

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

Vol. 39 — No. 3

APRIL 1994

25¢



'Business' is power over labor

by John Marcotte

Workers are invisible. You pick up the local newspaper, and you read about criminals, politicians, and movie stars. We're not even supposed to think of ourselves as workers. Politicians want us to think of ourselves as "the middle class" and as "taxpayers." Advertisers want us to think of ourselves as "consumers." It's as though all the products we eat, wear, and use every day were never made by anyone. Where are the workers?

But pick up one of the big business papers like the Wall Street Journal or The New York Times (NYT), and there you find—some workers! They can't talk about "business" without being forced to speak to talk workers. Isn't that strange. So what is business? Read the business pages. "Business" is the power to dispose of the labor of other people. That's the secret. Nothing is moved, nothing is made without the labor of other people—not the labor of the "business person" or that new hero, the "entrepreneur."

LAYOFFS, PAY CUTS, NO FUTURE

The New York Times just did a nationwide poll which found: "Two-fifths (39%) of workers worry that during the next two years they might be laid off or forced to take pay cuts. And 24% said they had personally experienced layoffs, reduced hours or pay cuts in the last two years." This, in an economy which has nothing to offer most workers, and especially young people, but "McJobs" at \$6 an hour or less and no future.

The article went on about "the unskilled castoffs of shrinking industries" who now work "two or three jobs without matching their former salary or benefits." Twenty-two percent of those working are now in part-time and temporary jobs.

Another article in the NYT proclaimed, "Productivity Had Big Jump in 4th Quarter," and went on to say, "Productivity—that is, the quantity of goods and ser-

(continued on page 3)

Black World

What has Somalia meant?



by Lou Turner

A special UN report, compiled a month ago but only leaked on March 31 which concludes that the U.S. and UNOSOM (United Nations Operation Somalia) were the major causes of fatalities and injuries in Somalia during the 16-month intervention, marked the last day of the U.S. military retreat from Mogadishu. The report, gathered by a three-person commission of the General Assembly, found that the UN and the U.S. bore the greatest responsibility for the scores of casualties the Western media subsumed beneath its frenzy to demonize Somali culture and opposition to UN-U.S. recolonization.

The end of U.S. intervention in Somalia is an opportunity to examine the meaning of the U.S.'s misadventure in armed humanitarianism and what it signifies for Africa's future in the "new world order."

It is now increasingly apparent that George Bush's precipitous intervention in Somalia, December 1992, and Bill Clinton's adherence to Bush's foreign policy, was in order to pre-empt U.S. intervention in Bosnia. It is also apparent that with or without Russian competition or collusion, the U.S. is no longer able to coordinate regional crises for its own "order-mongering" ends. Whether or not we live in a "posthegemonic" world of depleted superpowers, the present global instability discloses to what extent the West's political structures have fallen victim to its own ideological pollution. That is how "the most powerful nation on earth [became] embroiled in a battle it clearly [could not] win easily against a few hundred militia commonly characterized by Westerners as men in sarongs and sandals supported by a human shield of women and children" (Mark Doyle, "Somalia: A Dangerous Place," Africa Report, Nov.-Dec., 1993).

Nevertheless, George E. Moose, the Black career diplomat who is Clinton's Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, believes that Operation Restore Hope "has been a major achievement" because "those images [of

(continued on page 8)

Clinton's criminal code imprisons America's future

by Jim Mills

This month, millions of families in the U.S. will turn on their televisions to see and hear a sobering public service announcement. In one gut-wrenching minute, an eighth grader, Alicia Brown, retells the dreadful day she witnessed the gun slaying of a young friend, one of four she has lost in that manner. Her sad story commands attention all the more because practically every inner city resident can tell a similar story.

It is that deep-seated fear of crime that the producer of the public service announcement—the Clinton White House—hopes to exploit when it parades Alicia Brown before the nation. Conveniently left out by the administration publicists is a total view of violence in capitalist America. While young people especially are blamed for that crisis by a moralizing government, the whole truth is that structural crises in capitalism inspire violence of two interrelated kinds—the rage of a people turned inward on itself and institutionalized violence in the form of police state conditions accompanied by abandonment of the system.

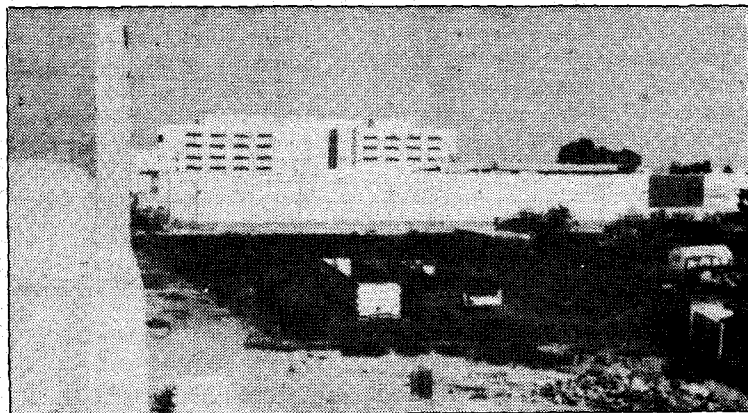
REAGANISM'S 'NEW DEMOCRATS'

The real star of Clinton's anti-crime policy is a provision—"three strikes and you're out"—unveiled in his January State of the Union speech. It mandates lifetime prison terms without parole for those convicted of a third violent crime or major drug felony when the third conviction is in federal court. Congress is now considering that and other crime bill provisions:

- \$22 billion to hire 100,000-150,000 cops nationwide.
- Ten additional maximum security federal prisons.
- Fifty-two more violent crimes deemed as federal capital offenses.
- Trials in adult court for 13-year-olds accused of violent crimes.
- Gun sale restrictions (this element of the crime bill was already passed thanks to its duplication of existing state laws and minimal restrictions).

If state pass laws at least as tough as those in the federal criminal code, they will receive \$3 billion earmarked for state-level police and prison buildups, and rehabilitation programs with any money left over.

The administration's anti-crime initiatives add to the current mandatory sentencing laws against drug offenses—which more often than not don't involve violence. Those laws have helped pack U.S. prisons and jails with 1.4 million inmates today, the highest rate of incarceration in the world and costing \$21 billion per year. In two decades, the U.S. has spent \$37 billion to build pris-



Prison under construction near Imperial Courts public housing projects in Los Angeles.

ons with \$5 billion more committed.

Clinton's punishment-model anti-crime strategy was cultivated by the Reagan White House, epitomized by its war on drugs and its shrinking rehabilitation-oriented Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. U.S. politics passed an important and ominous turning point when the "New Democrats" stole the crime issue from the Republicans, the traditional party of law-and-order. Diane Feinstein's vocal pro-capital punishment stance almost won her the California governorship in 1990 and did help her win a U.S. Senate seat in 1992. New York Governor Mario Cuomo has drafted "three strikes" into his "tough love" anti-crime platform. And Kathleen Brown, the Democratic frontrunner for election to governor of California this fall, advocates "order and accountability," boot camps, and lifetime prison sentences.

FAULTING (BLACK) 'HUMAN NATURE'

Violence now looms as a deep concern in the Black and Chicano/Latino communities like nowhere else. Exploit-

(continued on page 10)

Essay—Marx's humanism in today's environmental debates p. 5
 From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya—Hegel's Phenomenology and the dialectic of liberation today p. 4
 Editorial—U.S.-China human rights farce p. 9

On the Inside

Dobbs strikers win, continue to organize

Memphis, Tenn.—Workers at Dobbs International Services, a worldwide catering company serving airlines, have won their bitter, year-long strike. More than 100 workers at Memphis airport, members of Teamsters Local 667, walked out in February 1993 after the company demanded that older Black women workers in Dobbs' kitchens prove they could carry 50-pound boxes, drive trucks and load planes, or be terminated. Dobbs' strategy was to get rid of the high seniority, older workers, who would draw more health and pension benefits, and to bust the union if they went on strike.

"It's wonderful. We stayed together for a whole year, on the picket line 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and we won," said Annie Rolack, chief steward for the Dobbs workers. A new three-year contract, retroactive to Sept. 1, 1993 was ratified by a vote of 80 yes to 1 no. Workers began returning to work on Feb. 28; all the strikers have now been recalled.

'WE GOT RESPECT'

Dobbs dropped all their proposed requirements for the older women in the new contract. "We carried signs all year saying 'Respect Your Elders,' and we finally got respect," said Rolack. "We are back at work with full benefits and no loss in seniority. Most of the scabs are gone. A few are still in driving and loading, but they have the lowest seniority." The contract also provides a 95¢ wage increase over three years for inside workers and \$1.05 for drivers and loaders.

"The community got behind us in Memphis," Rolack reported. "The churches, community organizations, political leaders, everyone. All the demonstrations, leafletting and phone calls, the blocking of the bridge [over the Mississippi River]—it all paid off. (See Jan.-

Feb. 1994 N&L.) Going to the community with our fight is what put pressure on the company. Companies today don't care about employees. Once they got scabs in, they thought that was the end of it. The picket line itself couldn't win the strike.

"We got support from Congressman Harold Ford, from Bishop J.O. Paterson, from the Memphis school board, senior citizens groups, the YMCA—all kinds of organizations and churches. The greatest thing was that we went out and spoke to people and organizations. When this thing started we didn't know anything about organizing support, but a whole group of strikers, including me, learned to become organizers.

NEEDED: A UNION MOVEMENT

"Now that we are back at work," Rolack went on, "we are still organizing. At 5:30 this morning, before work, we were down at the R. R. Donnelly plant, a paper plant in Senatobia, Miss., passing out leaflets, trying to help workers get a union. I learned that we need a union movement in this country.

"We got support from our local union leadership, and Claude Brown from the International was in on the final negotiations, but I feel that rank-and-file union members are the ones who can change everything. We need to start going to meetings and get involved, not only in what is going on in our own company, but other workers' problems, too. We need to bring our children up in a unionized country where we have rights.

"I want to tell you in Chicago that the South is going to make a difference. We are not just the 'right-to-work' states. I want to thank all the readers of News & Letters for their support. Stay in touch," Rolack concluded. "There will be more news."
—Michael Flug

Woman as Reason

by Terry Moon

President Clinton's promise to "end welfare as we know it" has opened the floodgates of a roaring wave of racism, anger, fear, and contempt aimed at sweeping poor women and children, if not off the face of the earth, at least out of sight and thought.

Democrats and Republicans alike are simmering up a horrible brew of punitive, controlling schemes that are recipes for homelessness. Even some of Clinton's closest supporters, like Marian Wright Edelman, the Black woman head of the Children's Defense Fund, warned Clinton's welfare cabinet in what was reported to be a "blistering memorandum," that the plan being considered would "violate every standard of decency and fairness." Another official said, "If Ronald Reagan was doing this, they'd be dragging poor kids up to the White House in wheelchairs to oppose this."

In a desperate search for funds, Clinton's administration has looked at cutting welfare, food stamps and Medicaid payments to legal immigrants as well as taxing food stamps and welfare benefits. Clinton said in his State of the Union message: "We gave the states more power to innovate because we know that a lot of great ideas come from outside Washington..." This is what those "great ideas" look like now that the states can cook up whatever they want as they try to balance their budgets on the backs of poor women, children and immigrants:

'With Commander Ramona'

Translator's note: The one woman Zapatista in the "peace dialogue" with the Mexican government is the leader of the group representing the Zapatistas. "With Commander Ramona: THE WOMEN'S REVOLUTION," excerpted below, appeared in the Argentinian newspaper Pagina/12 on March 3, 1994. It was written by Juan Gelman, an Argentinian poet persecuted by both the last dictatorship and the so-called "democratic" governments that followed the long nightmare in which 30,000 lives disappeared.—Carlos Varela

San Cristobal, Chiapas—Commander Ramona is Tzotzil and she hardly speaks Spanish. For centuries the indigenous woman has been both excluded from this language and confined to domestic work in a one-room house where she cooks and lives with her man and children. The ones who besides their language speak "castilla" are the men.

Women work more than men. They have a long day's work that begins at 5 in the morning and ends between 8 and 9 at night. Just making corn tortillas—their basic diet—robs them five hours a day....They get married at 15 years of age. They often have five children. There are no hospitals and many of the women die when giving birth from complications that in another context can easily be solved.

The first Zapatista rebellion occurred in March 1993, and it was an internal one: women demanded equal treatment to men, defying the raging paleness and the sullen silence of the masculine sector. In assembly, the "Women's Revolutionary Law" was then approved. It contains 10 articles. The first says, "Women, regardless of their race, creed, color or political affiliation, have the right to participate in the revolutionary struggle in a way determined by their desire and capacity" [trans. emphasis].

Other rights proclaimed in the law: the right for a just salary; the right to decide the number of children they will have and care for; the right to participate in the affairs of the community and to hold positions of authority if they are freely and democratically elected; the right to Primary Attention in matters of health and nutrition; the right to education; the right to choose their partner and not to be forced into marriage; not to be beaten or physically mistreated by their family members or strangers; the right to occupy positions of leadership in the organization and hold military ranks in the revolutionary armed forces.

Before the rebellion, when women participated in the meetings of the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN), their husbands used to say: "For sure you're with another man." It seemed that the women of the EZLN needed more courage to confront these situations than for combat. They resisted.

Captain Maribel...became a member of the EZLN when she was 15 years old... "so the youth of tomorrow won't be like the ones of today. Today, we, the young, have to be soldiers, so tomorrow we can be teachers and doctors."

They really are young. Lieutenant Matilde is 18 years old; Captain Laura, 21, and she commands assault troops of the EZLN, in the ranks of which she learned how to read, to write, and of course, to use arms. She got married in the mountains and she uses contraceptives. The members of the EZLN cannot have children; the experience of guerrillas enlighten the wisdom of this decision. Also they do not have to bear ceremonies; they only communicate their decision to the command so everybody knows it.

The situation of women was one that occupied the most space in the dialogue EZLN/government. Ramona says, "Mr. Camacho also listened to the situation of the peasant women and of women in general; although there is not a concrete response to solve our situation, there is hope." Commander Ana Maria, present in San Cristobal, adds, "In the EZLN, we don't fight for our own interests, but against all injustices, against marginalization, poverty, and against the exploitation the Mexican women suffer."

Clinton's deadly welfare plan

● Wisconsin is ending Aid to Families with Dependent Children in five years, limiting cash benefits to two years, requiring those on welfare to find full-time work or enter a job-training program in 30 days with money earned deducted from their welfare check. If they can't find work, they will be assigned jobs, although Gov. Tommy G. Thompson stripped language from the welfare bill requiring the creation of public jobs.

● In Illinois a legislative task force recommended cutting off benefits for those who can't find work in two years. By September the state will force 4,000 people to work at maintenance, service or clerical jobs to receive their welfare check. Some call this "drafting" people on welfare, others call it slave labor.

● In a vicious attack on young women, a welfare check now means that the state can tell them where to live, that they must marry, how many children they can have and when to go to school. New Jersey has cut off women from additional payments if they dare to have another child; Georgia is forcing young mothers and pregnant women to live with a parent or guardian. Long Island is fingerprinting welfare recipients as if they are criminals.

None of this has anything to do with helping women and children. It has to do with getting elected and the kind of mentality brutally articulated by Charles Murray, author of *Losing Ground*, an attack on the welfare policies of the 1960s, who said recently: "A woman with small children...is not an economically viable unit. It is also not a socially viable unit." His use of the word "it" to describe a woman with children tells it all.

What also reveals the cruelty and hollowness of all these welfare schemes is that there are no jobs. Rather there is rising unemployment, underemployment, wage cuts, the substitution of part-time no-benefit work for full-time, and runaway plants to wherever labor is cheaper. Karl Marx showed that capitalism creates its own "mass of human material always ready for exploitation by capital."

What this well-funded, all-rounded attack on poor women and children shows is that unemployment in the U.S. is now so deeply entrenched that women and children on welfare—who, despite the reality, those in power insist on seeing as almost all African Americans—are now a superfluous burden to capitalism. The duality that Marx saw in the "mass of human material" was that this "unemployed army" were not only poor and suffering, but the capitalist's "own grave-diggers."

It is partly in recognition of this, side by side with racism, that the attack against women and children has been so inhumanly vicious and so intent on making women feel shame and humiliation. That they will not be successful could be seen in something as simple and small as the demonstration in Chicago that greeted the very first public meeting of Clinton's welfare reform task force in August 1993.

There women on welfare, women from the National Welfare Rights Union, from Chicago WAC (Women's Action Coalition), and NOW's (National Organization for Women) Patricia Ireland confronted the task force with the demand that its 23 members include at least one welfare recipient. The demonstration itself and the signs we carried that read "Listen to the real experts" and the constant chant, "We're not trash, we're not slime, being poor is not a crime!" reveals that element of revolt that Marx singled out when he saw the unemployed as those who may yet help put an end to this racist, sexist, capitalist world.

'Queer people of color fight to survive'

Editor's note: The following remarks are excerpts from a discussion at a News and Letters Committees meeting in Los Angeles by Julia G., a 23-year-old Chicana Lesbian teacher and activist.

I'm a member of Queer People of Color (Q*POC), an empowerment organization based on educating ourselves and our communities, and promoting change within those communities. Queer people of color have to fight for basic rights on issues of race, class, gender and sexual orientation. We're often fighting for any number of them at any given time. Fighting is not a choice, but we must fight to survive.

One of the things I see happening now is the pimping of people of color by both sides in the fight between the religious Right and the mainstream Gay and Lesbian, or Queer community. The Traditional Values Coalition of Anaheim, Cal., put out a video called "Gay Rights, Special Rights." It starts out with Martin Luther King Jr. at the March on Washington giving his "I have a dream" speech, and it goes on to pit a religious, righteous African-American community against a perceived white, wealthy Gay and Lesbian community.

They show the Black community as being all straight and being resentful of these white people appropriating the Civil Rights Movement for what are deemed in the video to be "special rights." The video tries to turn the struggle into a Black/white issue, and it works off the invisibility of Queer people of color.

The Gay and Lesbian community isn't innocent by far. They have tried to portray themselves as just being "normal" and just trying to fit in, and "we just want to be like everybody else." I think they thought the best way to go about that was to put the white face forward, but now that has backfired.

We know that the right wing has no interest in human rights across the board, but they're trying to use people

International Women's Day

International Women's Day was commemorated in NEW YORK CITY, March 6, with a march from the USS Intrepid battleship to the United Nations. Co-sponsored by Gabriela Network, News and Letters Committees, the Women's Action Coalition, and endorsed by about 35 international groups, approximately 300 persons vociferously supported the theme, "We Demand an End to the War Against Women." In celebration of the rich Herstory of the women's movement, streets along the route were named for revolutionary artists and "heroic" women. Organizational and homemade signs raised



many issues—including women workers' rights, violence against Lesbians and women of color, women's health care and women's human rights.

● **LOS ANGELES**—On March 8, some 50 women and men gathered in front of the L.A. County Board of Supervisors building in a mood of high-spirited determination to mark International Women's Day. The demonstration, in solidarity with the struggles of immigrant women, was sponsored by numerous groups, including the Women's Action Coalition (WAC), the Association of Salvadoran Women (ADEMUSA), the Pro-Immigrant Mobilization Coalition and Mothers of East L.A.

"Since we came to the United States, often fleeing hunger or war, as women immigrants we have found that the society here also exploits us, paying us less than men for the same work," said Maria Guardado of ADEMUSA. Mexican and Salvadoran immigrant women spoke passionately about their battles against sweatshop conditions in the garment and hotel service industry.

Rosa Martha Zarate emphasized that "We are here to celebrate the presence of women all through history. We will always be fighting. We are not here to 'ask' for our rights, but to say: 'This is my place.' Women have to break all our chains."

Although the L.A. chapter of WAC has been experiencing some loss of membership, WAC's co-sponsorship of this demonstration shows crucial solidarity from white feminists with immigrant, so-called "illegal" women. One WAC member expressed her appreciation of the depth of historic awareness that the immigrant women brought to this IWD celebration—a vivid counterpoint to the stance of California's "liberal, feminist" senator, Barbara Boxer, who has come out in support of stronger anti-immigrant laws.

"Both immigrants (women and men), and women as an oppressed group, have to struggle to be free of stereotyped roles and to be able to have decent jobs, fair health treatment and the chance to build a life," the WAC activist told N&L. "As a member of WAC and of the community, I'd prefer that we as women could carry on the torch together. For us, there is the barrier of language and the barrier of the media images of immigrant people. But this demonstration made me feel more than ever the desire to learn about the culture and struggle of immigrant women and to do all I can to support them."

—Karen C. and Michelle L.

of color to get what they want. The mainstream Gay and Lesbian movement wants domestic rights so that they can then go on with business as usual, but for their own purposes they're trying now to court people of color to organize against the right wing.

The whole movement is at a critical juncture. There is a group of leftist Queer people who are trying to move the Gay and Lesbian movement and trying to get it to be inclusive, to start doing some real coalition work with people of color and start fighting for human rights across the board. But all the hoopla about Gays in the military really usurped that a lot, so there's a struggle going on right now in the movement.

Women's peace conference

Jerusalem, Israel—"Women, War and Peace: The Vision and the Strategies," an international conference of Women in Black and women's peace movements, will be held in Jerusalem, Dec. 29-31, 1994. Women from women's peace movements throughout the world are invited to share their experience in an activist conference that will include discussions, workshops, a mass vigil and march through Jerusalem, and award of the first Women in Black Peace Prize. Both activists and scholars are invited. Some subjects include: creating a culture of peace, feminist strategies for resolving international conflict, dialogue among women at war, and so on. Special invitations are being extended to women peace activists in former Yugoslavia, the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina, Greenham Common Women, Black Sash women and others. If you wish to present, please indicate your subject and preferred format (workshop, panel, others). For further information and registration, contact Erella Shadmi, 4/11 Dresner Street, Jerusalem, Israel 93814. Tel: (2) 718-597; Fax: (2) 259-626.

Chinatown victory over slave labor

New York, N.Y.—What was to have been a support rally on March 13 for locked out workers at the Silver Palace, Chinatown's only unionized restaurant, turned into a victory celebration. It was a joyous, loud rally of over 200 Chinese workers and their supporters, put on by the workers themselves, their independent union, Restaurant Workers Local 318, and the Chinese Staff and Workers Association which helped them.

Silver Palace bosses last year imposed a contract that cut wages from \$7 and \$8 to \$2.90 per hour, eliminated benefits and seniority rights, and required waiters to share tips with management, which is illegal. The 43 dining room workers unanimously rejected the contract and were locked out. They won this battle after seven months on the picket line every noon and every evening, seven days a week.

Chinese workers proclaimed to the rally: "You have been told that Chinese workers are shy and quiet. Well, we are not shy and we won't be quiet! This victory is just the beginning! We have a list of the restaurants that are the worst exploiters, who steal workers' tips. The bosses have heard the news and are already promising their workers back pay. We will see. Meanwhile we will keep the list."

We were told by an energetic woman worker: "It was the women who started the struggle when the boss came to them saying, 'You are old and ugly. Why don't you leave?' and they said, 'We have to find a way to struggle!'"

Human cost to get job done

Chicago, Ill.—During the same week that the economic ministers from the Group of Seven leading industrial nations were meeting in Detroit on unemployment, leading U.S. manufacturers were gathered in Chicago. A National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) survey found that the latter blamed government regulation and workers' rights for unemployment. "The NAM survey confirms a growing reluctance on the part of U.S. employers to formally hire a worker if there is any alternative to getting a job done." (Chicago Tribune, March 20, 1994)

Helene Curtis always has employed day laborers in production. The attitude toward these workers is exemplified by my supervisor's remark at one morning's kick-off meeting: "I'm going to order some more people today." He had boasted a few days earlier that a new backup agency could supply workers within ten minutes. It actually took about 45 minutes, but 30 workers duly arrived so that we could meet the production schedule.

One of the laws singled out for special criticism by U.S. manufacturers was the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The primary agency for our department, Affirmative Industries of Chicago (AIC), is non-profit, "serving people with handicaps and people who are economically disadvantaged." Many of the people are protected by the ADA so that a "history" of inability to do the work must be established in order to give them a "no return" (in effect, fire them).

A form is filled out daily by each line leader for the AIC workers on her/his line. Each person is given a rating from one to five, five meaning "exceptional," three "average," and one "unacceptable." The labor variance (the difference between the number of "man hours" the engineers say are needed to complete jobs and the number actually used) for our department has been reduced by one-third for this fiscal year, and what happens to those workers who cannot keep up on the line, who need help to do their jobs, who must be reminded often of what they are supposed to be doing, is of no concern.

—B. Ann Lastelle

Saturn troubles

Los Angeles, Cal.—Any worker who thinks he or she can make capitalism work better by joining with the management doesn't know labor history. I just got through reading Helen Fogel's article, "Trouble in Labor Paradise," on the Saturn Corp. plant in Spring Hill, Tenn. It makes me wonder what has happened to working people's minds in that plant.

Jim Dickerson went to work at Saturn after his plant closed in Lakewood, Ga. He said, "It's the best job I ever had." Another worker, Ruben Gomez, said: "We all work a lot of overtime. I was not happy working Sundays, but we needed to get profitable. We have to sacrifice" (my emphasis). This is what I mean. Karl Marx wrote that a worker who is not a revolutionary worker is a nothing.

What I see in this article is that the union leadership and the company have joined together to rule absolutely over the workers in this Saturn plant, using the fear of the plant's failure as a club over each worker's head to get more and more production out of them. An explosion is in the making there. It is overdue.

When I worked for General Motors, I thought the working conditions were worse than fighting World War II, but the conditions of labor in the Saturn plant are beyond belief. The overtime and the rotating shifts are enough to kill a worker. I remember one time when General Motors wanted to rotate the shifts at the South Gate plant in California, just to mention it almost brought on a strike. We told the company if they wanted to rotate, rotate the dumb management, and that was what they did.

I have a friend who bought a Saturn. He read this article and said he would never buy another one. Saturn won't need that second plant when the word gets around about the hell hole of working conditions that has been created by Saturn's production drive.

—Felix Martin

Picket signs had been printed in English and Chinese saying "End Slave Labor" on one side and "Enforce Labor Laws" on the other. Speakers castigated Governor Cuomo for not coming to the rally and blamed him for not enforcing labor laws against the sweatshops. The workers said: "On March 25th, we will take a coffin, symbolizing ending long hours and modern slavery, to Gov. Cuomo. That is the anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire in 1911, that was a symbol of slavery. We want that stopped."



Among supporters of the workers who spoke at the rally were: Roberto Aguilar from the Association of Immigrant Workers in New York, which represents Latino workers; Joe Taylor from Metropolitan Workforce, a Black labor organization; and James Haughton of Harlem Fight Back, which fights for construction jobs for minorities.

Other supporters were "the new generation of Asian American students" from high schools and colleges, who had invited the workers to speak in their classes. "We have mothers who are garment workers, fathers who are restaurant workers; some of us have worked in the restaurants ourselves. The Silver Palace is a great victory, but there are thousands out there, and you will find the youth out there," said a Brooklyn College student.

—Supporter, New York local, News and Letters Committees

One big temp pool

Chicago, Ill.—All labor is becoming temporary part-time labor at every job. At Toys-R-Us they consider 30 hours full time. They make it sound really great when they "give" you a little more, like 35 hours. They're getting rid of as many so-called full-timers as possible by doing everything to get us mad to make us quit or get fired.

When the boss okays more hours, instead of giving the young men we have more hours, they hire three more people, each to work one or two days per week. They'll sweat them double-time and hope they will eventually quit, because what can you do with one or two days' pay?

They want to make do with the absolute minimum number of workers. Where one guy had one job, like building bikes, they now expect him to cover that, plus unload trucks, plus run merchandise out to the sales floor. We're working a hell of a lot harder for the same pay. One guy, for example, has been here three years and is not making even \$5 an hour yet. Where the trucks used to come in palletized, now they load them on the floor from head to tail and to the roof. There are not enough people to off-load the trucks, and yet they keep calling us to take stuff out to the floor.

For older workers, these part-time jobs mean you end up with a whole mess of temporary jobs. For younger workers it means living with your parents a lot longer than you would have or moving back in. You can't afford to leave home. You can't afford anything. We're all one big temp pool of workers, that's all we are.

People are mad. Management thinks they're going to sweat more out of us, but that makes us want to do less. The best way is to follow their orders. They want us as mindless automatons—well, it works better for us that way. You get me so pissed, I will do exactly what you tell me and nothing more. And we'll do it to the letter. If there is a loophole, we'll drive a truck through it.

—David L. Anderson

The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism

"The reduction of various kinds of labor to abstract human labor.... This specific social form of labor as an abstract universal.... becomes the differentia specifica of the capitalistic form of production.... Just as in society 'mere man' plays but a shabby part, so in the capitalist labor process it is not the laborer that is the subject of production, but the mere expenditure of his labor power."

—Raya Dunayevskaya

"Notes on Chapter 1 of Marx's Capital"
For information on ordering, see page 7.

Teamsters vote to strike

New York, N.Y.—There may be a nationwide trucking strike as you read this. Every driver and dock worker I know voted "yes" on March 18 to authorize a strike. We received the following information from our Teamsters local union regarding the National Master Freight contract due to expire March 31:

"...by their actions at the negotiation tables, the trucking companies management were telling all our members to GO TO HELL.

"Some of their demands are as follows:

- To expand the number of offenses that an employee could be immediately terminated for from 7 to 17, including one for 'dishonesty' which could be as simple as putting the wrong time down on your trip sheets.
- To do away with all job classifications so that they could order anyone to do anything.
- To have permanent part-timers.
- To be able to start bids at any time of the day, 24 hours a day, any day of the week. All those not on a bid would be required to stay by the phone 24 hours a day waiting for a call which would allow you only two hours' notice to get to the job.
- To be able to pay straight time for working on Saturdays and Sundays.

"...Throughout the entire country these employers are refusing to move off their 'take-away' proposals. To add to this, the employers stated that whatever they had on the table as of 11:59 p.m. on March 31, 1994 should be considered their final offer. This would, by law, make all those proposals become our new 'contract' until something else was agreed upon..."

The immediate reaction of workers old and new was to vote to strike if need be. One commented that working under such a contract "would be like being in prison. You'd feel you were being watched all the time"; another, that "it would be like not having a union."

Workers said that once you give up a concession, you never get it back: "Look at UPS (United Parcel Service). They're half part-timers now." They said letting the freight companies use part-timers "would be the end of the job. Then no one would be on the list." ("The list" is the seniority list, meaning permanent and full-time.) There is no way we will accept such a contract.

—Freight Teamster

Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

vices that the nation's workers produce in a given hour—rose at the annual rate of 6.1 percent." Someone measures how much we produce in one hour, and this is important at a national level! I thought workers were not important. But wait. How is this good productivity achieved? After all, we are constantly told that the high productivity of the U.S. workers is what has given us our "high standard of living."

This productivity was achieved through "the layoffs of thousands of workers considered a drag on efficiency." So we produce everything, but we are a "drag on efficiency"! Everything is upside down! "There have been 60,000 layoffs in telecommunications alone this year," Stephen S. Roach, senior economist at Morgan Stanley and Co., said. "That is not job shifting: that is upheaval." At last someone talks about the "upheaval" we are living in our flesh and blood and lives! But I don't think he means it that way.

PRODUCTIVITY AND NEW JOBS?

Edwin Dean, chief of the productivity division (yes, there is such a thing—your productivity and mine really matter to this great government!) at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, said, "One can explain a lot of this improvement by noting that...people have simply worked harder to fill all the orders." Well, I see that what is improvement to you, Mr. Government and Mr. Boss, is harder work to me!

Mr. Roach was then quoted: "Clinton has to deliver on his promise of 8 million new jobs to get re-elected. But if companies keep laying off and downsizing, he has a problem." No matter who is president there is no way he or she can buck this trend of business towards ever greater "productivity." That is our future.

Then I read the headline of another article, "Clinton to Unveil Jobs Bill that Focuses on Retraining," and I don't know if I want to laugh or get sick at the outright hypocrisy of these leaders. Their own Labor Department is telling them we need more productivity, in other words more layoffs, and these cynics want to pretend they will create jobs. They CANNOT.

CONTROL OVER OUR LIVES

The article on productivity noted, "The Labor Department said that unit labor costs—the labor cost to produce a car, a pair of shoes or some other product or service—had declined in the 4th quarter at an annual rate of 3.1 percent." Our happy Mr. Roach was ecstatic over this: "It has been 31 years since we have had two consecutive quarterly declines in unit labor costs. That indicates extraordinary control over labor costs."

Somehow this "extraordinary control" which he is so happy about sounds terrible to me. I picture police breaking up a picket line, scabs streaming, in and NAFTA. It is "control" over our lives, business being the power to dispose of the labor of others. As long as there is this power, we are not free.

No wonder they don't print articles like this in the New York Post. Workers reading it would only get gloomy. Oh, I forgot. There are no workers in America anyway. We're all happily middle-class, aren't we?

From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya Marxist-Humanist Archives

by Raya Dunayevskaya
Founder of Marxist-Humanism

Editor's note: As part of the classes News and Letters Committees is holding on "Why Hegel's Phenomenology? Why Now?" we publish another document on this work of Hegel's—excerpts from Raya Dunayevskaya's speech of Dec. 5, 1976, entitled "Hegel, Marx, Lenin, Fanon and the Dialectics of Liberation Today." In this speech Dunayevskaya explored each of Hegel's major works in relation to the views of such thinkers as Frantz Fanon, Herbert Marcuse, Jean-Paul Sartre, Georg Lukacs and Theodor Adorno. Due to space, we here publish excerpts of the first section of the talk, which deals with Hegel's Phenomenology. The full document can be found in the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, microfilm #15024, or can be ordered directly from News & Letters.

We want to begin immediately with both masses in motion and the self-determination of the Idea, in order to stress that there is a single dialectical process in both thought and activity. And that single dialectical process is the Absolute Method, that is, the dialectical method of revolution—whether in thought, or in fact—and in both is what we're after.

In order to stress that fact, it is important to see that even though Hegel was a bourgeois philosopher, and the greatest that ever lived, he was not as abstract as his great philosophic works make him appear, if you follow only various stages of consciousness, or if you follow only the philosophic categories. In fact, every philosophic category stands for a strict period in history, all of which covers the vast amount of 2,500 years of history. (In other words, so far as Hegel is concerned, it all began 500 B.C. with Greek philosophy, through the French Revolution, which is the period in which he lived.)

Because this single dialectical process is historic, and because I want you to see that it isn't something that Marx "added on" to what Hegel said, but is in Hegel, I want to begin with Hegel's statement that no idea is worth being called an idea unless it's an idea of freedom: "When individuals and nations have once got in their heads the abstract concept of full-blown liberty, there is nothing like it in its uncontrollable strength, just because it is the very essence of mind, and that as its very actuality....The Greeks and Romans, Plato and Aristotle, even the Stoics, did not have it....If to be aware of the Idea—to be aware, i.e., that men are aware of freedom as their essence, aim, and object—is a matter of speculation, still this very idea itself is the actuality of men—not something which they have, as men, but which they are." This appears not in an inconsequential essay, but directly in his highest book, *Philosophy of Mind* [para. 482].

There has to be a reason for our study a lot more urgent than what is encompassed by the word "relevance"—"Hegel's relevance for our day"—and that is the TODAYNESS of the Hegelian dialectic, and of Marx's new continent of thought, that emerges out of two elements: both the movement from practice to theory and the movement from theory to practice. In order to get it, to grasp it, not only at its roots, but its ramifications for our day, we have to grasp Marxism in its original state, in its original philosophy, which by no accident Marx called "a new Humanism." We must grasp this free from all distortions of Marxists, whether it's post-World War I, or post-World War II, or post-Marx.... Along with that we also have to get the origin and specificity of Hegelian dialectics, because again, it is no "accident" that Marxism is based on Hegelian dialectics, and that Marx considered that the source of all dialectics, his own included.

For us, Marx's Humanism is on the basis of our day, which began in the 1950s, with the upsurge for the first time ever from under totalitarian Communism—the East German Revolution [of June 1953]—and this spread all through the globe, Latin America, Africa, and so forth. The concrete specific form for our day of the Hegelian dialectic, and our original contribution, is Ab-

Hegel's Phenomenology and the dialectics of liberation today

solite as new beginnings. Those three little words—as new beginnings—tell you that it's our day and no other day, and we will have to come through and understand this—not only because it's our original theoretic contribution, but because this is the reality of what happened in life, the momentous world historic events of the last two decades.

"Absolute as new beginnings" happened in life, when the Hungarian revolutionaries [in 1956], and first the East Germans [in 1953], brought Marx's Humanist Essays from the dusty library shelves onto the historic stage of new freedom, and they were also so in thought—maybe not quite the way we are saying it, though you will see that it's not too far removed. "Absolute as new beginnings" was clear to those who recog-

nized this passion for freedom and operated as revolutionaries. I'm referring specifically to Frantz Fanon.

osophic expression that would not separate it from the transformation of reality. When we look globally at something, we realize that it's no "accident" that here is 1952, Frantz Fanon writing this, and here is 1953, the East German Revolution, and here is 1953, Hegel's Absolute Idea being interpreted as the unity of theory and practice, the movement from practice to theory, on the part of those who were discovering Marxist-Humanism.

IS RETROGRESSION PART OF THE DIALECTIC?

So what is the dialectic but the movement of both ideas and of masses in motion towards the transformation of reality? This is in contrast to the lack of all meth-



The storming of the Bastille in 1789

nized this passion for freedom and operated as revolutionaries. I'm referring specifically to Frantz Fanon.

FANON'S INSIGHT INTO HEGEL

There were two stages in Frantz Fanon's development that concern us.... One is the section of *Black Skins, White Masks* where Fanon takes up "The Negro and Hegel." Hegel didn't take up the Negro question—and that is exactly what Fanon said was wrong. What Hegel took up in the *Phenomenology of Mind* is the relationship of labor to the master. Hegel's great theory of alienation was that precisely because the slave was "nothing," and had to do everything the master said, had to do all the labor—precisely through his labor, the slave got a mind of his own, an attitude to objectivity of his own, a challenge to the person who was everything but who really had nothing.

But Fanon said, nevertheless, these two opposites were not as totally absolute as they would have been had Hegel considered the Black dimension. Involved in this dialectic of the relationship of master to slave, as Hegel postulates it, was still the essence of some reciprocity—somewhere on the way to a mind of your own, you would be able to force some recognition of yourself, as man, as woman, and not just as slave, from the master. But, says Fanon, Hegel didn't consider the Black—and it isn't the least bit true that the master is interested in the Black at all.

The really Absolute, where there is no reciprocity, is this slave who in addition to being a slave, in addition to being the exploited laborer, is Black, and is not at all recognized by the Other. Therefore, the dialectic would have to be much sharper, and see a certain transformation of reality which was deeper, than that of Hegel.

In our age there is Sartre, and he is Left, and he is a good friend [of Fanon], and he is trying to establish a new philosophy for our age, which he calls Existentialism. But look what he does with those three major categories of all of philosophy, Individual, Particular, and Universal. There is a movement from the abstract Universal, through the Particular, supposedly to the concrete, the Individual, who would be absolutely free, and the only proof that the Universal was a reality and not just a thought. But what does Sartre tell Fanon in "Black Orpheus"? He tells him that Black is only a Particular, a "minor term" in these three terms.

Fanon does two things in this particular section, "The Fact of Blackness." One is that he quotes the other West Indian, Aime Cesaire's "Return to My Native Land," in which he tries to show the difference of the dialectic when it comes not from knowledge but from anguish: "Those who invented neither gunpowder nor the compass/ Those who never learned to conquer steam or electricity/ Those who never explored the seas or the skies/ But they know the farthest corners of the land of anguish."

He goes on to explain that that is what makes them the revolutionaries, and what makes them strive for this philosophic expression as one of revolution. Whereupon he then quotes Sartre, on Black being only a minor, particular term, and he says: "[Sartre] was reminding me that my blackness was only a minor term. In all truth, in all truth I tell you, my shoulders slipped out of the framework of the world, my feet could no longer feel the touch of the ground."

The point is that at momentous historic moments what we call a passion for philosophy is actually the passion for freedom, which strives to acquire, to find, a phil-

od, which is reactionary, and what Hegel called the Third Attitude to Objectivity.

We always speak of how, under the impact of the French Revolution, Hegel had put to method the actual activity of masses in motion, the *sans culottes* in France, and so forth, and called it the dialectic. But in this period there was not only revolution, but counter-revolution, and we had not the millenium, but Napoleon. So why do we only talk of the response to the French Revolution, the discovery and development of the dialectical method in Hegel, and not speak about what happened on the question of counter-revolution, on the question of what Hegel himself called reactionary moves? The philosophic expression of this tendency specifically concerns Jacobi.

In 1807, when he wrote the *Phenomenology of Mind*, Hegel had, so to speak, laughed at Jacobi. He didn't take him very seriously, or deal with him at great length. He mentions Jacobi in passing, as part of the culture of what's called the Beautiful Soul, where the people had already gained minds of their own, and they have civilization, and they have the Enlightenment, and they have culture—and nobody's happy anyway....

By 1812, when he writes *Science of Logic*, Hegel doesn't any longer just talk of Jacobi as the Beautiful Soul....He now says, perhaps you have already forgotten Jacobi, he was just a minor philosopher, nevertheless it's important to recognize what he represented.

....At the end of Hegel's life, [1830]....Jacobi gets an entire section [in the *Encyclopaedia Logic*], the Third Attitude to Objectivity. What had happened in those years that made Hegel change his mind? What prompted Hegel to devote an entire section to someone who was supposed to be so minor that he may have already been forgotten?....

Hegel sees that the movement isn't always upward and onward—there is a retrogression. You come to a certain point, and instead of really transforming reality, and giving your life for it, suddenly you begin to say, it's really Faith, and you go backward. So that idea, that this late in life, after the Enlightenment, after the French Revolution, you can still say, not philosophy, but Faith, God, let's go back to that—that is the reactionary movement.

Hegel recognized this, and in 1914, in a much sharper way, Lenin recognized the same thing also, with the breakdown of the Second International—counter-revolution is within the revolution, something is crazy, and we really have to transform all this through revolutionary movement.

We have to therefore keep in mind that...the lack of method, the lack of trying to see what you should actually do—suddenly you're giving it back to Faith—that is the reactionary movement.

So with all these beautiful syntheses that are supposed to be in Hegel—the Absolute Knowledge of the *Phenomenology of Mind* as the unity of Science and History, the Absolute Idea in *Science of Logic* as the unity of Theory and Practice, and the Absolute Mind in *Philosophy of Mind* as the unity of the Objective and the Subjective—what happens, if there is really also retrogression? What is going to be done to stop it, to overcome it, to transcend it? Even before Marx had brought in a whole new continent of thought....Hegel had recognized this by...hitting on Jacobi as the person, and the Attitude that is shown when the revolution has not been transformed into a new society.

We have, therefore, in this introductory presentation:

(continued on page 9)

News & Letters

Vol. 39 No. 3

APRIL 1994

News & Letters (ISSN 0028-8969) is published 10 times a year, monthly, except bi-monthly January-February and August-September for \$2.50 a year (bulk order of five or more — 15¢) by News & Letters, 59 East Van Buren, Rm. 707, Chicago, IL 60605. Telephone (312) 663-0839. Second Class postage paid at Chicago, Illinois. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to News & Letters, 59 East Van Buren, Rm. 707, Chicago, IL 60605.

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Essay Article

Marx's humanism in today's environmental debates

by Franklin Dmitryev

Today's mass environmental movements give us a new vantage point from which to re-examine Marx's 1844 Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts on their 150th anniversary. New questions have been raised about the social roots of ecological problems, the need for a new concept of development, and the separation between theory and practice.

Contending theories have tried to reconcile society with nature by demanding humanity surrender any hope of freedom in humble submission to "natural" dominion¹, or by abandoning the challenge to unfree human institutions and simply trying to minimize their destructiveness to nature², or by posing an external mediator to harmonize them.³

'MARX'S METABOLISM WITH NATURE'

One thing today's ecological movements allow us to see in Marx is the illumination the concept of alienated labor casts on the question of alienation from nature. To Marx, writing in the essay "Alienated Labor," alienated labor is alienation from one's own activity, and is therefore self-alienation. Alienation from nature is one of the moments of that self-alienation.

Overcoming it requires the reintegration of one's own activity, or in Marx's words, the appropriation of human essence. One crucial moment of human activity is our metabolic interchange with nature. The current degradation is an irrational, alienated, and therefore unsustainable relationship to nature. It is alienation from one's own activity, and therefore from the metabolism with nature.

Under capitalist alienation, all human relations are reified, turned into things. That includes the metabolism with nature, which, in its capitalist form, is manifested as two processes that seem to have lives of their own: first, an insatiable consumption of natural resources; second, an ever-growing waste monster, which can be appeased for a time with recycling, or can be drowned or buried, but rises from its grave, to invade our soil, air and water like a zombie army. No matter how we try to contain it, the waste monster inevitably bursts its bonds.

That is only one manifestation of the "alien and hostile force"⁴ which confronts humanity and which humanity must conquer; that force is not nature but the product of alienated labor. What Marx had in mind above all was the machine in the factory, "the product of labor as an alien object which dominates" the worker. "This relationship is at the same time the relationship to the sensuous external world, to natural objects, as an alien and hostile world" (pp. 125-26), even though human beings are part of nature.

The young Marx did not yet use the word "metabolism." In his 1844 Manuscripts he expresses this concept as humanity's need for a "continuous interchange" with nature as a social process, of which industry is an expression. Later, in *Capital* and the *Grundrisse*, Marx appropriates the chemist Justus von Liebig's term "metabolism [Stoffwechsel]." Marx, who has analyzed the reduction of the worker to an appendage of the machine, rejects the 19th century's dominant metaphor for natural processes and human body, mind, and society—the machine—and adopts instead an organic metaphor.

In particular, he shows in *Capital* how the mechanization of agriculture and industry, and the resulting urban concentration of the population, impede the cycle of the return to the biosphere of waste from human consumption, such as sewage, rags, and so on. This disturbs the human metabolic interaction with nature, hindering "the eternal natural condition for the lasting fertility of the soil."⁵

However, he does not see the reintegration of that metabolism as merely a return to a pre-industrial state of nature, but insists that the metabolism, too, must be revolutionized. Over the years he expresses that variously: for example, in 1844 as "appropriation of nature," and in the *Grundrisse* as "human mastery over the forces of nature." The Green tradition is to take such phrases out of context to "prove" Marx advocated "domination of nature," but not explain what that means.

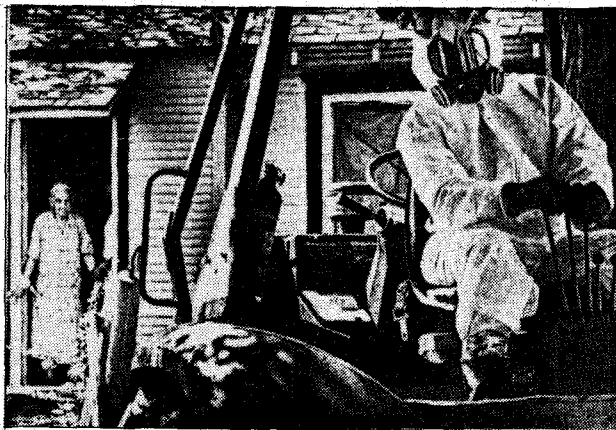
MARX'S CRITIQUE AND RE-CREATION OF THE HEGELIAN DIALECTIC

It seems to me that Marx's body of ideas as a whole points rather to a concept of transcending the alienation of humans from nature, a reintegration with nature, which finds its most precise expression in *Capital*. Socialized humanity would "govern the human metabolism with nature in a rational way," he writes in Vol. 3 of *Capital* (Vintage, 1981, p. 959).

In the passage of Vol. 1 discussed above on mechanization of agriculture, Marx does not stop at pointing out

the capitalist breakdown of the metabolism with nature. He writes that this situation compels metabolism's "systematic restoration as a regulative law of social production, and in a form adequate to the full development of the human race" (p. 638).

The few post-Marx Marxists who have paid attention to this crucial passage have tended to dismiss the last phrase, not grasping the integrality Marx is posing between human liberation and the restoration of a rational relationship with nature. Without this integrality, Marx's concept of nature is lost. As Raya Dunayevskaya points out, Marx's critique and re-creation of the Hegelian dialectic never lets go of "transcendence as objective movement."⁶ His vision is not to eliminate or even minimize humanity's impact on nature, but rather to achieve conscious, freely associated, planned, social control of the ways in which that impact occurs, so that it is not a



EPA worker removes lead-contaminated debris from the yard of West Dallas Latina resident.

destructive impact, but one that provides a foundation for human self-development.

Appropriation of nature is to Marx "appropriation of human essence by man and for man, is the return of man to himself as social, i.e., human man, complete, conscious and matured within by the entire wealth of developments to date. Just as completed humanism is naturalism, so this communism, as completed naturalism, is humanism. It is the true solution of the strife between man and nature, and between man and man."⁷

Marx's critique in these manuscripts shows that neither the relationship of man to woman, nor that of humanity to nature and to the community, nor a person's needs, capacities and labor, have yet become fully human. His vision is that they can become fully human through the simultaneously social and individual act of humanity reuniting itself with itself in all of these dimensions, and that precisely is the innermost meaning of social revolution.

In contrast to Hegel's concept of subject, which Marx criticizes as being abstracted from nature, Marx has created his own concept, which does not separate nature from thinking, self-developing, self-liberating human beings. The subject in Marx is something natural and at the same time specifically human. It is "actual corporeal Man, standing on firm and well-rounded earth, inhaling and exhaling all natural forces....[The subject] is the subjectivity of objective essential capacities, whose action must, therefore, also be objective."⁸

This subjectivity is of course that of the human individual as subject, but also includes the power of thought,

6. *Philosophy and Revolution, from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (Columbia University Press, 1989), p. 54.

7. "Private Property and Communism," by Karl Marx, in *Marxism and Freedom, from 1776 until Today* (Bookman 1958), p. 293. A more contemporary translation would replace words like "man" with gender-inclusive words like "human being."

8. "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic," by Karl Marx, in *Marxism and Freedom*, p. 313.

which is an objective essential human capacity to transform the world in accordance with the idea—especially when it is an essential human idea, that is, freedom.

WHAT KIND OF DEVELOPMENT? WHAT KIND OF LABOR?

Marx's 1844 exposition of his concept of the "human natural subject" is extended in his 1867 *Capital*, whose section on "The Labor Process" is discussed below. It offers a Hegelian view of labor as the self-production of humanity. At the same time it transcends Hegel through its full grounding in the concept of humanity's metabolism with nature. Thus for Marx, human development is not merely "economic" but the dialectic of liberation.

The very question of "What is development?" has been raised profoundly by the movement from practice, from the Zapatista struggle in Chiapas, Mexico, to the fight against the placement of an incinerator in Robbins, Illinois. The questions go beyond just the economic to what kind of development is truly human and not just the self-expansion of capital.

Various tendencies have tried to formulate theories capable of responding to this challenge from practice. Of special importance is Ted Benton, who finds a "naturalistic" dimension in Marx, yet at the same time argues the necessity of its critical reconstruction as a "Green Historical Materialism."⁹ While most post-Marx Marxists have ignored this aspect of Marx, Benton sees that it comprehends humanity as "dependent upon nature-given material conditions," living within natural limits.

However, in his view Marx's economic theory doesn't take sufficient account of natural limits to human activity. Benton concentrates his "ecological reconstruction" of economic theory on the concept of the labor process laid out in Chapter 7 of Vol. 1 of Marx's *Capital*.

Here Marx examines the labor process, not just in capitalism but in general. Benton is especially taken with one sentence from this chapter: "The simple elements of the labor process are (1) purposeful activity, that is work itself, (2) the object on which that work is performed, and (3) the instruments of that work" (p. 284). He interprets this as a "model" of the labor process.

In this "model," the conceptual "structure" of the labor process is supposedly determined by its purpose alone. This "intentional structure...is, for Marx, a transformative one," that is, human labor intended to cause a transformation of an object to yield a use-value.

Benton counterposes humanity's transformative powers to natural limits. He contends that the "model" does not fit certain types of labor—"eco-regulatory," like agriculture, and extractive, like fishing—which are distinguished from "transformative" labor by their dependence on natural conditions that are "relatively impervious to intentional manipulation."

Marx's discussion here is not restricted to the general labor process, a feature of all societies. The second half of the chapter describes the production of surplus-value, which only occurs in capitalism. The commodity has a dual character as both a useful thing and at the same time a value. Labor in commodity production therefore has a dual character too, which Marx calls concrete labor, the activity of making something useful, and abstract labor, the production of values.

To Benton, value production is one more "intentional structure," superimposed on and predominating over those he has identified as transformative, eco-regulatory and extractive. With value production reduced to the capitalist's "intention," there is no room for the question of what kind of labor produces value, so he has absolutely no mention of alienated labor, the core of Marx's philosophy and his economics.

By posing value production as an "intentional structure" parallel to the technical branches of production,

(continued on page 8)

9. "Marxism and Natural Limits: An Ecological Critique and Reconstruction," *New Left Review*, November/December 1989, pp. 51-86.

Don't miss these classes this spring

On the 150th anniversary of
Marx's Economic and Philosophic
Manuscripts of 1844

Why Hegel's Phenomenology? Why Now?

This series of open discussions will probe with eyes of today into what Marx considered Hegel's most creative work—the *Phenomenology of Mind* (1807)—as part of the effort of working out a philosophic new beginning in today's freedom movements. Contact the News and Letters Committee local in your area for a syllabus of readings and schedule of meetings. (See directory, page 10.)

• Class 1 •

**The Todayness of
Marx's Origins in Hegel**
The Preface and Introduction to
Hegel's *Phenomenology*

• Class 2 •

The Master/Slave Dialectic
Labor, the Black and Latino Dimensions,
and Women's Liberation

• Class 3 •

The Pitfalls of False Consciousness
Stoicism, Skepticism, and
the Unhappy Consciousness

• Class 4 •

Spirit in Self-Estrangement (I)
Fetishisms of State Power, Culture and
"The Party"

• Class 5 •

Spirit in Self-Estrangement (II)
What Happens After the Revolution?

• Class 6 •

Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy
The "End of History" versus
Philosophic New Beginnings

1. This "deep ecology" approach is exemplified in *The End of Nature*, by Bill McKibben (Random House, 1989).

2. For instance, "sustainable development" theories have not gotten beyond Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland's assumption that capitalism and its "market" constitute a law of nature. See *For the Common Good* by Herman Daly and John Cobb (Beacon Press, 1989).

3. Murray Bookchin's eco-anarchism relies on his detailed plan for social organization, which leaves no room for living human beings to work out their own self-organization; see *The Ecology of Freedom* (Cheshire Books, 1982). The eco-socialism of James J. O'Connor depends on "democratizing the state," so it can mediate; see *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, Fall 1988, pp. 11-38.

4. "Alienated Labor," in *Karl Marx: Early Writings* (McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 123.

5. *Capital*, Vol. 1 (Vintage, 1977), p. 637.

CHIAPAS AND THE UNIVERSALITY OF FREEDOM

At the heart of the question the Lead article in the March issue asks—is the rebellion in Chiapas a new form of struggle?—lies something evinced throughout the whole issue. That is the idea of possibility, the possibility of social transformation on new and truly human grounds....

The discussion of Marx's last writings in the last chapter of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* helps shed light on the events in Chiapas, in pointing to what was the determining concrete for Marx, "the ever-developing Subject." In Chiapas that is specifically the revolutionary subjectivities of the indigenous people. Rather than viewing capitalism/imperialism as a necessary stage the Third World had to endure to reach socialism, Marx viewed the struggles against them as the determinant for the village commune to become the basis for a Third World socialism. Is the groundwork for socialism in the Third World present within the struggle to regain control of communal lands in Chiapas?

Graduate student
Chicago

The article, "Native Hawaiians fight for independence," was very important to see in *News & Letters*. The struggle of Native peoples has the potential to unite people around the world because the universality of the demands for human dignity, for land, for freedom and for the right to work out their own future speak loudly to the Maori people in New Zealand, the Inuit in Alaska and Canada, the Tzotzil and Tzeltal in Chiapas, Mexico and Native Americans in the USA.

Terry Moon and Franklin Dmitryev
Chicago

In thinking about the revolt in Chiapas, I have questions about where the people's demand for the return of their land will lead. I don't think that it's enough to give the land back to the indigenous people, because technology has created a dependence on the way of production using insecticides and chemical fertilizers. This way of doing agriculture depletes the land of nutrients and makes the people economically dependent, and that is what leads to people leaving the land and migrating to the cities for better wages. They cannot afford to buy the fertilizers and insecticides and so do not have the economic means to keep producing, and that is how the government and the industries take advantage of that and take over the land. There is a need for self-sustainability, and if there is going to be a change, all of us have to think about the limits of resources and the need for changes in our lifestyles.

New reader
Los Angeles

Something is going on in Chiapas that is new, the relationship between peasant revolt as a spark that could set off a different kind of revolution in the advanced lands. Carlos Fuentes says Chiapas is the first post-communist revolt and that's why they are talking not of ideology but of "practical issues." But what is new has to do with the realm of thought. When I was reading Dunayevskaya's letter to Erich Fromm in the same March issue I kept thinking of Chiapas. She often saw "Spirit in Self-Estrangement" as a critique of Mao, but here she is not critiquing intellectuals who are aligned with state power but those who end up being rootless. The challenge from Chiapas is as sharp as Raya Dunayevskaya's demand that the intellectuals see the new.

Archivist
Chicago

The peasant rebellion in Chiapas was not a surprise. In this state, where the

peasant masses suffer the worst economic, political and social repression in the country, the self-organized indigenous movement has been rebelling against the classist and racist Mexican government for years. The silence from the local government and media has among its explanations the rulers' need to maintain an "image" of political and social stability which eventually allowed them to sign the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Latino
New York

I must describe myself as indigent because this state refuses to compensate prisoners for their labor. I could not even afford to mail this letter if they didn't allow me \$1.45 in free postage every week. But I realize there are others in this world who have even less than me.

It is very important to keep informed of the struggles others are fighting. As the Zapatista rebels in Chiapas fight, we need to remember that we are at war against capitalism and that the New World Order will not willingly give up the power that they possess and abuse. Until everyone understands that all forms of oppression are linked we will never achieve true justice for all.

Prisoner
Texas

The Mexican Revolution achieved certain things but remained on paper. The universality of the Chiapas uprising is so great because it comes from the people themselves and not from a slogan of "follow me" like Che Guevara.

Revolutionary
New York

FROZEN CUBAN EMBARGO

The U.S. economic embargo of Cuba has caused great hardship for the Cuban people. The Cold War has ended. Cuba is not a threat to the U.S. The embargo has been rejected by the General Assembly of the UN, 23 Latin American heads of state and 13 members of the Caribbean community, but Washington seems frozen in the past. Many U.S. citizens are challenging the ban by delivering needed medicines and supplies to Cuba in defiance of U.S. policy. Recently Representative Charles Rangel (N.Y.) introduced a bill (H.R. 1943) in Congress to end the embargo. Please let your readers know they can help by urging their own representatives to pass it.

Academic supporter
Evanston, Ill.

LABOR STRUGGLES TODAY



At least three very bitter and protracted labor struggles in Michigan are continuing, despite nearly total silence from the media: 1) Although the UAW won the right to represent workers at the Dayton Hudson Company Westland store, the company has so far refused to bargain. The workers describe intimidation, and discrimination against women and longer-term employees; 2) Jacobson's CEO March Rosenfeld is slated for a humanitarian award on April 5 although 160 mostly older women warehouse workers, members of Teamster Local 194, have been locked out for over a year over their refusal to accept huge health care concessions; 3) Calling for a boycott are the beer truck drivers for Daniel L. Jacob & Co. (Budweiser and Anheuser-Bush) in Washtenaw County and South East Livingston County near Detroit. The drivers have been forced to take up to 25% pay cuts and suffer greatly from injuries caused by lifting heavy cases with no helper assigned to the trucks.

For more information on Jacobson's call Brenda Abbey (517) 784-4606 or Jobs With Justice (313) 461-1034. Con-

Readers' Views

tact Citizens for Justice at Hudson's, P.O. Box 27794, Detroit, MI 48227-9998.

Susan Van Gelder
Detroit

Most of the workers who were on the picket line in the Silver Palace strike don't speak English. Those that do translated our stories from N&L into Chinese for the others on the picket line.

Silver Palace supporter
New York

The government and management ministers met here for two days to try to solve unemployment problems that have developed over decades of government and management mis-management. Nobody expected anything out of that conference, and that's what came out of it—nothing.

Ford worker
Detroit

All they were doing at that G-7 conference was building economic coalitions to fight against the Asian countries that are threatening the European countries and the U.S.

Chrysler worker
Detroit

The G-7 Conference in Detroit was perfectly described in Hegel's critique of "Enlightenment" and the intellectual culture of a Spirit in self-estrangement. If the stupidity displayed at the G-7 didn't reflect the "inversion of reality and thought" I don't know what does. I even wrote a letter to President Clinton to let him know how I, as a worker, felt about his speech there.

Retired auto worker
Los Angeles



WOMEN'S LIBERATION

I would have titled Raya Dunayevskaya's letter from the Archives in the March issue "An Appeal for a Dialogue on Hegel." That is how she begins it, and she ends by saying the dive into Hegel is "not for any scholastic reasons, but because it is the essence for the understanding of today." Then she grounds her critique of Sartre's "Search for a Method" in the question of Hegel's "Spirit in Self-Estrangement—the Discipline of Culture" and the parallel she saw in Marx's concept of the "Fetishism of Commodities."

It seemed to me that Laurie Cashdan's essay on "Feminism and Marx's humanism reconsidered" caught some of that concept in her turn to Marx's *Capital* in order to discuss modern feminist theoreticians. In tracing out the relationship of the bourgeois family and the perverse nature of capitalist production, you can see the perverse relationships that flow from it.

Angela Terrano
New York

The essay on feminism and Marx's Humanism made some fine points on Marx but I have some questions on the discussion about poststructuralism which quoted Jennifer Ring that postmodernist theorists act as if "the power of the past can be undone by an act of literary will." More sophisticated feminist theorists like Gayatri Spivak or Judith Butler would laugh at such a conclusion. What drove many to Foucault was not literary critique but questions of the body and sexuality.

Scholar
New York

Communalism is attracting lots of women in India. There is a growing popularity of women's wings of Hindu parties, eclipsing the role of the autonomous feminist movement with an older and successful history of obliterating feminist movement issues. The success of the autonomous women's movement forced these parties to raise women's issues. This was started in the 1980s when women found "space" within their own community.

I think that fascist movements appeal

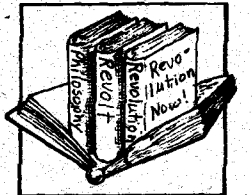
to some women as they always stress family values and traditional values. There is a strong link between women's issues and religious issues. In India, every religious group has different laws regarding marriage, divorce, inheritance. The feminist movement has been struggling for a common civil law and in this effort there is a lot of opposition from the fundamentalists in every religion.

Pillar
Bihar, India

Rarely have I been more outraged than when I learned that our government regards women's bodies as a source of food which can be harvested to help balance the damn budget! Congress set aside a whopping \$8 million over the past five years to promote breastfeeding among poor women in the U.S. Why? To reduce the cost of providing food under the WIC (Women, Infants and Children) program! Now the Government Accounting Office is studying "whether any changes in federal laws could encourage breastfeeding." Evidently even motherhood is no longer a sacred "cow."

Jan Kollwitz
Chicago

LITERATURE AND REVOLUTION



There's no way one can live the Black experience and not deal with the need to transform reality. The question of raising rhetoric to the level of revolution is the new duality we face, especially regarding Afrocentricity where rhetoric can replace the need for revolution and it becomes "revolutionary" just to listen to rap or see the film "Malcolm X." The question is whether that rhetorical character really becomes the point of departure for digging deeper into the theory needed to extract the revolutionary dimension of Black history and today's current needs.

Black writer
Chicago

Those in power know the power of writing. A lot of people don't read as much as they did before. Slaves were not allowed to read because writing has always been a force to change society. Sojourner Truth's "Ain't I A Woman?" speech first appeared in *The Liberator* so others could "hear" it.

New substitute teacher
Chicago

A lot of what poetry is now is just asking people to get up and express themselves. Is it art for art's sake or art for liberation? Many writers write for themselves, as opposed to Black writers like Richard Wright and Toni Morrison, who are writing for/to others.

White youth
Illinois

Publishing Richard Wright's 1941 essay for Black History Month showed that for N&L there is a relation between literature and revolution, where the "regular world" would insist they live on opposite sides of the street.

Young worker
Oak Park, Ill.

LANGUAGE AND SEXUALITY

I'm more and more adopting the word Queer to define who I am and what I'm doing, and the reason why is that it is a term that defies assimilation. Something that is "queer" cannot be normal, by definition. In that very defiance I like it, and also in the inclusiveness of it. That it's not your sexual practice per se, but rather how you are making sure that what you're doing is not again supporting that which is normal and status quo and mainstream. I love the word for those reasons.

Jennifer
California

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FARRAKHAN AND FUNDAMENTALISM

Lou Turner's recent article, "Farrakhan's frenzy of self-conceit" in the "Black World" column highlighted the interrelation of moral code and political discipline in contemporary American Black fundamentalism, correctly pointing out that it was "as much a Christian as an Islamic creation." He called it an "alienated religiosity," but what Marx described as the "sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world," was religion itself. It is the self-consciousness of an individual adrift on the social sea, a person in search of genuine human moorings, a reversed world-consciousness for a reversed world. Nevertheless, Karl Marx and Lou Turner were right. Fundamentalism is alienated religiosity: supra-alienated consciousness, the self-awareness of individuals who, suspecting they may be lost, seek to define their condition as found. It is the world view of those who turn for the open ocean when land appears on the horizon. Fundamentalism must rely on political discipline because its reality is an illusion. The only way to sustain this illusion is by coercion.

Ted V. Chicago

Lou Turner brings out that many voices in Black academia are directly or indirectly supporting Nation of Islam's dogmatic theories. Cornel West has a caption on Farrakhan's latest book that says something like, if anyone is interested in the future of Black America he should reconsider Louis Farrakhan. It kind of fits in with the fact that most Black academics are pretty much reformist, advocating, like Farrakhan, a reform of current capitalism. They seem to feel that a "capitalism for everyone" is the only viable solution, and very rarely do you hear revolution as a consideration.

Revolutionary youth Los Angeles

What was great about Lou Turner's column was that it didn't only skewer Farrakhan—it skewered everyone! Khalid Muhammad, Elijah Muhammad,

Leonard Jeffries, Tony Martin, the Anti-Defamation League, the fascist Kach party of Meir Kahane all got what they deserved by being exposed so starkly by a deeply philosophic critique. I hope this column can be reprinted everywhere.

Women's liberationist Bremerton, Wash.

Lou Turner showed how Farrakhan uses Malcolm X to a certain point. The Nation of Islam sells his tapes, but in the long run they look at Malcolm X as a Judas, who sold out. Turner is right that they're trying to destroy the ghost of Malcolm X. Malcolm's greatness was his ability to change, his self-critique and his development from that. For him the ideology of the human element determined reality and the future. In Mecca he saw all colors of people, and so it was no longer color as the determinant. It was your belief in what you represented. I think he would have gone even further, maybe towards a concept of humanism.

Gene Ford Los Angeles

There is a road to freedom but it is a vast struggle. One thing that is done is to pit the Black middle class against those fighting for freedom and call freedom fighters illegitimate. Behind that is the Man who has pulled the strings all along, who says this is not the time for freedom. We have never got to freedom, so the struggle is ongoing.

Mark Jones Chicago

STOP THE POLL TAX

The Highland Regional Council has been waging a campaign of economic terrorism to try and collect their poll tax money, delivering warrants to people to impound their household goods. The next struggle looming here is a consumer strike against the imposition of a tax on fuel. We will pay minus the tax.

Bill Johnston Scotland

RUSSIA AND THE PLAN

The point in the essay "Where is Russia going?" about how many of the "independent leftists" in Russia still harbor a hidden nostalgia for the Plan and nationalized property is very important. It reminds me of the analysis of the independent Russian socialist Boris Kagarlitsky: Yeltsin's policies are resulting in the deindustrialization of Russia, and therefore it is now the moment for socialists to advocate worker collaboration with their bosses, the industrial managers! He includes the various reformed Communist Parties (i.e., adherents of the former totalitarian state-capitalist rulers) under the same "Left" rubric as the youth organizing as anarchists and anarcho-communists.

M.L. Los Angeles

NEW INTEREST IN MARXISM



I am beginning to appreciate an organization such as News and Letters Committees, representing Marxist-Humanism. Even though I still have questions in my mind regarding issues of leadership and centralization/ decentralization...only a revolutionary education, a struggle for freedom, an activist engagement in a dialectic of theory/practice, is a true human development. I look forward to the classes on Hegel's Phenomenology of Mind. My initial reading is beginning to demystify Raya Dunayevskaya's work for me.

New member Los Angeles

There seems to be a renewed interest in Marxism. It's kind of like the '60s (not that I was alive then) but there seems to be more people interested in ideas than I found three or four years ago. I talk to people about Marxist-Humanism and about Raya's writings. I

know I don't understand a lot of what she wrote but just from talking to me, people want to hear more. It helps me focus on what I need to think through more.

High school student California

I am an artist/poet enslaved by the notion that I must work dull survival jobs in this "land of the free." I subscribed to N&L hoping to gain insight into my independent struggle towards a personal anarchy. I have found the paper informative, honest and "humanistic" but I don't have the patience to deal with the power brokers of this greedy world of ours. Only when "push comes to shove" will you see me at the front lines, ready to kick some capitalist butt.

New subscriber Austin, Texas

BOSNIA AND THE UN

What is your position now that the imperialist UN has moved into Bosnia-Herzegovina? I do not support UN intervention anywhere in the world. In this period U.S. and world imperialism use the UN as a front for political and military control of oppressed peoples. In the U.S., the National Guard and the Marines serve a similar military purpose.

D.A. North Carolina

A CORRECTION

In the lead on the Chiapas uprising in the March issue of News & Letters, footnote 2 refers to The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism by Raya Dunayevskaya. Dunayevskaya developed the theory of state-capitalism but never wrote a work with that title. The quote is from her 1942 study, "Labor and Society," included in the above-mentioned collection (on p. #23, not p. #21 as cited in the article). For the benefit of all new and old N&L readers who may want to learn more about Dunayevskaya's writings, I think it's important to be precise.

Librarian Michigan

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS FROM NEWS & LETTERS

The following is a select list of publications available from News & Letters. A full list of our publications is available in our "Marxist-Humanist Literature Catalogue," available from N&L for 50¢.

—BOOKS—

by Raya Dunayevskaya

- Marxism and Freedom ...from 1776 until today
1989 edition. New introduction by author
\$17.50 per copy
Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao
1989 edition. New introduction by author
\$14.95 per copy
Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution
1991 edition. New introduction by author. Forward by Adrienne Rich.
\$12.95 per copy
Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future
\$15.95 per copy
The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism: selected writings.
\$8.50 per copy
The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism: Two Historic-Philosophic Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya.
"Presentation on Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy of June 1, 1987," and 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes."
\$3.00 paperback, \$10.00 hardcover

—PAMPHLETS—

- American Civilization on Trial, Black Masses as Vanguard
Statement of the National Editorial Board. Includes "A 1980s View of the Two-Way Road Between the U.S. and Africa," by Raya Dunayevskaya, and "Black Caucuses in the Unions" by Charles Denby.....\$2 per copy
Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western "Civilization"
.....\$1 per copy
Marx's Capital and Today's Global Crisis
Contains introduction, "Today's Epigones Who Try to Truncate Marx's Capital," and Chapters Five through Eight of Marxism and Freedom by Raya Dunayevskaya\$2 per copy
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by Andy Phillips and Raya Dunayevskaya\$2 per copy
25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S. A History of Worldwide Revolutionary Developments
by Raya Dunayevskaya.....\$1.50 per copy
The Myriad Global Crises of the 1980s and the Nuclear World Since World War II
Includes "Introduction/Overview—Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development," and "Retrospective/Perspective: Thirty Years of News & Letters."
by Raya Dunayevskaya.....\$2 per copy

- Theory and Practice, by Rosa Luxemburg
First English translation.....\$2 per copy
Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions
by Raya Dunayevskaya.....\$1.25 per copy
Frantz Fanon, Soweto and American Black Thought
by Lou Turner and John Alan.....\$3 per copy
Selections from Raya Dunayevskaya's Writings on the Middle East
.....\$2.50 per copy
Working Women for Freedom
by Angela Terrano, Marie Dignan and Mary Holmes\$1 per copy
Dos ensayos por Raya Dunayevskaya
.....\$2 per copy
Constitution of News & Letters Committees
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—ARCHIVES—

- The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development
A 15,000-page microfilm collection on 8 reels available from Wayne State U., Detroit, Mich.\$160
Guide to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development.
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Black/Red View

by John Alan

Almost 30 years after Berkeley, Cal., integrated its public schools without any hassles over "forced" busing, ethnic studies is a controversial issue at Berkeley High School. Many students think that the required course in ethnic studies has failed to bridge the cultural gap between the students. Administrators and teachers at Berkeley High contend that "teachers are not seeking to bring the students together physically, just mentally" in order to construct a foundation to make them more sensitive to the cultures of others.

Both views reveal the narrow limits that the public school system has when it attempts to deal with the unresolved problems of class and race, wealth and poverty, disguised under the rubric of diversity and multiculturalism. For example, it has been reported, that in a recent ethnic studies class a Black student asked a challenging question about an assigned text entitled "The Whites and non-Whites." The student wanted to know: "Why do white people always get their own category and everyone else has to be labeled non-white?"

Environmental debates

(continued from page 5)

Benton has spirited away Marx's focus on the contradiction between abstract and concrete labor. The contradiction develops in many concrete ways as capitalism develops. What is at first only the formal subordination of the worker to the capitalist becomes the real subordination of the worker to capital, as the labor process is redesigned so as to make the machine the prime mover and reduce the human worker to its appendage. What appears as an irrational, destructive domination of nature by humanity is actually the reflection of the subordination of both nature and humanity to capital.

Marx's analysis of the dialectic of capitalism shows the perversion of the relationship of subject and object, where the object is value, dead labor, especially in the form of the machine, which acts as the subject and dominates the living laborer, who becomes an object, an appendage to the machine.

BEYOND NATURAL & THEORETICAL LIMITS

Inherent in Marx's treatment of the dual character of labor is that value dominates, but can never totally submerge, the human being. The revolt of the workers is the subjects' reclaiming their own subjectivity from the machine and positing their subjectivity as objective, in the form of revolutionary activity. While the revolt traced in Capital is that of labor at the point of production, Marx's argument provides ground for comprehending today's multiple forces of revolution and mass opposition to environmental destruction as also challenging capitalism's perverse relationship of object over subject.

By contrast, Benton's counterposition of human transformative powers to natural limits leaves him no way to explain environmental movements except as a reaction to production's "unintended consequences." His necessary conclusion is the need to limit those transformative powers by restraints on certain types of technology. There is no place in his theory for recognition of how both design and use of technology are shaped by the perverse object-subject relationship.

Benton is correct in seeing "transformative, productive powers of associated human beings" as central to Marx. But why pose them as the cause, rather than the solution, of social ecological problems? Is human power necessarily equivalent to "domination of nature"?

The secret of Benton's concept of human powers—a concept shared by many activists and theorists—is the recognition of those powers only in an alienated shape, that is, as powers embodied in capital, as a "hostile force." The aspects of human power that then stand out are its technological forms and the sheer scale of social production. Such a theoretical concept skips over the contradiction within human power itself: human beings themselves struggling against their domination by their own products.

In the Marxist-Humanist analysis of Capital, the productive powers Dunayevskaya emphasizes are not just machinery but also the human power of cooperative labor. That is not only a power of production but a power of revolt—not only transforming objects but transforming the human being, and society. The essence of the ideological pollution of our time is the overwhelming consciousness of defeat, the loss of confidence in that human power of transformation of society.

This retreat from revolution is developed in theory as the impossibility of any transformation that results in true liberation. Such a theory sees subjectivity as a monstrosity when it exercises "human transformative powers" in order to posit itself as objective. Therefore, the domination of object over subject is posited as natural and eternal, rather than a social form of a specific historical stage, capitalism. What Benton has achieved is the articulation of that theoretic principle. That makes his theory represent far more than just one individual's misinterpretation of Marx.

There is some truth in a theory that conceives human power as negative. But the solution to environmental destruction cannot be found by imposing external limitations. It must rather be sought in the use of human power itself to effect transcendence of its alienation from human subjectivity and thus from nature. That is the direction the movements from below are looking for. It is also the thrust of Marx's body of ideas. Working it out concretely, in theory and in practice, as direction for today's movements is a task for our age.

Multiculturalism excuses status quo

The obvious intent of the student was to challenge the fact that his cultural development was being determined and judged externally by a so-called "white concept" of culture. Often this negative relationship is expressed negatively toward more academic Black students by other Black students who accuse them of wanting to be "white." This negative attitude is not totally irrational because it expresses the existence of Black opposition to being mere objects in a race-determined social relationship, even if it is called multiculturalism.

It is very easy to single out the race dimension of American culture. Alexis de Tocqueville, the French aristocrat, in the early 19th century thought that it would lead to the destruction of American civilization. Since then many historians and sociologists have tried in vain to understand why race—and racism—is such a powerful dimension in American culture.

Andrew Hacker, the eminent sociologist, simply says that America is inherently a "white country in character, in structure, in culture," something often repeated by reactionary whites in defense of the racial status quo at the time of the Civil Rights Movement.

Saying that the culture of America is "white" reveals little; it only gives the appearance of a culture permeated with the ideology of racism. But what is the ground of this culture, its true essentiality? If sociologists would dare to leave their computers and their so-called objective statistics, they would discover that neither culture nor racism are autonomous social phenomena, but are "spiritual" manifestations of America's commodity producing society and the way it organizes and disciplines labor to perform that kind of production.

The manic pursuit of commodity production began when the first Africans were brought to this country as slave laborers to produce cotton and tobacco for the world market. Later the African was followed by great waves of European workers to toil in the factories and the mines. In this gigantic historical process, Black and white humanity, along with their labor and culture, was stripped away and transformed into another commodity—labor power.

While some may see that American society is divided today, the process of the separation of races remains a missing ingredient. For example, the postmodernist Jerry Herron, in his recent book *After Culture: Detroit and the Humiliation of History*, relates Detroit's urban culture to Henry Ford's invention of the assembly line in Highland Park in 1911.

Herron makes the preposterous claim that Ford's assembly line "democratized work on a vast scale...by reducing it to the level of duplicatable idiocy...where historical differences—race, religion, language, national origin—were transformed by work into modern individuality." He says nothing about the reality of the assembly line, the harsh discipline it imposes upon workers and the destruction of their individuality in the process of performing "duplicatable idiocy." He is also silent about the working-class struggles in Detroit and the crisis in the automobile industry.

By avoiding the realities of Ford's rationalization of commodity production, Herron arrives at two conclu-

sions for the "unmaking" of white, middle-class culture in Detroit: first, Black violence of the 1960s drove the white middle class to the suburbs; and second, this represented the failure to deal with urban life.

Herron's conclusions place him among the multiculturalists and the white cultural chauvinists since they all create the same dualism. All make a universal out of culture, separating it from the realities of life while at the same time thinking that culture is something that can be imposed upon reality. Yes, there is a crisis in American culture, but it can only be resolved by the creation of a new society that has as its object the real production of human life.

Media poverty pimps

Chicago, Ill.—Picture this scenario: 28 people living crammed together in one filth-strewn apartment. Three Black women: all sisters, all with drug habits, and all on welfare, put on display before television cameras—the perfect prey for opportunist politicians and the vultures of the media.

This scene describes the recent discovery on Chicago's west side of a Black family forced to live in overcrowded conditions. The media descended quickly from its perch to exploit the situation. We heard about the drug abuse, implied child abuse, and the typical Black woman "welfare queen." The politicians, from Mayor Daley to President Clinton, were quick to use these Black families' deplorable conditions to further bolster their own draconian cutbacks in welfare. But there is another side, contrary to the impression left by the media that the community had completely abandoned these children.

Members of Keystone Baptist Church, across the street from the apartment, had been giving the children food and clothing through several programs. Neighbors had spoken to the women about their children, but were turned away. A woman from the church attempted to talk with the mothers, but was stopped at the front door. Some of the children were in the church's summer camp and its afterschool tutoring program. The Department of Children and Family Services had been called on several occasions to no avail.

When a television news crew came to interview members of the church, one woman defended the mothers. She explained that the mothers were doing the best they could with what they had and she justified taking in the other sisters' families on the grounds that the children would have been homeless otherwise. This did not fit the script. The reporter began walking off. The camera person shut off the camera, pointing it at the floor instead.

Not once did the media connect the social conditions of these Black women with the lack of affordable housing, drug treatment facilities with months long waiting lists, or the loss of over 1,000 manufacturing jobs in Chicago over the past decade. All we were left with was a distorted image of drug addicted welfare queens fabricated by an irresponsible media and law-and-order politicians. The real picture of what contributed to these deplorable living conditions remains to be shown.

—R.W.

Black World

(continued from page 1)

Somali famine victims] are no longer on the screens." Speaking as much for the UN as for U.S. national interests, Moose announced, in a recent interview that "we have gone forward with...a peacekeeping force in Rwanda." Intervention into the "killing fields" of neighboring Burundi is already under active UN-U.S. consideration.

Though Moose is merely articulating the current UN-U.S. multilateralism that passes as Clinton's foreign policy, it is not inconsistent with the prevailing neoliberal imperialist attitudes of Black intellectuals and political leaders who, like Jesse Jackson, Ron Dellums and TransAfrica's Randall Robinson, supported the Bush-Clinton policy. In Somalia, UNOSOM was seen as a war to re-colonize an African country, while these African-American leaders helped cast it as imperialism with a human face. The reality that they have yet to face, and which this imperialist misadventure now leaves behind, is a society with more crises than existed before the Marines landed.

One of the most tragic but unreported outcomes of UNOSOM is the plight of some 300,000 Somali refugees, mostly women and children, stranded in the desolate wastes of northeastern Kenya. According to the joint report issued by Africa Watch and the Women's Rights Project, "Seeking Refuge, Finding Terror," the rape of Somali women has assumed massive proportions at the hands of armed Somali and Kenyan bandits and soldiers. The tragic irony is that many of the women raped in the refugee camps fled there because they were victims of rape in Somalia.

Writing for *Africa Report* (Nov.-Dec., 1993), Binaifer Nowrojee explains:

"For Somali women, the physical injuries caused by being violently raped are, in some cases, compounded by the practice of female genital mutilation. Somali women subjected to genital mutilation have generally undergone infibulation. This practice involves the removal of the clitoris and the inner lips, followed by incisions in the outer lips to create raw surfaces which are then stitched together. Only a small opening, sometimes the size of a match stick, remains for the flow of urine and menstrual

What has Somalia meant?

blood. Sexual intercourse for women who have undergone this operation is painful unless the opening is gradually expanded over a period of time or they are recut to widen the opening. Rape is excruciatingly painful for the refugee women who have undergone this procedure. In some cases, the bandits preparing to rape a refugee woman have slit open her vagina with a knife before raping her."

In the end, the U.S.-UN intervention has left Somalia bleeding, and what beginnings made towards resolving Somalia's crisis by the Somalis themselves have come about in spite of, not as a result of, Operation Restore Hope's "nation building."

Just off the press!

HARRY McSHANE

and the Scottish Roots of

MARXIST HUMANISM

Peter Hudis



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Editorial

U.S.-China human rights farce

Secretary of State Warren Christopher accepted his share of humiliation on his mid-March mission to Beijing. His message, couched as a warning to the perpetrators of the Tiananmen Square Massacre of June 4, 1989, was that China would lose its Most Favored Nation (MFN) trading status without concrete movement on political dissidents and human rights. In substance he was there to beg for just enough signs of action to let President Clinton renew MFN.

But Christopher's real humiliation came back in Washington when the administration cut the legs out from under him. Led by Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen, voices around Clinton criticized the law and the policy Christopher had just represented; the linkage of trade and human rights.

That policy had come about because of popular pressure for sanctions against China's rulers after the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, where both the opposition and the repression stood so far out in the world spotlight that overnight there was sentiment for isolating China not unlike that for isolating apartheid South Africa. Clinton, on the campaign trail in 1992, mined that sentiment by attacking Bush for certifying China's compliance with human rights requirements each year and so renewing MFN.

Because of pressure from business, Clinton renewed China's MFN last May, adding only the requirement that China show "significant, overall progress toward improving its human rights record," then meet with Deng Xiaoping's chosen Communist Party chairman Jiang Zemin in November. Clinton had done the same

Hegel's Phenomenology

(continued from page 4)

the masses in motion, the self-determination of the Idea, to hear itself speak, and how it develops; we have the single dialectical process of both of them. And let us see where we actually get when we come to todayness, and try to recapture not only Marx, but also Hegel, and within Hegel capture what was just an element, just implicit, not quite clear—because this Absolute Idea as new beginning means we have seen something in Hegel that no others have seen, because they didn't live in our age, and each age brings out something new in what the people from below have done, in what has happened in the world historic events.

THE MOVEMENT OF THE PHENOMENOLOGY

The Phenomenology of Mind has different stages of consciousness: Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason. Then you go into Spirit, which is supposedly the new society, but you find out that Spirit too is in Self-Estrangement, and culture really transforms into opposite the relationship of reality to thought. When you therefore re-arise into Absolute Knowledge, there is something that is really abstract—and Hegel thought so too, but he wanted to come to a certain conclusion.

Now, even though everyone, Marxists and non-Marxists, and people who don't believe in anything Hegel wrote, recognize that the Phenomenology is Hegel's greatest work, nevertheless, according to a mechanical view of things, the work is very chaotic. Hegel originally thought he was only writing on Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason; that's all he had outlined—he had planned this as a little introduction to what he would write in Science of Logic, where he would write in actual scientific, i.e., philosophic categories. But what happened is that the Phenomenology stretched for 800 pages! The point, however, is that the Phenomenology reflects both the movement in life—in this case, the French Revolution—and Hegel's disgust with his colleagues, the philosophers, who were using all of the same old categories.

Hegel was saying: For heaven's sake, look how the world has changed! We Germans just keep talking, but the French have really done everything: they've abolished the monarchy, they've abolished the republic—or at least partway—they've gone through things and done it, and what have we done except talk? At this point—loving the French and hating the Germans—Hegel was even welcoming Napoleon, thinking, well, at least he'll get rid of feudalism in Germany...

There is nothing that so excites Existentialists as Phenomenology of Mind; they have built their Existentialism on it—or at least so they think. And they've tried to apply it. But it is impossible, it is wrong—in addition to being impossible!—to try to apply Hegel. You have to see that if it is true what he describes, that there is a dual rhythm of revolution and counter-revolution, that there is a dual rhythm of thought and activity, if it emerges from below—you have to work out the dialectic for your age, you can't "apply" it.

But everyone has tried to apply it...Take Merleau-Ponty. He said that the greatest work since the Phenomenology of Mind is Capital. But Capital is not the application, so to speak, of the Phenomenology. Sartre says that the fetishism of commodities, in Chapter 1 of Capital, is the greatest thing, but it just begins our trouble. Each one—even Engels—tried to apply the relationship of Hegel to Marx, instead of seeing how each arose in its time, on the basis of the dialectic, and what you have to do is re-create the dialectic for your age...

The point however is, when we look at Chapter 1 [of Capital], Marx had to create an entirely new continent of thought to develop all of those categories, plus other material that is very originally Marx and only Marx. The idea of trying to "apply" means that supposedly you are so unhappy with just abstract categories that you want to go immediately to the concrete; in fact, however, you haven't yet grasped the Hegelian dialectic....

about-face on Haiti, criticizing Bush for returning Haitian refugees into the bloody hands of the military after President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's overthrow, then continuing and defending the same action in face of repeated slaughter.

Jiang and other rulers had seen enough of these flip-flops to dare to call Clinton's bluff. They stepped up arrests in Beijing even during Christopher's visit and put at risk the \$40 billion in U.S.-China trade during an export-driven economic expansion because they figured there was no risk—the U.S. would blink first.

The very size of the trade deficit—\$31 billion exported to the U.S. versus \$9 billion to China—might indicate that U.S. capitalists want Chinese labor more than China needs investment. Many of the 550 U.S. companies located in China were looking for a billion customers, but the bulk of the \$3 billion U.S. companies have invested is in production destined for the U.S., and that has helped to sustain two years of a torrid 13% growth.

In some trades now, production from China dominates in the U.S.: over half the shoes sold here are made in China. Companies have rushed to be a part of the restructuring of China's state-capitalist economy with a wage level so low that one economist said firms could count wages as zero on a balance sheet compared to the other costs of production.

Only now has the government set a legal limit to the working day in private enterprises: an eight-hour day, yet allowing up to 48 hours of overtime a month! There is no minimum wage yet for workers in private enterprises. The frequent participation by local and party officials in these ventures means even sparser health and safety enforcement than in the U.S.

If China's rulers are risking such a high volume of exports to the U.S. by not releasing all dissidents, it is because they fear the masses and the voices of revolt. Political prisoners as different as Wei Jingsheng and Han Dongfang, founder of the Beijing Autonomous Workers Federation, have not remained silent when released.

One official report pressed for sterner measures against labor in light of 250,000 strikes and work stoppages since 1989. Underlying part of the unrest by workers in the largest cities is inflation topping 20% not counting housing, which when privatized has skyrocketed. In the countryside, peasants in more than 20 provinces have staged revolts against confiscatory taxes, not to mention the revolts inside the armed camps that are in Tibet and the Muslim areas of the West.

It is not just the beacon of China's economic expansion that guides U.S. foreign policy. Clinton, like all presidents since Nixon, has counted on arrangements with China for stability in Asia. Hoping to play the China card now in restraining North Korea and whatever nuclear threat it poses, Clinton does not sound ready to let "little" things like increasing numbers of women being kidnapped and sold in South China stand in the way of that relationship.

When Secretary Bentsen, just days after Christopher's mission, chipped away at the linkage of trade and human rights by talking of the need to "balance our interests" in Asia, China's rulers have every reason to expect that by June, no concrete conditions will interfere with MFN and the explosive expansion of U.S.-China trade.



Han Dongfang, founder of the Beijing Autonomous Workers Federation.

G-7 labor ministers can't touch unemployment

"Modern Industry...compels society, under penalty of death, to replace the detail-worker of today...reduced to the mere fragment of a man, by the fully developed individual, fit for a variety of labors, ready to face any change of production..."
Karl Marx, Capital

Detroit, Mich.—The G-7 "jobs conference" held in Detroit on March 14-15, which included the U.S., Canada, England, France, Germany, Italy and Japan, produced little besides an exchange of ideas on the chronic global unemployment crisis. When first proposed by President Clinton at the G-7 (the Group of Seven leading industrial nations) meeting in Tokyo last year, the idea received a cool response. But persistent and growing unemployment changed the attitudes of member governments facing both elections and rising rebellious actions of not only the unemployed, but also of the employed who see their own jobs and livelihood endangered.

This was the first G-7 meeting that included labor ministers from each country, which attests to the magnitude of the problem. In the U.S., with unemployment over 6.5%, more than 8.5 million are jobless, while 6 million are underemployed—without counting the millions who have given up on even trying to find a job. In Europe, unemployment averages some 12%, with over 19 million unemployed. Spain tops the list at 23% unemployed.

President Clinton said he chose Detroit for the conference because it reflected an economically resurgent auto industry. A profitable auto industry, however, does not mean a jobs increase. In fact, the auto industry in Detroit, which today has only three auto assembly plants, ranks third in employment behind both health care and public employees. Detroit meanwhile suffers an unemployment rate of over 11%. A Ford worker in Detroit said of the conference: "That was a management-government meeting. They can't solve the problem—they are the problem. The ones who can solve it are the workers, only we weren't invited."

One conference agreement centered on the need to improve education so youth would be prepared for technologically changing production demands of industry, with Japan and Germany singled out as models where young people are regimented early in school and taught to adapt themselves to capitalism's changing demands. In the U.S., for example, a few years ago it took the Big Three (GM, Chrysler, Ford) 30 days to train a worker. Now it takes from six months to a year. At a Chrysler plant in Windsor, Ontario (across the river from Detroit), a startling two-thirds of the workers recently hired on a new midnight shift were college graduates.

Education is certainly critical, but management's solution is exposed by the statement of Chrysler Vice President Thomas Stalcamp at a side conference to the G-7 meeting by labor and management officials: "It might be nice to see a [school] lab with a mini-robot in it rather than a classroom with a blackboard." Thus, "failure" of education in the U.S. is to be remedied by teaching all students to meet the needs of capitalist production. Nor is this limited to the "school years." Now a lifelong learning process—with at least seven job changes foreseen during a lifetime—will serve the U.S.'s alienating, exploitative industry.

On the other hand, even capitalist mouthpieces recognize the revolt of the workers. Dominique Moisi, deputy director of the French Institute of International Relations observed: "In France there are people already saying we are preparing ourselves for a nice little replay of the revolutionary events of May '68—only this time around, it won't be young people bored with growth and the affluent society who take to the barricades, but young people desperate to find a place in a system that rejects them."
—Andy Phillips

Britain's secret arms diplomacy exposed

Oxford, England—Out of a trio of political scandals a picture is emerging of government ministries working hand-in-glove with arms corporations and construction firms to procure overseas contracts. While Margaret Thatcher and her successor John Major pose as champions of democracy, human rights and a "free market," their words are contradicted by their actions, peddling weapons of war to some of the most violent and oppressive regimes on earth.

Since 1978, British Aerospace has supplied Indonesia with Hawk warplanes. The first contract was signed less than three years after the Indonesian army invaded East Timor, beginning an ongoing genocidal conquest. The Labour government's foreign secretary at the time was David Owen, now the UN peace envoy in Bosnia. Sales continued under Thatcher, who made a state visit to Indonesia, and under Major. The Hawks were used to attack Timorese mountain villages with incendiary bombs and machine guns. Other military equipment sold by Britain to the Suharto regime includes navy frigates, helicopters, armoured vehicles and Land Rovers.

After the Iran-Iraq war, the Ministry of Defense and the department of trade secretly encouraged British companies to export arms-related products to Iraq, in disregard of legal restrictions and the government's own policy. At the time Saddam Hussein was attacking the Kurdish people with poison gas. These secret deals helped Hussein to rebuild the Iraqi war machine, which he later used to invade Kuwait. After the Gulf War, the directors of Matrix Churchill, a company which had supplied machine tools for use in arms factories, were prose-

cuted for breaking export regulations. The directors' defense, which was documented, was that the government had known and approved of their actions.

In 1988 Malaysia agreed to spend one billion pounds (\$1.48 billion) on Hawk aircraft and navy frigates from Britain. At the same time, Britain made a low-interest loan of 234 million pounds (\$346 million) for the Pergau hydroelectric dam project. This loan was made under the Aid for Trade program, which meant that Malaysia had to contract with British firms to construct the dam. What was special in this case was that there was (briefly) a formal, written linkage between the arms deal and the aid package. The government is claiming that this was simply a mistake, which was afterwards put right. However, an analysis by the World Development Movement has shown that the British aid allocations have increased for countries which purchase British weapons. Since 1980, aid to Indonesia has tripled, while for Malaysia and Oman it has doubled.

Some Tory politicians have asserted that these arms exports have preserved thousands of jobs in Britain, undoubtedly true as things stand. This illustrates the monstrous perversity of capitalism, which steals workers' time, skill and energy to fill the Third World with death-dealing weapons for the sake of profit, capital accumulation and global power politics. Arms trade or unemployment—this is a false dilemma. The only alternative is for working people to win control of the economy and to run it on the principle of developing the quality of life everywhere.
—Richard Bunting

(continued from page 1)

ing that concern for the purpose of pushing his authoritarian crime policy is what brought Bill Clinton, in his role as "moral leader," to Memphis Nov. 13, where he preached about Black-on-Black violence. Topping the President's list of culprits responsible for violence and drugs was "the breakdown of the family." "The values, the spirit, the soul, and the truth of human nature"—these, not the government, would deliver African Americans from violence.

Although the Congressional Black caucus promises support only for an omnibus crime bill that includes economic aid to communities, they have surrendered to Clinton's degrading thesis nevertheless. Rep. Charles B. Rangel's pitiful response to Memphis was: "We have not spoken out about the cancers we have in our own bodies...And all of them weren't planted there by the majority." Jesse Jackson, even before convening his own crime summit, refused to let Clinton steal the crime show. Adding his own reproach of Black families, he stoically declared, "We got the power right now to stop killing each other, to stop abandoning our babies and give them the dignity of our names."

Clinton's timing is not accidental. As long as the debilitating effects of drugs and violence were contained within the ghettos of the U.S., the ruling class was content to play the usual game of benign neglect. Then the L.A. rebellion came along to reveal that the explosive nature of festering social conditions could engulf the whole urban landscape, even reaching into suburbia.

A SPECTER HAUNTS U.S. RULERS

A South Central Los Angeles resident spelled out what the U.S. bourgeoisie so mortally fears: "I would say that the spirit of rebellion was not a planned-out event, but took on a natural organization which captures a mood of the times." Indeed, following the unity meetings which brought together hundreds of gang members, unimaginable prior to the L.A. uprising, labor historian Mike Davis reported that "being a gangbanger is no longer the thing to be. Now the thing to be is, in some sense, a freedom fighter."

It is U.S. capitalism's ongoing response to this "mood of the times" that signals the broader agenda inherent in its anti-crime machinations. The new, Black, "reformer" police chief of Los Angeles, Willie Williams, is supervising a severe repression that is to be the model for cities across the land. Especially chilling is Operation Hammer which in its post-rebellion, escalated phase aims to build a rap sheet on every young Black, Chicano and Latino within its jurisdiction. People are detained solely in order to generate new data. Inclusion on this so-called gang list can count as a felony charge against any one of the hundreds of thousands of people listed.

Community organizations like Mothers ROC (Reclaiming Our Children) and the L.A.4+ Defense Committee continue to press the even more dire cases of one youth after another, framed by the police and put away by racist courts. A Mothers ROC member explains, "One Black male is considered just as guilty as any other Black male, so little time is wasted on the facts and the sentence begins at the time of arrest." Another remarked angrily, "Once the smell of gangs and drugs enters a case, nobody goes free."

RAGE AND INSTITUTIONAL VIOLENCE

The repressive matrix of police, laws and courts is quite a different sort of response to the Los Angeles uprising than previous urban upheavals. The Kerner Commission report which followed the 1960s Black revolts and the commission report following a series of Miami rebellions in the 1980s all cited underlying police brutality and held out hope for economic and social redress to ghetto residents. No such commission report followed Los Angeles because it's clear that no such promises can be met. Instead, the response was George Bush's and now Bill Clinton's federally directed prison buildup and the police apparatus to go along with it.

What happens to youth caught in this deteriorating order has become the subject of intense debate by social scientists, some of whom have gone so far as to theorize that Black youth are genetically prone to violence. Oth-



Watts community mural: "Crossfire (The First Word on Peace)"

ers like youth advocate Michael Green observe sympathetically that "youth respond to the chronic stressors of poverty and violence with rage, distrust, and hopelessness. More than half of all homicides occur in the context of interpersonal conflict, that is, rage...Young people growing up in poverty and around violence are very angry about what feels like everyone's inattention to their plight...Teenagers growing up in poverty and around violence frequently question whether they will survive into adulthood."

That almost one-fifth of all violent crime is committed by youths is a fact that officials have stretched into an image of youth as lawless and culpable. "They label us as being violent and punish us while we are still too young, even before we do something," bitterly complains a 14-year-old in San Francisco. An ignored fact is that teenagers are the single most victimized segment of society. In New York City, murder is the leading cause of death of 15- to 19-year-olds, men and women. Throughout the U.S. in the late 1980s, 12- to 19-year-old people were victims of 1.9 million rapes, robberies, and assaults.

Kids in inner cities experience racial segregation, crumbling buildings, bookless libraries, insidious "tracking" methods that kill enthusiasm for learning—the message behind these conditions is that society cares nothing for their development.

Furthermore, young people face the organized power of the police, laws and courts arrayed against them. The death penalty is no longer out of bounds for teenagers. In fact, the authoritarian pattern of this criminal justice system has less to do with the way an individual acts than it does with a logic of repression which is clearest in its racial form, a fact apparent to any young person. Sixty percent of youths in public custody facilities are either Black or Chicano/Latino. And police harassment and brutality happens mostly to young people, and particularly to young minority group men.

Part of the pattern is also what happens to figures of wealth and influence who—like Oliver North who now runs for the U.S. Senate and Michael Milken who lectures at UCLA—openly break the law and are rewarded with the lightest of punishments

from their kind.

LOOSENING THE BINDS

While it is hardly original to say that crime is a product of capitalism, Karl Marx's explanation of what happened when the poorest sections of feudal society were "freed" from the land remains compelling:

The proletariat created by the breaking-up of [feudalism] and by the forcible expropriation of the people from the soil, this free and rightless proletariat...were turned in massive quantities into beggars, robbers and vagabonds, part from inclination, in most cases under the force of circumstances...Legislation treated them as "voluntary" criminals, and assumed that it was entirely within their powers to go on

working under the old conditions which in fact no longer existed. Capital, Vintage Press, p. 897)

In today's globalized economy of Third World wages and conditions, large and growing groups in America's depressed inner cities find themselves "freed" from industry and, for young people, work itself. Once again, being poor itself is a crime.

Added to this is the current appeal of the former Black Panther Party's glorification of a so-called lumpen proletarian life style among today's youth. While that piece of left mythology is perceived as "revolutionary" by some, others fear that people have already "thrown away this generation." As a young lesbian Chicana put it, "It all began with the cutbacks in education, and now rather than being educated, we are being put away for life. Many youths aren't ever given any opportunities to create something with their lives." But unlike social scientists, she envisions how to overcome: "As youth we need to organize to reclaim our generation."

A participant in the Los Angeles uprising likewise shows where the overcoming can lead when rage runs to reason:

I've been thinking for a long time that I'm crazy. There was one day, about a year ago, that I felt like going out and killing somebody. The denial in this country about what's really going on is so deep. For black men, we thought we were going crazy. But this event (the L.A. rebellion) convinced me I was not nuts...The envelope was turned inside out for us, and we could see the seams. The riots straightened everything out...They look at us like we're a bunch of killers—that we're waiting for the chance to kill people. We're a bunch of people waiting for a chance to live.

A slew of tougher prison sentences are likely to be adopted, taking the heat off the rulers who pander to a white, racist electorate—until it becomes apparent that they haven't worked and the next upsurge of anger and seizing a chance to live comes along.

Conference debates Marx's value theory

Boston, Mass.—In an intensive mini-conference on value/price theory, held here between March 18-20, the philosophical and technical dimensions of Marxian value theory were jammed together, largely by happenstance. The resulting dialogue on the meaning and relevance of Marx's value categories attained a rare depth.

Conducted within the Eastern Economic Association conference, the mini-conference brought together 17 invited panelists from the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Great Britain, Spain, and Japan, including individuals associated with such publications as *Capital & Class*, *International Journal of Political Economy*, *London Notes*, *News & Letters*, *Rethinking Marxism*, *Review of Radical Political Economics*, and *Science and Society*. A dozen or so other participants, including non-academics, joined in the discussions.

The participants' sharp theoretical and political differences, evident from the beginning of the conference, were greatly clarified through three days of intensive, continuous dialogue. The following issues surfaced: whether value production, and abstract labor, are transhistorical or specifically capitalistic phenomena; whether Marx's value categories are investigative tools or expressions of real relations; whether, and why, we "need" value theory; the primacy of market forms vs. production relations; and the class nature of the ex-USSR.

The mini-conference's central theme was the exploration of "new approaches" that defend the internal consistency of Marx's value theory. Academic economists have long claimed that "logical errors" negate Marx's arguments that market phenomena do not alter the total value and surplus-value generated in production, and that mechanization and automation produce a tendency for the profit rate to fall.

It is these "errors," above all, that radical critics have pointed to as justification for "completing" or "correcting" Marx's critique of political economy, and that bourgeois critics use to dismiss and/or suppress it. By refusing to flee to abstractions that evade the quantitative questions, the "new approaches" hope to open space for

the renewal of Marx's critique of political economy as against today's fragmented and apologetic "Marxist economics."

Many conference participants were unenthusiastic about the project of defending Capital in its own terms. Many believe Marxist economics can best progress by debating mainstream economics, answering empirical questions, or taking an eclectic approach to theory. Also, many participants remained skeptical that the "new approaches" had indeed refuted the claims of Capital's logical inconsistency. Yet many likewise acknowledged that they needed to study the issues anew.

Several participants complained that examination of the logical consistency issue had been impeded by the mini-conference's wide-ranging discussion of value theory. Others emphasized, however, that the key issue concerns interpretation. Arguing that the "new approaches" rest on value categories conceived as expressions of alienated labor, rather than of transhistorical physiological or technological phenomena (as in the dominant approach), they suggested that the broad complex of issues raised in the dialogue had a direct bearing on whether Marx's work was deemed internally consistent.

In his poignant concluding remarks, Alan Freeman said that the "new approaches" hope to free Marxian value theory from the morass of technical complications and to return to its simplicity. He recalled the explanation of capitalism and socialism given by Harry McShane, the Scottish labor militant and Marxist-Humanist thinker. "This is capitalism," McShane had said, holding one hand over the other. Inverting the position of his hands, he had concluded, "this is socialism." In the context of the mini-conference, in which Marxist-Humanist participants had stressed the inverted relation of dead to living labor as capitalism's *differentia specifica*, it was clear that McShane's simplicity was not a naive one, but a profound one indeed.

Despite sometimes heated exchanges, participants expressed a desire to continue the dialogue. At the conference's end, they took steps to preserve the ad hoc working group that had convened it.

—A.K.

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Youth

Houston Baker's rap misses reality

by Maya Jhansi

Houston Baker's new book *Black Studies, Rap and the Academy* (1993) raises a very important question: What is the relationship of today's Black intellectual to the urban reality of masses of Black people in the U.S.? To answer this, Baker attempts to forge a relationship between academia and the inner city through rap. Ultimately, however, it's the revolutionary character of the Black dimension which reveals the theoretical limitations of Baker's postmodernism.

In the first chapter of the book, Baker gives a brief history of the movements of the '60s which instituted Black Studies in academia. The student and civil rights revolts of the 1960s transported inner city Black youth to academia's forcibly opened gates—a phenomenon Baker aptly describes as Black immigration. With this immigration, Baker argues, the "inside," academic world and the "outside," Black world collide in "brilliant kaleidoscopic allegiance" (p.11). Akin to many postmodernists, Baker describes the revolts of the '60s as a moment of historic disjuncture with the past.

BLACK STUDIES AND POSTMODERNISM

Central to this argument is Baker's description of Black Studies as simulacrum. The idea of simulacrum is taken from the French postmodernist, Jean Baudrillard. In general, it means image, but Baudrillard uses it to describe a society where images have replaced reality. The image, he argues, no longer refers to a reality outside of itself but signifies the absence of reality. As Frederic Jameson put it in *Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, the "peculiar function" of the simulacrum "lies...in the derealization of the whole surrounding world of everyday reality." Though Baudrillard bases his critique of society on the idea of the simulacrum, he so totalizes the reification of society into the image that the critique of society is lost.

Baker uses the idea of simulacrum to argue that Black Studies also doesn't refer to a reality outside of itself because it embodies the moment when the world of urban Black youth collided with lily-white academia. It thus always already has an implicit and necessary relationship to Black urban life. Because the revolts of the '60s altered everything, he assumes a continuity between the urban youth origins of Black Studies and the academic scholars it has since generated.

This assumed continuity ignores the differences between the '60s and the '90s. In the 1960s, a mass movement brought inner city Black youth to the gates of academia. In the 1990s, the relationship between Black academics and the inner city is willed through theoretical means alone—inner city Black youth, 50% of whom are unemployed, are today more marginalized than ever.

Because, according to Baker's logic, the relationship of the Black scholar to Black urban life is mediated abstractly, the Black scholar approaches inner city Black life, not through the masses, but through its cultural expression—rap. Rap is accessible to the logic of simulacrum because it is an already reproduced sound, a commodity. Rap provides the means for the Black scholar to simulate the experience of Black urban life.

RAP OR REBELLION?

The L.A. rebellion reveals the shallowness of Baker's attempt to relate to the inner city: the rebellion inspires Baker to call for an increased engagement with rap as the "sounding space of opposition." Rap, he argues, disrupts the homogeneity of national life through its heterogeneous form. In his essay "Scene...Not Heard" from the anthology *Reading Rodney King, Reading Urban Uprising*, Baker argues that Rodney King, a 25-year-old representative of Black youth, has no voice in either the beating, the trial or the "aftermath." (See "Reading the L.A. Rebellion" by Jim Guthrie, *N&L*, March 1994). Where Baker hears Black youth is through rap. Rap at the expense of rebellion becomes the signifier of Black urban life.

Poor people bulldozed out of Golden Gate Park

San Francisco, Cal.—Hundreds of people demonstrated on the steps of City Hall in early March to protest Mayor Frank Jordan's MATRIX program. MATRIX is a multi-departmental crackdown on homeless people which criminalizes sleeping and eating in public as well as panhandling and sitting on the sidewalk. Thousands of people have been arrested since MATRIX began last August. The most recent demonstration was against the arrest of over 20 people who sleep in Golden Gate Park.

Shortly before dawn the previous week, police and city workers bulldozed camp sites in Golden Gate Park. They arrested anyone who tried to run away. Hundreds of homeless people, many of them youth and families, sleep in makeshift camps in the park. They were given no warning of the predawn destruction of their homes, nor the chance to move their belongings to safety.

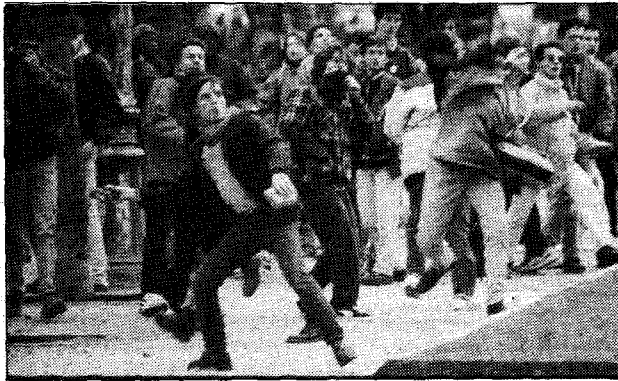
One young woman who was arrested said, "I didn't know what was happening. There were flashlights and when I tried to run a cop grabbed me. They said camping was illegal and I know that. It's just that we don't have any other place to sleep. The ones who cooperated were fined a hundred dollars for sleeping in public. Those of us that tried to get away were charged with resisting arrest and taken to YGC [Youth Guidance Center, Juvenile Hall] or 850 [Bryant, the city jail]."

—Lynn Hailey

It is true, I think, that rap expresses the rebellion of inner city Black youth, and it certainly puts the U.S. cops and racist white society on trial. In it sounds from past and present are collaged and arranged in an irreverent appropriation of bebop, jazz, rock and roll, etc. What is key, of course, is the rap, the "lyrics" (an outdated term) which verbalizes the resistance of the Black youth. It is the human voice which gives force to rap as a musical form. However, what does it mean to recognize this voice of revolt in the cultural (and now very commodified) form of rap—but then not hear the voices engaged in the actual disruption of national life in the moment of urban rebellion? This is a weakness that derives from one's theoretical ground. The logic of the simulacrum cannot conceptualize actual rebellion.

In fact Baker refers to our time as "postrevolutionary." Revolution is replaced by "disruption" and "subversion" through culture. It is thus resistance within alienation. The contradictions that barrel through the sounds of rap such as the violent misogyny of many rappers discloses this. What Baker ignores is that national culture, as Fanon pointed out in *The Wretched of the Earth*, moves and develops during revolutionary movements in ways that anticipate the new. Struggles for liberation give "rise to a new rhythm of life and...develops the imagination."

Mass demos rock France



The massive demonstrations and open revolts of students and young workers that spread across France throughout the month of March forced right-wing Prime Minister Edouard Balladur to meet with student leaders on Monday, March 28. At the meeting he suspended a government decree allowing people under 25 years old to be paid as low as 30% of the \$1,000 a month legal minimum wage and promised to develop a new policy that would "put an end" to the youth wage.

On March 25, over 200,000 university and high school students and young workers flooded the streets of Paris demanding the policy be repealed. Mass demonstrations occurred simultaneously in Marseilles, Toulouse, Grenoble, Lille, Velence, and Nice.

In some cities the protesters blocked off highways and railroad tracks. In Besancon about 500 youth forced a 45 minute delay in a Davis Cup tennis match between France and Hungary by blocking the stadium with a human chain. In Nantes over 400 youth built barricades in the streets the night before and fought off police attacks by throwing gasoline bombs.

These actions came after weeks of increasingly militant activity, including a street battle in Lyon where youth fought police with baseball bats. The mass actions of the students in Paris, such as the blocking off of a railroad station for more than two hours on March 23, coupled with unemployed youth engaging in mass looting and pitched battles with the police in the working-class suburbs of Paris, raised fears among the bourgeoisie of a return to the worker-student unity of May 1968.

Balladur had originally tried to defuse the emerging protests by modifying his proposal by creating a three tier system where youth with top degrees would be excluded from the policy, and youth with technical degrees would be paid 80% of the minimum wage. This attempt to divide workers and students, however, only caused the movement to grow more quickly.

"We're tired of being known as the generation that doesn't care about anything," a student said. "This movement is a pretext to express our general unhappiness."

—Jim Guthrie

Pro-choice for teens too!

San Francisco, Cal.—When I go to demonstrations and rallies for pro-choice, I see a lot of older people who are always talking about how "abortion is a right; after all we are consenting adults." But I think that abortion is a right for everyone, not just adults.

When I got pregnant last year and had to have an abortion, my mother was supportive of me. But what if she hadn't been, what if she had not let me? Because of parental consent and notification laws I might have had to have a baby. I was only 17!

Parental consent and notification make it so that you have to tell and/or get permission from both of your parents. Even if my parents were divorced and I hadn't seen one of them since I was a baby, I would have to get their permission. But I think that if they aren't in my life now, then it isn't any of their business. That would be really embarrassing!

The anti-choice people say that it would bring families together. But they aren't my family! Something like having a baby when you are not ready to would be just the thing to tear my family apart.

—18-year-old Latina

Mission H.S. walkout

San Francisco, Cal.—Walkouts and demonstrations at San Francisco's Mission High School continue because the district refuses to listen to student leaders and will not implement a culturally sensitive history program. Rallies, marches, and student speakouts happen on an almost weekly basis and tension between students, teachers, and the administration grows.

Sighting lack of sufficient funds, the district has refused to allow students to celebrate Black History Month or Women's History Month, refused to incorporate Asian and Latino history into the present curriculum, and refused to purchase books for the school library that are about minority leaders and cultural pride. Mission High is a primarily Latino/a school in the Mission district, a working-class neighborhood.

—Marxist-Humanist youth

Youth in Revolt

by Marna Leber

The Defense Ministry in Spain is concerned because they may not find 100,000 draftees each year anymore. The Movement for Conscientious Objection has been campaigning for five years and is now celebrating its results! In 1993, one in three 18-year-olds registering for the draft declared conscientious objection. This year, nearly half the people eligible for the draft, are expected to express ideological, political, religious, or ethical opposition to military service.

Thirty Ukiah High School students in California, grades freshman to seniors, showed their support for the Chiapas, Mexico, rebellion by wearing red bandanas that read, "Zapatista National Liberation Army." Fifteen were suspended for refusing to take them off when ordered to by school officials. The day before the demonstration, student organizers distributed a flyer which read in part, "We don't know much about the ZNLA. It remains to be seen whether its leaders are really interested in liberating the poor people of Chiapas....We can show our support by wearing red bandanas. It isn't much, but it is something. And it could mean a lot."

A one-day strike in Russia closed colleges and universities in all parts of that country. Academics and students picketed government offices and gathered in campus rallies protesting the lack of government support for higher education. Demonstrators are demanding that the promises made by Yeltsin's government for education to be a top priority be met. Most academics earn only \$25 a month, less than 20% of what is made working in a factory.

Racist mascots protested

Chicago, Ill.—Over 50 people gathered on Friday, March 11, at the University of Illinois at Chicago to protest racist, dehumanizing stereotypes of Native Americans, such as UI's Chief Illiniwek. The mascot comes out during the halftime of basketball and football games and performs a mockery of a Native American dance to the sounds of stereotypical music and hand-clapping, which is done over the head. A Seminole called the dance an outright insult to Native American culture.

Supporters of Chief Illiniwek believe that this mockery is actually a celebration of Native American culture that is done in respect. These supporters also argue that the Chief has been a tradition since the 19th century. Such claims mean nothing, as Native Americans have repeatedly called these generalizations slanderous.

As long as this "tradition" is maintained, the University will continue to receive certain funding from the Illini Alumni Association, which threatened to cut off a number of these funds if the school logo were to change.

Some of the groups that organized and took part at the demonstration included Humanity Allied Against Racist Mascots, Native American Students for Progress, Progressive Resource/Action Cooperative, and Women of All Red Nations. Protesters took turns speaking through the monophone, and towards the end of the rally, they marched in the vicinity of the Illini Union chanting, "This racist mascot's got to go" and "We don't want the Chief no more!"

Mililani Trask, a native of Ka La Hui, Hawaii, spoke about the struggles of native Hawaiians and the failure of the U.S. to recognize their identity. As she asked those present at the demonstration to imagine Hawaii, she knew these imaginations would be a stereotypical image created by the tourist industry's commercialism and artificial portrayals through television programming. The presence of this type of commercialism in Hawaii shows us that the struggle against racist stereotyping needs to be a broad one.

—Vijay Jhansi

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Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

The assassination last month of Mexican presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) has thrown Mexican politics into a new state of turmoil and uncertainty. Though President Salinas quickly named Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon to run for President in Colosio's place, the aftermath of Colosio's murder has brought forth deep divisions within the PRI. Some party factions have gone so far as to blame opposing factions for Colosio's murder, reflecting the extent to which the PRI is riven with internal strife and division.

Yet the truly critical division in Mexico was posed by the Chiapas rebels this year, when they put the spotlight on the depth of the division between rulers and ruled in Mexican society. Because their continuing revolt has far more long-term significance than the divisions among the rulers, it is important to take note of the latest

Algerians protest violence

A murderous Iran-style fundamentalist movement is now close to taking power in Algeria after two years of civil war which has already cost 2,000 lives. The war began after the military cancelled elections which the fundamentalists seemed poised to win. In recent months, attacks by fundamentalist guerrillas have grown.

In February, fundamentalists distributed leaflets calling on women to wear the veil (hijab) or "await the dagger." On Feb. 28, 17-year-old high school student Katia Bengagna was murdered by fundamentalists as she walked down the street unveiled. Facing down these death squads, on March 8, International Women's Day, hundreds of women demonstrated in Algiers, carrying flowers and photos of victims of the fundamentalists. According to the exile paper *Iran Times*, the women chanted slogans such as "Not Iran, not Sudan, Algeria is Algeria" and "Against the Islamic Hijab."

On March 22, more than 50,000 mainly women marched in the streets of Algiers against fundamentalist violence, workers went on strike, and newspapers published with one blank page in protest. Two more unveiled young women were gunned down March 30.

Key Western powers like the U.S. and France seem almost to have conceded victory to the fundamentalists. Such a victory would have a major effect on the Arab world.

The fundamentalist attacks on women are part of a larger ethno-religious "cleansing" campaign. Like fascist movements everywhere, they attack left and liberal intellectuals, independent women, and foreign residents. In late December Yussef Sebti, a well-known poet, died after fundamentalists slit his throat, the eighteenth prominent intellectual to be murdered. Also in December, Larissa Ayadi, a Russian woman married to an Algerian man, was shot to death shortly after fundamentalists had warned all "foreigners" to leave the country.

The corrupt and unpopular military government has responded to the fundamentalist uprising by death squad-type killings of suspects and by massacres of whole communities believed to have supported the rebellion. This type of indiscriminate violence has only hardened support for the rebels. Many observers even accuse the military of having caused or at least allowed some of the killings of leftist intellectuals, who were often its opponents as well.

Who We Are and What We Stand For

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

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

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958); *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

Mexican government in turmoil

events in Chiapas itself.

Hundreds of representatives from Indian communities and organizations in Chiapas together with the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) continue to debate the preliminary accords reached with the Mexican government on March 2. Major points include construction of schools, health clinics and infrastructure improvements (roads, electricity, water); new laws to implement land redistribution, autonomy for local indigenous government and investigation into the impact of NAFTA on Indian communities. The government agreed to begin implementing the reforms in the following 30-90 days.

After centuries of repression, exploitation and neglect, the Indian peasants of Chiapas have refused to wait any longer for legalistic sanctions to take back their land. By some estimates, over 34,000 acres have been reclaimed by peasants since the EZLN uprising on Jan. 1.

Near the town of Bachajon in southern Chiapas, 70 families took over the Santa Clara cattle ranch that was originally communal farmland until it was seized by a rancher over 175 years ago. A peasant representative explained, "A cattle rancher buys up the best land and leaves us the steep hills to work...When we try to organize to fight back, they call us agitators and throw us in jail. Who can we complain to? The cattle ranchers are the mayors, the judges and the PRI officials. We have no place to turn."

On a latifundia north of Ocosingo, Indian peasants began occupying 4,500 acres. Many had lived for generations on the Jotoaquil farm, working for the same landowner family. According to one peasant leader in the area, "We have never met the Zapatistas and we never even heard of them until Jan. 1, but we are totally in support of them ideologically."

Another peasant described how everything changed after Jan. 1: "If we had done this [occupied the land] in the past, our little houses would have been burned already, we would have been beaten and taken to jail, maybe even killed...The ranchers now are scared. They know they can't do things they used to do."

Bosnia 'peace' agreement

The Bosnian-Croatian agreement worked out over ten days in the U.S. embassy in Vienna and signed March 18 in Washington, D.C. is the latest result of the February U.S.-NATO military intervention. The agreement sets up "ethnic entities" within Bosnian territory controlled by Bosnian Croats and Muslims, to be federated with the Croatian state.

The Clinton administration promised Croatian leaders financial aid, "Partnership for Peace" (junior NATO) membership and, most importantly, pressure on Serbia to give up some portion of the 70% of Bosnia it brutally seized and occupied. Russia also concurred that a larger federation including Bosnian Serbs, its "allies," could be a "useful element of the overall settlement."

The Clinton administration, together with European allies, has also proposed lifting UN economic sanctions against Serbia in exchange for some territorial concessions in Bosnia and has also indicated willingness to recognize a Bosnian Serbian state. This type of settlement is nothing less than partition. The grounds for the U.S.-brokered, post-Cold War "peace" codifies Serbian aggression, sets up the boundaries for future war and is unalterably opposed to the struggle for a multiethnic society for which Bosnians have been fighting.

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

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

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

While Mexican President Salinas has reined in his soldiers during peace talks with the EZLN, local ranchers and businessmen have begun a campaign of intimidation and murder against supporters of the uprising.

The EZLN has refused to disarm or retreat from the areas in Chiapas it still controls. They are also disputing the government's misinformation which has attempted to present the March 2 accords as a nearly final document.

South Africa on election eve

Following the March 28 carnage left by armed clashes between followers of Inkatha Freedom Party's Chief Gatsha Buthelezi and Nelson Mandela's African National Congress leaving 31 dead in downtown Johannesburg, South African President F.W. De Klerk has imposed a state of emergency in the Zulu-dominated Natal Province, supported by Mandela.



As April 27, the date of the first elections ever in which the Black majority will be able to vote, draws closer, tensions in South Africa have reached a boiling point. With African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela's slate poised to win on April 27, the Black masses of the so-called homeland of Bophuthatswana (Bop) rose up against their white-installed ruler, Lucas Mangope. In alliance with the rightist Inkatha movement and white fascists, Mangope had resisted efforts to allow local Blacks to vote on April 27, claiming that Bop was an independent country.

By March 8, students were battling Mangope's police force and civil servants were on strike. As the army and police wavered, Mangope called on white neo-fascists to come to Bop to aid him. Several thousand did so, armed to the teeth, and began shooting randomly at Blacks on the streets of the capital. At that point, the Bop army and police went over to the people, opening fire on the fascists. It was all over in three days.

Many are wondering if a similar uprising can occur in Kwazulu, the fiefdom of the heavily-armed anti-ANC Inkatha movement. The white government has begun to distance itself, in light of revelations that it armed Inkatha, but it is unclear whether they are willing to pull out the rug before April 27. ANC support is growing, even in rural areas of Kwazulu, where traditional chiefs allied to Inkatha have long held sway.

With Inkatha still armed to the teeth, with tens of thousands of even more heavily armed white neo-fascists allied to it and with much sympathy for the latter among South African soldiers and police, few are betting that April 27 or its aftermath will be peaceful.

After several years of compromise with the white regime, Mandela has left many questions unanswered as to the nature of the post-April 27 regime. One of the issues is that of the land, something which was raised dramatically when thousands of Black peasants met to demand return of land stolen from them by the white minority. Another issue is that of Mandela's relationship to the white-dominated political-military-police structures, the very structures born of apartheid. What does it mean when the ANC calls upon the South African military to move into Kwazulu or applauds their takeover of Bop? What type of new compromises are being forged?

El Salvador's voting fraud

Long-awaited elections held in El Salvador March 20 were marked by massive fraud. The official results, with the neo-fascist Nationalist Republican Alliance (Arena) at nearly 50% of the vote total and the leftist Democratic Convergence at around 30%, were scoffed at, not only by the Left, but even by *The New York Times*, whose March 23 editorial charged that "significant instances of fraud" barred hundreds of thousands of people from voting. This occurred when their names never made it onto the voting lists, while at the same time dead politicians such as Arena founder Roberto d'Aubuisson were not only on the list, but recorded as having voted as well!

The official turnout was only 54%, no higher than in 1984 in the midst of the civil war and an election boycott by the Left. This was true despite the fact that popular participation in rallies and debates was higher than at any time in recent memory. A runoff is scheduled for April 24 between the rightist Armando Calderon and the leftist Ruben Zamora, but there is little hope that the voting rolls will be significantly more inclusive by then.

That the Left scored 29% even under these circumstances is a signal that millions of Salvadorans—workers, peasants and urban poor—who braved death threats and other forms of abuse to vote, continue to demand revolutionary change in a society still dominated almost completely by a handful of landowning families whose army and state have received billions from the U.S. "save" the country from Marxism.