The reason Indian women are evident in their criticisms of the government’s response to its hastily called JS Verma Committee’s report that recommended changes to India’s anti-rape laws. While Indian women’s liberation groups were pleased that the new laws would criminalize voyeurism, stalking, disrobing women and acid attacks, they vigorously oppose the death penalty as punishment for rape where the woman dies or is seriously injured. Introducing the death penalty is rightly seen as a retrogressive move.

Furthermore, the government’s own commission proposed recognizing marital rape and holding commanders accountable for rapes by their subordinates in the armed forces. These recommendations...

continued on p. 10

**RALLY PARTICIPANTS SPEAK**

*I was really disappointed in Obama’s remarks about fracking, which we pretend is “natural” gas. I’m a member of CYCC, a coalition of students from around the country. We went to a protest at Roosevelt University. At BU we have an organization called Rise, based on building student activist networks. Climate change is connected to economic rights issues, immigration rights issues, anti-poverty issues. Our main goal is to mobilize youth because we really only have a few more years to take serious climate action.*

—*Dylan

Today we fight for the ultimate goal for rights to clean air, water, and existence. Pilsen Environmental Rights and Reform Organization fought for over ten years on a campaign to close the Fisk coal-fired power plant. With lots of grassroots organizations and widespread partnerships, we won. This is a huge victory. But the two coal plants of Illinois are only representatives of the environmental devastation we see all over the world. We can change the world for the better.*

—*Megan

**Chicagoans rally on Forward on Climate**

Chicago—Hey! Obama! We don’t want your climate drama!* we chanted at the Forward on Climate rally here on Feb. 17. There were at least 20 rallies that day, with 40,000 people in Washington, D.C. Most of the 400 here were college students brought out by Chicago Youth Climate Coalition (CYCC).

Foremost was stopping the Keystone XL pipeline. If approved by President Obama, it would carry tar sands oil from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, greatly adding to the amount of carbon emitted into the atmosphere. Speakers were also warned of the dangers of fracking for natural gas, and told of campaigns by students at several Chicago colleges to make their schools divest from oil, coal, and gas companies.

These rallies were preceded by civil disobedience on Feb. 13, when 48 people were arrested for handcuffing themselves to the White House fence.

**NO! TO TAR SANDS MINING**

A key demand was for Obama to deny a permit to the tar sands pipeline. Many protesters were disturbed by the ambivalence of Obama’s State of the Union address, noted for his ringing words:

“For the sake of our children and our future, we must do more to combat climate change...”

But not only did his specific proposals amount to far less than what is needed to steer the world away from catastrophic warming, he even seemed to be in the same speech about increasing fossil fuel production, which drives climate change. He promised, “My administration will keep cutting red tape and speeding up new oil and gas permits.” And of course he advocated a “market-based solution,” as if capitalism is not a fundamental part of the problem.

—*Franklin Dmitryev

*Rally participants spoke...*
Women’s struggle for freedom has continued to develop into a worldwide movement with revolutionary content (see page 1). Unfortunately, much of the Left seems preoccupied with reducing the women’s struggle to slogans. A recent example is Sharon Smith’s essay, “Marxism, feminism and women’s liberation” (http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/BF02720861), which, like her earlier International Socialist Organization (ISO) (USA), has to at last and at least give lip service to an undeniable fact: women’s liberation has changed the world.

**Past time to stop rape in South Africa**

Grahamstown, South Africa — Thubelihle Qobeka was gang-raped in the early hours of Jan. 20 at the corner of New Town and E Street in Grahamstown. She was 30 years old and the only one surviving in her family. Both her parents died when she was growing up, leaving her to look after her younger brother. She was savagely beaten during the rape, suffered permanent brain damage and eventually died from the beating. Thubelihle was an ambitious family member and the Unemployed People’s Movement (UPM) held a prayer meeting in her honor.

The men that were arrested were granted free bail. The rape case was then dismissed and struck off the record because of the extreme negligence of the incompetence and incoherence of the police. The only charge that is remaining is murder.

Witnesses have been subject to serious intimidation by one of the accused. One has been taken to a place of safety after being threatened with death by one of the accused. Another had to flee to Johannesburg. But the accused were given free bail!

We do not believe that the state is taking the rape of women seriously. Their lives are not held in the same regard as those of their male counterparts. Some of the accused are awaiting their trial at home, others to end this scourge.

*Yetti Morris*

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*Yetti Morris*
Bloomberg. The decision to order the drivers and matrons back to work in February came without any input from the strikers. There was no discussion within the union, just an announce- ment that the strike was over and that the driv- ers and matrons should return to work. But the question that many are asking is: ‘Is this the right move?’

Although the 8,800 members of Local 1181 stood strong and united, the same could not be said for other unions represent- ing school bus drivers. Teamsters local and another local with school bus drivers in its ranks both failed to honor the picket lines. That helped break the strike by easing up the pressure on Bloomberg.

When the strike began, the union strike fund was close to collapse, but New York’s other unions did not offer to help so that the workers could continue to stay on strike. This lack of solidarity hurt the striking drivers and matrons.

At the end, union leaders were told by a number of Democratic Party politicians that if the union ended the strike and if one of them topped mayor this year, they would ‘do’ right by the union. But, as one union member put it, ‘Since when do we trust politicians, of any party?’

Not surprisingly, some of the bus companies are already starting to fire strikers, not individ- ually but in large numbers. As one striker told me, although they lost the strike, it was important to fight, and that he was going to stay on the picket line.

All the ATU members can hope for now is that some Democratic Party politician will stand up for union rights if he or she is elected. A dubious proposi- tion. Some politicians were nowhere to be seen during the strike, except at the end when they helped broker the settlement.

---Michael Gibert

New York City—Over a month ago, 8,800 school bus drivers, mechanics, and matrons—members of Local 1181 of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) who are responsible for transporting New York’s chil- dren—went out on strike for the first time since 1979. This came after billionaire Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced his intention to eliminate the ‘Employee Protection Provision’ (EPP) of the union’s contract.

For the past two years, Bloomberg sought to shred the EPP—pro- vides a measure of job security for workers by requir- ing private bus companies charged with transporting school children to appeal to shareholders. Bloomberg wanted to liquidate the drivers’ seniority. Veteran drivers have been getting up against the :children’s schedules, and the drivers have been standing firm, up against the political pressure.

The strikers kept up the picket lines through a cold New York winter, defying rain, snow, and continued from p. 1

attention. Brill right says Obama’s Affordable Care Act does not address the most obvious way to cut costs, which is the life expectancy of seniors. The most cost effective because, as a massive purchaser of healthcare, it uses its clout to keep prices down. The Affordable Care Act was another attempt by insurance purchasers to sidestep insurance-industry gouging.

WHO LIVES OR DIES

Wage increases and other efforts aim to curb runaway healthcare costs like the over-prescribing of state-of-the-art tests for people with Cadillac healthcare plans. But what about the more serious abuse: manslaughter through deliberate negligence?

A friend of mine I’ll call Tasha spent two weeks in an ICU at UC in Oakland after an accident. Only after her discharge (perhaps pre- maturely, due to staffing shortages) to a skilled nurs- ing home was Tasha’s condition, caused by a super-resistant germ now lurking in hospitals, which would kill her within 30 days.

Work, or little for New Hospital miss detecting the killer bug which killed Tasha? Negligence— institutional, not individual, because of staffing shortages. As an inner-city general hospital, funded by Medi-Cal and Medicare, having a des- titute patient population and a higher mortality and morbidity rate, Highland is severely under- staffed and unable to fully cope with its tren- dences.

This speed-up costs almost 100,000 lives each year in hospitals private and public across the nation. We who work in health care hospitals have to say: so many work conditions affect patient care. Literally hun- dreds of thousands of lives of workers and patients could be saved if only we would be heard.

In the past, failure to deliver proper healthcare was deemed wayward, an anomaly, an offense warranting discipline and shortage of staffing or other criti- cal resource was recognized as a problem. Now chronic staffing shortage occurs by design.

HOW TO PROFIT FROM NEGLECT

Administrators don’t call it neglect, just part of maintaining the financial health of the company. For- profit health care hospitals, mass marketed as ‘non-profit,’ have gobbled up financially troubled com- munity hospitals, then imposed severe cuts in patient services and laid off workers. In 2008,每股 Karl Marx had warned us about this brave new world when he described capital’s constant revo- lutionizing of work conditions to increase the marketable surplus-value of the assembly line causes injury to not only our bod- ies but to our minds.

Besides, the worker can perform cannot be achieved while the pull of capital’s dominant ideology traps one and all into the self-fulfilling dead-end thinking that ‘there is no alternative.’ This kind of self-identification inflects everyone in society, even on the shop floor. A cura is af- forded only when people who have to deliver that care recognize that they are not only working very long hours but are also working very long hours of life itself, thereby reclaiming our humanity.

At a Black Workers’ Journal

Read Charles Denby on:

The early UAW
With Dr. King and Rosa Parks in Montgomery
Stokely Carmichael in Lowndes County

On the 35th anniversary of
Indignant Heart:


meatcutters stand up

Queens, N.Y.—Trade Fair, a supermarket in Astoria, Queens, with a unionized meat department, is engaged in a scurrilous effort to break the union. But the union members at Trade Fair line every day, risking their lives to feed their families. Their pride is evident in the union buttons they wear on the job which say, in English and Spanish, ‘Standing Strong, Preparing to Strike.’ Trade Fair, in huge posters outside the store attacking the union, calls those displays of workers’ determination ‘disruptive’ and ‘conspiring to prevent the public from buying meat.’ For 11.3% of the work force, dropped union membership to the level it had been since 1938, when it was 11.2% of the work force, the states with the least number of union workers, as ers, police and firefighters as state budgets tightened. The states with the least number of union workers, as ers fell by 234,000 last year with deep cuts of teach- ers, police and firefighters as state budgets tightened. The states with the least number of union workers, as ers fell by 234,000 last year with deep cuts of teach- ers, police and firefighters as state budgets tightened. The same could not be said with every contract that the workers signed. The same politicians were nowhere to be seen during the strike, except at the end when they helped broker the settlement.

The reasons are many. Assaults on unions like right-to-work legislation in Indiana and Michigan and laws narrowing the right to represent workers in a union have had a devastating impact, as well as on the attitudes of workers toward their unions. Union membership last year fell by 13% in Wisconsin, by 10% in Illinois, and by 9% in Michigan. Huge demonstrations, rallies and protests by workers and their allies before anti-union legis- lation was passed prompted Sergio Garcia and other workers to go on strike. These workers were more than willing to do whatever was necessary to prevent the legislation, and they had mas- sive union public support. This successful revolutionary spirit was quashed by union and political leaders and the reactionary legislation passed, dealing crippling blows to workers.

Nationally, the number of government union work- ers fell by 234,000 last year with deep cuts of teach- ers, the military and firefighters as state budgets tightened. The states with the least number of union workers, as ers fell by 234,000 last year with deep cuts of teach- ers, police and firefighters as state budgets tightened. The states with the least number of union workers, as ers fell by 234,000 last year with deep cuts of teach- ers, police and firefighters as state budgets tightened. The states with the least number of union workers, as ers fell by 234,000 last year with deep cuts of teach- ers, police and firefighters as state budgets tightened. The same could not be said

Fair owner flips out on workers.

As a union spokesman says in the video, their treatment has been disgraceful, and they ask, ‘Is this the American dream?’ In response, Local 342 of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, which represents many grocery store workers in New York City, has filed to win a public interest hearing in front of the store, with volunteers from the union explaining the union side of the story to community residents.

Attacks on organizing

Detroit—The number of unionized workers in the U.S. last year dropped by 406,000 members, to 14.3 million workers, down 1.7% to 8.9% of the workforce,dropped union membership to the level it had been since 1938, when it was 11.2% of the work force, the states with the least number of union workers, as ers fell by 234,000 last year with deep cuts of teach- ers, police and firefighters as state budgets tightened. The states with the least number of union workers, as ers fell by 234,000 last year with deep cuts of teach- ers, police and firefighters as state budgets tightened. The same could not be said

With Dr. King and Rosa Parks in Montgomery

Stokely Carmichael in Lowndes County

and much, much more

See literature listing, page 7

Andy Phillips
The Black dimension as Liberation as revolutionary reason

Editor’s note: For Women’s History Month, we present excerpts from “An Overview by Way of Introduction” to Raya Dunayevskaya’s study, The Woman and the Myth, published in 1972.

Markia Stewart, Harriet Tubman, and Sojourner Truth

of the Revolution of 1848?”

The 1840s had been filled with revolutionary ideas as an active phase of history. In 1843 Mary Wollstonecraft Trum was the first to call for a Workers’ International for men and women, in her book, Union Overiue, she stressed the need to recognize the current necessity of giving to the women of the people an education, moral, intellectual and technical. [and to recognize in prin
cipal, the equality of right between men and women as being the sole means of establishing Human Unity.]

The very next year, typhoid fever deprived us of this exciting utopian revolutionary. In that same year, how
ever, 1844, Marx discovered a whole new continent of thought and of revolution, with his now-famous Hu
man Unions. It took a revolution—the Russian Revolution of No
tember 1917—to dig out these 1844 Manuscripts from the archives where they were kept. For a long time, archivists
had been shocked to see the recognitions were not just that they were great writings, but writings that discussed in so profound an idea of Freedom that it tran
scended both time and place, that is to say, the Germa
ny of the 1840s. The genius Marx could articulate such a philosophy of revolution, not because he was a proph
et, but because he dived so deeply into human relations that he came up with this concept of Man/Woman.

The infinite degradation in which man ex
ists for himself is expressed in this relation to the woman as the spoils and handmaiden of communal lust. For the secret of the relation-
related to the whole human existence.

And yet...and yet...missing from Marx’s com
prehensive analysis are plains of existence whatever to the Man/Woman relationship, which Marx made so central in the essay “Private Property and Communism.” That essay was reviewed by the Workers’ International but was left out of the title. What was involved in Marx’s opposition to private property was far more removed from a question of “property.” Rather, as we see it, more clear over and ever again, his opposition to private property was due to the fact that it “completely negates the personality of man.”

And to make absolutely sure that his readers did not find still other ways of either fragmenting or “col
lectivizing” the individual, Marx ended the essay with a warning that “communism, as such, is not the goal of human development, the form of human society.

Just as even a Herbert Marcuse missed hearing the crucial Man/Woman concept, so all too many Women’s Liberalists today do not perceive the Black dimen
sion as Reason in our age. Those who deny today that the idea of revolution and that existing Black dimen
sions were both crucial in establishing the first Woman’s Rights Convention not only have forgotten that today’s Women’s Liberation Movement likewise arose out of the Black dimension, but have failed entirely to grasp what is the root of theory, its true beginning. Take something as simple as a name”—that of Sojourner Truth—and compare it to what it was, in fact, as an accomplish
ment when we use, not our husbands’ names, but our “maiden” names. When Isabella became free and want
ed to throw off her slave name, she chose the name of Truth, for it follows to what degree
man to man is the
ship of man to man is the
federacy during the Civil War.

These historic facts of a Harriet Tubman or a So
journer Truth bring to mind the radicalization of the old Black woman as the spoils and handmaiden of communal lust. For the secret of the relation-pin
posed in population activity and in influence upon the early women’s rights struggle and the Civil War; thousands were involved. The ongoing process of Black women’s struggle in the
feminist dimension, its true beginning. Take something as simple as a name”—that of Sojourner Truth—and compare it to what it was, in fact, as an accomplish

1. Bert James Loewenberg and Ruth Bogin, eds., Rrose Luxemburg, Women’s Liberation, and Marx’s Philosophy of Revolution. The chapter serves as an introductory survey of what is to come in the book. The first section of the chapter is entitled “The Women’s Liberation Movement as Revolutionary Force and Reason.” All footnotes are from the original; some have been omitted for space consider
ations.

phasis added.


7. There have been several translations by now of the 1844 Manuscripts. The best known are those by Martin Milligan, Krzysztof Dydynski, Ela Erich Fromm, T. Bottomly, and Lowestau. I use the English version, however, of the first one that was published in English, as an appen
dix to my Marxism and Freedom (New York: Twyowe Pub., 1987). These essays are further discussed in chap. 9. Em
phasis in original.


For International Women’s Day and Women’s History Month, treat yourself to

Rosa Luxemburg, Women’s Liberation, and Marx’s Philosophy of Revolution

by Raya Dunayevskaya

For more information, see literature listing, p. 7
reached in 1867, after the Civil War, when even the most reverent women, like Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman, refused to collaborate with the women in their fight for suffrage on the grounds that this was a man’s war. To boot, the “Aba riots,” which took place in 1929, which entered Great Britain’s imperial history as the “Aba riots,” but which the Africans named “The Women’s War.” 11

This event, hidden from history, involved tens of thousands of Ibo women, who organized demonstrations in Calabar and Owerri provinces of modern-day Nigeria against both Brit- ish imperialism and their own African chiefs, whom they accused of carrying out the new British edict to tax women. These women, without any help from their own men, combined forces across tribal lines and be- gan their protests, called “making war,” or “sitting on a man.”

This was by no means an individual act, but a traditional Ibo way of expressing revolt; it involved mass action. The method used and the speeded time and place (in this case the hut of the Warrant Chiefs), dancing, and singing scurrilous songs that detailed the women’s grudges and washed the chiefs (including questioning their manhood) and banging on the men’s huts with the pestles they used for pounding yams. Traditionally, this man would go to the right and die until an apostle came and the man mended his ways. In the 1829 “Women’s War” it continued through November and December. This was serious enough, and British imperialism feared it sufficiently to forget that women had not prev- iously been fired on. This time they brought out the troops, murdering 50 women and wounding others. The women, however, had won their point, and the tax es were not imposed. It was clear that, though the event had women leaders—Bomis, Nwannaya, Njorgo—this grassroots leadership had emerged out of the collective act of female anger.

The greatest of all events were the March and No- vember 1917 Russian Revolutions. We saw in the last chapter that the women of Russia were very conscious of those revolutions and how totally she practiced the principles of proletarian revolution in her call for the revolution in Germany. After the revolution, negotiations in any detail the March Revolution, which was initiated by women. It was initiated, on International Women’s Day, 1917. Women leaders, Bolsheviks, Anarchists, Socialist-Revolutionaries. Those five days that topped the mighty empire demonstrate that the masses do not need its leadership, that is no matter how great. Rather, it is masses in motion....

Having viewed the relationship of Man/Woman as Marx’s concept, integral to a philosophy of revolution, as it appears in the Women’s Liberation Movement, as revolutionary, the United States, she calculates in different historic periods, we can see that it is not only a question of then and now—that is to say, of contrasting historic periods. Rather, it is as Marx defines it: “Time is space for human development.”

The 150th anniversary of the Civil War, and of the Emancipation Proclamation, is especially, for a lot of people talking about that history and race relations to- day. Steven Spielberg’s movie Lincoln is lose the cause than the effect of this surge up popular interest. Lincoln is very moving and beautifully made, with excellent acting and shrewd writing.

PRINCIPLES AND SLAVERY’S ABOLITION

In truth, it was the uncompromising, principled racism—a desire for social control—and the vol- utes and resistance of slaves and free Blacks on whose shoulders the movement stood—that made Civil War and the abolition movement possible. Eventually transformed Lincoln from a moderate politician into the instrument of emancipation.

Lincoln himself acknowledged this near the end of his life: “I have only been an instrument. The logic and moral power of [William Lloyd] Garrison and the anti- slave people of the country and the army have done all.”

That quotation is mentioned in this year’s docu- mentary “The Abolitionists” on PBS’s American Ex- periment. It goes on to note: “Lincoln would be bow- ing how decisive the Abolitionist movement was in the country’s history. Exploding the mainstream narrative of American history, which places Lincoln and the Abolitionists had a tremendous effect on U.S. politics and on attitudes in the North, while stirring up violent reactions in the South.”

WHERE ARE THE WOMEN?

Even this three-part documentary, however, has its limitations. While it takes up Angelina Grimke’s groundbreaking advocacy of women’s rights, it men- tion neither Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, nor the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention on women’s rights, which grew out of Abolitionism. Nothing is said of the new divide that arose within the movement after the 13th Amendment of 1865. In one version even Frank- lin Douglass opposed the call by women like Truth and Tubman to include women’s right to vote in the Consti- tution.

The full depth of the Abolitionists is best captured by Raya Dunayevskaya’s American Civilization on Tri- al. Forty-fifth Massachusetts Colored Regiment charg- ing Fort Wagner, South Carolina, July 18, 1863.

“Even this three-part documentary, however, has its limitations. While it takes up Angelina Grimke’s groundbreaking advocacy of women’s rights, it mentions neither Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, nor the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention on women’s rights, which grew out of Abolitionism. Nothing is said of the new divide that arose within the movement after the 13th Amendment of 1865. In one version even Franklin Douglass opposed the call by women like Truth and Tubman to include women’s right to vote in the Constitution.”

Readers: We want to hear from you! Email readers@newsandletters.org or write to us! See contact information, p. 9.
American Civilization on Trial (ACOT) is not "Black history." Rather, Black play such an enormous role in the U.S. that their history that is in ACOT is a history of America.

Octobertooid West

The movie Django Unchained could have won any Oscar except the NRA's position on the current gun control turmoil. It is a whole in motion. The Abolitionists acknowl-

ding that the only thing that can stop a bad day is a good day with a good guy gun. That formula may suit Tarantino's Spagh-
tetti Westerns, but a Black guy guns don't kill it. But it shortchanges the real history of the idea of freedom that was transformed into a mass struggle by the Abolitionists. I am glad PBS is finally paying some attention to

This SIDE of WARS

Chicago allows the murder of chil-
dren daily. The city leaders express sorrow, but they don't do anything com-

One Law for All


The public debate on sharia law is chang-
ing, as is evident at our speaking engagements.

The alliterative listing of dramatic events—"Stonewall"—in President Obama's in-

1960s and '70s? Is there any sce-
dario that one could imagine, wherein the rebellion of masses base Cath-
olics and lower clergy succeeds in un-

an, 15,000. We apologize for this

sacred number, 1,500, it was mis-
capitalism is a big temptation to want to hurt

So how do we fix that? Some see those who do the killing as depraved, broken individu-
als. I don't know how to answer such a

It seems likely that one could imagine, wherein the rebellion of masses base Cath-
olics and lower clergy succeeds in un-

riage, nor would I want to. Second of

Abe Cabrera

Lorenzo Kaye

The press started interviewing people,

the consequences of "keeping up ortho-
dination. He had no consideration for

except that of his historical flow of thought. The unexpected Marxist-Humanists will be elaborating on those points, be it more or less like Jay Chapman, who had written that the lack of "guard" was not part of them. That lack

But why is Marx and his philosophy within myself, necessary to look at the con-

He was no bad boy, Lincoln was that 'Black masses as van-

What was missing from the current Abolitionist story is that Lincoln was not a 'Black masses as van-

tional parade came back to Chicago and got murdered. Some Black nationalists blame the system. I don't ag-

Five hundred people in Chicago decide to

I don't know how to answer such a

local, like the City Council. Chancellor Angela Merkel said he was not so bad. What an apostle! Ratzinger was in the Hitler Youth. Lots of excuses were made for that, but other young people at the time stood up and said no.

christianity has often inspired revolutionary mass movements among the poor. During the 17th-Century Eng-

lish revolution, the levellers called for radical social equality and the Diggers took over the land, while Anabaptists sur-

Catholic and his humankind within myself, necessary to look at the con-

Atheoles
duced bad things. Dunayevskaya wrote briefly where Dunayevskaya writes briefly the humanity of the person you've harmed. You acknowledge a people so they can acknowledge themselves, to begin heal-

The political letter from Raya Du-

nated Westerns. Others have made clear that they stand with the sisters and their

For slavery to African Americans is in

the real history of the idea of freedom that was transformed into a mass struggle by the Abolitionists. I am glad PBS is finally paying some attention to

it is a big temptation to want to hurt

American Civilization on Trial (ACOT) is not "Black history." Rather, Black play such an enormous role in the U.S. that their history that is in ACOT is a history of America.

AMERICAN CIVILIZATION REMAINS ON TRIAL

in motion. The Abolitionists acknowl-

I'd rejoice at the Pope's retirement except he and John Paul II sucked the deck of cardinals so thoroughly that whoever replaces him will just be his
close or worse.

Ratzinger's resignation surprised me. I thought he was going to be here forever. The press started interviewing people, saying they were astounded by how weak he

to the people of China, albeit after his own death.

The alliterative listing of dramatic events—"Stonewall"—in President Obama's inaugural address was a powerful way to frame the message in the present, in the meaning of the present. But it was no substitute for the creative power of the negative that stands on the basis of the transformation of reality. After all, Seneca Falls came out of Abolitionism's total commitment to new human relations, completely in opposition to, and

This past month in New York, Oc-

The alliterative listing of dramatic events—"Stonewall"—in President Obama's inaugural address was a powerful way to frame the message in the present, in the meaning of the present. But it was no substitute for the creative power of the negative that stands on the basis of the transformation of reality. After all, Seneca Falls came out of Abolitionism's total commitment to new human relations, completely in opposition to, and outside of, a Constitutional framework, while—with Abe Obama's help—Lincoln's Constitutional framework seems to predominate over Obama.

What was missing from the current Abolitionist story is that Lincoln was not a 'Black masses as van-

in solidarity with the sisters and their

American Civilization on Trial (ACOT) is not "Black history." Rather, Black play such an enormous role in the U.S. that their history that is in ACOT is a history of America.
At the crossroads of history

The Green Movement started in Iran over the 2009 election, the so-called leaders were part of the government who were against Ahmadinejad. The growth of the movement of women and youth got so big it became “out of control” by the so-called leaders. The government leaders got scared because they had found their original leaders and the government leaders were the “leaders” called it the Green Movement, green being a religious symbol, to try to limit it in any way. But the Movement was past that point.

Middle Eastern Revolutionary Women Committee

With great joy, we received five copies of Crossroads of History. Marxist- Humanist Writings on the Middle East by Gyorgy and Ela Dunayevskaya. It is really great and Gerry Emmett’s introduction was on target—clear, concise, and challenging to the Left. The professional staff Congress of the City University of New York—the union of faculty and staff members—has been having a film series: “Combating Islamophobia,” including showing films from Iran. I am anxious to see what they will think of this new pamphlet and News & Letters.

David New York City

I am grateful that you’ve finally published a collection of Dunayevskaya’s writings on the Middle East. They are indispensable for any comprehension of what is happening in that region today. Historical material is needed to experience the Arab Spring. But she gave us firm ground upon which to understand today’s events.

Elise Chicago

In Egypt Mori took absolute power after the youth, women and workers started the revolution. The leaders of the so-called dementalists, the Muslim Brotherhood, came to the end and took the majority in the election. Mori grabbed absolute power. The same happened in the 1979 Iranian Revolution. There was a death struggle between the Shah who tried to keep all the people united, but the counter-revolution came in under Khomeini and started killing anybody who was opposed to him. He brought in a religious, autocratic dictatorship, something never before seen in Iran.

Los Angeles

Dismal capitalist healthcare

Suzanne Rose wrote in the last issue of 14-year-old Marie Freyre, who died due to inadequate healthcare.

Her death illustrated that the U.S. must improve our healthcare system! A single-payer system would be a great step in the correct direction. Marie should have stayed in the care of her mother, as a job. As much as possible, the disabled and the elderly should have home care. The government should help pay substantially for that for families in economic need.

The nursing home and hospital need to be held accountable for Marie’s needless suffering and death.

Elise Chicago

What is described in “Rape and people with disabilities” (Nov.-Dec. 2012 News & Letters) is utterly disgusting. How in the world did this man get away with victimizing a physically disabled woman with the mental capacity of a child? The Connecticut court ruling is completely bunk, has absolutely no merit and they deliberately understand nothing about people with severe physical disabilities. I am going to be blunt, jail time isn’t even a good enough punishment for the likes of an individual like this.

D.B. Clark

We marched, petitioned, and packed an open forum and a courtroom. We defended 200 flowers to President Zimmerman. And we won. One month after Toussaint and Jacob were beaten by University police and arrested along with Victoria and Alex, the prosecutor dropped the charges. Victoria, Ja-

cob, Toussaint, and Alex were fighting because Chicago’s South Side doesn’t have a trauma center. It still doesn’t.

Elise Chicago

Plundering Detroit

The other shoe finally dropped in Khash-

mir that nuclear war is imminent with the People are being told to dig air- raid shelters. Violent skirmishes on the India-Pakistan border have become routine, only to be overlapped occasionally by either side for political convenience. Given that both are nuclear-armed, it is imperative that the nations end the arms race.

We urge all concerned to reengage in-

side for the common prosperity of the people on both sides. To sign the full statement from Kumar Sunda-

ram, visit http://space4space.blogspot.com/

Continued on page 9

Fear of nuclear war.

Fear is being spread in Khash- mir that nuclear war is imminent with the

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Rosa Luxemburg la libera
domina

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A Trilogía de revolución en todo un solo libro: Marxismo y libertad; Filosofía y revolución; y Rosi Luxemburg la liberación femenina y la filosofía marxista de la revolución

by Raya Dunayevskaya

The Administration and the pro-

ducer faced overwhelming, persistent, and creative opposition that came from people who rarely manage to speak together, including private university students, professors, teenagers in Wood
down, social workers, senior citizens who marched with walkers, and even a few Basili-

rians. Chicago

Duff Chicago

...and Environmental Disaster

The State Department quietly re-

leased its new environmental impact

statement on the Keystone XL pipe-

line. The Administration would be

liable to a lawsuit if all the news was

focused on the budget “sequester.”

The statement claims that the pipeline is “unlikely to have a

substantial impact” on the environment.

The administration refuses to acknowledge that NASA’s top climate scientist said that allowing an outlet for Canada’s tar sands would be “game over” for the climate. Beware, Obama! The ever-gro
growing climate justice movement is not going to take this sitting down.

Long-time environmentalist

Escandille, Canada

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Our prison mail tells me what’s go-

ing on in the real world. Could you let

me know who is my donor so I can thank

the people from whom the much needed

money comes to me?

Prisoner

Delano, Calif.

To our readers: Can you do-

ate the price of a sub ($8) for a prisoner who cannot pay for one! It will be shared with many others.

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Dunayevskaya en españo

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Marxismo y libertad

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Filosofía y revolución: De Hegel a Sartre y de Marx a Mao

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ate the price of a sub ($8) for a prisoner who cannot pay for one! It will be shared with many others.
California hearings on prison torture

We are on lockdown status again, as every inch of the prison compound is searched for contraband. We’re living on thin sandwiches again. We call them jam sandwiches. You take two pieces of stale bread, put a spot of peanut butter on one and jam them together. This time around is the worst ever. I was hungry day and night until another con began giving me his bag meals. Across the wide expanse of cellblock directly in front of my cell on the opposite side lives an elderly Mexican-American who is confined to a wheelchair. The day before my new cellmate began refusing his meals, I didn’t think it unusual at the time because some people fast around holidays. But then I recalled that up to Christmas Eve he had been getting books delivered to him every day for months from the prison law library. That suggests he was working on his appeal or maybe even a lawsuit. Then abruptly after Christmas no more law books came and he quit eating. The guards didn’t take notice because they work a different cellblock every day so they were eating in 10 or 12 cell blocks and continued to refuse his meals. I don’t know his name or even if he was assigned to a prisoner unit. I very briefly looked for any smile and nod across to him. That is the extent of our communication. I began informing the guards at meal time that the old man had quit eating.

Long ago I read an article about I.R.A. prisoners inside English prisons who went on hunger strikes in mass to protest against their assignment to what they called as war criminals instead of common criminals. Many starved themselves to death and the horror publicity of it forced the English government to begin to the prisoners. One of my prisoner同伴 saw to recognize granted and celebrated. But he was doomed nonetheless because after a couple of months of refusing to eat his health had caused irreparable damage to his vital organs.

Not long after we began getting bag meals, at every meal the old man asked the guards for a small feeding box to give his bag to me. So I began eating his sandwiches along with my own. He sits at his cell door and at meal time. After that I have his bag and when the bag meal left from the cellblock on their inspection rounds. They did, but still refuse to eat. I eat his food and am sure that the bag meals are hungry away from me.

As I write this on Jan. 22 it has been 28 days since the old man last ate. I woke up in the middle of the night to discover his cell door open. He was gone and I was startled by the sight of it. But then a few minutes later guards brought him back to his cell. I think they must be taking him to the medical department to monitor his weight loss. I take the case of the bag meals as one of the more serious issues of what was happening and was the death penalty the only option for those who did not make it out alive?

Prisoners speak for themselves

Two perspectives on the prison struggle:

Voices from within the prison walls

Pelicran Bay hunger strikers, 2011

See News & Letters literature list, p. 7

in the Security Housing Units (SHUs). An estimated 5,000 prisoners are tortured in California by being subjected to extended solitary confinement, 2,400 of them for determinate time. Following the prisoners’ hunger strikes in July and Sept.-Oct., 2011, CDC proposed revisions to its policies and procedures that address some of the prisoners’ demands and in fact codify practices that are totally unacceptable. I think it is safe to say that all of us who have been promised that their demands will be met, have rejected CDC’s proposal and are planning another hunger strike for July 8.

For many people the rally was their first action. They spoke from the heart. Dolores Canales said, “My life changed on July 1, 2011, when the SHU prisoners went on hunger strike. I knew my son had spent a decade in solitary confinement. I knew my son was unjustly held in isolation. I knew this, and I didn’t give it a second thought. Now, I cannot stop thinking about it.”

The “National Institutes of Health and federal law prohibit research chimpanzees to be held in solitary confinement. It is seen as detrimental to their mental and physical health as they are social animals. Chimpanzees must be able to see and hear other chimps, they must be able to touch each other as well. Chimpanzees are seen as social beings. What are human beings? Human beings that are being deprived of human contact, human beings that are being deprived of natural sunlight. Why is there no law to protect our son, your husband, your father, your brother, your sister and your loved one? We are demanding that they enact such a law in the United States of America!”

Another mother said: “When I go visit my son, I see others who have been in there for 10, 20, 30, some over 40 years. It breaks my heart. What does that say about the future of my son, who has been there for only four years? What do I have to look forward to? What does his son have to look forward to? He has not been able to touch his son since he was three years old! It devastates everybody. We have to stand up and make changes so that families can be reunited, so we can touch them, so they can be treated as human beings. I lay awake at night thinking of how my child is suffering. None of us should have to worry about the mental conditions of our children. None of us should have to worry about their physical condition. They have not harmed anyone, they have not stolen anyone. A prisoner who actually commits a murder only sits for 18 months to two years in the SHU and then he is out. We’re not here to make up a law. We just want you to do the basic human, moral thing.”

Hugo Pinell, 42 years in solitary, sent a statement written in February: “In 1967, when I joined the liberation movement in San Quentin, one of the goals was to build a new man. When Malcolm X showed we could. We don’t know how long it will take to create new men. I’m not talking about physical or orga- nations. But if we continue working at it and try to create the new man in ourselves, we can achieve a personal freedom. I go through different changes to stay human for I will never get used to isolation and deprivation.”

That is an especially important message for those leftists, caught in their own binary thinking and ab- stract revolutionism, who are unable to consider California as an opposite to U.S. imperialism. As Hegel and then Malcolm X showed we could. We don’t know how long it will take to create new men. I’m not talking about physical or organi- zations. But if we continue working at it and try to create the new man in ourselves, we can achieve a personal freedom. I go through different changes to stay human for I will never get used to isolation and deprivation.”

Voices from within the prison walls

Families gather in Sacramento for hearings on extended solitary confinement

Prisoners speak for themselves

Two perspectives on the prison struggle:

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Pelicran Bay hunger strikers, 2011
Rally Across U.S. against Keystone XL Pipeline

Washington, D.C.—I drove from Memphis to Washington, D.C., with three others and joined the 40,000-plus people there on Feb. 17 for the People’s Climate Change rally, the biggest ever held on climate change in this country. Yes, the 15-hour drive was long. Yes, it was super cold. Yes, we stood for a long time during the rally and were glad to be marching again to restore feeling in our frozen toes. But yes, we were glad and proud to be there.

I attended my first protest in Washington, D.C., in the 1980s, returning many times to protest U.S. involvement in Nicaragua and El Salvador, then to demonstrate against our invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan. Those marches were protests. We were expressing our outrage at our government for such unforgivable acts of aggression. It felt good to join so many others who were just as angry and ashamed.

The climate change rally was not like the anti-war protests. We were there for something more than to protest and to show our indignation. We were there knowing that President Obama could decide not to approve the Keystone XL pipeline. We were there knowing that President Obama has urged us as citizens to “make him” do what is right. We were there knowing that, as Van Jones said, this decision could define him. We were there because we are hopeful that he will do what is right and begin legislating to save our planet rather than to save oil executives. Then we learned that President Obama was not at the White House on that day. He was in Florida, golfing with oil executives. So... we shall see.

—Sandy Farshchi

Climate Chicago rally continued from p. 1

Keystone pipeline before I came out today. I want to learn more about what I can do and different moves people are making to change our culture. I want a future that isn’t compromised by huge fossil fuel companies. I want a society that puts my friends and family before profit. I’m a member of CYCC, a lovely group of dedicated students with a shared dedication to ending fossil fuel consumption and attaining a just and sustainable future. We know that our efforts can make a difference worldwide. We will not stand by while fossil fuel companies wreak havoc on our planet and our health. We cannot wait for politicians and Big Oil to shape our future. We need to join across borders and backgrounds, genders and ethnicities, to reshape our world. We need to fight for all our lives, even when we may live in a world completely different from the world we grew up in.

—Virginia Baker

Special offer for new book: Crossroads of History: Marxist-Humanist Writings on the Middle East by Raya Dunayevskaya

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40,000 in Washington, D.C.

Los Angeles—On Feb. 17, over 1,000 environmental activists gathered at La Placita of historic Olvera Street to agitate to stop the tar sands Keystone XL pipeline. The pipeline is to run over 2,000 miles from Canada through the U.S. to the Gulf Coast. There, this dirtiest of oil will be shipped to the Asian market.

The protest was begun by Canadian First Nations people as the Idle No More Movement to stop the mining of tar. It was a part of a massive demonstration the same day in Washington, D.C.

Participants included the Pachamama Alliance, Native Americans, African Americans, drummers, Artar drummers, Food and Water Watch, Natural Resource Defense Council (NRDC), Sea Shepherds, Alliance for Climate Education, Green Party, League of Young Vietnamese Americans, children from Union Elementary Schools Carbon Science Club, students, ML King Coalition, Occupy people, various Marxist groups, and many others. Notably missing were large labor unions.

Some of the many signs read “tar sands = extraction,” “carbon oil-gas = death,” “tax carbon,” and “Wanted: Stephen Harper and Trans Canada for genocide, stupidity, treachery.”

We marched for a mile to City Hall, where speakers addressed the crowd with a PA system powered by solar panels, and drums.

Speakers ranged from Lakota Chief Phil Lane, Jr., who said we do not want our sacred land destroyed and thanked Stephen Harper for awakening a sleeping giant, to Congressman Henry Waxman, who urged President Obama to stop Keystone, noting there were 25 separate climate crises in 2011 and 2012. We heard from climate scientists who told of worsening severe weather, women of color speaking of how, because of racism, pollution impacts minorities more severely, a homeowner impacted by fracking who said their house was to be in paradise, now it’s in hell, a longtime anti-nuclear activist who warned of the dangers of the aging San Onofre Nuclear Power Plant in Southern California, and several poets, including a Black woman who recited her poem on trash that goes into a can but doesn’t go away, asking, “How many landfill cans will we fill?” There was also a large cloth petition for us all to sign which will be sent to President Obama.

The rally ended with everyone joining in a traditional Indigenous round dance to the beat of the women drummers.

Global warming and climate change are caused by expanding capitalist production, consuming massive amounts of oil, coal, methane gas, gasoline, timber (logging), etc. As the News & Letters article “Climate Chaos and Capitalism” (Sept.-Oct. 2012) stated: “Until we can abolish capital, we will have no chance of avoiding climate chaos.”

—Basho

In Los Angeles

San Francisco—On Feb. 17 there was a Climate Forward rally at Justin Herman Plaza protesting carbon burning, Keystone, Arctic drilling, and other threats to the environment. Before the rally, as some 6,000 marchers completely encircled a nearby large building containing a meeting office, dozens of Indigenous people held a prayer vigil. One of them, a young First Nation woman from Canada, told the service— they . . . No more movement starts by four women (see ‘Idle No More,’ Jan.-Feb. 2013 News & Letters).

—David M’Oto

by Suzanne Rose

Chicago, Ill.—After a Seattle couple ordered their 26-year-old daughter with disabilities to undergo a treatment that would keep her from going through puberty, disability activists got the news they had expected.

New Delhi, India—Disability rights groups joined the One Billion Rising global campaign to end violence against women, spotlighting harassment and poor treatment faced by disabled women. Samantha Anjlee Agarwal, an organization which promotes accessible environments, organized events highlighting violence against women with disabilities. Their initiative got the support of the Delhi Metro, which displayed digital flash messages on violence against women in its train coaches and at all Metro stations. At the YWCA and Parliament Street, dancers in wheelchairs performed “Delhi Rising.” Their message to women with disabilities was “Celebrate life, celebrate diversity and celebrate freedom.”

New Market, Md.—The death of Robert Saylor, a 26-year-old man with Down syndrome killed in police custody, has been ruled a homicide. He was asphyxiat-ed on Jan. 12 while lying handcuffed and face down on the ground. The police were called to the movie theater where Mr. Saylor was watching a movie with his care giver. When she left the theater to get her car, Robert waited for her in his seat and wouldn’t leave. That’s when a theater worker grabbed him and pinned him to the floor. When his caregiver returned, the police ignored her and her efforts to de-escalate the situation. They said Mr. Saylor was distressed after being handcuffed, appeared to panic and started to struggle. He had not threatened anyone. “Robert just loved everybody,” said his mother, Patti. “If the police had gotten the proper training on how to deal with someone with Down syndrome, this wouldn’t have happened.”

St. Louis, Mo.—The Transportation Security Administration is apologizing to a Missouri family after agents at Lambert-St. Louis International Airport on Feb. 16 searched a 6-month-old child in a wheelchair heading to Disney World for a vacation. Agents took away her stuffed animal and tried to stop her parents from flying with their young daughter and her pink wheelchair, telling them it was illegal which is not true. The family had made it through the TSA checkpoint, but as they walked to their gate, another TSA agent pulled Lucy aside for additional screening. Annie, Lucy’s mother, refused to stop filming. The video shows Lucy weeping uncontrollably and screaming that she no longer wanted to go to Disney World.

—Theodore Gray


—Ban

—Sandy Farshchi

—David M’Oto

—Suzanne Rose

—Ban

—Sandy Farshchi

—David M’Oto

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—David M’Oto

—Suzanne Rose

—Ban
From India to Egypt to U.S., women fighting for freedom

continued from p. 1

tions the government did not accept. This is disturbing, as it continuously the practice of giving soldiers a green light to rape and institute the brutality they are doing, for example in Kashmir. Indian women have made it clear that they see rape and sexual abuse em bodied in their society as a way to keep women down.

As Kavita Krishnan, secretary of the All India Progressive Women’s Association, said of the new restrictions on women, “I don’t think that all the reaction was due to fear of sexual violence to women.” The reaction is also to the assertion of freedom. When a woman starts demand ing freedom and rights, that’s where the discomfort begins.

CONTINUING THE EGYPTIAN REVOLUTION

The second recent event is women—and men—resisting the new order. The first is the One Billion Square. First women and men created organizations to physically protect women in the Square. One such group is Operation Anti-Sexual Harassment/Assault (Oshant). They track and document the attacks and try to intervene and take the women to safe houses or hospitals. They are pressuring groups who call for demon strations to make sure the area is secure for women, and they make the point that to fail to do so reflects an attitude of indifference or worse to women’s oppression. Oshant states, “These attacks aim to exclude women from public life and punish them for partici pating in political activism and demonstrations.” They stress that ignoring the dangers women face “in the on coming struggle for justice—not only women’s participation but the very success of the revolution.”

Another response to the mob attacks was taken by The Uprising of Women Worldwide (womenWorldWide, Nov.-Dec. 2012), who called for protests on Feb. 12 at Egyptian Embassies around the world. They began as a Facebook group but have made the leap into the physical world. Demonstrations were held around the world, including in Brussels, Belgium; Morocco; several cities in Egypt; Tunisia; Sudan; Yemen; Jaffa, Gaza and Ramallah in Palestine; the USA; Italy; Hun gary; Germany; Canada, and Russia. Women used the demonstration to call for the end to sexual violence to all Arab women’s rights, not just Egyptian, and as a way to critique their own societies. Many took advantage of the day to show their support for #OneBillionRising women.

ONE BILLION RISING

The third event was the One Billion Rising action on Valentine’s Day. This year a novel novel by Eve Ensler, author of “The Vagina Monologues.” The name comes from the fact that one in every three women in the world—that’s one billion, will be beaten or raped dur ing her lifetime. One Billion Rising called on people to strike and dance to call attention to violence against women. The call to dance was inspiring. As a 25-year-old woman in India said, “Dance allows you to express emotions—outrage, anger, hope—that sometimes words don’t allow you to.” One Billion Rising spread like wildfire through India. Tens of thousands joined rallies and dance events there. Women, saw it, as one said, “as a new struggle for freedom.” In Mumbai alone, more than 1,000 people came together to take a pledge to respect women.

Women and men in more than 300 cities gathered in Mogadishu. About 600 people danced and sang in one of at least five events in Egypt. In Egypt, where a high level of sexual violence is being reported, many women enjoyed the event, there were many One Billion Rising actions across the islands. There were 40 events in New York City alone. In Turkey and Germany, and 1,300 danced in Iceland. Women organized flash mobs in Addis Aba ba, Ethiopia; in City of Joy in Congo; and in Bangladesh, 1,000 acid attack survivors took part in rallies across the country.

Women also danced in Tunisia. The recent assas sination of opposition leader Chaker Belaid shows the ruling Islamist party Ennahda’s complete unwilling ness to change its ways. The former Island Salafist leader, who was murdered was preceded by attacks on women and others, as homegrown reactionaries try to destroy Tunisia’s family code, one of the most progressive in the Arab world. Tunisian women are adamant that they will move forward, not back. Their spirit and determination to create something new were expressed passionately by a woman in a low-cut jeans and a sweater who got up on the stage of a rally and called a large group of young Is lamist men harassing her to wear the hijab. She yelled at them fearlessly: “This is Tunisia, a country with a 3,000-year-old history, and for you, you are mere outsider s and bloody descendants from the deserts of Saudi Arabia, destined to be on the side lines of the history of Tunisia. Never will we become another Afghanistan!”

WOMEN FIGHT FOR REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

In the U.S. too, women are facing that world-wide oppression, and here too they are fighting back. One example is the struggle for women’s liberation. Their biggest battle is in reproductive rights, with state legislatures moving to enact one internet law after another—some—1,100 bills sought to limit abortion rights and 135 passed in 36 states in 2012. Now, Texas has a new law that makes it mandatory to display an ultrasound to women who have decided on abortion. Even if a woman avers her eyes, the doctor must give a ver bal description of the fetus.

North Dakota and a slew of other states are try ing to pass so-called “heartbeat” bills that would ban abortion as early as six weeks, before most women even know they are pregnant. Right-wingers in Mississippi successfully funding abortion clinics in the state to close. Indiana introduced a bill that would require women to endure two expensive, invasive, and sometimes dangerous trans vascularity ultrasounds before and after having an abortion. The US Senate passed a bill that would out law abortion in the first trimester of pregnancy. And there is a push in all 50 states to pass so-called “personhood” measures declaring a fetus a human being, which could ban all abortion and could make the “fetus” a legal person in the common forms of birth control and in vitro fertilization. It also puts a woman who has a spontaneous abortion in legal jeopardy.

There is as well the Catholic hierarchy’s well funded attack on birth control that tries to strip away women’s freedom to choose. There is a huge outcry against the Catholic Church’s stand on birth control as it stands against the health of women. There are no exceptions. The only way to control fertility and healthcare for women’s health cannot possibly be separated from the need for reproductive health and pregnancy. The Catholic Church can impose a religious ban on insurance funding for needed medical devices and medication is tantamount to the Catholic Church dictating that their sex and reproduction is their business. Women in India work to stop their army from raping women under occupation. U.S. women are fighting against the right of both women and soldiers to be as false comrades in arms. Sexual assault on military women is estimated to be 25,000 cases a year. Nothing the military has done—and they have only done something because of the huge outcry women have already made—has put a dent in the number of attacks. As long as women have to report rapes to superiors who control their jobs, pro motions, and in the military they have, rape in the military will thrive. The military is developing a “silent epidemic.” To break that silence, women have started the “I Am One” campaign that documents the personal experiences of women survivors and puts them on the web.

REPUBLICANS HELD VAWA HOSTAGE

Another sign of the war on Women is how Republic ans—like the Virginia Congressman as ABORTION VAWA hostage, first holding it up for over a year, then trying to gut it instead of passing it. The House Republicans ver sion, which the Senate rejected, would have made the Democrate completely eliminated any protection for LGBT people. It grudgingly granted (the) courts sovereignty needed to prosecute non-Native American men who rape or abuse Native women on reservations. But, always mindful of white rights over all others, the Republican version granted those provisions and the right to move their cases to a federal court. Furthermore, in a stunning act of racism, those found guilty by an Indian court of battering their women, the law might mean that Native land could only receive a maximum sentence of one year! That racism and xenophobia extended to immi grants and trafficking as well. The VAWA could ban all cru tali zed women in the world. It would have limited con ditions under which undocumented women could have legal status while they claim asylum. Nevertheless, 138 Republicans voted against pass ing the VAWA. The only reason it was eventually passed by the others is because of the huge outcry women have already made—has put a dent in the number of attacks. As long as women have to report rapes to superiors who control their jobs, promotions, and in the military they have, rape in the military will thrive. The military is developing a “silent epidemic.” To break that silence, women have started the “I Am One” campaign that documents the personal experiences of women survivors and puts them on the web.

Celebrate International Women’s Day: Women’s Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future

“No doubt we will not fully overcome male chauvinism so long as class society exists. But we can and will break up its monopolism. We can and will witness the development of women’s liberation not only as force but as reason. We can and will be a catalyst not only for our development as all-round human beings, but also for that of men. The first step in that direction is to meet the challenge as a whole and, when the time comes, any time it rears its head, under no matter what disguises. The first act of liberation is to demand back our own heads.”

—Raya Dunayevskaya

From: Women’s Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution

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N E W S & L E T T E R S

INTERNATIONALISM OF STRUGGLES

Violence against women is, tragically, an interna tional phenomenon and women worldwide are fighting it. While the form of the demonstrations may differ, the content is strikingly the same as in each coun try articulate that violence stems from their own cul tures. They reject the idea that it is women who should change their behavior or dress more modestly, drink less, stay hidden, stay subdued. Or that, in any time—-the list never ends. Rather, women are demanding that men must do this. It is women who are suffering, not men. Soci eties must be transformed.

Women, however, historically—posi tioned themselves at the center of the struggle, raising questions about the needed totality of any revolution. It must include all segments of society.

Though women, globally, are challenging very basic aspects of their societies—and this is true in both the developed and the developing nations—is new. What shines through so luminously in coun tries like Egypt and Tunisia and is also evident in the U.S. is that the struggle is about new, really hu man relationships, and that it is a revolutionary struggle.

Today, women’s liberation has shown itself to be the ultimate weapon for driving forces worldwide are fighting. Any separation opens the door to counter-revolution. The ongoing struggles for freedom make clear that nothing short of a banner of new human relationships, from Man/Woman to labor, is needed.
Britain’s rulers keep failed policy of austerity

London, England—Moody’s Investor Services, the international financial ratings agency, stripped Britain of its elite AAA credit rating, after citing stumbling economic performances and ongoing struggles to reduce its deficit, instead of implementing an austerity plan. Moody’s pointed to “a bursting bubble of debt” and “a fiscal plan that is clearly inadequate.” The decision to downgrade has more to do with a “compromised economic outlook” than with Britain’s internal market. Claiming that the UK’s economic recovery has proven slower than that of previous recessions in the EU, Moody’s noted the apparent inability of the government to meet its fiscal consolidation targets.

One important question also arises: what kind of accreditation does the AAA rating mean, especially for the government in power? Though it supposedly operates under federal and state authority, ACCJC claims to be independent of government; in other words it is a private organization. It is really a form of regulatory association homes, and many tenants will have no accountability. The plan seems to be to dismantle the legacy of FDR’s New Deal, of which CCSF was a creation. At CCSF, that means the decision to downgrade has more to do with an “anticipated slow growth of the economy” than with Britain’s internal market. Claiming that the UK’s economic recovery has proven slower than that of previous recessions in the EU, Moody’s noted the apparent inability of the government to meet its fiscal consolidation targets.

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Pope Benedict XVI's sudden resignation announcement on Feb. 11 took the world by surprise. It is the first time in almost 600 years that a Pope has decided to quit during his lifetime. This decision paves the way for an election in the Vatican, bearing the title "Pope emeritus," and "continue to serve the Church through prayer.

The new Pope's announced changes of abuse by Catholic clergy and irregularities involving the Vatican Bank helped the former Joseph Ratzinger make his decision. He was a natural public figure who was comfortable in manipulating behind the scenes. But it was his failure to take action on the abuse cases that he knew about, and the public’s knowledge that he knew and did not act, that made him singularly poor as a Church figurehead.

Barbara Blaine, president of Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP), said, "I would hate for him to be remembered as someone who did the right thing because of a story. I would hate for Pope Benedict's record to be his absolved.

While some abuse victims advocate for his resignation to be tried in the International Criminal Court, that is unlikely for many reasons, not least because he will retain diplomatic immunity in the sovereign Vatican City state, much as the late Archbishop Paul Marcinkus did during the Vatican banking scandal of the 1970s-1980s.

ATTACKS ON WOMEN, GAYS

Ratzinger's record is also distinguished by reactionary policies. As much as anyone, he was who made sure that the reforms of Vatican II would not lead to fundamental changes in the position of women—in his early days, Ratzinger was not fit to hold spiritual authority—or gays, who were to remain in the closet. He retained a hypocrical and deadly opposition to both same-sex and birth control. For many of his opinions, his only appeal was prejudice— they were valid because this is how things had always been done.

Most telling was his opposition to Liberation Theology, which he did attempt to justify philosophically. The new Pope's views of Liberation Theology were formed by his flawed and reactionary understanding of Marxism, and of Marx's roots in Hegel. It is likely that he saw the failures in the development of Hegel's actual works. Thus, the idea of human liberation (and he saw its appeal) because for Ratzinger the basis of a mythology of political reaction. Rather than seeing freedom being proven real in the lives of his contemporaries, in the heat of anti-colonial struggle, and imperialism in Africa and Latin America, he felt obliged to reiterate the very alienation that Marx ctitiqued in the 1940s.

ANTHI-LIBERATION THEOLOGY

Where Hegel saw Freedom as the basis of human history, Ratzinger saw the reduction of humanity to necesity and unfreedom. Like a typical post-Marx, in fact, he wrote "[Hegel's] attempt at total logic ends in illegibility; in the self-delusion of logic into 'Herder to Christianity'."

But his positive vision is mostly an undialectical inversion of Marx's critique of religion, in fact. Marx himself was too Marxist a poor Hegelian.

Hegel's account of the corruption of the Church is basically what he lived out in his failed public career and the televised episode in his consciousness embodied what Hegel critiqued as "externality," or that which is "in 'rigid opposition to self-conscious spirit" and thus "brings the spirit under an externalism by which the very meaning of spirit is perverted and misconceived in their (spiritual) sense of justice, morality, and conscience, responsibility and duty are corrupted at their root."

Liberation Theology indeed represented that moment when religion was split into its two aspects, as Marx pointed out, the religion of the oppressed and the religion of the rulers. It is what Hegel also referred to in his Inception of Philosophy as "An Objective" concerning the attitude to a body of objective truth. The post-World War II world had caught up to that problem of giving new meaning to world-historic battles that continue today in the struggle against various forms of fundamentalism, to state to state violence in the Middle East.

This philosophic failure was central to Ratzinger's life and thought. Indeed, for all his "intellectualism," in many cases his thinking passed through the thought of a cult leader like Lyndon LaRouche. Their published views on popular music, for instance, are so similar, and racist, then it's tempting to ask which plagiarized from the other.

It would be nice to be able to forgive an old man his human failings, to see the burdens of Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti— or the AIDS victims of Africa. He has left us our vision of what could have been. He left us, and nothing more was ever to be.

The ex-Pope may try to return to his behind-the-scenes role with a new, perhaps more charismatic and less damaged Pope. He may feel that as long as the Catholic Church as an institution is seen as "too big to fail," he can drive it toward that smaller but "better," "purer" state that he prefers.