more and received our time under the "old" law of "rehabilitation." I was not convicted under this new law of hate, crime and punishment, but I'm being treated as such.

The Illinois Supreme Court overturned a similar law in 1990, saying it violated *ex post facto* laws to deny a prisoner a hearing on an annual basis. I believe that denying over and over again a parole for a crime that happened 30 years ago is or really should be unconstitutional. When the prisoner is no longer the criminal but becomes the victim of a crime, it does not help him change his lifestyle or his way of thinking. It can only make him become like that which is attacking him, a person of hate and a crime being done under the color of the law.

'INTERCOMMUNICATION BETWEEN AGES'

The Clinton and Gore administration is asking for more policemen, an open war on crime, safe streets and new laws for crime control. All of the above is just like the Reagan-Bush administration; crime in the streets and prisoners are used to put fear into people, and the really needed programs are never worked on. Crime is a problem but it's not the real problem, as one really should be worried about those rulers of the world who are now leading us to a nuclear holocaust.

As the author of a very beautiful book I'm reading stated, "Death here becomes a beacon to the future. The intercommunication between the ages will continue, until a new, liberated world is born." Let's have this kind of debate in the spring of 1997.

—Prisoner
Menard, Illinois

Threat of Netanyahu

The irresponsible decision taken by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to open the tunnel beneath the Al-Aqsa Mosque was a step towards declaring war on the Palestinians and to destroying the Oslo Accords.

For the last three years, the Israeli government has been continuously encircling Jerusalem. The Mayor of Jerusalem, the fanatical right-winger Ehud Olmert, has ceased issuing any building licenses for new houses while at the same time he continues to demolish Arab houses, to pave roads to the Gush Etzion settlement and to continue with other moves to Judaize Jerusalem and eradicate its Arab identity.

At the international level too, Netanyahu has succeeded in increasing political tension, in particular with the Islamic and Arab world. He has closed the door of negotiation with Syria and Lebanon, and introduced a new element of strain in Israeli relations with Jordan and Egypt. He has driven the area to a state of dangerous volatility which not only threatens the future of its population, Israelis included, but seems destined to lead to a final and all-engulfing war.

Netanyahu is a threat to both Arabs and Jews, a past master in political deception and underhanded dealings. Anyone who reads his book *A Place under the Sun* will immediately discover the real, discriminatory face of Netanyahu. Throughout the book's 400 pages he repeatedly emphasizes his hatred for the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular. In his eyes, the PLO will never be anything more than a terrorist organization. It will never gain his recognition. Further, he does not disguise his objection to the national rights of the Palestinians, especially the right of self-determination.

The bloody confrontations have reawakened the peace camp in Israel which has constantly been demanding that the Israeli government stop its criminal policies which endanger the whole peace process.

I address these remarks to my Palestinian brothers and sisters, emphasizing that we, the Israeli supporters of peace, stand by you to work hand in hand in this struggle to save the peace process. Netanyahu has declared war upon you and we in turn have declared war upon him. Our aim will not be fulfilled until Netanyahu has resigned for the sake of peace between both our peoples. Victory will undoubtedly be ours.

—Latif Dori
Latif Dori is the head of the Committee for Israeli-Palestinian Dialogue, founded by Israelis of Eastern Origin.

Youth

African youth at mercy of structural adjustment

by Kevin Michaels

The African revolutions of the post-war decades re-drew the map of the world. As we approach the end of the twentieth century though, the reality is that Africa is now falling off that map. International capital will not invest there and the governments of the industrialized lands, as the recent events in Zaire show, are increasingly willing to cast a blind eye on the crises that, because of their utter enormity, manage to penetrate the blanket of media obscurity which lays over the continent. Africa's people are under the duress of a system unconcerned with human need and, without question, African children bear the brunt of the suffering.

It is almost gratuitous to list the horrors the children of Africa are confronted with. They are press ganged into the militias of armed conflicts, they face malnutrition, they are forced to labor in sweatshops, or, in an effort to gain some control over their lives, they take to city streets to eke out a tenuous existence one step ahead of both the police and those who would victimize them. Perhaps most ominously for the future, the number of African children who have lost one or both parents to AIDS, called the "The Grandmother's Disease" because extended family members are forced to provide care for those orphaned, is approaching two million.

To contend that the governments of Africa and the world's network of donor agencies are simply ignoring the continent's conditions would be wrong. The question is how they view the context of the problem. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) held a conference in Dakar, Senegal in November of 1992 devoted entirely to children's issues. OAU members, UNICEF and 18 donor countries signed on to a document called the "Consensus of Dakar," a plan to channel aid to African countries to strengthen domestic budgets for children. At the 1995 UN women's conference in Beijing as well, children's issues were on the agenda. Yet the agendas of Dakar and Beijing must be viewed in the light of objective conditions, specifically the economic discipline imposed by capitalism.

Since the world economic crisis of the early seventies, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have assumed leading roles in keeping the poor nations



Conflicts displace many African youth

of the world in line with the dictates of the rulers of the rich ones. The primary means by which this has been accomplished is the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP), a comprehensive list of economic demands a country must adhere to in order to receive aid. Typical strictures include drastic reductions in government spending, the introduction of high interest rates and policies to discourage independent labor activity. The net effect of the SAP is, without exception, to inflate prices while driving down wages, in short, to make workers and peasants pay the cost of forcing the economy of their country into the confines of the plan of international capital. Ghana, Zambia and Zimbabwe are just three African countries where textbook SAPs have been implemented.

Despite what development agencies, Scandinavian donor countries and individuals concerned about the people of Africa might wish for, no amount of aid offered within the context of international capital's limitations will assist Africa in overcoming the ravages of colonialism and the yoke that persisting neocolonial relations represent. Even South Africa's historic transition to majority rule has left little more than unfulfilled expectations of betterment in its wake.

What is needed in this era of retrogression is a return to the breadth and boldness of those revolutions which brought Africa to the world's attention, yet a return which will go beyond the limitations, both internal and external, that they encountered. Youth will no doubt be at the forefront of this return.

In Senegal for instance, a country in which 40% of children between the ages of 10 and 14 labor as domestics, porters and other types of workers, the child laborers of Dakar have formed their own independent organization. Among other demands, the young workers insist that they have the right to play, rest, read and write. They have also raised funds to pay for the medical bills

of a young domestic worker who was thrown off the fourth story of a building by her boss, who accused her of stealing.

The structural adjustment that world capital demands of Africa is a life and death question for humanity. The revolutionary reconstruction of Africa, beginning with its youth, is the only thing that will bring it back onto the map. Recent events have shown that change for the continent may come sooner than later and, as revolutionaries aware of the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa, our responsibility is to solidarize with those who want to bring about a truly human future.

Ogoni struggle continues

San Jose, Cal.—While the Nigerian capitalist generals think they have silenced Ken Saro-Wiwa by brutally murdering him, the organization and the movement of which he was a part live on. Noble Obani-Nwibari, vice-president of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, his voice powerful with rage and sadness, proclaimed, "I can die a righteous man, because I have stood up and told the multinational Shell Oil Co., your actions are inimical to my people."

Before a rapt audience of students and faculty at San Jose State University on Nov. 14, Obani-Nwibari detailed the 38-year history of exploitation, "agony and genocide" that the "unfortunate" discovery of oil brought to Ogoniland. He noted that as a direct result of scientists, technology, and capitalist wealth, the life expectancy of the Ogoni has plummeted, demonstrating once again Marx's saying that "to have one basis for science, and another for life, is a priori a lie."

Most inspiring were his accounts of how the Ogoni have fought back, demanding self-determination and a clean environment as the basis for all other freedoms. Historically, the Ogoni resistance sparked other Nigerian peoples and freedom movements.

The dialectic of multiethnicity, in both its particularity and universality, was heard in the voice of the martyr Ken Saro-Wiwa, from a letter smuggled out of his prison cell in January of 1995. He told his people that together "we have seen tomorrow, and there is an Ogoni star in the sky."

Obani-Nwibari, while demanding continuation of the boycott of Shell, also encouraged the youth of the world to be a "generation of action and a generation to express your mind."

—Jennifer Pen

Remember Eric Smith

On April 9, 1996, while his family watched in horror, Eric Smith was killed by Forest View, Ill., police. He was severely beaten and shot six times. Eric's family is taking legal action against the Village of Forest View, the Forest View Police Department and the officers who killed him. To reach beyond the racist police lies and media stereotypes, Eric's mother, Wanda Hogue, tells about the reality of his life and death.

As the mother of a young, Black deaf man beaten and murdered by police officers, I have one simple question. Why?

My son faced one of the most unfair hardships in life, losing his hearing at 15 months from meningitis. To not be able to hear or talk had to have been overwhelmingly frustrating. Just place yourself in his shoes for a moment. Imagine that you are unable to communicate with people except with sign language.

In spite of it all, he had the determination to succeed in life. He became very athletic, a football player. He was a championship wrestler. He traveled overseas to Bulgaria to take part in the Special Olympics. He was chosen out of a select group of students to attend Space Camp while attending Illinois School For The Deaf. He graduated with many honors and awards. A lot of the students looked up to him, calling him the gentle giant. He attended Gallaudet University in Washington D.C.

He had a very loving family. He was a big guy with a big heart. He never tried to throw his weight around. In fact, he was just the opposite; a big baby. Sensitive and loving. I will never understand why he ended up in such a horrible state.

I feel in my heart that God is going to bring something good out of this terrible tragedy. My son did not deserve what happened to him. No human being deserves this kind of treatment. He had never committed a crime in his life; yet his size, race and handicap have cost him his life. This and the police officers' brutal, ruthless and unprofessional nature. I'm starting to wonder who the real criminals are.

In Washington, D.C., in October of 1995, my son was reporting a burglary to police. Mistaken as a suspect in a crime that took place close to where he was standing, he was beaten viciously by nine police officers. They used batons, kicked and maced him and gave him a black eye. His wrist bone was broken. He was hit with a flashlight on his head, requiring six stitches. He had handcuff prints embedded in his wrists. His eye was swollen shut. It destroyed him mentally. Why? No actions have been taken against these officers.

On April 9 of this year he was on his way home from the counseling that was helping him get through all this. We had stopped alongside the highway so that I could sign and communicate with him. The officers jumped to a conclusion again. He was beaten and killed by Forest View police officers. The allegations and accusations made against my son are outrageous. So far, no one has been held responsible for this crime either. No one wants to take the blame.

I feel that this is a wake-up call. Something serious needs to be done to stop this police brutality. I hope that it doesn't take the worst to get the attention of the right people to finally take a stand to stop this violence.

Mario Savio's revolutionary generation

When the hundreds of students at the Berkeley campus of the University of California, who gathered on Nov. 6 to protest the passage of Proposition 209, learned of Mario Savio's death from a sudden heart attack that very day at the early age of 53, they vowed to continue their struggle in his name and invoked the legacy of the Free Speech Movement.

For Mario Savio's name is inextricably bound to the historic Free Speech Movement (FSM) that erupted at the end of 1964 out of the dialectic set in motion by the freedom struggles of the Black youth in the South at the beginning of that decade, when a whole new generation of revolutionaries was born.

Mario exemplified that generation as one of the students from Berkeley who returned from Mississippi where they had gone to help the Black youth in their freedom struggles only to learn that they had to fight for freedom in the North as well, when they were forbidden by the University to collect funds for the struggles in the South.

IT WAS WHEN THE POLICE attempted to arrest a member of the Congress of Racial Equality for defying that order that students spontaneously surrounded the police car and a normally quiet philosophy student, Mario Savio, took off his shoes to jump on its roof and address them, that he suddenly found himself a leader. "I don't know what made me get up and give that first speech," he said later. "What was it Kierkegaard said about free acts? They're the ones that, looking back, you realize you couldn't help doing."

In the turbulent weeks that followed, his passionate speeches from the steps of Sproul Hall engaged thousands in open discussions of where the movement was going. It was Mario who most clearly articulated in this process that the unique achievement of the FSM was raising the theory of alienation from an academic question to one that questioned the whole society. As he put it:

"America may be the most poverty-stricken country in the world. Not materially. But intellectually it is bankrupt. And morally it's poverty-stricken. But in such a way that it's not clear to you that you're poor. It's very hard to know you're poor if you're eating well..."

"Students are excited about political ideas. They're not yet inured to the apolitical society they're going to enter. But being interested in ideas means you have no use in American society...unless they are ideas which are useful to the military-industrial complex..."

"Factories are run in authoritarian fashion, nonunion factories anyway—and that's the nearest parallel to the university."

The true legacy of the FSM—where the right to free speech became a discussion about the alienation in society as a whole—is that the dialectic of revolt became inseparable from the dialectic of ideas.

WHILE MARIO'S INTERVIEWS and spontaneous speeches were widely transcribed, and reported in a diverse number of journals, the News and Letters pamphlet *The Free Speech Movement and the Negro Revolution* was the rare exception to his consistent reluctance to write the story of the FSM. His agreement to become a co-author meant that the story of the FSM was placed in an integral context together with the story of the Black Revolt on the one hand, and Raya Dunayevskaya's philosophic analysis on the other.

In the years after the FSM, Mario dropped out of Berkeley and earned degrees in physics from San Francisco State. He raised a family and earned his living in recent years teaching math and philosophy courses at Sonoma State. In those years, his political activity took him to many different dimensions, whether that be labor marches, women's struggles, or most recently his activities in opposition to Proposition 209.

As activist and philosopher, his life may well be said to have reached for what the philosopher Hegel called an "Individualism which lets nothing interfere with its Universalism, i.e., freedom." That legacy remains the challenge for today's revolutionaries.

History in the making of youth mobilized for freedom North and South in 1964

The Free Speech Movement and the Negro Revolution



\$5...Use literature order on page 7.

INCLUDES

Mario Savio
BERKELEY SUMMER

Eugene Walker
MISSISSIPPI
FREEDOM SUMMER

Robert Moses
EDUCATION IN
THE SOUTH

Raya Dunayevskaya
THE THEORY OF
ALIENATION:
MARX'S DEBT TO
HEGEL

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

Bill Clinton, so eager to lecture small countries about democracy, avoided any such talk at the 18-member Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting in November in the Philippines. Clinton had friendly chats with Indonesian dictator Suharto who roomed down the hall from him.

Also, for the first time since the 1989 Beijing massacre, at APEC the U.S. government reached an agreement to exchange state visits with China's President Jiang Zemin, something even the Bush administration refused to do. The business of APEC was of course business, especially that of opening markets to U.S. exports and, most of all, securing a continuing supply of low-priced Asian labor for the multinational corporations.

Only weeks before APEC, China's courts handed down an incredibly harsh 11-year sentence to 1989 student protest leader Wang Dan who, since his release from an earlier four-year term in 1993, had attempted to unify dissidents from 1989 with those from the 1970s. Wei Jingsheng, one of the older dissidents, is also serving a long sentence having met briefly with Wang Dan in 1994. While on Dec. 9, Clinton welcomed China's Defense Minister Gen. Chi Haotian who oversaw the blood-bath in Tiananmen Square in 1989.

Another leading dissident, Wang Xizhe, who published a Marxist critique of the Maoist system in 1973 and who has spent 16 years in Chinese prisons, managed to escape into exile. He did so just as the government was getting ready to arrest him again, this time for having

Afghanistan's Taliban

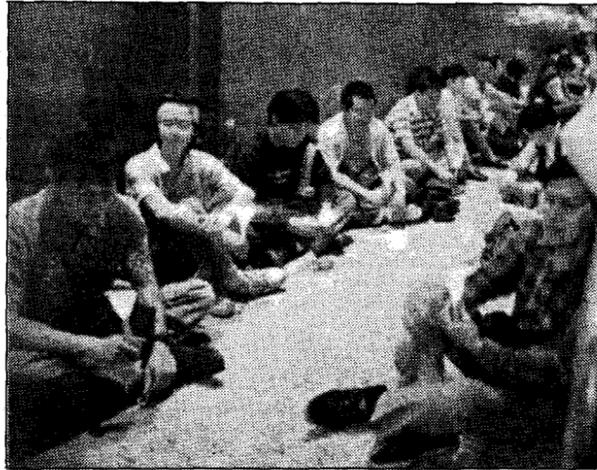
The Taliban movement has now held Kabul, Afghanistan's capital, for two months and much of the country for a year or longer. As fanatical Islamic fundamentalists, they have gone further than even the Iranian mullahs or Saudi kings in setting up a reactionary theocracy. They have outlawed even rival interpretations of Islam and have banned the following: women's education, women working outside the home, women going out without a male guardian, men without beards and almost all forms of music, television and films.

Armed and trained by longtime U.S. ally Pakistan, the Taliban are opposed by India, Russia and Iran. The latter countries back the forces of Abdul Rashid Doestam, a former Communist general whose base of support is the Uzbek minority group, and those of Ahmad Shah Massoud, a somewhat more moderate fundamentalist whose forces, drawn mainly from the Tajik minority, had controlled Kabul for the last few years. The Taliban are based among the dominant Pashtun ethnic group. In recent weeks, the Taliban have suffered reversals, but they still control Kabul.

In their first days in Kabul, the Taliban engaged in an orgy of brutality. They summarily executed Najibullah, the former Communist ruler, and displayed his visibly mutilated body. Women whose veils showed a bit of skin were severely beaten. During those first days, the U.S. government made some clear gestures of support to the Taliban before backing away when this came under criticism. Another factor to watch is whether the collapse of the Benazir Bhutto government in Pakistan will have any effect on the Taliban.

signed an appeal for the self-determination of Tibet.

While the situation in Tibet has received world attention, and rightly so, apparently serious unrest this year among the heavily Muslim population of northwest China has received less coverage. This region, which contains China's nuclear test sites, borders the newly independent Central Asian countries of the former Soviet Union with which it shares longstanding cultural links. While Chinese authorities mention only "banditry," an exile "Unified National Revolutionary Front" based in Almaty, Kazakhstan, reports the arrest of thousands of anti-Beijing activists in the northwest over the past six months.



Protesters against the imprisonment of Chinese dissident Wang Dan sat in at the Chinese embassy in Hong Kong.

French Guyana student unrest

In October and November, a series of student demonstrations, four nights of street battles with police and a general strike organized by the pro-independence Union of Guyanese Workers, forced the French government to agree to demands by high school students to release needed funds for education.

The deplorable conditions of the schools, in what is one of South America's last remaining European colonies, was underscored by the modesty of the students' demands which included adding a few hours of computer science courses and air conditioning for the history and natural science classrooms.

An account in a local Trotskyist paper, *Combat Ouvrier*, reprinted in the Paris Trotskyist paper *Lutte Ouvriere* (Nov. 22, 1996), underlined the deeper causes which included "the general degradation of the country in a climate which still stinks of colonialism. An unemployment level of 25% plunges the youth into anxiety about their future.

"The government tries to separate the high school students from other youth who looted and set fires. This is a classic tactic. But, students or not, those who participated in looting and setting fires have, above all, allowed a type of anger to explode for which the French government and the colonial administration are solely responsible."

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* (1958); *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) 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 recreation 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.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. 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.

China: totalitarian imperial ambitions

Another border zone that needs watching is that between China and India. Jiang Zemin visited India right after APEC, the first time a modern Chinese head of state has done so. While the public talk was all about friendship and overcoming the "border disputes" that led to a Chinese invasion in 1962, many Indians outside the government expressed worry about China's designs along their 2,500-mile border.

These skeptics pointed to China's growing and nuclearly armed military and to the widening economic disparity between the two countries. Before the collapse of Communism, Chinese ambitions in the Indian subcontinent were checked by Russia, but today Russia is considerably weakened.

By now China is producing nearly half of the world's shoes. According to sociologist Anita Chan, who was able to visit shoe factories in Dongguan, an industrial zone near Hong Kong, Taiwanese factory owners have imposed military-style discipline there, part of Taiwanese capitalists' \$20-billion investment on the mainland.

At the Yu Yuan factory, workers are forced to march around like soldiers, even at meal times when they sit down and commence eating to a strict set of commands and bells. Pay is 25¢ per hour with shifts at busy times running as long as 16 hours a day, seven days a week.

Unsurprisingly, Chan notes, one sign of resistance is that "the factory's turnover rate is a high 7% a month," even though quitting means losing two weeks pay (*Manchester Guardian Weekly*, Nov 17, 1996). Some factories actually use physical coercion to keep workers from quitting. Taiwanese investors say that if their labor costs become too "high" they can set up in Vietnam instead.

French truckers win strike

On Nov. 29 the French government and trucking companies caved in after a 12-day truck drivers strike and blockade of highways tied up much of the French and even the Western European economy. The heartbeat of the movement was in northern France, where highway blockades near Caen and other cities effectively shut down road traffic between England and the continent.

Despite cold nights spent sleeping in the cabs of their trucks, the drivers managed to outlast both the conservative government and the owners who came under severe pressure once oil deliveries were cut off and as auto factories began layoffs.

So deep has the discontent with Prime Minister Alain Juppe's austerity moves become that, instead of anger, strikers often received reactions like the following from a woman caught in a huge traffic jam in Caen: "Juppe has so antagonized people that we can understand [the drivers], even if they really complicate our lives" (*Le Monde*, Nov. 11, 1996). In opinion polls, fully 74% of the public expressed support for the strikers, a pattern which has held for the past year of labor struggles.

One key issue in the strike was the workers' demand to lower the retirement age from 60 to 55 after 25 years of service, something the government initially said it could never agree to. Workers also pressed successfully for changes in working conditions such as guaranteed pay for waiting time and nights away from home, and better provisions for sick pay, winning all of these from employers whose first offer was nothing except an insulting 1% raise. The test now is whether this agreement can be enforced since trucking employers have a history of renegeing on contracts. Such a clear-cut labor victory is quite rare in today's retrogressive climate, one in which racism and anti-labor moves are all too common.

Protests in Serbia

Mass opposition demonstrations which began late last October continue to rock the regime of Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic. Tens of thousands have taken to the streets in the capital, Belgrade, in the cities of Nis and Bor, and in other smaller towns. Students and professors have occupied buildings in all the major universities. Protesters are now demanding that Milosevic leave office.

The demonstrations were first organized and led by the political coalition Zajedno (Together) which opposed Milosevic in recent federal parliament and local municipal elections, winning a victory in a majority of the local elections. Zajedno has a strong right-wing nationalist and even in some sectors a neo-fascist base, although the demonstrations have also drawn in other students, independent intellectuals, retired workers who do not necessarily identify with Zajedno's reactionary politics.

There is mass opposition to the economic ruin brought on by Milosevic's genocidal war against Bosnia, but no sign yet of opposition to the premise of that war—or solidarity with the Bosnian people and their struggle for a multiethnic society.

Workers voted against Milosevic's party in many local elections in order to rid themselves of corrupt local officials and in Nis have joined in the daily protests. The decision of other workers on whether or not to strike, especially the miners, could be decisive in days to come.

Milosevic has organized and mounted a propaganda campaign against the opposition. As we go to press, he has labeled all protesters "criminals," and for several days shut down the last independent mass media outlet, Radio B-92, which long ago denounced Milosevic's genocidal war against Bosnia and has reported the mass protests in minute-to-minute coverage. These moves will not stop the protests but may be a prelude to an army-police repression. The situation remains open.