

NEWS & LETTERS

THEORY / PRACTICE

“Human power is its own end”—Karl Marx

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Save the Rohingya, stop the genocide!

Genocide once again is taking place before our eyes—this time against the Muslim minority Rohingya people of Burma (Myanmar). And once again the world response is indifference, hand-wringing or open complicity.

EDITORIAL Inflammatory calls by Islamophobic Buddhist monks like Ashin Wirathu, who said he modeled himself on the English Defense League, to exterminate Muslims led to repeated mob attacks on Rohingya villages by their Buddhist neighbors over the last five years and have provided cover for the military campaign of murder, rape and pillage. The army drove over 300,000 Rohingya men, women and children from their villages, fleeing for their lives into neighboring Bangladesh, India and beyond.

Since Aug. 25, after Rohingya guerrilla fighters had been able to mount attacks on police stations, the military has retaliated without mercy. The 600,000 Rohingya who have fled for their lives since Aug. 25, added to those who had taken refuge earlier, approach a million Rohingya in Bangladesh, India and around the world. That leaves barely one-third of the original population of 1.5 million Rohingya in Burma.

Their demonization by Buddhist agitators as invasive foreigners has been used to justify the ongoing brutality, and is no more grounded in fact than any other “Kill ‘em all” calls around the world. Rohingya have been in Burma since the 12th Century and had a substantial community for nearly 300 years. Their numbers tripled in the 40 years leading up to World War I as Britain, colonial ruler of both

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Abuser-in-chief trashes women

With the Trump administration’s gutting of the Affordable Care Act’s (ACA) birth control mandate while at the same time successfully making the ability of women to have an abortion a “right” fewer and fewer are able to use, we are faced with a blatant attempt to not just control women’s bodies and lives, but to crush a movement.

Women of all colors are in the center of Trump’s bullseye right next to African Americans in part because of the fantastic worldwide Women’s Marches on Jan. 21; because, as a headline in *The Guardian* put it: “The Trump resistance can be best described in one adjective: female”; because Trump lost the popular vote to a woman; and because Trump has a realization in that tiny brain of his that women might just be the ones who bring him down.

ANTI-ABORTION FANATIC’S DREAM

Trump’s new edict on birth control is an anti-abortion, anti-birth control fanatic’s dream-come-true. Not only are any and all religious organizations entitled to ignore the federal contraceptive mandate—a mandate that made it possible for 55 million women to access the birth control that best suits their needs without charge—now any “entity” can do the same. Besides churches and the like, which already didn’t have to provide birth control, the ruling now includes nonprofit organizations, for-profit corporations, and any other nongovernmental employer, as well as colleges and universities.

Not satisfied with allowing any employer with

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ONLINE: www.newsandletters.org

Puerto Ricans suffer as Donald Trump plays to his racist base

by Franklin Dmitryev

The devastation wrought in Puerto Rico by Hurricanes Irma and Maria on Sept. 6 and 20 was compounded by the chaotic aftermath. The country was hammered by a combination of climate change, the depredations of capitalism in its prolonged depression and the malign neglect of the racist Donald Trump administration.

Maria, the most powerful storm to strike Puerto Rico in 90 years, came in one of the most active Atlantic hurricane seasons on record, the first year to feature three storms as powerful as Irma, Jose and Maria. This year hints at the future if the world does not check global warming. In Puerto Rico alone, Maria left dozens of people dead; destroyed thousands of homes and other structures; caused flooding from 6 to 15 feet in places; knocked out the island’s power grid and most communication networks; wiped out a year’s worth of agricultural production; and caused billions of dollars in insured losses.

IS PUERTO RICO THE WORLD’S FUTURE?

Five weeks after Maria hit, only one in four people had power, with repairs not projected to be completed until next year. Electricity is crucial for preserving food and medicine and cooling the sick and elderly, as was brought home by the shocking deaths of 11 residents in a Florida nursing home due to the greedy owner’s negligence combined with the power loss after Hurricane Maria.

The serious consequences for a society built around electricity and cars—with over 90% of roads still closed due to the storm—are illustrated by the fact that Puerto Rico’s hospitals are without power. Witnesses have described one hospital in which all Intensive Care Unit patients died. A viral Oct. 27 photo showed a surgery lit only by flashlight. Dialysis has been dangerously rationed due to a shortage of fuel for generators.

Basics like baby food are lacking or in short supply. People wait in endless lines in the hot sun to buy food, fuel and water, when it’s available. Nearly one-fourth of the population still lacked clean water

at the end of October, forcing some people to open sealed wells on a Superfund toxic waste site. Diseases spread by contaminated water, such as leptospirosis, are sickening and killing people. Many people are living in soaked, roofless houses with dangerous black mold growing.

Fifty volunteer nurses from National Nurses United, after a two-week mission, reported desperation in Puerto Rico worse than they had witnessed in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake. The federal government, they said, was “delaying necessary humanitarian aid to its own citizens and leaving them to die.”

‘CLOSE TO A GENOCIDE’

In the words of San Juan’s Mayor Carmen Yulin Cruz, “I am begging anyone that can hear us to save us from dying. If anybody out there is listening to us, we are dying. And you are killing us with the

inefficiency and bureaucracy. If we don’t solve the logistics, we are going to see something close to a genocide.”

But President Donald Trump’s initial response has been characteristic of his hate-filled regime. First he was slow to send needed aid, mobilizing many fewer rescue workers than had been done in response to previous disasters. When Puerto Ricans rightfully objected, this inhuman creature dared to accuse them of “wanting everything to be done for them.” He only grudgingly suspended the 1920 Jones Act, which limits shipping to Puerto Rico and even blocked aid supplies after the hurricanes—and then it was only suspended for 10 days! (See “Help Puerto Rico now,” p. 10.)

While the islanders were straining to survive and rebuild, Trump was not only occupied in tweeting insults at them and playing golf. Quite the contrary. At the very moment that he was giving himself both a “10” and “A+” for a “response better than anyone has ever seen,” he was pushing an agenda reflecting his contempt for Latinos and all people of color:

• Trump was tempting Congressional

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Demonstrator at Oct. 11 protest in Washington, D.C., Upper Senate Park in support of U.S. citizens in Puerto Rico suffering from Hurricanes Irma and Maria and neglect by the Trump Administration.

Judy Tanzawa (Judy Tristan) 1939-2017

A FIGHTER FOR HUMAN LIBERATION IN ALL ITS DIMENSIONS

We will long remember our News and Letters Committees comrade Judy, who passed away this past October. She passionately entered so many struggles for freedom of workers, of minorities—Black, Latino, Asian—of anti-war, of women’s liberation, thus developing her own multidimensionality.

Born into a family of revolutionaries, she came to the ideas and practices of Marxist-Humanism on her own terms, in her own time. Her decades-long experience as a union organizer and representative, her work in the Black community, particularly with Black women after the 1992 Los Angeles Rebellion, her intense interest, along with her husband

Paul, in the experience of Japanese-Americans in the World War II internment camps, together with her exposure to the ideas and practices of Marxist-Humanism through Raya Dunayevskaya and Judy’s

mother Bess Gogol, came to be expressed in her work within News and Letters Committees.

She was a long-time member of the Committees, eventually taking on responsibilities as organizer of the Los Angeles local and as a member of the National Editorial Board of *News & Letters*. When attending News and Letters national gatherings she reported on the activities of the Los Angeles Local, particularly her work in the African-American community among women whose sons were experiencing brutality and prison at the hands of the police.

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Olga Domanski and Judy Tanzawa in May 2014.

Convention shows women persist

“This is your convention,” proclaimed “proudly Muslim” organizer Linda Sarsour at the opening plenary of the Women’s Convention Oct. 27 in Detroit, Mich. Four thousand women, despite a \$300 entry fee, gathered to continue the moment of the Jan. 21 massive global Women’s March as an ongoing movement.

While mainstream media focused on actress Rose McGowan, the first to speak out publicly against Hollywood predator Harvey Weinstein, organizer Tamika Mallory, who declared she was here to “tell the truth,” drew the most passionate response:

“Your feminism does not represent me if you only support abortion rights, if you leave men out, if you don’t care about gun violence, if you are only concerned with Bernie versus Hillary...and if you don’t care about the women in Detroit who could not afford to come here.”

ELECTORAL POLITICS OVER REVOLUTION

Other speakers underlined the determination of the organizers to realize not just diversity but the multi-dimensionality of the resistance, which had burst forth so massively on Jan. 21. Tarana Burke, who originated “me too” in 2007, hailed the current hashtag campaign as a sign of a united community of survivors of which there are “many leaders...ready to topple the system that allows” sexual harassment and abuse.

Rosa Clemente called herself a “Black Puerto-Rican woman” born in the South Bronx. She described the ongoing misery on the island despite a full-on military occupation. She contrasted thousands of containers of supplies sitting at the port to the lack of food and safe water in the interior, and called out the AFL-CIO for not allowing non-union local workers to help get supplies distributed during the emergency.

It is puzzling that with such a broad comprehension of the complexity and connectedness of issues that the majority of breakout sessions emphasized electoral politics, as if more women running for office would solve everything. Nevertheless, in the workshops that did address social justice issues, many of the hundreds who attended had not just questions but knowledge and understanding to share.

Oxfam’s “Refugee Road” was especially moving. Participants role-played refugee experiences, guided by leaders who had fled Syria with their families still in danger. A young Syrian-American woman told us her brother’s family had completed all 20 steps of the vetting process to come to the U.S. only to be told that since his wife was pregnant, the family would have to wait until the baby was born so he too could be vetted!

CONTRADICTIONS REVEALED

The contradictions that were revealed at the convention will need to be worked through for the movement to grow. A fund to offset the high cost of the convention was not well publicized and clearly insufficient. A panel, “Nevertheless We Persisted: Women and the Fight for Clean Water, from Flint to Puerto Rico,” discussed legal and health violations of the Safe Drinking Water Act in great detail, but did not call either Flint water activist Melissa Mays or radio host-activist Lela McGee Harvey up from the audience to speak. In the panel on hyperlocal organizing, a white woman new to activism who had done an amazing job bringing three high school girls concerned about racism as co-panelists had to be chided by an audience member for doing most of the talking herself.

One way to overcome these contradictions is for

Countering white supremacists

Berkeley, Calif.—Editor’s note: In the last week of September the alt-right called for a “free speech week” at the University of California-Berkeley. The week before, they had a “No to Marxism” rally downtown, which met overwhelming opposition. During the so-called “free speech week,” most speech was shut down. The scores of student groups whose tables usually crowd Sproul Plaza were largely absent. Police, on the other hand, were everywhere in massive numbers. On Sept. 25 the alt-right’s events were cancelled. However, there were still rallies opposing them. Below are excerpts of a talk by a young Black woman student at UCB.

Hi everyone, my name is Ashley and I am a student here and a member of Speak Out Now.

We live in a society which was founded on slavery, genocide, and exploitation; a society which thrives on dividing us—pitting us against each other based on the color of our skin or the status of our papers. That’s how capitalism works. The alt-right operates on the margins of society, but they aren’t a contradiction to the society we live in.

Over the last six months we’ve seen how the alt-right can use their pathetic forces to dominate the conversation and set the agenda. In Milo’s [Yiannopoulos] case, the campus administration was ready to drop over a million dollars for him to speak. The agenda of a bogus student group of literally five

participants to deepen their vision to that of a non-capitalist society that values the wholeness of human beings working together to sustain the struggle as new challenges arise, never losing sight of the kind of society we strive for.

For more, go to www.womensconvention.com and Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

—Susan Van Gelder

WOMENWORLDWIDE

by Artemis



On Sept. 30, the anniversary of the 1919 massacre of 100 Black activists in Elaine, Ark., Black Women’s Blueprint, Trans Sistas of Color Project and Black Youth Project 100, held a Black Women’s March in Washington, D.C., which converged with the March for Racial Justice. They marched to the Justice Department because, as one marcher stated, “The Justice Department has become a mechanism to make injustice the law of the land.” Organizers stated the march was to denounce “state violence and the widespread incarceration of Black women and girls, rape and all sexualized violence, the murders and brutalization of Trans women and the disappearances of our girls from our streets, our schools and our homes.”

* * *

In 2002 Turkey’s Justice and Development Party (AKP) members made news by refusing to shake women’s hands for fundamentalist religious reasons. On Sept. 30, Meltem Cumbul, an actress hosting an awards ceremony, caused a media furor by refusing to shake the hand of a director who supported the right-wing President Erdogan. Her statement “I refuse to shake hands—which is a ritual of greeting and intimacy between equals—with those who marginalize people who are not like them or those who use the power of the rich against the poor, who side with the powerful and humiliate the weak” received 29,500 likes and 7,600 retweets on twitter. The pro-AKP media labeled Cumbul’s refusal to shake the director’s hand an “act of fascism” and a “hate crime.”

* * *

In Canada, two Indigenous women filed a class-action lawsuit over being coerced into sterilization procedures at a hospital in Saskatchewan. Their lawyer, Alysia Lombard, stated that she has been contacted by 40 women from the province with the same experiences. She said this violates the UN convention on the prevention and punishment of genocide. She said, “When you talk about genocide, no one wants to think Canada...I have to call it that, because that’s what it is.”

people, but backed by millions of dollars, disrupted our lives for weeks as we organized a response. The alt-right is able to use these events as a media spectacle that gains attention and makes them look like victims.

This is what they’ve wanted all along. Since Trump got elected, we’ve been stuck mobilizing a reaction to every new thing the right wing throws at us. These rallies are important, we should have a response. But we have to go beyond them.

We have to recognize that until we free ourselves from capitalism, we will never be free from institutional oppressions, inequalities, and exploitation. We will never get there if we are only reacting to the right wing’s agenda or if we rely on those in power today—the administrators, bureaucrats, politicians or police.

We—the majority—have to rely on ourselves because when we’re organized we have the potential to build a new world. We have to begin to organize everyone around us, in our schools, our workplaces and neighborhoods, to fight for a society that’s run for and by the majority of people. We need to fight for socialism.

It’s time for us to stand up together in solidarity and fight for the world we deserve to live in—not a more tolerant world, but a liberated one! One in which humanity can finally unleash its full potential.

WOMAN
AS
REASON

#MeToo

by Terry Moon

The revelations about Harvey Weinstein’s criminal raping, harassment and ruining of so many women’s lives is—after decades of abuse—finally out in the open. Actress Alyssa Milano, recognizing how banally common is women’s experience with such behavior, suggested that women who’ve experienced it post on social media #MeToo.

HARASSMENT AMNESIA

In solidarity I posted #MeToo but felt guilty as I couldn’t remember specific instances of experiencing the type of horrendous acts that the women who encountered Weinstein did. Then I did remember.

One of my feminist friends had also suppressed her experiences of abuse. As a younger woman she had a secretarial job at an urban campus. Every day—every day—professors rubbed against her at her desk and students or others harassed her when she went for lunch or walked to school or home. She always told them off, always fought back, and I was always scared for her.

Perhaps women have trouble remembering these acts of harassment, because they let us know that so many in the world consider women less than human. That Weinstein—among tens of thousands of others—got away with it for decades shows the futility of suppressing this reality. It just continues, so some other woman gets raped or harassed so severely that she quits her job, moves to a different city, or has to rearrange her life in an unwanted way.

When I was 23, I parked my car a half block from my apartment near an urban university at around 10:30 PM. In that half block a man stopped me asking for directions. When I told him I didn’t know the answer to his question, he told me he had a gun in his pocket and I should go back to my car. Terrified, I told him he could have my money and tried to give him my purse, but he kept telling me to get back to my car. In 1968 I was in the Women’s Liberation Movement and I knew I was not getting in the car with him, that I would rather chance being shot.

ABUSE IS NOT A ONE-TIME THING

He had not shown me the gun, which gave me some hope, so when we got to my car I took off running to the police station that was about three blocks away. I never looked back to see if he was chasing me. At the station I was interviewed by a young cop, who told me I had given a good description and asked if I would come in to view a suspect in a lineup. I said yes. He offered to drive me home. I was grateful, as I had no one to pick me up.

On the way home, the cop asked me out! I mumbled something about being in a relationship and started looking at the car door to make sure I could get out if I had to. I learned later that they knew who my would-be rapist was from my description, that he had raped others, but they never picked him up, never called me in to identify him.

These things are never just over. After that I wouldn’t go out at night without making sure that someone would meet me so that I didn’t have to walk alone from my car to my apartment. That meant I couldn’t always go where I wanted, do what I needed to do. I felt like I was in prison. For months I had this daydream of seeing him walking down the sidewalk and running him over with my car.

After that I never let a woman at a meeting, party, or whatever walk alone at night to her car. I would either get a group to walk with her or walk with her myself and have her drive me back to my place. Always women would tell me that they would be OK, and always I ignored what they said and walked with them.

Many things contribute to people becoming revolutionaries. That almost-rape was one of my reasons. It’s why revolution—to be a revolution—cannot be a narrow concept like only a change in leadership or some kind of economic reform or a Bernie Sanders kind of “socialism.” When millions of women worldwide can post #MeToo and relate stories like mine, like theirs, like all of Weinstein’s plethora of victims, it’s crystal clear that revolution has to be so deep and so total that all human relationships are transformed. That is the kind of revolution that is worth fighting for.

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Raya Dunayevskaya, Chairwoman, National Editorial Board (1955-1987). Charles Denby, Editor (1955-1983).

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NFL players defy owners and Trump

Chicago—A hundred people marched to Soldier Field before the Chicago Bears' first game on Sept. 10 to "Stand with Kaepernick." We marched partly to condemn the 32 National Football League teams for keeping Colin Kaepernick out of work in reprisal for his taking a knee during the National Anthem before games of the 2016 season. But this was primarily a Black Lives Matter rally in solidarity with the purpose behind Kaepernick's actions, to call out the never-ending epidemic of police killings of unarmed young Blacks.

One speaker represented the family of Bettie Jones, who was killed when she opened the door for Chicago cops who were answering her neighbor's call for help with a mentally ill son, whom they also killed. Another organizer admitted she knew nothing about football, but stood with Kaepernick against police killing unarmed civilians, especially young Blacks, with little fear they would be convicted.

POLICE KILLINGS CONTINUE

Just five days later a St. Louis judge proved Kaepernick's point by acquitting police officer Jason Stockley, a man who had delivered on his vow to gun down Anthony Lamar Smith, even planting a gun at the scene. Protests raged in the streets day after day in spite of mass arrests and military-style police brutality.

Hundreds of Bears fans passed our rally on the way to Soldier Field, with few negative comments. But Trump decided, after players on team after team began taking a knee or otherwise protesting during the National Anthem, that condemning NFL player protests would play well with his base—while endorsing white supremacists wielding Nazi flags and Confederate flags in Charlottesville, Va., as "fine people."

PENCE PERFORMANCE ART

Trump later sent Vice President Mike Pence to the NFL game in Indianapolis with orders to stalk out when players took a knee. Trump even demand-

ed that the NFL fire protesting players, behaving like his ally Putin might act in Russia or his freemymy Kim in North Korea. NFL Commissioner Goodell actually responded to Trump's bluster by directing all players to stand for the National Anthem. When players refused to knuckle under, Goodell had to back down. But the TV networks now keep protests off the screen.

Trump has publicly incited police nationwide to expand extra-judicial punishment of those they arrest, and now counts on attacking NFL players as another wedge issue. Let's see how many people will gladly stand with Black Lives Matter against police executions and against Trump. —Bob McGuire

Dan Perron



News and Letters Committees lost a wonderful comrade when Dan Perron (Oct. 12, 1959-Sept. 7, 2017) died. Dan was a lifelong activist for freedom and justice.

He met Marxist-Humanists in the National Federation of the Blind in the

early 1980s and found News and Letters Committees to be a place from which he could participate in all freedom struggles.

His support for Women's Liberation, Black Lives Matter, the homeless, the mentally ill, prisoners—all who suffered the oppressions of capitalist society—was unwavering. He regularly distributed News & Letters to students and workers in Ann Arbor and at demonstrations and rallies.

Along with his work with News and Letters Dan was active with the National Federation of the Blind. He volunteered at the Salvation Army, where he befriended many of the homeless, especially those whom no one else would tolerate. Whomever he knew, he emphasized and championed their best qualities.

He also enjoyed listening to his short-wave radio, all varieties of cuisine, and always Detroit Tigers baseball, rock and roll music and Coca-Cola. Two nicknames bestowed upon him were "Rock'n'roll" and "Eat-em-up." He often said, "less talk, more rock 'n' roll."

He welcomed winter's cold weather because he could ski with the Optical Illusions, American Blind Ski Foundation at Pine Knob near Detroit. He shared his love of skiing with his father, Dr. George Perron. Besides his father, he is survived by his siblings Caroline, Jeffrey and Ursula, his News and Letters family and people from all walks of life whose lives he touched. Dan shared his passion for a better human society with everyone he met. No one who met him will ever forget his kindness to them and to others. —Susan Van Gelder

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'Good company man'

Morgantown, W.Va.—His name was Jim McGraw. He was the boss of the main line in Pursglove 15 mine, owned in the 1940s by Consolidation Coal Co., the largest coal company in the U.S. at that time.

On the main line crew when I joined them following a foot injury were Steve, about 6'4" tall and a terrific human being, and John, a Black deaf-mute and likewise with a terrific physical build.

Their physical builds resulted from years of handling steel rails that weighed 60 pounds per each foot of 10-foot rail. They had to drag the rails and position them on wooden ties on which the rails were attached by steel spikes.

Watching Steve and John was a symphony of motion as they alternately swung their 14-pound hammers with unerring strokes to drive the spikes into the ties. Although John was a deaf-mute, he and Steve had developed a communication system with hand motions that worked well for them.

LIFE-CHANGING INJURIES MADE WORSE

While I was working with them, Steve developed back pain, but he did not report the pain to Jim McGraw, the boss. He waited a few days until the pain worsened, then reported the pain to Jim. There wasn't a man in the mine, including Jim, who didn't know that years of wrestling with steel rails had caused the injury.

Yet Jim denied that the injury was caused by the work and rejected Steve's claim because Steve did not report the injury when it occurred. Despite the fact that Steve was Jim's son-in-law, Jim insisted on his denial, and Steve couldn't do a thing about it.

Steve went for an operation to Pittsburgh where there were back specialists. Unfortunately the operation failed.

About a year later, I ran into Steve at a local beer garden. He was struggling along with the aid of metal crutches. As we talked, he said that Jim never changed his denial position.

Steve raised his pant leg. What had once been strong legs had shriveled to the size of broomsticks. All because Jim remained a "good company man."

—Andy Phillips

Knocking on Labor's Door book launch

Chicago—I went to a book launch on Oct. 14 at the Newberry Library for *Knocking on Labor's Door: Union Organizing in the 1970s and the Roots of a New Economic Divide*, by Lane Windham, published by the University of North Carolina Press. Windham had interviewed workers, and focused on a different analysis of labor unions than mainstream theorists.

She contended that there is not a loss of interest in unions, but that laws have been passed that weaken the union movement. Companies have used the old standby of pitting one group, white men and some white women, against another group, women and people of color.

OBSTACLES TO ORGANIZING THE SOUTH

Her background was in the South, where union organizers felt that women and people of color were not interested in organizing.

The reality is that new union members came from these groups, but established union leaders undercut them because they feared the gains made by women and people of color due to progressive laws such as affirmative action.

The panelists and Ms. Windham spoke on new research included in her book and a new way of looking at this missed opportunity. If, in the future, racism and classism can be overcome, unions or new movements of workers' associations may give birth to a new wave of workers winning back rights that are being lost today.

LOW-PAID WOMEN'S WORK

Women Employed and the organization 9 to 5 were also discussed. Anne Ladky, a panel member and recently retired executive director of Women Employed, said that her organization had faced a decision on what road it would take: organize secretaries and upper-class jobs for women, or be advocates for women workers at the low economic end.

Ladky said they chose to stick with the path that inspired their founding, the farm-workers' struggle for a union and the Civil Rights Movement. They chose to work for paid sick days and minimum wage increases, and to work with those women workers most in need of support.

Upcoming struggles discussed included the push from the Right to get rid of affirmative action, the minimum wage or any raise in the minimum wage and the spreading of misnamed "right-to-work" laws.

Another question raised was why white workers make choices that go against their self-interest. Is it because people of color would benefit from what unions manage to win for their workers?

—Sue

Workers threaten Xi

Xi Jinping was not merely elected to a second term as Party Secretary at the Congress of the Communist Party of China in October, he got his name and his thought into the Constitution. "Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era" will not fit on a bumper sticker, but multiple universities, including Xi's alma mater Tsinghua University, are now racing to set up departments and class outlines to teach it.

When Mao Zedong found himself in the minority in the ruling Politburo Standing Committee (PSC), he introduced Mao Zedong Thought as a cover for a preventive counter-revolution against political opponents and factory workers in revolt. It was led by the army and aided by youth who for awhile waved Mao's Little Red Books.

XI THOUGHT MEANS XI AS RULER

Xi, by contrast, has wielded control of the Party apparatus, and his hand was strengthened with the five new members of the seven-man PSC. Elevating himself to leading "Marxist" threatens that Xi will break recent precedent and not relinquish power after five years. Under Mao many refused to recognize China as state-capitalist, although Mao used that term himself. But now China presents itself as a linchpin of world capitalism, and all can see it.

Xi made a promise to end poverty by 2020, before this term ends. He might be able to do that and claim success by manipulating figures on paper. There are 46 million people listed as below the poverty line, which is 95 cents a day and not even close to enough for survival. Meanwhile millions of migrant workers in the cities, without local papers or eligibility for any social services, remain in poverty without being counted.

The Party has touted China's power abroad—from making claims on the South China Sea to pushing forward in the Himalayas—and its public campaigns against endemic corruption, to counter the widening disruptions of striking workers in revolt and the escalating repression against them. Many strikers, lawyers and labor activists have been jailed, but Lu Yuyu, a former migrant laborer, has been sentenced to four years in jail just for blogging news about strikes.

The real promise Xi made is to double down on control of ideas of freedom in a surveillance society. Despite the nominal autonomous status of Hong Kong under "one country two systems," a woman in Guangdong just spent three years in jail for praising Hong Kong's Occupy Central movement of 2014. Hong Kong schools erase mention of the June 4, 1989, Tiananmen Square Massacre in their history classes. The announced plans to track the physical movements and online presence of every resident into an individual permanent record complete with loyalty grade is an ugly vision of Party control for the benefit of capitalists within and without China.

—Bob McGuire

PUERTO RICO: TRUMP'S KATRINA

Puerto Rico should be considered Trump's Katrina/New Orleans. You didn't hear him whining about costs for recovery for Houston or Florida, but his snide comment about how the recovery for Puerto Rico would "break the bank" had all sorts of connotations that one could glean, mainly racially oriented. After all, the majority of folks in that country are brown.

I have an utter disregard for armchair patriots—people who never served yet want to be the greatest flag-wavers around and have so much negative to say towards those expressing freedoms that people in the military take an oath to defend regardless of what one might think of the particular conflict. I am glad to see Bush come out as he did.

Robert Taliaferro
Black River, Wisc.

LGBTQ IN AUSTRALIA

I was happy to learn that on Oct. 11, as part of Victorian Seniors Festival, a group of Lesbian elders in Australia held a mass handholding demonstration on a trolley car traveling from Melbourne to St. Kilda. The event commemorated the 1976 arrest of a Lesbian couple charged with "obscene behavior" just for holding hands on a tram. The group invited listeners, especially younger Lesbians, to hear and record their personal experiences with oppression and what they did to resist. The event is part of the "Hold Hands on a Tram Project" launched by the LGBTQI organization Alice's Garage, which aims to collect stories focusing on how Lesbians' experience of



READERS' VIEWS

homophobia is compounded by sexism, making lesbophobia socially invisible.

Adele
Memphis

TRANS IN TEXAS

I'm in a Texas Prison. I don't get much mail from family. I'm writing you because I would like you to send me a free subscription. I have struggled here in this Texas prison. I have been raped five times and nothing has been done about it. When I'm released I will be letting the media and society know what I have gone through. I'm hopeful that I can start a lawsuit against this Texas prison. I've been asking to be placed in "safekeeping" and been denied four times. The Texas prison system doesn't care about us Transgenders. We are the victims of rapes, extortion, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and other threats of violence because of who we are. There's no safe place for us. I am looking for anything that is a resource guide for survivors of sexual abuse behind bars. I'm scared for my life. I like reading things about legal actions and survivor options.

Prisoner
In a Texas hellhole

WOMEN'S LIBERATION

What was clearly missing in the Women's Convention in Detroit was a revolutionary perspective (see "Convention Shows Women Persist," p. 2). The issues raised will never be eradicated without a radical change in the U.S. political system.

Black woman activist
Detroit

REMEMBERING JUDY TANZAWA AND DAN PERRON

I knew Judy Tanzawa (see "Judy Tanzawa (Judy Tristan) 1939-2017," p. 1) as totally committed to Raya Dunayevskaya's ideas, News and Letters Committees and the Black Dimension. Her life was as a women's liberationist and as a Marxist-Humanist and reflected her past work as a strong union representative. She and her husband Paul were active with Georgiana Williams and the LA 4 + Defense Committee formed when four Black youths in South Central Los Angeles, including Georgiana's son Damian, were jailed after the April 29, 1992, L.A. Rebellion. She and Paul attended every meeting as well as every court session for him. When there were complaints of teachers not standing up to the administrators, she would say, "Go lower and deeper."

Basho
Los Angeles

Judy was fearless, loving, passionate about freedom—especially Black freedom—principled and loyal to those she cared about. She did grievance work for actors. If you were management, you would not want to go up against Judy. She had a hard life with a lot of loss and personal struggles. She had a lot of love too. She could be tough on people, but I never saw that directly.

It makes me so sad Judy never saw the birth of the "new society" she dedicated her life to. But I know that laying the groundwork and staying human in an inhuman world was crucial. She was in it for the long haul, took the long view of history and, while thoroughly sickened by the state of human relationships and the world, she wasn't so selfish as to only want to work for it if she or those she loved could see the end result.

She was true blue, knew her work mattered. My heart goes out to

Judy's family and friends today. She was a superhero.

S.B.
Illinois

News and Letters Committees lost two wonderful comrades who couldn't have been more different yet had in common their love for the organization they helped build and the ideas that they took responsibility for. Dan (see "Dan Perron," p. 3) was one of the friendliest, warmest and most loving people I have known. He always met you with a hug, always wanted to know how you were doing. At our national gatherings he wanted to help and would gladly do any task you asked of him. He loved the newspaper and told me often how great he thought it was, and he took responsibility for distributing it.

Judy was fierce. Her fierceness was for the Idea of freedom that she saw embodied in Marxist-Humanism. To Judy, no one better mess with those ideas, use them for their own careers or try to dilute them or misrepresent them for their own ends rather than for humanity. When it came to protecting and standing up for Marxist-Humanism she was unforgiving. She brought that fierceness to every battle she decided to be a part of—from fighting racism, to working for women's liberation and standing up for workers.

She told me that in her job representing workers, her motto was that "The worker is always right, even when he or she is wrong." To me that meant that she would fight for that worker even if they were wrong on a particular issue, because they were right in the universal fight against capitalism's exploitation of labor. We will miss Dan and Judy terribly, and at the same time, they remain a part of us as News and Letters Committees.

Terry Moon
Chicago



I learned a lot of important things about the sex industry from Adele's review of *Pimp State* by Kat Banyard (July-Aug. *N&L*). The review transformed me into being opposed to legalizing the sex industry, unless it is done by strictly following the Nordic Model. Otherwise women will surely suffer, and pimps, strip club owners, traffickers and brothel owners will be the ones who profit. Thank you, Adele.

Feminist
Chicago

RACISM IN CANADA

Thank you to rally organizers and participants in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, who solidarized with anti-racists and anti-white-supremacists in the U.S. after protests in August at Charlottesville, N.C. Haligonians want the statue of Cornwallis removed. Soon after Cornwallis founded Halifax, he ordered the killing of Canada's Mi'kmaq First Nations People. It is emboldening and hope-giving when there is any, even small, international solidarity shown for a more human world.

Wanting peace
Chicago

DETROIT AND 'DETROIT'

The review of the film *Detroit* in the Sept.-Oct. *N&L* is too one-sided. It is a flawed film but significant and needs to be widely viewed. The violence and intensity of the racism shown ring true. The purpose is to bring that violence to public attention, at a time when that memory has been largely suppressed, and make it part of public discussion. People in the San Francisco Bay Area could take heed. Detroit was once a world center of technology, just as "Silicon Valley" is today. The direct appropriation of consumer goods was not simply destructive, but a call for justice. The film fails to show the huge numbers of whites who were also involved in shopping-without-money, which is a huge gap. *Detroit* is far better than the film *Detropia*, which, though well-meaning, leaves viewers with a preset conclusion that Detroit fell apart because people there failed to "innovate," as if workers were to blame.

The destruction of Detroit included not just corporate scheming, but corrupt and dysfunctional city and state governments since the mid-1950s. There are a lot of great things going on in the movement for freedom in Southeast Michigan, and the film *Detroit* tells a crucial part of the story and is a voice for freedom, whatever its faults. We have to look at the whole picture if we are to have the possibility of reaching new beginnings and truly uprooting the terrible social relations that led to the 1967 Rebellion and the present situation, and creating a new society on truly human grounds.

Former Detroitier
Berkeley, Calif.

LABOR AND ROBOTS

With the advent of enhanced robotics in the workplace, labor is no longer an appendage to the machine; rather, its role is totally eliminated. Capitalist technology will eventually achieve such precision that a living human worker is no longer needed for at least some part of production. A bus driver told me that at his workplace

an experimental self-driving bus was parked in the garage shortly before a new bus drivers' contract was to be negotiated. This certainly has a psychological effect on the union members. There is definitely more need for union members in all aspects of work: in light of accelerated automation, the fight against the hubris of the capitalists will be even harder. The most advantageous machine for any particular production line can be invented, but without the living labor to work to create surplus value, and to consume the capitalists' output, the capitalist is only hung out to dry.

Mannel
Los Angeles

HAITIAN REVOLT

Demonstrations continue to erupt throughout Haiti, braving the terror of the Haitian National Police and affiliated paramilitary forces. The demonstrators object to Jovenel Moïse and his illegitimate government as no different than the old Duvalier dictatorships. They demand the resignation of Moïse and similarly corrupt members of parliament.

Since the media either blocks or distorts news from Haiti, we ask that you, our supporters, become a people's media for Haiti and help us report the news.

Haiti Action Committee
Berkeley, Calif.

WHY READ N&L?

I really appreciate you guys. I like receiving this publication because it includes so many things that we normally wouldn't hear about on the news. What these protests are truly about and what they stand for. There are articles that fill us in on different events all over the world. It's not confined to just a couple of cities or states. I would not want to lose touch with *N&L* so if at all possible I will greatly respect and appreciate the continuation of this paper.

Prisoner
Susanville, Calif.

Let me just tell you how much I simply adore your newspaper. It always provides a revolutionary ray of hope into my heart, especially these days when Trump is in the White House and the alt-right is on the march!

Prisoner
Suffield, Conn.

CORRECTION

For "Where Ayotzinapa Movement Can Lead" (Sept.-Oct. *N&L*): Bertha Nava is the mother of Julio César Ramírez Nava, not of Julio César Mondragón. Both were killed on Sept. 26 in Iguala. The mother of Julio César Mondragón is called Afrodita Mondragón Fontes. Thanks for the article on Ayotzinapa.

A.M.
Mexico City

To our incarcerated readers—

Prisoncrats sometimes choose to return an issue to us undelivered, but if you have been moved—to another prison, or within the same prison—the USPS will not forward newspapers. Help us keep *N&L* in your hands by letting us know your change of address, including when you are released. When you leave prison your donor subscription can continue to your new address for one additional year.

We welcome your contributions to *N&L* and for our website. There are some things we cannot provide. We do not match up pen pals. *N&L* cannot help prisoners with individual legal cases, and we cannot offer legal advice or access to attorneys. We don't have the resources to do that work. But this paper is a place where the voices of people engaged in struggles inside and outside prison walls can be heard speaking for themselves.

CONCEPTS THAT UNITE PHILOSOPHY & REVOLUTION

Normally, we understand “concept” as a definition whose scientific value is its capacity—or not—to describe reality. However, we see in Dunayevskaya’s two-part column on “A concrete Universal—Marx’s *Capital*” (July-Aug. and Sept.-Oct. *N&L*) that “labor power” is a living concept, which speaks of the struggles of men and women to get rid of alienated labor. At the same time, it is profoundly objective, for it comes from the analysis of the contradiction between dead and living labor generated by the “specifically capitalistic mode of production” with mechanized factories. This total unification of the contradictory structure of reality and the will of men and women to overcome such contradiction, to become freer, brings Dunayevskaya to say that Marx’s “original economic categories were so philosophically rooted that [he] created a new unity out of economics, philosophy, revolution, on a specific historic plane.” Marx’s economics is a philosophy of revolution that, when worked out with the actual struggles for freedom, becomes the unity of theory and practice, of philosophy and revolution, that constitutes the revolutionary task of our time. **J.G.F. Héctor Mexico City**

LIES POISON US

Trump’s Environmental Protection Agency showed its true colors once again when its head, Scott Pruitt, banned scientists who receive EPA research grants from advising the agency. No one believed the blatant lie that it was done to stop conflicts of interest, since he is busy filling agency staff and advisory panels with scientists and others who are corporate lackeys. This administration revels in blatant lies as a way of dissolving the line between true and false.



Environmentalist Southern California

CLASS JUSTICE

Trump’s associate Paul Manafort got the privilege of being free and then surrendering, even with so much riding on his indictment for conspiracy and other charges. No predawn raid with smoke canister bombs damaging his house. No danger of the dog or spouse being shot. Our legal system is a completely different experience at every step when you have money, not least because police and prosecutors choose to do different things from the very beginning.

Watcher of police and courts Indiana

VOICES FROM BEHIND BARS

I love the newspaper. A positive inspirational article to give Brothers in the underground struggle some strength would be a plus. I’m up in the backwoods of Pennsylvania. When I pass this newspaper around, Brothers tuck it like it’s contraband. I’m at war with the justice system and these racists. I’m Muslim so that makes it twice as bad. I’m from the U.S., but I look like I was born in Mecca, so the things I face and endure relate to the articles. I know racists on a first-hand basis and the newspaper reminds me I’m not alone.

Prisoner Huntingdon, Penn.

I have been a voice and action in Kentucky prisons. My life is to show others the capability we have! Kentucky prisoners suffer a special type of oppression: “reality numbing.” They offer every sort of toy: TV, tablet, email, cookies and devices to distract men from reality. Men and women are comfortable in this perfect environment for institutionalism to breed. Group efforts, grievances, post-incarceration legal pursuits, education, even keeping contact with kids become extra work when we can play all day. The staff yells at you for untied shoelaces and untucked shirts! Maybe it’s time to focus on job training, college credits, halfway houses focused on re-entry and not money, and healing wounds with community and victims.

Blood in My Eye by George Jackson, *Capital and The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx, Che’s works on guerilla tactics, *The Study of Fascism in America*, slavery, the Native American holocaust, immigrant exploitation, class separation, racism, the power of money vs. lives, all drive me to fight and make a stand to show by example and sacrifice for just a small change—a mustard seed.



Prisoner West Liberty, Ky.

Thank you for the past year of knowledge; your *N&L* is great! As for me, please Google me. Yes, I’m The Litigator For Justice. I feel I’m well informed on Marx and Marxism. Wow, “His words fall out as if they were my words. I’ve never read anything that feels so normal.” I fully understand. I want to help. To do that I will need your help! Whatever information your organization sends it will remain and grow. We are 43,000 prisoners in Arizona and we are not growing in a good way. We need knowledge and guidance.

What can I do to make a lasting impression on Arizona and the Department of Justice? Let’s end my current mission on a big upbeat. I’m close to all races, I’m a go-to person. Let’s make a change.

Dale Maisano Tucson, Ariz.

I’m currently serving my 19th straight year in the Canadian penitentiary system. I would greatly appreciate whatever info you can send on your organization, as well as a copy of *N&L*. I entered prison far less politically and socially conscious than I am now. I’ve since developed a passionate sense of social justice and interest in variants of Marxism and other critical social perspectives, with my attention becoming increasingly directed to the institutions and systems—capitalist, racist, patriarchal—which perpetuate oppression, exploitation and dehumanization. My commitment is geared toward the social transformation of

the world to make it a more just and human place for all people, regardless of color, class, gender, sexual orientation, geographic location, etc.

In my view a major target in radical social transformations must be the political economy; changes in which are crucial to changes in society. Key to social transformation is the basic respect for the humanity of the human being, even those we may find ourselves pitted against. I’ve become convinced that when we resort to undermining another person’s humanity, we lose a part of our own. Your “humanist” brand of Marxism might be exactly the kind of Marxism that I’ve been searching for.

Prisoner Port Cartier, Quebec

I would love to find a donor so I could keep receiving this informative paper. Being incarcerated, the struggle is harder, but just to have the information is a blessing. I have no TV and most here care less about world affairs. On top of that, almost all the new lifers are 25 years old or younger. But for a person who feels that the state and federal governments have abandoned him, your paper is my only breath of fresh air.

Prisoner Tracy, Calif.

Sign me up for *N&L*. I would like to thank y’all for everything y’all are doing for me and other inmates in prison. Without y’all I don’t know what we would do. I like to read and I write poems and work on my case. I like to share my work with other inmates who are in the struggle with me.

Prisoner Trion, Georgia

TO OUR READERS: Can you donate \$5 for a prisoner who cannot pay for a subscription to *N&L*? It will be shared with many others. A donation of \$8 pays for a subscription plus the *Pelican Bay Hunger Strikers* pamphlet to be sent to a prisoner. Prisoners are eligible to continue their free subscriptions when they first get released, a time when the system tries to make them forget the struggle.

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FROM THE WRITINGS OF RAYADUNAYEVSKAYA

Editor's note: On the Russian Revolution's 100th anniversary, we present, first, Raya Dunayevskaya's outline for a speech in Pittsburgh on Nov. 14, 1948, for the Revolution's anniversary (Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, #9186). The notes have been excerpted and edited; footnotes and section titles were added by the editors. Second is the section "Lenin and the Dialectic: A Mind in Action" from chapter 10, "The Collapse of the Second International and the Break in Lenin's Thought," of Marxism and Freedom, from 1776 until Today.

I. INTRODUCTION

As vodka and the tons of caviar flow freely at Russian embassies in celebration of the Russian Revolution, while totalitarian control over Russian and East European masses continues, cynics are heard to say: If that is what it could degenerate to, why should you celebrate the event?

But just as bloody White Terror could not wipe out memory of the Paris Commune of 1871, neither can the Stalinist usurpers wipe out memory of the Russian masses "storming the heavens" to establish the first workers' state in the world.

The first attempt at a workers' republic—the Paris Commune—was drowned in blood but it is that experience which made possible the successful Russian Revolution.

For Marxists there is no division between theory and practice—the Paris Commune laid the basis for the theory of the breakup of the capitalist state, and that theory laid the basis for the Russian Revolution.

On its eve, in his work *State and Revolution*, Lenin was drawing the lessons from the heroism of the Commune, which lay not only in self-sacrifice but in the **historic initiative** displayed by the Parisian masses. Just as he came to the application of Marx's theory to the Russian scene, he was interrupted in his work. The afterword to this work states:

"I had not succeeded in writing a single line of the chapter [on the Russian Revolution], being prevented therefrom by a political crisis—the eve of the October Revolution of 1917. Such a hindrance can only be welcomed...It is more pleasant and more useful to live through the experience of a revolution than to write about it."

So we see that for Marxists the most abstract theory is the most concrete practice. Or, as Trotsky put it:

"This 'commentator' of Marx was preparing the party for the revolutionary conquest of a sixth of the globe's surface."

It is this which we are celebrating today; the unfinished chapter of Lenin's *State and Revolution* was finished by the entrance of the Russian masses on the historic scene to make world history.

II. THE FEBRUARY REVOLUTION

In that single year, 1917, the Russian workers and peasants won **two** successful revolutions. The first, February Revolution, was made in five days and gives us the dynamics of revolution. Let us look at it (I'm using the old calendar).

Feb. 23—International Women's Day celebration, 90,000 strikers.

Feb. 24—Strikers doubled. Slogan "Bread!" replaced by "Down with autocracy!"

Feb. 25—Cossacks called out to put down demonstration refuse to do so.

Feb. 26—Workers from suburbs move over Neva, though being fired upon, and to Tauride Palace.

Feb. 27—Soldiers join insurrection; Tsar arrested. Political prisoners let out.

Now the workers did it spontaneously, without leadership. But though they accomplished the revolution, without a revolutionary party they could not hold power and Kerensky came to "the throne" to ask them in the name of the republic to continue the imperialist war.

But precisely because they were really not just one force but two, (1) [Kerensky's government] and (2) soviets, the instability of this new provisional government opens the regime of **dual power**.

III. TOWARD OCTOBER

April Days—Lenin rearms the Party.²

1. A quote from Karl Marx about the Paris Commune, from his letter to Ludwig Kugelmann, April 12, 1871.

2. Lenin's "April Theses" called for all power to the soviets as a "commune state," a new International and an end to the war. Dunayevskaya's notes indicate that she would add "but May Congress of [soviets of] peasants elects" an execu-

On the 100th anniversary of the Russian Revolution

Historic initiative of the masses and Lenin's philosophic break

July Days—Month of Great Slander;³ 500,000 demonstrate.

September—Kornilov marches on Petrograd.⁴

Between February and October there are 4,955 agrarian conflicts with landlords. Local Militia refuse to put down acts of violence of peasantry.

Leon Trotsky: "Rural revolt loosened the last bolts of the army."

Lenin's slogans: Peace! Bread! Land! Out with capitalist ministers! All power to the soviets! Self-determination of nations!

IV. THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

In an attempt to conciliate and bring workers over to their side, Compromisers suggest the formation of a Committee of Revolutionary Defense on Oct. 9. Bolsheviks accept the idea and suggest its staff consist of: 1. Presidium of Soviet; 2. representatives of soldiers and of fleet; 3. representatives of railroad union; 4. representatives of trade unions; 5. factory



Women march on International Women's Day, 1917, in Petrograd, Russia.

committees; 6. Party's military organization—Red Guard. Trotsky president of Military Revolutionary Committee.

Approved on Oct. 20, and within **five days**—Oct. 25—preparations for insurrection are made and revolution is successful.

V. THE NEW SOVIET GOVERNMENT

Congress of Soviets Oct. 25: 505 vote for transfer of power to soviets; 86 vote for government of "democracy"; 55 vote for coalition; 21 vote for coalition without Cadets.

Since all revisionists try to identify Bolshevism with totalitarianism and claim Stalinism is the natural result of Bolshevism, let us watch carefully what type of Presidium the Bolsheviks proposed: 14 Bolsheviks; 7 Socialist-Revolutionaries; 3 Mensheviks; 1 Menshevik Internationalist.

Right-wing Mensheviks walk out of the Congress; 70 of them show this hostility when the Congress votes down negotiations with the provisional government. Martov, with 25, walks out because Bolsheviks are proceeding with insurrection "alone."

New Central Executive Committee: of 101 members elected, 62 Bolsheviks and 29 Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. And they leave space for factions who abandoned Congress to send delegates to CEC on the basis of proportional representation.

It is this Congress which becomes the new government or workers' state. The news is brought in of conquest of the palace and key points—a nearly bloodless revolution.

The blood did not start flowing till the counter-revolution armed by world imperialists attacked on seven different fronts.

The most moving chapter in Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution* is this chapter, describing the singing of the "Internationale" now that it was not just words but actual power...

VI. REVOLUTION AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION

It is this Russian Revolution which we are celebrating today. From the beginning the Bolsheviks knew they could not maintain power unless the workers in other, more advanced countries came to their aid, by making their own revolution. Lenin wrote to the American workers:

"We are in a besieged fortress until armies of international socialist revolution come to our aid."

The armies of the international socialist revolution did not materialize

and the inevitable degeneration of the workers' state was speeded along by the usurper of power, Stalin, against whom Lenin in his *Testament* warned as a

tive dominated by the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, which Lenin regarded as petty-bourgeois opportunists. 3. Trotsky dubbed July 1917 "The Month of the Great Slander," when counter-revolutionaries discredited the Bolsheviks by portraying Lenin as a German agent, forcing him into hiding. This followed a march of 500,000 workers and soldiers demanding "All power to the soviets!"

4. Gen. Lavr Kornilov, appointed commander-in-chief of the Russian army in July, attempted a military coup beginning with an assault on the Petrograd Soviet in August.

cook who would cook only "peppery dishes" and who should be removed from his post of General Secretary.

Lenin and the Dialectic: A Mind in Action

"All revolutions, in the sciences no less than in general history, originate only in this, that the spirit of man, for the understanding and comprehension of himself, for the possessing of himself, has now altered his categories, uniting himself in a truer, deeper, more intrinsic relation with himself."—Hegel

Nadezhda Krupskaya, Lenin's wife and closest collaborator, in her *Memories of Lenin*, tells us that Lenin began his study of Hegel for the "Essay on Marxism," commissioned by the *Encyclopaedia Granat*. He thereupon placed the philosophical question in the forefront, as is evident from the first section of the essay. She adds: "This was not the usual way of presenting Marx's teaching."

This is true. Scores of "popularizations" of Marxian economics had been written. Lenin's *Essay* is the first, since the death of Marx and Engels, to show the primacy of a philosophical approach. There is no doubt that as soon as Lenin opened the *Science of Logic*, he grasped the importance of dialectics, the *movement* of thought:

"Movement and self-movement (this NB! independent, spontaneous internally necessary movement), 'change,' 'movement and life,' 'the principle of every self-movement,' 'impulse' to 'movement' and to 'activity'—opposite of 'dead-being'—Who would believe that this is the core of 'Hegelianism,' of abstract and abstruse (difficult, absurd?) Hegelianism? We must disclose this core, grasp it, save, shell it out, purify it—which is precisely what Marx and Engels have done."

When Lenin *began* his study of Hegel, as his *Philosophic Notebooks* show, he still felt compelled to emphasize that he is reading Hegel materialistically, instead of taking that for granted, and going on to what was *new*. By the *end* of the Hegelian studies, he wrote:

"Intelligent idealism is nearer to intelligent materialism than is stupid materialism.

"Dialectic idealism instead of intelligent; metaphysical, undeveloped, dead, vulgar, stationary instead of stupid."

With his characteristic precision, Lenin himself tells when he first fully grasped the dialectic. He wrote the *Essay on Marxism* between July and November, 1914, the period when he began his study of the "Larger Logic." On Jan. 4, 1915, having already forwarded the *Essay* to the *Encyclopaedia Granat*, he wrote:

"By the way, will there not still be time for certain corrections in the section on dialectics? Perhaps you will be good enough to write and say when exactly it is to go to the printers and what the last date is for receiving corrections. I have been studying this question of dialectics for the last month and a half and I think I could add something to it if there was time..."

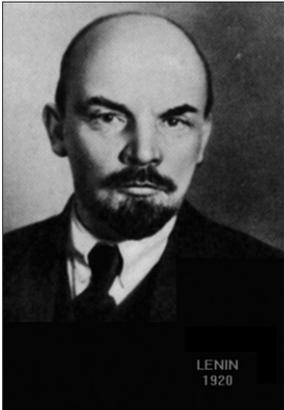
Six weeks. That is the time it took him to reach the book on "Subjectivity," in the "Doctrine of the Notion." The *Notebooks* carry the date Dec. 17, 1914. It is under the section on "Syllogisms," where Hegel destroys the opposition between subjectivity and objectivity, that Lenin bursts forth with the aphorisms that reveal how decisive was his break with *his own philosophic past*.

Heretofore, to Lenin, as to everybody else in the Second International, the Hegelian dialectic had been important mainly as a reference point in internal polemics. If an opponent was obscure, he was accused of dialectical sophistry and reminded that Marx had turned Hegel around and stood him right side up. Reformist and evolutionary theorists of socialist development were fought by citing Hegel's "dialectic." It was generally agreed that Hegel stood for development and revolution, rather than standing still and evolution. The conception of contradiction was that of two units existing *alongside* of one another. The conception of opposition had not gone beyond Kant's dualism—as if Hegel had never destroyed it with the conception that every single thing is itself a contradiction, is the basis of all movement. Hence, that all movement is self-movement.

Having broken with this philosophic past, Lenin now moved boldly to sum up the essence of the dialectic: "Briefly, the dialectic can be defined as the doctrine of the unity of opposites. Thereby is the kernel of the dialectic grasped, but that demands explanation and development."

For the first time he was no longer satisfied with [Rudolf] Hilferding's *Finance Capital*, the standard, accepted study of the latest stage of capitalist

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LENIN
1920

On the 100th anniversary of the Russian Revolution

Russia: From Proletarian Revolution to State-Capitalist Counter-Revolution

Selected writings by Raya Dunayevskaya

From the introduction:

Investigating the process leading to the Russian Revolution, understanding the contradictory years 1917-1923, as well as grasping what transpired in the USSR after Lenin's death and within the capitalist world under the impact of the Great Depression are all crucial to unearthing the significance of the Revolution 100 years later.

Today, however, we are making that investigation in a world whose dominant ideologies deny the Russian Revolution's singular importance, dismiss it as a deviant historical footnote and obscure its contradictory meaning. Two dimensions

of the present moment stand in our way.

First is a world in economic, political and social disarray that includes: a permanent drive by the U.S. for world hegemony in conflict with nuclear-armed Russia, China and the nuclear ambitions of North Korea; a multitude of reactionary regimes and non-state powers determined to crush any authentic opposition from below under the cover of religious dogmas and narrow nationalisms; and an unprecedented refugee crisis involving millions of people in the Middle East, Asia, the Americas and Africa, with tens of thousands already massacred in on-going wars. *We are in a cauldron of seemingly permanent war and suffering.*

Second is the ideological pollution. A host of ideologues seek to smother the idea of liberation and dismiss as unreasoning the human beings needed to achieve emancipatory social transformation. They wish to consign authentic revolution to the distant past and imprison us within a no-exit future. While this is to be expected from neoliberal and other modes of reactionary thought, more distressing—and a somber indication of the depth of the ideological pollution—is the lack of an emancipatory vision from many who see themselves as radical critics of today's oppressive reality but for whom revolution is hopelessly utopian and doomed to be dictatorial rather than liberating.

A *critical return* through the revolutionary mind of Raya Dunayevskaya to the world-shaking events of 1917 that forged a giant leap in humanity's emancipation, as well as a devastating transformation into opposite in the decades that followed, can provide us with a needed vantage point to confront our own contradictory, unfree world.

1917 was a world-historic turning point—the first successful social revolution against capitalism. But, before that, there arose a crucial test for revolutionaries—the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914. It was a test that the established Marxism of the Second International failed, betraying

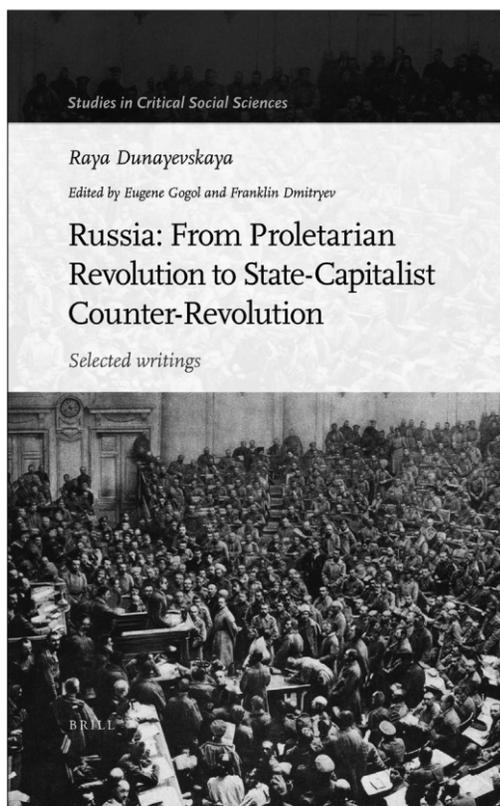
the world's masses. Despite a decade and more of anti-war proclamations, speeches and demonstrations, once war broke out the vast majority of the socialist and trade union groups backed the governments of their respective countries. The largest socialist organization, the German Social Democracy, supported the war, and its members in parliament, save for Karl Liebknecht, voted to fund it. He and the great Polish revolutionary and theoretician Rosa Luxemburg would break from this betrayal of socialist principles.

From Russia, a crucial exception came from Lenin and the Bolshevik Party, who sharply opposed the war. To Lenin the betrayal was such a shock that he sought to work out its root and to establish theoretical ground for his revolutionary viewpoint through a return to the philosophic origins of Marxism within the Hegelian dialectic. His *Conspectus of Hegel's "Science of Logic" (Philosophic Notebooks)* provided "philosophic preparation" for the events from February to October 1917, and for the first conflictive years

of Soviet power, 1917-1923....

In the darkest hours of war, a new beginning became possible. It was based on the activities of masses of workers—including women workers—and peasants....

[Dunayevskaya's] study did not end with analyzing the revolution and the contradictory practice of the period afterwards, but continued with its transformation into its opposite, the establishment of state-capitalism, and its global impact in the 20th century. Crucial—after this first attempt to build a workers' state was transformed into the monstrosity of a state-capitalist tyranny—was Dunayevskaya's determination to find *new beginnings for revolutionary Marxism for her age.*



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Russia: From Proletarian Revolution to State-Capitalist Counter-Revolution.

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Lenin's philosophic break and the Russian Revolution

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development. He embarked on an independent analysis. His voluminous notebooks, filling 693 pages, were his preparation for the small volume that was published as *Imperialism*. These preparatory notes show how, in the concrete economic study, he holds tight to the dialectic. The published work itself was a demonstration in economics of the dialectic as the unity of opposites.

Prior to 1914, Marxists had treated cartels, trusts, syndicates, as mere "forms" of large-scale production, as part of a continuous development of capitalism. Capitalism seemed to be "organizing the economy," removing "planlessness," and thus making it easier for the workers "to take over"—as if it were merely a matter of replacing one set of office holders with another. Now, however, Lenin treats monopoly not so much as a part of a continuous development, but as a development through contradiction, through *transformation into opposite*.

Competition was transformed into its opposite, monopoly. But monopoly didn't transcend competition. It coexists with it. It multiplies contradictions; it deepens the crisis. Imperialism arose, not out of capitalism in general, but out of capitalism at a specific stage "when its essential qualities became transformed into their opposites." Just as competition was transformed into its opposite, monopoly, a part of the proletariat was transformed into *its* opposite, the aristocracy of labor. That was the bulwark of the Second International. That caused its collapse.

Lenin's study of monopoly capitalism followed his *Philosophic Notebooks* and outside of that context cannot be fully understood. Once Lenin saw the counter-revolution within the revolutionary movement, he felt compelled to break with his former conception of the relationship between materialism and idealism. The keynote of his *Philosophic Notebooks* is nothing short of a restoration of truth to philosophic idealism against vulgar materialism, to which he had given the green light in 1908 with his work on *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*.⁵ Necessary as that book may have been for the specific purposes of Russia—only Russia was so backward that in 1908 one still had to fight clericalism in the Marxist movement—he now includes himself among the Marxists who "criticized the Kantians...more in a Feuerbachian than in a Hegelian manner."

Of his former teacher, Georgi Plekhanov, respected as such, Lenin now writes:

"Plekhanov wrote on philosophy (dialectic) probably nearly 1,000 pages (Bel'tov + against Bogdanov + against Kantians + basic questions, etc., etc., on 5. It is no accident that the favorite book in Russia has become this very same *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, which has undergone innumerable editions. These editions make a hash of Lenin's relation to the dialectic by including two pages from his *Philosophic Notebooks* as they and the book on *Materialism* were one continuous development.... The Russian conception of the backwardness of the Anglo-Saxons is such that they have never even bothered to make a translation of the *Notebooks* for the American and English public. The first English translation of the *Notebooks* is included as Appendix B of *Marxism and Freedom*...-R.D.

philosophy (dialectic). There is nil in them about the Larger Logic, about it, *its* thoughts (i.e., the dialectic *proper*, as a philosophic science), nil!!"

With himself, he is as merciless, giving no quarter, not even in the economic field:

"It is impossible completely to grasp Marx's *Capital*, and especially its first chapter, if you have not studied through and understood the *whole* of Hegel's *Logic*. Consequently, none of the Marxists for the past half a century have understood Marx!!"

Before 1914, Lenin had one view of *Capital* and philosophy. War and the collapse of the Second International made him turn to the dialectic and changed his views. But he didn't face either event with a blank mind. He had been a practicing revolutionary in Russia and was molded by the sharpness of the contradictions of that backward country. There is no study of Volume II of *Capital* more profound than that which Lenin had made at the turn of the century. There is no more profound grasp of the dialectic in action, that is to say, "*masses as reason*," than that which he made of the 1905 revolution. No matter where Lenin resided, however, he *lived* in Russia. He was a *Russian Marxist*. He was unprepared for the International's collapse. But having faced it both in actuality and in philosophy, he became politically more irreconcilable than ever. It was not a "mood." His attitude was not only against those who betrayed. The collapse of the Second International meant the breakdown of all previous thought and method of thought which called itself Marxist, i.e., *all* established Marxism.

VOICES FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Ferguson, Mo., at three

by Faruq

It was in Ferguson, Mo., three years ago on Aug. 12, 2014, that sadly we witnessed another police killing of an unarmed New Afrikan man. Once again we were fed the banal excuse of the alleged “criminality” of Michael Brown and, of course, officer Wilson’s fear for his life, as the justification of Mr. Brown’s murder. An added insult to the tragedy of a life cut short was that Brown’s parents and neighbors, who had gathered at the scene of his death, had to watch his body lie covered by a blanket under a hot August sun for four hours.

But out of that tragedy we also witnessed the emergence of Black Lives Matter (BLM) and that phrase signaled much more than an empty slogan without resonance. That is because it expressed an old idea that has been simmering, waiting to be fully addressed: the latest demand of New Afrikans for their total human dignity. Today we can see that the phrase has become the appellative of a decentralized, horizontally led national coalition.

The question is: Can BLM as a functional organized entity develop philosophically, and thereby become capable of generating something beyond a national discussion of U.S. racism?

PRISONERS’ VIEW OF BLACK LIVES MATTER

Thoughts concerning the potential viability of BLM as a mass movement prompted me to ask other prisoners what their thinking might be.

Prisoner one said that BLM could make a difference in highlighting structural racism and its effect on the lives of New Afrikans, particularly the subtle effects that are not always clearly visible to every

Time to stop Trump

by Robert Taliaferro

J.S. Mill in his 1859 treatise “On Liberty” wrote, “No one pretends that actions should be as free as opinions. On the contrary, even opinions lose their immunity, when the circumstances in which they are expressed are such as to constitute their expression a positive instigation to some mischievous act.”

This is a concept that is lost on Donald J. Trump and his hardline supporters. Perhaps the self-defined “super intelligent” being who currently reigns in the White House is not familiar with Mill and others who define what it means to value freedom and to do so with equity, fairness and maturity.

Perhaps the self-appointed chief antagonist of the nation, and his cronies, should be reminded that, despite its deficiencies, when it comes to universal democratic principles, we do not subscribe to oligarchical governance, or take well to attempts to bully one’s way into a belief that you are the only one who is right.

THE PRESIDENT IS A BULLY

This is not 1920s Fascist Italy, brown-shirted Nazi Germany, Stalinist Russia, Maoist China or the family-run nation of North Korea.

The presidency is not a pulpit for bullying with a purpose of payback for real or imagined slights; it is not the place to find redemption for past failures like the United States Football League which are now disguised as veiled attacks on the National Football League and its players who choose to use their forum to protest injustice and indifference.

It is not the place to disgrace the service of U.S. military personnel and their families simply because you take umbrage with the way you are portrayed in the media or because someone expresses a contrary opinion.

Government is not a place for petty and childish actions, something the current administration has turned into an art form; nor is it a personal bully pulpit that requires everyone to bow and applaud every time you pass rhetorical gas.

Government is alleged to represent all the nation’s people and take into account those who make up this country regardless of race, creed, gender, or ideology. Oligarchical and xenophobic fanaticism ignores that concept, and that is something the current administration is attempting to incorporate as national policy.

This country has always been a country of immigrants. Only one culture is indigenous, regardless of the racist rhetoric, which passes for policy by those who attempt to create alternate histories that support their ignorance.

There is hope that the 2018 midterm elections can send a message that people want their country back. That is when youth, the true middle-class, women and the LGBTIQI community, when people of all colors can send a message to the president all the way down to the lowest intern that if you don’t get your shit together and start representing the interests of all the people of the U.S., then we are going to send your asses home—period.

Enough is enough is enough!



Protests in Ferguson, Missouri, Aug. 17, 2014.

amerikan.

Prisoner two thought BLM was on the right track in pushing the guardians of the status quo to begin to respect the inherent dignity of New Afrikans’ lives.

Prisoner three thought BLM was necessary in response to the precarious nature that defines New Afrikan people’s existence in amerika, and that it is very important that BLM maintain its autonomy.

Prisoner four opined that if New Afrikans wanted a change in their social relations in amerika, then they needed to place themselves in the position to be the change desired. Thus BLM can provide the appropriate medium to bring about the fundamental change the country needs.

All these prisoners have a positive view of BLM. However, those views are the products of limited perspectives because we lack an in-depth knowledge of BLM’s total mission statement.

BLM VERSUS AMERIKAN DEMOCRACY

BLM versus amerikan democracy should be discussed entirely in the historical context that birthed the racial tensions that exist today. BLM, by its stance and projections, has pitted itself against amerika’s foremost ideals. We all have heard it said by presidents that amerika is a nation founded on laws. The implication being abstract principles of laws are the sole arbiter of all social interactions between human beings in amerika. However, the experiences of New Afrikans with the police and judicial system reveal something quite different from the claim of equal justice under the law.

Any talk of changing the basic procedures governing how policing is conducted, and specifically how it plays out between the police and New Afrikans, is interpreted as an attack on the foundation of amerika. That is evident in the attempts to distort and misinterpret the reason why BLM has emerged at this point in time. Once again we are witnessing, in a sense, the hostile reactions of former slave owners displaying their indignation toward emancipated slaves demanding the full fruits their emancipation would entail.

It is imperative to completely draw on the lessons of history to furnish the correct path forward and, at the same time, to reveal the degree of effort necessary to uproot police brutality while bearing in mind that the idea is to eradicate the anti-human abstract principle of laws, and replace them with humanistic principles of restorative justice that recognize the inherent dignity of all human beings.

Wisconsin Trans prisoner traumatized

I have been traumatized over the last several months in prison segregation. I’m scared to leave my cell to bathe or change clothing. I was sexually humiliated in a series of incidents where prison staff forced me to strip when they didn’t have authorization to do so. This happened after I reported being raped by a fellow prisoner in 2015. Because of how the staff tormented me I am now scared to say his name.

I know they will retaliate if you help me. But I promise to stay strong. I tried to castrate myself after they started refusing to deliver my mail. They said “you can’t put ‘Samantha,’” and wouldn’t listen when I said that the rules in Wisconsin say I can.

When I filed a grievance, I received a conduct report for “false identification.” None of the sexual harassment or rape I reported was acknowledged in writing or in person by anybody. I’m all alone trying to speak out against this. They’re sexual sadists. They’re perverts.

Please help me. I really would appreciate if you publish what I’ve said. I’m a Transgender person at Waupun Correctional Institution, who has been sexually degraded and humiliated for speaking out about being raped, for being Transsexual, who refused to call herself a male and for being a “problem inmate.” The abuse continues despite my pleas for mercy.

—Samantha Eichman

Dreamers fight back

Los Angeles—From Sept. 1 through Sept. 10, Dreamers (young undocumented immigrants brought to the U.S. as infants or young children) fought for their human rights against President Donald Trump’s administration’s white nationalist policy of rescinding President Obama’s DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival) Program.

On Sept. 1, there was a press conference/protest downtown at the Edward Roybal Federal Building plaza sponsored by the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights. A thousand Dreamers and supporters gathered in front of a large contingent of media and protested Trump’s anti-DACA, anti-Mexican, anti-Muslim agenda. After the press conference, we marched, chanting, “Aquí estamos y no nos vamos” (We are here and we are not leaving), and carrying a variety of pro-DACA human rights signs.

U.S. LABOR AND IMMIGRANTS UNITE

On Labor Day, Sept. 4, hundreds of pro-DACA activists together with thousands of low-wage service workers gathered and marched from a downtown high school to city hall with signs such as: “The workers’ struggle has no borders” and “Fight for 15 and a union.” We then marched to the federal building against ICE’s (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) raids, detentions, and deportation of Latino/migrant workers.

The next day, hundreds of SEIU low-wage service workers held a press conference at the L.A. County Building, where Board of Supervisors members Janice Hahn and Hilda Solis spoke. Solis stated that Jeff Sessions’ ending the DACA program filled her with “disgust.” Then we marched to the L.A. County Sheriff’s office to protest Sheriff Jim McDonnell’s cooperation with Trump and the ICE raids against undocumented immigrants.

Sept. 10 was the climax of the protests as up to 20,000 people gathered at MacArthur Park. Protesters spoke of the contributions of undocumented immigrants and against Trump’s proposed wall between Mexico and the U.S.

A procession of Indigenous Americans joined the protest and we marched several miles to La Placita Olvera, the historic site of the settlement of 44 African, Aztec and Spanish subjects in 1781 that established the city of Los Angeles. We chanted, “From Charlottesville to the White House, dismantle white supremacy,” “No more family separation” and “Build bridges, not walls.”

Undocumented Mexican workers don’t take jobs from U.S. workers, as Trump asserts; rather it is decades of U.S. corporations closing their factories and moving them to underdeveloped countries in order to raise their rate of profit. Automation has also eliminated millions of U.S. jobs.

Criminalization, imprisonment and deportation of undocumented immigrants increase profits for private prisons. Dreamers and their allies are fighting the institutional racism of capitalism and its anti-humanism.

—Basho

Prison danger zones

I have been able to see a Danger Zone in the minds of people who have been damaged by all the trauma they have faced and, in all reality, should be in a mental hospital.

The Danger Zone consists of yellow police tape that says “Don’t Cross.” But who would want to step onto a blood-soaked piece of concrete with a dead body oozing brain matter? Only a family member trying to catch the last warmth of their loved one’s body.

Another part of this Danger Zone is all the men and women who were sexually assaulted, raped and molested; victims of a crack-addicted parent trading their child for drugs; victims of a pervert too insecure to have sex with a grown woman; victims of sick, twisted molesters who prey on children. I’ve also seen victims who were at the wrong place at the wrong time, so they carry that abuse around their whole lives.

The worst and most dangerous Danger Zone is of the mind. All of those people who run around every day with undiagnosed and untreated mental disorders. People who walk around talking to themselves, who suffer from bipolar disorder, depression, PTSD, anti social disorder and more. They get into physical and verbal altercations with staff and other inmates, and the administration just locks them up instead of getting them the proper help.

Yes, state and federal prisons have become a warehouse for people suffering from mental health issues. Why? Because mental health treatment is more expensive than throwing people in jail?

This and other practices have got to change in order for the crime rate and prison population to be under control. What can society do to help? Let me know! Or, if you relate to any of these issues and need someone to talk to. God bless.

—Randall James

Letter from Mexico

Earthquake: Mexico's wake-up call

by J.G.F. Héctor

On Sept. 7 and 19, two deadly earthquakes struck Chiapas, Oaxaca, Mexico City, Morelos, Puebla, Guerrero and other states in the country, killing around 400 people and leaving thousands homeless. What has been the response from State and capital? What have been the possibilities opened by the self-organization of the people from below?

'NATURAL DISASTER' NOT SO NATURAL

Earthquakes are natural phenomena and impossible to avoid. However, their consequences are not "natural." They are directly related to social conditions.

Most of the earthquake victims are families who live in old apartment buildings, workers in antiquated constructions, Indigenous communities in precarious housing.

Even when the buildings are new, as in Portales Sur in Mexico City, why did they collapse? If builders and contractors didn't follow the proper building codes, why did the State allow them to build?

The earthquakes brought to the fore the corruption of the government, as well as social inequalities in the country.

While the poorest people are always the ones most affected, it was they who made possible, through their collective self-organization, the rescue of dozens of people trapped under the debris, as well as the collection of food, clothing and health items for the victims. Officials were often an obstacle to relief efforts as they closed access to disaster zones and stopped civilian rescuers from working. They bureaucratized the delivery of aid. There have been reports that some officials stole it.

Two scenes show the government's way of han-



A fraction of the earthquake damage in Mexico City on Sept. 20, 2017. Volunteers work to rescue survivors.

dling the situation versus that of ordinary citizens: 1) When the Secretary of State wanted to capture the attention of the television cameras in the middle of a rescue in Mexico City, people pushed him away, demanding that he "let them work," as this was no place for interviews, and 2) when, after just 36 hours, the army wanted to look for corpses instead of living human beings, the people demanded that looking for survivors must continue without the use of destructive machinery.

A few days after the Sept. 7 earthquake, the National Indigenous Congress (CNI) raised precisely the question of solidarity that springs from below versus the opportunism that comes from above:

"As is usually the case, the bad governments are only going to mock our suffering,

taking pictures of themselves in front of the rubble and making money off the pain of the people struck by tragedy. For this reason we call upon the men and women of good conscience, the collectives of the Mexican and International Sixth and the Mexican people as a whole to be in solidarity and to bring blankets, medicine and non-perishable foods in support of the [affected] villages."

EARTHQUAKE AFFIRMS CLASS DIVISIONS

Earthquakes don't destroy class divisions but reaffirm them. Capitalism turns natural phenomena into deeper tragedies. Capitalism, in order to save production costs, puts workers in old buildings, like the ones that fell down in Mexico City. Capitalism, by paying minimum wages, forces families to live in precarious homes.

This is a system that, by concentrating work in big cities, causes chaotic growth, raising the risks from "natural disasters." It is capitalists who want to build an airport on the highly seismic zone of the Texcoco Lake, putting in peril the life of millions while disposing hundreds of their land.

September was a month of grief and commotion for all the Mexican people. For days, our efforts had to be aimed at trying to rescue survivors of the earthquakes, as well as to help other victims. It is precisely here, in the solidarity and self-organization that springs from below, that the possibility of a new world, beyond capital, with new human relationships, appears. How can we make it blossom? Will this movement from below, splendid in itself, suffice, or would we need something else in addition?

Raid on French anti-nuclear activists

On Sept. 20, 150 police showed up at 6:30 AM at the House of Resistance in Bure, France. It is the latest incident of repression against growing opposition to "permanent" burial of France's high-level radioactive waste (HLRW); including a deep geological HLRW dump in the area. The police arrested two and held citizens in their trailers and rooms for 10 hours.

According to the House of Resistance: "The cops seized practically the whole office...including the photocopier (luckily they didn't take our cat) and loads of other stuff. Windows were smashed, doors forced, one person detained, habitants intimidated, police checks, houses quite far from Bure also raided and people were asked questions about their private life." Other locations raided simultaneously included Lumeville, Commercy, Verdun and Mandres.

For many years, the Bure House of Resistance served as the hub of local opposition to a national nuclear waste research center established 20 years ago, which is now, by law, the permanent disposal site (CIGEO). The last six years have seen regular peaceful marches and demonstrations against the planned dump. As far back as 2012 in dynamic clashes with masked resisters the police used tear gas, pepper spray and flash grenades, resulting in serious injuries.

The nuclear waste agency began clearing trees before obtaining necessary permits; but the locals forced them out of the woods in the summer of 2016. Since then the critical forest site has been occupied by resisters. The "owls," as they call themselves, have built tree houses and shacks in the woods to establish residency. As one disenchanted French person said: "Thanks for shooting our future."

September's raids were a setback to anti-nuclear activism, but the activism certainly will continue.

—January

EDITORIAL

continued from p. 1

India and Burma, recruited more field workers to expand plantation crops like rice.

The history of the Rohingya is so intertwined with Burma that their name derives from the kingdom of Arakan, or modern Rakhine state, stretching along the coast of the Bay of Bengal. Yet after independence, while the government, in 1977, officially recognized 135 different ethnicities within the country, it denied citizenship to Rohingya and dismissed them as Bengali, foreigners within their midst.

SAN SUU KYI BETRAYS FREEDOM IDEA

Rohingyas like most people in Burma had looked forward to better times when the National League



Rohingya refugees fleeing Burma for India or Bangladesh on Sept. 16, 2017.

for Democracy under Daw Aung San Suu Kyi swept the 2015 elections. She had been the most visible face of the mass democracy movement of 1988 that military rulers bloodily crushed. The two decades that San Suu Kyi spent under house arrest gave her moral standing to represent a beacon for human rights and democracy—and a Nobel Peace Prize.

In 2015 the military allowed San Suu Kyi to form a government, but without ceding power. Civilian control did not extend to the pivotal powers the military reserved for itself. San Suu Kyi has remained silent in the face of the military's scorched earth campaign, even as reliable reports of atrocities got to the outside world, including the rape and murder of women and children used as a tool of genocide, despite barring reporters and UN inspectors from the region.

Some defended San Suu Kyi's silence as a sign that the military was holding her hostage, but on Sept. 19 she removed all doubt by publicly denying the genocide that the world had seen. Her ultimate defense was that over half the Rohingya villages had not been burned down or pillaged.

CHINA MOVES AHEAD DESPITE GENOCIDE

By the same logic, there was no genocide against Tutsi in Rwanda in 1994, because half the Tutsi survived. Yet crowds of her supporters in Yangon demonstrated in support of government attacks on the Rohingya, and other crowds in Sittwe, the capital of Rakhine state, demanding that no "non-citizens" be allowed back into Burma.

China is Burma's firmest backer as it builds a road into Rakhine state under its Belt and Road Initiative. Condemnation from the international community has been no obstacle. The UN condemned Burma's atrocities as "ethnic cleansing," which showed that the Serbian chauvinist euphemism for its genocide against Bosnian Muslims has infected today's language.

To allow genocide to proceed anywhere is to open the door to genocide everywhere. Lack of solidarity with the Syrian Revolution, while state powers, Nazis and so-called Marxists lined up behind butcher Assad, has encouraged other butchers, none more than those threatening the existence of the Rohingya.

QUEERNOTES

By Elise Barclay

Beijing high school students made the film *Escape*, a fictional tale of Transgender youth Zhang Wang'an in China. Director Hu Ranran's aim is to educate Chinese people about Transgender youth, a group she correctly cites as being disadvantaged in China, where Queer people do not have any legal protections. While local authorities pressured the Guangzhou Transgender Center into not showing *Escape*, the Beijing LGBT Center and Wuhan Tongxing LGBT Center screened it—and *People's Daily* reviewed it, positively. Director Hu plans to post an English version of *Escape* on YouTube.

* * *

Over 100 people in Chicago's Lincoln Square neighborhood held a sign distribution rally at Waters Elementary School in September to support two neighborhood LGBT families whose pro-human rights/anti-hate signs had been vandalized. Neighbors carried signs reading "Hate Has No Home Here," "Love Is Love," and "Black Lives Matter." People committed to distributing signs to their neighbors to talk about fighting hate with love. Speaker Uge Okere, of Fuerza Del Sol, pointed out that all human rights causes are connected.

* * *

Russia's anti-LGBT laws are so repressive that many LGBT Russians are closeted or underground, yet 100 LGBT people and their supporters marched in Russia's largest Pride Parade in St. Petersburg. Three Russians who participated in Kirekenes, Norway's, Pride march, were detained before re-entering Russia by persons who showed no ID, but claimed to be with the FSB. Kirekenes's Mayor Rune Rafaelsen publicly decried the FSB treatment of the Russian Pride participants.

* * *

Representative Pete Olson, Texas Republican, is sponsoring a bill to invalidate executive orders that included Trans people as a protected class under Title VII. Olson's Act would bar Transgender people from healthcare under the Affordable Care Act specific to their needs, such as gender-affirming hormone treatments,.

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Puerto Ricans suffer as Trump plays to his racist base

continued from p. 1

Democrats with partial retention of the Dreamers program in exchange for funding for his border wall and intensified militarization of the Mexican border.

• His administration was drafting a law for speedy deportation of child migrants from Central America.

• He was pushing as nominee to oversee chemical safety for the federal government Michael Dourson—a notorious defender of toxic chemicals, including chlorpyrifos, a pesticide known to harm children's brains. Farmworkers and their families, many of them immigrants from Latin America, are those most likely to be poisoned.

• He ordered new barriers to women's access to birth control, which hurts women of color the most. (See "Abuser-in-chief trashes women's lives," p. 1.)

The colonial relationship to Puerto Rico is revealed by the slowness of aid and the priority given to maintaining control over the people, as seen in the rifle-toting shadowy private security roaming the streets. Even the infamous war-crime-stained

Academi (formerly Blackwater) has been invited by the administration to send its mercenaries to keep "order." At the very same time, the U.S. Navy hospital ship the USS Comfort arrived at San Juan on Oct. 3 but three weeks later 87% of its 250 beds were still empty, despite the massive unmet need for care.

While aid is desperately needed because the colonial economy has been engineered to depend on imports of food and fuel, at the same time everything depends on solidarity from below, especially within Puerto Rico. Neighbors are helping neighbors, and when 98 (9%) of the schools were reopened, it was teachers, aided by parents, who worked to get them in shape for learning.

The Independent reported on "A People's Recovery"¹ bringing together activists "supporting more than 20 grassroots initiatives that range from debris cleaning brigades to agricultural projects to communal kitchens....The main concern of organizers...was the mobilization of thousands of U.S. troops to the island who were not distributing the much-needed aid but controlling it." They "encourage communities to unite and become self-sustaining" and aim "to build popular power from within the communities and eventually move Puerto Rico away from its colonial dependency to the U.S."

Every disaster manifests this conflict between solidarity from below and the state-capitalist drive to control activities. (See "Earthquake: Mexico's wake-up call," p. 9.) That is not a momentary impulse by bureaucrats to stay in charge, nor simply a "shock doctrine" conspiracy by greedy leaders, but the inner drive of capital itself to shape the conditions to shore up its accumulation.

DEBT CRISIS AND COLONIALISM

Puerto Rico's debt crisis had already set that in motion. The multi-billion dollar debt is the end result of centuries of colonial exploitation. Spain decimated the native Tainos 500 years ago and built an economy on enslavement of Africans and surviving Indigenous people. After the U.S. seized Puerto Rico, the Philippines and Guam in its 1898 war with Spain, Yankee landlords seized the lands of peasant farmers and turned agriculture into a sugar-cane monoculture, driving peasants to the cities. The people became producers of cheap manufactured goods for U.S. companies—U.S. businesses in Puerto Rico were allowed exemption from minimum wage laws, and efforts to lower the minimum wage continue today.

Forty years ago, Congress set up tax breaks so that multinational corporations could rack up huge profits virtually tax-free and send them to the U.S. mainland or Europe. In lieu of taxes, the territorial government borrowed money, with the predatory loans largely determined by people who worked for international banks, some of whom also had decision-making jobs at government entities. Not surprisingly, the banks made out like bandits—with some bonds requiring payment of 10 times the amount borrowed—while Puerto

Rico's debt ballooned to more than 100% of its gross national product. Now much of the debt has been bought by "vulture funds," which buy "distressed" debt and use courts to make whole populations pay for the illegitimate actions of corrupt governments.² Some of these same vultures recently preyed on Detroit.

Congress imposed a Fiscal Control Board with only one Puerto Rican member, with power to override local decisions—like the emergency management responsible for poisoning Flint, Mich., water. Similar to Detroit, the Board pushed mass closings of 179 schools. Gov. Ricardo Rosselló invited Teach for America to scab on the island's teachers, who face potential layoffs and salary freezes.

The Fiscal Control Board jacked up the sales tax. It proposed drastic government spending cuts and furloughs (delayed for a few months due to Maria), and a 10% cut in pensions. Free marketeers like the American Enterprise Institute, which has a representative on the Obama-appointed Board, are clamoring for it to privatize the electric and water utilities, the Transportation Authority, the Land Authority and the government bank.

This comes in the context of 10% unemployment, a 46% poverty rate, and looming cuts in Affordable Care Act healthcare funding. Meanwhile, the exodus to the mainland—445,000 from 2006 to 2015—has accelerated due to both austerity and the storm.

This is not enough for the vulture funds, which are using the courts to demand that every dollar of revenue should go first to paying off the debt before funding such secondary priorities as health and education.

STRUGGLES IN BARBUDA AND CUBA

Hurricane Irma created an opportunity for rulers in the Caribbean country of Antigua and Barbuda to privatize traditional communal land handed down by the descendants of freed slaves on the island of Barbuda, whose entire population was turned into climate refugees by the hurricane. But the people of Barbuda are fighting back.³

In Cuba too the aftermath of Irma spurred revolt. Cubans reported that as the hurricane approached the state telecommunications monopoly charged money for storm update notifications, and afterwards food rations that were supposed to be free were being sold. Protests erupted spontaneously in at least two neighborhoods of Havana with chants of "We want light! We want water!"

Even on the U.S. mainland, though better served than Puerto Rico, thousands were suffering after Hurricanes Harvey and Irma and were frustrated by bureaucratic delays, saying they got more help from family, neighbors and churches than from FEMA. Particularly in Texas, toxic waste from virtually unregulated industrial sites seeped into floodwaters and contaminated homes, schools, water and soil. Texas prisoners donated thousands of dollars from their scant funds for hurricane relief, just as 4,000 California prisoners, women and men, were fighting the climate-change-fueled wildfires there.

The Trump administration once again tried to smother all thought about climate change by banning Environmental Protection Agency scientists from speaking on it at a conference and by removing even more information on climate change from official websites, as it began to do on its very first day in January. But they cannot hide the reality from the world, demonstrated by the spate of major hurricanes; the out-of-control wildfires in California, Portugal and Spain; the deadly drought in India; the famine in three African countries; the toll from record heat waves.

2. See "Who Owns Puerto Rico's Debt? We've Tracked Down 10 of the Biggest Vulture Firms," by Joel Cintrón Arbasetti and Carla Minet, Centro de Periodismo Investigativo, and Alex V. Hernandez and Jessica Stites, *In These Times*, Oct. 17, 2017.

3. See "Barbudan Land Ownership: A 200-Year-Old Freedom Put at Risk Following Hurricane Irma," by Tim George, openDemocracy, Sept. 22, 2017 (www.opendemocracy.net/beyondslavery/tim-george/barbudan-land-ownership-200-year-old-freedom-won-by-emancipated-slaves-and-).

REFUSING CLIMATE CHAOS

Puerto Rico's catastrophe spells out the world's future, if capitalism is allowed to continue its sway—not only as climate-driven disasters but as society's class-tilted, racist, sexist responses to those disasters and preparations or lack thereof. That includes the crumbling infrastructure. In Puerto Rico both the electric grid and the water and sewer systems have been falling apart for years as resources have been diverted to debt service. The mainland is on the same path, as capitalists react to the falling rate of profit by putting the squeeze on infrastructure investment, social services, workers' wages and benefits.

Climate change denial fits well with this squeeze, since adaptation requires massive retooling and shoring up of infrastructure. The Trump administration even covertly abandoned the belated federal program for relocating homes, infrastructure, and communities endangered by rising seas, melting permafrost, and unprecedented storms.⁴ Capitalism is much more geared to the short term, and the short term demands shoring up profits at the expense of humanity's future.

As the Puerto Rican exodus builds, climate refugees—also refugees from war, repression, and economic depression—are a real factor in global politics. Their numbers will continue to swell as long as climate change is unchecked and adaptation is modeled after the militarization of New Orleans in the wake of Katrina and its subsequent restructuring by dismantling public housing and education and permanently displacing many Black residents.

This is not only Trump's plan for one devastated island; it is his plan for the entire crisis-ridden world. It is his capitalist "philosophy." The essence of Trumpism unfolds in apocalypses, up to and including imperialist world war, because capitalists want to stay on top even at the price of civilization's destruction. The widespread solidarity with Puerto Ricans and the growing refusal to surrender to climate change show the deep opposition that needs to unite with a philosophy of liberation to revolutionize this world and save our future.

4. See "America's Climate Refugees Have Been Abandoned by Trump," by Kyla Mandel, *Mother Jones*, Oct. 17, 2017.

Help Puerto Rico now

Chicago—Puerto Ricans and supporters from the Mexican community and others gathered in sight of Trump Tower on Sept. 29 to demand that Puerto Rico get the aid it needs after being devastated by two hurricanes. Being forced by police to gather across the Chicago River from Trump Tower did not silence our attacks on President Trump's indifference to the fate of 3.5 million residents left without power and even drinkable water.

HUMAN SOLIDARITY SHAMES TRUMP

One young woman made it clear that aid to Puerto Rico did not depend on the asserting of their citizenship. The fact that Puerto Ricans need aid to survive and the U.S. government has the resources to help Florida, Louisiana and Texas should be enough. A young man wanted nothing to do with an appeal to fellow Americans, considering that their citizenship was awarded in 1917 as a result of U.S. imperialism. He preferred to demand sovereignty.

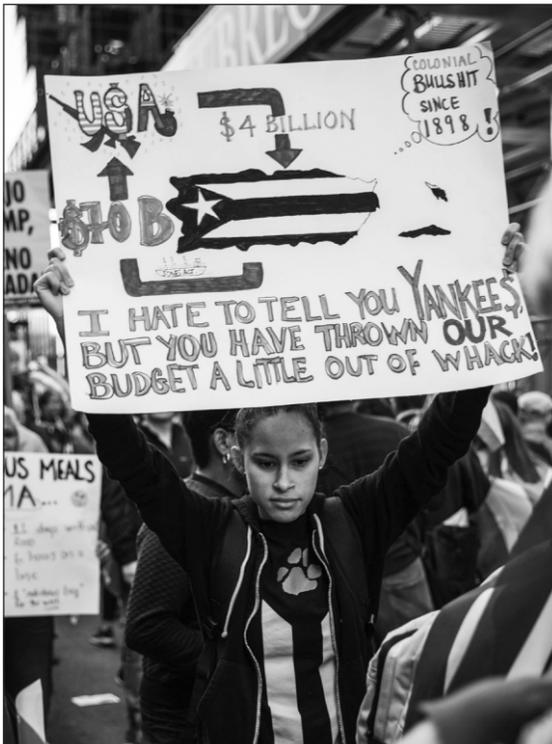
One schoolboy talked passionately of how it amazed him that after he had packed his first box of relief supplies he had already done more to help Puerto Ricans than President Donald Trump. Many at the rally demanded the rescinding of the Jones Act, which impedes other countries from sending aid. As signs pointed out, under public pressure Trump had been shamed into suspending the Jones Act, but only for 10 days.

The rally took place before Trump's trip to Puerto Rico where he told the few people who had power to hear him that they were not in a "real disaster" like Katrina. He pelted his audience with rolls of paper towels while claiming that Puerto Ricans want everything done for them—his variation on former President Ronald Reagan's conjuring up welfare queens.

Trump knows that demonizing brown people plays well with his racist base. Reporters found survivors of Hurricane Harvey in Texas who had already gotten help from FEMA who did not think that Puerto Ricans should get the same aid. It will be up to Puerto Ricans themselves, on the island and on the mainland, to keep up the demands for aid from one human to another and for greater control of their destiny.

—Supporter

Readers: We want to hear from you! Do you have a story to tell? Write or email! See contact information, p. 9.



On Oct. 3, New Yorkers march and rally in solidarity with Puerto Ricans at Trump Tower and protest President Trump's visit to the Islands.

www.flickr.com/photos/WorkingFamiliesParty

1. "A People's Recovery: Radical Organizing in Post-Maria Puerto Rico," by Juan Carlos Dávila, *The Independent*, Oct. 18, 2017.

California fires from global warming and incompetence

San Francisco—The massive wildfires in the North Bay of the San Francisco Bay Area that began on the night of Oct. 8 have sent a shock wave through the entire region. Most here feel that this was eminently preventable. Altogether there were at least 12 fires, covering nearly 400 square miles. More than 8,900 buildings and homes have been destroyed, 100,000 people displaced, at least 42 dead, though there are a number of people still unaccounted for. In some areas, there were actual firestorms and winds so strong that one man described how when he fled to an open space he was almost hit by a burned-out automobile rolled along the ground by the intense winds. He barely survived.

DEADLY FIRE, TOXIC AIR AND ASH

There are uncounted numbers of injuries and people suffering health problems, including medical patients who have sustained further problems from the toxic air and from being evacuated. There is so much toxic residue that some officials are worried about letting people return to their neighborhoods.



On Oct. 9, 2017, Canyon Fire 2 in Orange County, Calif., caused evacuation of a school directly in the smoke plume.

Many people have suffered trauma that may last a lifetime. A number of those reported missing are undocumented immigrants who may be afraid to come forward, and many other undocumented people may not be able to get even minimal assistance. At the same time, it is publicly acknowledged that undocumented labor will be crucial in the rebuilding of the burned-out areas.

The causes have yet to be determined, though the combination of heat and dry air is seen as a major contributing factor. Another is the failure to maintain forests that has been going on for decades. Then there is the problem of electrical wires, which have caused fires in the past.

POORLY MAINTAINED POWER LINES

There were reports within 90 minutes in at least 10 locations of arcing power lines and exploding transformers on the night of Oct. 8. Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E)—already in trouble for the 2010

San Bruno gas line explosion—has not been forthcoming on these issues.

Now PG&E is pushing state regulators to allow them to charge customers for billions in liabilities in order to protect shareholders. Last year Governor Brown vetoed SB1463, which would have enhanced the inspection of electrical lines. At the same time there has been a lot of fake news and rumor that the fires were set by “Mexican cartels” or by undocumented immigrants.

The behavior of forest fires is well understood, and there are ways to lessen the possibility of fires spreading. Many things point to a failure of the government to support reasonable and adequate fire safety in rural and forested areas. At the same time, huge sums of government money have gone to pet projects that the governor and various legislators have promoted, largely infrastructure projects for the rich (such as an unneeded new Bay Bridge), which have drained the state budget.

Though the fires have subsided for now, the questions and consequences of this tragedy have just begun to be faced. This story is not over by a long shot.

—D. Chêneville

Kris Kobach has something to hide

The co-chair of Trump’s “Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity” is in a legal fight with the *Kansas City Star*, which filed a request under the Kansas Open Records Act to see his emails relating to the commission. Kris Kobach, the Secretary of State for the state of Kansas and a gubernatorial candidate in that state, has been using a personal gmail account to perform duties for the presidential commission. He has refused to hand over the emails, alleging that he is serving on the commission as a private citizen. “Any communications that may exist are not communications in [my] official capacity as Secretary and thus not public records.”

KOBACH, A FAN OF OBSTRUCTING VOTERS

Kobach is a strong proponent of state laws that require people to show a state-issued picture ID in order to vote, requiring some voters to make a special trip to the DMV and pay fees before exercising their “right” to cast a ballot in an election. This sets up barriers for people in precarious living situations (disproportionately voters of color, young, and poor voters) who work excessive hours or who may misplace IDs or have them confiscated by law enforcement. Three states including Kansas have even passed laws requiring proof of citizenship (i.e., a birth certificate or passport) in order to process new voter registrations, a set of laws that remains under court review.

Judging from Kobach’s public announcements, he has not delved much into instances of vote suppression. Instead he moonlights as a paid columnist for Breitbart News and uses his column to advance a fool’s errand—close Trump’s 2.9 million-vote deficit in the 2016 election by repeating the assertion that at least this many people voted twice or cast ballots when they were ineligible to do so.

Though the penalties for voting twice or for faking eligibility are heavy and the benefit negligible, Kobach has highlighted the large number of voters double-registered in more than one state as evidence of a major problem. Double registration is a routine occurrence which is not illegal—only voting twice is. Generally, it is not a voter’s responsibility to cancel their previous registration.

THE FOX WATCHING THE CHICKENS

Breitbart published a so-called bombshell story from Kobach in September. It focused on 5,000 New Hampshire voters who crossed state lines to vote in the 2016 election, a state Hillary Clinton won by a narrow margin. However, these were voters who used an out-of-state ID to obtain a ballot, something that is allowed even in Kansas. Firmly established federal legal precedent says that citizens who live temporarily outside of a state (for example, to attend college or work seasonal jobs) are allowed to vote in the state where they have an “intent to return.”

The request from the *Star* is still waiting. It is not entirely clear what Kobach is trying to hide by shielding his communications from public scrutiny. However, the foot-dragging seems to suggest that the emails include incriminating messages which indicate that reductions in voter turnout were not just unfortunate consequences of hastily enacted voter-ID laws but the intended effect.

Short of filing a lawsuit, the *Star* would have had to follow a process laid out in the Kansas Open Records Act to appeal the wrongful denial of their access to records: the first step is to file a complaint with the office of the Kansas Secretary of State: Kris Kobach.

—Buddy Bell

Judy Tanzawa

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Within the Los Angeles Local, Judy chaired meetings, developed agendas, shared communications from the Center, and participated in giving educationals on issues of *News & Letters*, as well as on topics from Marxist-Humanist literature. Her passion for freedom activities and ideas, as well as her taking organizational responsibility for the Idea of Marxist-Humanism, will be greatly missed.

—Eugene Walker

JUDY—HEARING AND LISTENING TO THE VOICES FROM BELOW

Courageous. That was Judy’s basic quality, which permeated her thought and actions in her professional and personal life. That outstanding trait took the form of hearing and listening to the voices from below. She was attuned to the reverberations of the disenfranchised who were trampled on in society. This disenchanted her with those who abused their power.

As a factory worker Judy heard the workers’ voices. She organized with them, had meetings with them and confronted the factory owners with their grievances. With the united strength of the organized workers, Judy won concessions that benefited them and their families. Her actions were brought to the attention of the union and Judy became a union representative. She was in that capacity for over 20 years—winning grievances, negotiating for better pay, better working conditions and at all times hearing and listening to those voices from below.

In the 1950s the Los Angeles City Council ousted hundreds of Mexican families from their village in Chavez Ravine, claiming that the land would be used for affordable housing. But soon they sold the land to the owner of the Dodgers. As a result of lies and the finagling of the powerful and moneyed, this area became Dodger Stadium. Judy became involved in the struggle of the displaced Mexican families, and eloquently revealed the truth of this takeover.

Judy was always aware of the voices from below and acted valiantly against any words or actions unfairly brought against the impoverished.

—Paul Tanzawa

I met Judy during the Los Angeles uprising of 1992; two strangers’ paths had crossed, only to become good friends. Judy showed me that she was truly color-blind; she fought for everyone. She was a friend through thick and thin, she supported not only those who were oppressed in the inner city but those across the country. She broke all color barriers, all racial lines; she crossed all economic lines, and dared to enter all gang-infested communities. She was a “Radical Warrior.” We traveled abroad as Freedom Fighters. Together we kicked down the doors of injustice for the LA 4 + in 1993.

Our acquaintance grew into a deep-rooted friendship. She supported me beyond the LA 4 + trial. She was always there, a listening ear and a supportive shoulder. We traveled together and fought together for the underserved and the oppressed.

Judy gave her all. She had a never ending dedication for justice, for humanity. For 25 years we marched side by side. Her greatest desire was equality for all. Judy has truly left an indelible mark upon my heart.

—Georgiana Williams

**Mother of the struggle
Mother of Damian Football Williams**

EDITORIAL

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religious objections to deny paying for women’s contraception—which is, after all, *healthcare*—with Trump’s new ruling one only needs a “moral objection” to do the same. And unlike what was worked out by the Obama administration—that women whose religious employer refused to provide birth control would get it automatically from other sources—now there is nothing requiring that women be provided birth control from any sources at all.

Linda Greenhouse, a perceptive Supreme Court watcher, points out “the administration’s truly astonishing effort to show that birth control really isn’t all that important and may even be counterproductive. Statements [in the rule like] ‘Contraception’s association with positive health effects might also be partially offset by an association with negative health effects,’ are hogwash... One cited article from the *Ave Maria Law Review* by Michael J. New, a well-known anti-abortion activist, insists that there is ‘little evidence that increasing the use of contraceptives reduces the unintended pregnancy rate.’”

TORTURING WOMEN FOR THEIR CHOICES

What starkly reveals the fanatical depths Trump’s administration is anxious to sink to is their torture of a 17-year-old immigrant who tried to get an abortion after being locked up for illegally crossing the border. “Jane Doe” got the judicial bypass minors must get in Texas to obtain an abortion as well as raising the necessary funds when she was nine weeks pregnant and her abortion would have taken ten minutes. But the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) refused to let her leave the “facility” (read prison). The Trump administration put Doe through hell until Oct. 25, when she was 16 weeks pregnant and the procedure is more complicated.

Doe said that when she found she was pregnant, “I knew immediately what was best for me then, as I do now—that I’m not ready to be a parent...[The government has] not allowed me to leave to get an abortion. Instead, they made me see a doctor that tried to convince me not to abort and to look at sonograms. People I don’t even know are trying to make me change my mind. I made my decision and that is between me and God.... This is my life, my decision. I want a better future. I want justice.”

The government hypocrisy was sickening: jailing Doe in the ORR facility was supposedly not an “undue burden”; they maintained it was Doe’s “choice” to remain in the ORR when her other “choice” was to be deported to her home country where abortions are illegal and her parents abusive. While making her abortion more dangerous, the government claimed the ORR didn’t want her to have the abortion as they would have to “monitor Jane Doe’s health” and do follow-up care if she suffered “complications,” made more likely by their own actions. But if Doe had the baby, the government “would be happy to provide” that care.

This is hard to believe since this is the same administration that is working to destroy healthcare for all Americans who aren’t filthy rich. Their supporters opine about “anchor babies,” and want to cut immigration to zero. Many of them want to deny citizenship to children born in the U.S. whose parents do not have legal status here.

Trump’s policies hurt those who are most vulnerable—especially Black, brown, and poor people; the old, children, babies, and women. But he cannot crush the movements against him; just make them more determined and more powerful.

WORLD VIEW

by Gerry Emmett

Did Trump conspire with Russia? The genocidal bombing campaign the Russian military conducted against Free East Aleppo in Syria last year took its cue from a Donald Trump phone call to Putin. But former FBI director Robert Mueller isn't looking into war crimes in Syria or Ukraine.

Special Counsel Mueller and his investigators are looking into Russian influence in the 2016 presidential election. The guilty plea by Trump adviser George Papadopoulos settles this question—the hacked Democratic National Committee and the Hillary Clinton campaign emails he solicited became central to Trump's campaign.

RULING CLASS CONFLICT

Money-laundering charges filed against former Trump campaign director Paul Manafort and his associate, Rick Gates, are designed to put the hook into the Trump administration.

The specific focus of lifelong Republican Mueller's investigation is designed to manage the current conflict within the ruling class. Elements in the Republican Party leadership are resisting its complete takeover by neo-fascists like Trump strategist Stephen Bannon.

Former House Speaker John Boehner, once the right-wing standard bearer, now calls these people “assholes” and “anarchists” who “want chaos.” South Carolina Republican Rep. Robert Inglis said, “Don-



Kneel-in in front of Trump Hotel in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 1, 2017, as part of March for Racial Justice.

ald Trump is reshaping the heart of the GOP into something that is very dark and diseased.”

Vice President Mike Pence's chief of staff, Nick Ayers, recently made a pitch to wealthy Republican donors to support Trump's takeover of the party, including Bannon's false promises of “infrastructure building,” in return for further tax cuts. He promised the donors immediate profits, while saying that “ordinary people” would see no benefit from Trump's

policies “for years”—amounting to tax cuts for the rich in return for “Trump über alles.”

The rich audience loved this plan. Since then, Republicans opposed by Trump have been dropping out of re-election contests.

RACIST PARTY ‘TOO BIG TO FAIL’?

This investigation ignores the fact that the Republican Party has been a vehicle for reactionary politics since Nixon's racist Southern strategy. It is a model for right-wing parties everywhere. It has

also bolstered every reactionary tendency within the Democratic Party.

Trump-style neo-fascism has been gestating for decades, as seen in Reagan-era photos of a younger Paul Manafort side by side with Lee Atwater, who in 1981 described “tax cuts” as “abstract racism.”

From a bourgeois perspective, this makes the party “too big to fail.” So the Republican opposition to Trump can keep voting tax cuts for the rich, cuts in social programs, and other racist and misogynist agenda items. Too many Democrats meanwhile defer to Mueller's narrow investigation.

To be rid of Trump would be a victory. But it is vitally important to keep up our own pressure on the rulers—only mass protest has allowed this split among them. This is a moment when class struggle becomes clearly defined, both in itself, and as inextricable from the struggle against racism, misogyny, homophobia, xenophobia and religious bigotry—the struggle for a revolutionary humanism.

Kurdistan setback

A shaken President Masoud Barzani was forced to resign Nov. 1 as the independence referendum he promoted in Iraqi Kurdistan blew up in his face. The referendum passed as expected with over 90% of the vote, but, also as expected, all state powers blocked its implementation.

Both Turkey and Iran opposed Barzani's move, closing their borders in response and threatening military action. Iraq's central government—with the help of Kurdish opposition forces—retook control of oil-rich Kirkuk from Barzani's government. At the moment oil shipments from Kirkuk have been halted completely.

NOTHING WAS DELIVERED

Tensions between factions have been exacerbated, with Barzani's followers in the Kurdistan Democratic Party besieging the Erbil Parliament and attacking opposition lawmakers.

This is a major setback for Kurdish self-determination. If the debacle ends the career of Masrour Barzani, Masoud's brutal son, it will be all that's gained. Nephew Nechirvan Barzani, who has served as prime minister, will attempt to rebuild relationships, along with his deputy Qubad Talabani, from the other major Iraqi Kurdish faction.

Venezuela human toll

Lack of principle, competing agendas, and egos led to the collapse of the opposition Democratic Unity Roundtable in October. This will give a further lease on life to the crisis-ridden United Socialist Party of Venezuela government, but will do little to help the people.

As U.S. cash had given way to Chinese cash, now Russia is loaning Venezuela's state-run oil company needed funds—which are expected to be paid back, at the expense of social benefits, even as refineries are running at half capacity.

The crisis has taken a toll. Earlier this year, Health Minister Antonieta Caporale was fired for releasing statistics showing the number of women dying in childbirth had increased by 65%. Children's mortality increased 30%.

With shortages of medicine, vaccination levels have fallen. Diphtheria, a disease unseen for decades, has reappeared. In Valencia, where two people died of it recently, hundreds were left standing in line as vaccine ran out.

Japan, North Korea in Asian military spiral

Right-wing Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was easily re-elected in October following the collapse of Japan's opposition parties. He is expected to push forward with efforts to change Japan's Constitution to allow for more military development.

This will be a subtext of discussions between Abe and U.S. President Trump as he tours East Asia

U.S. military in Africa

At least 358 civilians were killed and over 400 wounded in a truck bombing in Mogadishu, Somalia, on Oct. 14. The attack was the work of al-Shabaab. That terrorist group, allied to al-Qaeda, claimed credit for another truck bomb attack Oct. 28 that killed 23 people.

The U.S. military is also in Somalia. In May a Navy SEAL died in combat with al-Shabaab.

Increased U.S. military presence in Africa led to the death of four Green Berets in Niger. They were pursuing members of al-Murabitoun, an al-Qaeda linked group. The U.S. also has military advisers in Nigeria fighting ISIS-linked Boko Haram.

With the fall of its “caliphate” in Iraq and Syria, ISIS threatens to move resources to Africa—which will escalate U.S. involvement. The racist Trump administration adds a new horror: the worst of them have shown it as their aim to put a Black face on terror.

Anti-Muslim Trump flack Sebastian Gorka recently stated, “Our big issue is black African gun crime against black Africans. Go to Chicago...” Fascists like Gorka have already tried to label Black Lives Matter a “terrorist” group.

in November to “maximize pressure on North Korea.” The U.S. has agreed to increase military sales to Japan, including advanced air-to-air missiles already deployed in Indonesia, Malaysia, and South Korea. This is a dangerous spiral of militarism in the region.

Abe's reception of the Philippines' murderous President Rodrigo Duterte was also telling. Japan was an occupying power in World War II, and no previous Philippines ruler has visited. Duterte spoke of entering “a golden age of strategic partnership.” A framework is being laid for the development of military ties, beginning with joint coast guard exercises that will include Indonesia, Malaysia, and Vietnam.

IMPERIALISM'S EVIL LOGIC

North Korea was founded upon the logic of imperialism—the *juche* ideology was meant to give the Kim dynasty maneuverability among rival imperialists Russia, China, and the U.S. As the Cold War gave way to a more multipolar world after 1989, the Kims were driven to develop both a “military first” (*songun*) policy and a nuclear weapon. Militarism is now officially the society's “social metabolism.”

Trump, Abe, and others who embody this imperialist logic only bolster the North Korean regime. Trump can make genocidal threats to “completely destroy” the country, and his rhetoric reinforces the *songun* policy of its rulers. In a similar way, North Korea's doctrine of “self-defense” is based on the threat to destroy Seoul, South Korea, and its 10 million people.

The logic of imperialism is genocide. Humanity must overcome this madness once and for all.

NEWS AND LETTERS COMMITTEES

Who We Are And What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists. It has always stood for the abolition of capitalism, both in its private property form as in the U.S., and in its state property form calling itself Communist, which appeared as the Russian Revolution was transformed into its opposite. That retrogression anticipated the next stage of development—the age of state-capitalism. We stand for a society of new human relations, what Marx 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 could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation.

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910–1987), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, was Chairwoman of News and Letters Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907–1983), a Black rank-and-file autoworker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, was editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983.

The articulation of the relationship between the movement from practice which is itself a form of theory and the movement from theory to philosophy is reflected in Dunayevskaya's three major works.

Marxism and Freedom, from 1776 until Today (1958), established the American roots of Marxism while presenting a comprehensive attack on present-day Communism, which is a form of state-capitalism. It re-established Marxism in its original form as “a thorough-going Naturalism or Humanism,” while pointing to the new Humanist philosophy expressed by the working class. It presented history and theory as emanating from the movement from practice.

Philosophy and Revolution: From Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao (1973), written after the failed revolts of the 1960s, articulated the integrality of philosophy and revolution as the characteristic of the age and, tracing it historically, caught the link of continuity with the Humanism of Marx. As against the vanguard party, the integration of dialectics and organization reflects the revolutionary maturity of the age and the passion for a philosophy of liberation.

Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution (1982) ex-

plores Marx's body of ideas from his discovery of a continent of thought and of revolution in his youth to the “new moments” of his last decade. Written for our time of revolutions in developing countries, the rise of the international women's liberation movement, and global economic crisis, it reveals the absolute challenge to make real Marx's “revolution in permanence” as the determinant for the relationship of theory and practice and as ground for organization.

These works spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism. *American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard* (1963, 1983) concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way freedom road between the U.S. and Africa.

In 1989 News and Letters Committees published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough—her two letters on Hegel's Absolutes—and her 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism*.

This body of ideas challenges all those desiring freedom to transcend the limitations of post-Marx Marxism. In light of the crises of our nuclear-armed world, climate change, and failed revolutions, it becomes

imperative not only to reject what is, but to further work out the revolutionary Humanist future inherent in the present. The recreation of Marx's philosophy as Marxist-Humanism is recorded in Dunayevskaya's archives, *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development*, deposited at Wayne State University in Detroit and available to all.

We aim to continue to develop Marxist-Humanism and make it available to all who struggle for freedom. In opposing this capitalist, racist, sexist, heterosexist, class-ridden society, we have adopted a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party “to lead.”

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 free copy of the *Constitution* of News and Letters Committees or see it on our website: www.newsandletters.org.

