

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

Vol. 40 — No. 8

OCTOBER 1995

25¢

One more (mule) team concept



by B. Ann Lastelle

As a worker subjected to variations on the themes of team concept and job redesign, I was eager to read a new book by Laurie Graham, *On the Line at Subaru-Isuzu: The Japanese Model and the American Worker* (Ithaca, New York: ILR Press, 1995, 169 pp.). Graham worked undercover at the Japanese auto transplant in Indiana for six months, recording her observations and conversations with workers, and comparing her experience with the literature on the Japanese management model, also called lean production.

Her introductory chapter notes that research had been limited to unionized auto transplants and asks two important questions: "How does the Japanese model affect nonunion workers...? How do workers themselves view the Japanese model?" The core of her book is not the disputes with other theorists, but her account of actual working conditions and workers' responses.

It sounds so familiar. "Team members would bring up problems and suggestions. They complained, however, that their suggestions were seldom acted upon. Several times team members brought up their desire to rotate and to vote. Requests were acknowledged but simply ignored. Team members resented this."

The truth of the company's "philosophy" lay in the horrifying safety record. "Immediately after official start of production (SOP), there was an outbreak of hand and wrist injuries.... Within only a few weeks, dozens of workers were wearing splints on their wrists and forearms." Graham's detailed description of the jobs on her team in the Trim and Final department made me wince. Yet the company blamed the weak and "out of shape" workers, making no changes in the jobs themselves.

The goal of the lean production management style, Graham writes, "is to create a system of worker compli-

(continued on page 7)

Black World

Gen. Powell: man and imperialist doctrine



by Lou Turner

The more a dominant class is able to absorb the best people from the dominated classes, the more solid and dangerous is its rule.

—Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 3

A piece of good luck has befallen white America—his name is Gen. Colin Powell (Anthony Lewis, the liberal columnist for the *New York Times*, has an inexplicable penchant for the title "the General" when referring to Powell). Colin Powell is not only the best piece of luck white America has stumbled on in some time, America's imperialist power structure is not a bad piece of luck to have befallen an inside-the-Beltway bureaucrat of Powell's class ambitions and history.

Hence, the good luck Powell wants white America to believe befell him as a consequence of living a "structured and disciplined" life (which white America wants Black America to emulate) is what Powell and white America mutually deceive each other in extolling as the "American dream."

Black America is suspicious at the very least. What Powell and white America take as his good fortune or luck, Black America understands in more historical terms to be nothing like luck at all, but rather a consequence of Black masses in motion who transformed America's social landscape. Unfortunately, those who took advantage of the civil rights revolution were more the Clarence Thomases and Colin Powells than the working-class masses who did the actual fighting.

It is ironic that when white journalists wonder about Powell's credentials as "warrior," it is as a tool of this country's imperialist wars they have in mind, not as a freedom fighter on the home front. Every test of Powell's fortitude to fight for civil rights, or against discrimination in and out of the military, has found him wanting, if not actually as a willing tool of repression.

Powell's record shows that at the behest of his white superiors, he eagerly suppressed Black militancy in the Army's Second Infantry Division when he was stationed in Korea in the mid-1970s, and more recently when as

(continued on page 6)

Editorial statement

U.S. pushes partition of Bosnia

by Peter Wermuth

At the very moment when the forces of multiethnic Bosnia have made the most significant military gains against Serbian forces since the start of the genocidal war there 41 months ago, the Clinton administration has plunged headlong into the Balkan imbroglio—not, however, in order to aid Bosnia, but rather to force it to agree to the central aim of Serbian expansionism: the carving up of Bosnia into distinct "ethnic" units.

A U.S. "peace plan," provisionally agreed upon by the warring parties on Sept. 8, calls for Bosnia to be divided between a "Croat-Muslim" Federation and a Bosnian Serb "Republic" which will be allowed to unite with Serbia. Though many of its details remain to be fleshed out, the U.S. plan is being widely criticized in Bosnia and elsewhere for allowing the perpetrators of genocide to achieve a "Greater Serbia."

In true Orwellian fashion, this "peace" plan was imposed on the contending parties through an intense bombing campaign by NATO against Serb positions in early September. The bombing campaign was supposedly undertaken to punish the Serbs for launching a murderous mortar attack upon unarmed citizens in Sarajevo on Aug. 28, which left close to 40 dead. The real aim of the bombing, however, was to force the Serbs to the negotiating table and pressure the Bosnian government into accepting the terms of a "peace" plan calling for the partition of their country.

The U.S. plan is fraught with contradictions and the ongoing negotiations over it could unravel in light of the military advances being made by Bosnia and Croatia, on the one hand, and the opposition of many Bosnians to the plan, on the other. To discern the direction of events to come, however, we must first retrace the events of the last two months, especially because the NATO bombing campaign has fooled many into thinking the U.S. has intervened in order to support Bosnia.

THE PATH TO PARTITION?

The process which led to the latest U.S. foray into Bosnia dates from late July, when Clinton instructed



Muslim refugee from multiethnic Tuzla.

Balkan envoy Richard Holbrooke, former architect of U.S. policy in Vietnam and protege of Henry Kissinger, to draw up plans for a negotiated settlement. What impelled this plunge into the realm of high diplomacy was the administration's desire to short-circuit growing demands to lift the arms embargo on Bosnia.

(continued on page 10)

Capitalist America's war on the poor

Senate passage on Sept. 19 of the so-called "Welfare Reform" bill created by Newt Gingrich, sugar-coated and then supported by both Pres. Clinton and Senate Republican leader Bob Dole, has intensified what has become an all-out War on the Poor. The bill, in something like its present form, is sure to be approved by a House-Senate conference, and signed by Clinton.

That only 11 of the Senate's liberal Democrats voted "no" on a bill which sweeps away Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), a fundamental pillar of the "New Deal" economic package enacted in the midst of Depression and labor rebellion 60 years ago, tells us more than how wide is the "bi-partisan" support for this war. It also underlines the way the attack on the nearly five million adult recipients of AFDC is bound up with an urgent corporate agenda with far-reaching economic and ideological consequences.

The bill cuts federal spending for welfare, regardless of the health of the economy, forces more than two million adults and more than five million children off welfare

within five years, and, under the banner of "states' rights," transfers to the individual states the power to decide virtually all aspects of welfare policy. Under special Clinton administration waivers, a number of states have already implemented large sections of the bill, leaving little doubt as to what its "states' rights" provisions will mean in practice.

STATES' RIGHTS AND ENDING WELFARE

Nevertheless, the ideological obfuscations which have surrounded the welfare debate since Gingrich's victory in November, 1994 have thrown civil rights and women's organizations, labor and the Left, into confusion about the attacks. At best, the responses have been limited to expressions of outrage which do not ferret out the meaning of this new War on the Poor and its connection to the present crisis in capitalist production.

Not that all the government and corporate commentators have been shy about their real intentions. Alabama, where the current maximum AFDC benefit for a family of three is \$164 a month, has recently followed Mississippi with a pilot program designed to force recipients off welfare and into low-wage production jobs. Claire Ealy, director of Alabama's job-training programs, hailed the results in one county where recipients were driven into the local catfish processing plant: "Processing catfish is not a pleasant job. It's cold and wet and it stinks and they pay not much more than the minimum wage... [But] once you make it clear this is what's expected, then changes will occur. You either find a job, or you're going to work for the catfish plant." *New York Times*, Sept. 21, 1995.

What Ealy did not say was that the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) were attempting to unionize the plant, and that some 60 welfare recipients forced into the plant—all of them Black—were told that if they backed the union, they would lose their jobs and be ineligible for welfare or Medicaid. After a bitter campaign, the union effort at the plant was defeated.

CAPITALIST HUNGER FOR CHEAP LABOR

It is an old axiom of the southern plantocracy that nothing is more important than a plentiful supply of cheap, controllable labor. Stories like the tale of the catfish plant, deeply rooted in the historic "Boss and Black" relationships of the old South, are today re-emerging in new forms of state-capitalist partnership, and as a na-

(continued on page 12)

Editorial

WHY THIS SPECIAL 16-PAGE NEWS & LETTERS?

THE EXPANSION of this special issue of *News & Letters* to 16 pages is a response both to the critical objective-subjective situation we have reached and to the decisions undertaken at the National Gathering of News and Letters Committees last month to meet that challenge. We outline them for you on page 15 of this issue and invite your participation.

ON THE INSIDE

- LABOR STRUGGLES IN THE SOUTH page 3
- DETROIT NEWSPAPER STRIKE page 7
- From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya • Sexism, Politics, Revolution in Mao's China page 4
- Essay • Queer Notions: Notes for a Marxist-Humanist philosophy of Les/bi/gay revolution page 5

Beijing—Women's Liberation 1995

by Laurie Cashdan

Over 30,000 women from nearly every corner of the globe converged in China in late August to participate in the gigantic Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Forum and smaller U.N. Fourth Conference on Women. Although the major papers ran daily articles, barely any news of actual meetings filtered through to U.S. readers.

Instead, what was reported was U.S.-China "tensions"—would Hillary go or wouldn't she?—and China's harassment of attendees at the conference. Now we certainly must criticize China's pre-conference reign of terror in Beijing and removal of the NGO Forum to distant Huairou—away from Tianamen Square. Moreover, China's exclusion and/or harassment of hundreds of lesbians and Tibetan, Taiwanese and Burmese women became major flashpoints at the conference itself and demand the most serious attention.

Woman as Reason

Nevertheless, the near-eclipse of the conference itself through this skewed reporting buries the most important fact about the conference: that the tremendous intercommunication spared no existing state power—not China nor any other nation represented, especially the U.S.

This attempt to perpetuate our isolation from women battling oppression in distant towns, cities, and nations must be fought. Indeed, one of the most poignant stories I have heard was from an Indian woman living in the U.S. who told a forum in Chicago Sept. 27, "The greatest experience was to meet women from the grassroots organizations. My most moving moment was meeting a 95-year old Nepalese woman who had lain down alone on mining ground to save her village from being destroyed."

Despite the shared emotional impact of discovering how much women had in common given the vast difference in culture and language, as one woman told me, "There was no consensus at Beijing. People were willing to go to the line for a particular position."

Three protests from Latin American women show how women went to the line. First, indigenous women who had prepared for the conference by meeting in Ecuador and then in Argentina expressed their disgust at their marginalization at the NGO Forum. They insisted they were there to address problems such as racial and ethnic discrimination, economic issues and political agendas. Rejecting their treatment as exotic cultural objects in "diversity workshops," they demanded that the particular problems they face be taken seriously.

At the same time Afro-Latin American women, mostly from Brazil, issued a statement denouncing what they considered racist discrimination by the organizers of the forum for not taking into account their views and representation. Later, Latin American women marched to protest the lack of consideration of economic themes in the UN's Platform for Action; if the developed countries refuse to economically assist women's development in the Third World, what good is the Platform?

Indeed, many returning from Beijing have emphasized the scathing criticisms by Third World women of the exacerbation of local cultural traditions that discriminate against women, due to international development policies. A speaker from the Tanzanian Gender Networking Program argued that structural changes forced by the International Monetary Fund have led to massive layoffs of women, forcing many into prostitution and skyrocketing AIDs among women.

Jaya Arunachalam, founder of Working Women's Forum, a mass organization of 360,000 in South India, portrayed the problems faced by women in the informal sector. An Asian-Pacific woman argued that "structural adjustment is re-colonization." A U.S. woman, after hearing accounts from Asian women about the forced migration of displaced women workers shared her new perceptions of anti-immigrant sentiments at home.

GLOBAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The horrifying accounts of women caught in the crossfire of war particularly brought home the double-edged sword of local tradition and national/international politics and economics. At a Peace Workshop held at the Africa Tent, speakers from Rwanda, Burundi, Mozambique, Sudan, Eritrea and Ethiopia spoke out about personal witnessing of genocide, rape and other atrocities.

An international tribunal held at the Forum heard ac-

Women's clemency denied

Chicago—On Sept. 19 Illinois Governor Jim Edgar denied clemency for 17 women imprisoned for killing or conspiring to kill the men who abused them. He said they failed to make battered woman syndrome a compelling reason for granting clemency. He granted meager clemency to Janet Luster, reducing her sentence from 19 to 15 years. Luster's husband had beaten and abused her and two daughters for years.

Battered woman syndrome, a form of post traumatic stress disorder, is often, but not always, present in victims of abuse. It is admissible as evidence in Illinois but is neither considered a defense in a murder trial nor a ground for granting clemency. Many women in clemency cases had poor representation from lawyers who didn't present evidence of abuse in the original trial. As a result, judges didn't hear about the circumstances in which victims acted to defend themselves. —Sharon M.

counts by women from Bosnia, Rwanda, Algeria and Korea ("comfort women" survivors of World War II) about genocidal rape and systematic sexual abuse. The same day Women in Black held a vigil and march that attracted thousands of women. When halted by Chinese officials, the women sat down in the street and began singing the famous "We Shall Overcome," from the Civil Rights Movement in the U.S. And at another hearing "emaciated survivors of the nuclear disaster at Chernobyl" spoke out against global nuclear development.

These confrontations with violence against women in its most appalling form in the context of war and nuclear disaster were coupled with literally hundreds of accounts of rising personal violence, including within nations that recently won anti-colonial movements. Namibian women, meeting at a regional NGO Forum earlier this year in Dakar, Senegal, demanded, in the words of one banner, "Did we fight the struggle to live in fear?"

The retrogressive reality women are fighting to overcome also came in the form of an ideological assault. Thus Joaquin Navarro, Vatican spokesman, attacked U.S. Catholics for a Free Choice, the group which tried to have the Vatican considered a non-governmental organization instead of a state at the conferences, by calling them "cultural imperialists."

Another anti-abortion speaker, Gwen Landholt, em-



Youth Tent at NGO Forum

Jenny Knauss

ployed the same notion of cultural imperialism in arguing against the language of "sexual rights" in the Platform for Action agreed upon at the U.N. conference: "Do not let the depravity of Western societies, including lesbianism, sexual orientation, breaking down of the family, alcohol abuse, divorce, do not let that be imposed upon you" (!!!). And a Muslim feminist from Algeria, Dalila Kadri, recalled a story of confronting Islamic fundamentalist women on a bus from Huairou to Beijing who considered lesbianism in Muslim societies an impossibility.

Throughout the muddy roads, tents and conference rooms of Huairou, women fought verbal battles over the meaning of Islam, "family values," and culture. In the final U.N. Platform for Action, lesbian rights were sacrificed at the midnight hour and language about "sexual rights" was transformed into "human rights."

These battles over culture and women's freedom became a faultline throughout the conference. They made clear that the struggle for Women's Liberation in 1995 is, more than ever before, a struggle for the mind unseparated from one of economics and politics.

Women speak out from NGO forum in China

Message from East Timor women to conference:

Nearly 20 years ago Indonesia invaded my country, East Timor, planes dropping paratroopers from the skies and boats vomiting fire and hatred from the waters. As women we have gone through anything a military invasion and a military occupation machine sets up: rape, imprisonment and death.

During the most difficult days in the late 1970s and early '80s, the Indonesian military used to kill husbands and children in front of the wives and mothers, and literally asked them to smile and yell "viva Indonesia," and then bury their husbands and children. Unborn babies were dislodged from pregnant mothers with a knife, and in the fury of their "anti-Communism" the Indonesian military would smash them against rocks!

To the Indonesian women in this conference we appeal for courage and for dignity. Your men, your children, your soldiers in East Timor will be doing nothing but killing innocent people. In spite of the official rhetoric, that is the crude reality. Our fight for freedom will go on as long as there is no freedom to live as free human beings, as women, as individuals, as a nation and as people of East Timor.

Dyke TV interviews Kagendo Murungi (Kenya):

I came to Beijing with the International Lesbian and Gay Human Rights Commission. There is a myth that there is no homosexuality in Africa. I'm here to challenge people with my very presence. One thing really good at the Lesbian Tent is that various African women have come. They took a great risk coming into the tent because of the incredible stigma that is attached to women who identify as lesbians or who are identified as lesbians by other people. The constant surveillance we've been under by the China Organizing Committee has made it hard to make the space accessible.

Zimbabwe's exclusion of GALZ (Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe) from an International Book Fair signifies the rise of conservatism in Africa. The government threat-

Fayette County foul play

Editor's note: Allison Corp. is one of three unionized plants in Fayette County, historically a county with a large Black majority and the poorest in Tennessee, despite its proximity to Memphis. Allison has joined Somerville Mills and Master Apparel's effort to make Fayette County union-free by trying to eject IUE Local 282, Furniture Division, a Black-led local and the only industrial union in the county. Allison is headquartered in Livingston, N.J., where its other plant is organized by IUE Local 76 B.

Somerville, Tenn.—Allison Corp. is your worst nightmare—a nine-hour nightmare every day. I've never seen such heartless management in all my life. They do not care about people at all, only about making money for themselves. They do not care if people get sick; they just want you there to do your job.

When women get pregnant, it's like you were considered as nothing. One woman union member was told they could put her on a leave of absence and her health insurance would cover her baby coming into this world. A month before her baby was due she called the insurance company and found they were about to cancel her off the family plan. It was because she wasn't paying monthly premiums—but the company had told her she was covered. They paid for the insurance only because the union intercepted it.

The general manager told another woman we should "stop having all these kids." He stated, "That's all you women want to do: have children and make men pay for it." Their attitude is, if you get pregnant get out. If your doctor wants you on light duty while you're pregnant they say they don't have light duty jobs.

Local 282 came in at Allison in 1991. We had a four-year contract that expired Labor Day. There were changes after the union came in. They started raising the piecework pay for production workers.

Our chief steward resigned during negotiation time. She was all headstrong about the union until she resigned. Once we were in this "window period," 60 days before the contract ended, this ex-chief steward started a

(continued on page 3)

Who defines Islam?

Los Angeles—After attending the international conference in Beijing the issue that concerns me the most is the rise of fundamentalism.

Almost 40% of the workshops offered were related to religion. In my paper on women's human rights and Islam I stated that we have to draw a line between religious fundamentalism and religion in general as beliefs of each person. The fundamentalists argued that religion and state should be one. There were heated debates on this in all the workshops offered by those from the Islamic Republic and by Iranian women in exile.

The Iranian delegation repeatedly attacked the validity of universal standards of human rights. They questioned the fact that human rights is inclusive of women's rights. They say we have a different culture and religion.

The Iranian government claims that its definition of Islam is universal, but we had Muslims from different countries with a wide variety of positions on women's rights. If you don't believe in universal standards of human rights, by definition you cannot protect the rights of people not in power. In Iran you have no freedom to have political parties or freedom of assembly. There is a specific definition of the clothes women can wear. Fundamentalism is imposing only one definition of religion. This by-itself violates women's rights.

—Iranian woman professor in exile

ened the organizers of the book show with the withdrawal of financial support. President Mugabe followed this action with an official statement that was very homophobic. Mugabe's been in government for so long and he hasn't done anything to help the people. So now it's time to pick a minority group as a scapegoat. When talking to African women, I tell them to look at what Mugabe did. It's an excellent opportunity to raise the issue of African lesbians and gays in the context of our struggle for human rights.

Dominican-Haitian interviewed by Linda Prout:

Thirty-six years ago, Solange Pierre was born into virtual slavery on a sugar cane plantation in the Dominican Republic. Pierre is with the Movement of Dominican-Haitian Women (MUDHA), an organization working to improve conditions for women of Haitian parentage who toil in the bateys, as the plantations are called.

Pierre: The conditions are very grave. The houses are old barracks that haven't been renovated in 50 years. They have no electricity or running water. There are no schools and it is difficult to travel to any facilities. Many people live packed together and disease is prevalent.

Most half of the workers are women, but they are virtually invisible. Balaguer (president of the Dominican Republic) said the Dominican government never invited women, so women are given no rights. Yet, more than 50% of the households are headed by women. Men have some access to medical care, but women do not and a large number die during childbirth. Women are paid less. Women have no legal protection. Men are not punished for raping or even killing a woman in the batey.

Women demonstrated against the Balaguer government and the government gave batey workers papers legalizing them for six months, but only to the men. MUDHA has sponsored courses in legal issues for women in the bateys. And we recently completed an investigation into health conditions in seven bateys.

Southern labor battles anti-union assaults

Alabama union-buster hired at Delta Pride

Indianola, Miss. — The struggle with Delta Pride catfish company is a continuous fight. We're in new contract negotiations and we're fighting to hold what we've got and continue to grow. In 1990 we went on strike because the company still didn't realize we wanted to be respected on the job, that we wanted benefits we fought for when we organized.

I found that it all depends on who is in control. After the 1990 strike, they brought in a management team from California who had worked with unions before. The working relations between the people and employer were better. Now the company has brought in a new management team to destroy what we've worked for and gained over the years.

This new team is out of the state of Alabama and is totally against unions. When Barry MacMillan, who is now over operations, came into Delta Pride, he stated he was the new sheriff in town and there were changes to be made. He doesn't realize that the fight is going to be tougher than he thinks. He's trying to run things at Delta the way he ran things at the catfish plant where he worked in Alabama. He stated that regardless of unions, he can run that plant the way he wants. But he's in a new territory with a different type of people.

At the Delta Pride plant, the women have experienced what it's like not to have a voice and security. This gives us strength to hold onto what we've accomplished. On the other hand, the Simmons plant in Yazoo City is also in UFCW 1529, but the members have let the company take total control and dictate to them how things should go instead of using the strength of unions to better their everyday lives. Simmons controls them by loaning them money and not giving raises according to what the contract says, but by favoritism.

This reflects on us because the farmers running Delta Pride and the new management team look at this and say, if those people are happy, why should we give so much to our work force? We need to make sure all the work forces in the Mississippi Delta fight together.

At Delta Pride they want the policy that all work over eight hours is paid at time and a half to change to all work over 40 hours. This would mean going back to before the 1990 strike. It takes our time at home with our kids, because time and a half over eight hours keeps them from making us work 10 or 12 hours a day. That's why we fought to have that in the contract.

They want to keep "interchangeability" in but we want to take that out. They can make us work eight hours on the kill line and then send us to the fillet table to help out over there. They use that to keep from hiring other workers. But that's double working us — we work one hard job and then they can interchange you to work another hard job.

Then they want to take away our experience pay because they are saying these are not skilled jobs. If a person quits for a medical or any other reason, they have to start over within the catfish industry. If I get sick and have to stay out for a year I lose my seniority. If I get well and go back to work, after one month they shoot me back up to my experience rate of pay. They want to take that away, which would mean you start fresh.

They also want to say if you worked at Con-Agra on the kill floor for six years and then come to Delta in the fillet department, even if you're skilled throughout the plant, they'll only consider your experience in the fillet department at Delta. But if you worked for six years at Delta and go to Con-Agra, they'll pay you for six years of experience, if they see you can handle the job. That is in the contract. Delta is trying to take it out. We've already

Fayette County foul play

(continued from page 2)

petition to decertify the union, done in a low-down, conning, sneaky, devious and backsliding way. We feel she is getting paid off by the company by having her piece rates lowered. The same job she used to have and not make money is now made easier for her to make money.

The petition should be thrown out by the Labor Board because she went to the people with false statements. She had them sign the paper by saying: sign this if you want a raise. Or: this is not to throw the union out, it's to revoke the union in. Some people signed before they found out differently. Some want their names off that paper. The chief steward's friend, a supervisor, hand-delivered her petition for her during company time.

After that petition, we lost recognition. We are waiting on a decision from the Labor Board and hope we win. We have representation until the decision. We're still going to meetings and trying to bring the union back. The only way progress will be made is with union representation.

They're trying to get the union out because they do not want us to band together in Fayette County. They want us to stay overworked and underpaid. They don't want to give people holidays. The insurance they are trying to offer us will require us to pay 50%. They want a plant where they can let you go if you don't go along. People are tired of it, although some people are afraid to voice their opinion for fear of losing their jobs.

I'm talking about the whole of Fayette County. It's a racist county. As long as they keep us under, they have power over us. To me having a union in Fayette County means the people making a stand and saying they are not going to take these poorly paid jobs or any more mistreatment.

—Young Black woman union supporter

been having problems with people not getting their experience pay and have been filing grievances.

These are examples of how they are trying to take our benefits and carry us back to the beginning. People should wake up and realize this is a continuous fight. I want people to know how hard we had it at Delta, how they take your whole respect from you. All over Mississippi, the only way to have dignity and job security is to stop letting the company dictate to you.

— Delta Pride worker

Dobbs workers ratify, but they don't settle

Memphis — Are labor laws there to actually help the workers? Or are they set up to break down the unions' strength and give the workers a feeling of being constantly oppressed?

After being on strike for one year at Dobbs Catering [the airline caterer at Memphis airport], we returned to work to find out management has the upper hand because they refuse to comply with the contract. The grievance procedures are long and drawn out. Since our return we've lost at least three arbitration cases. Management feels that regardless of what they do they will come out on top. Therefore I feel that, especially since the November 1994 elections, labor laws have become another pawn in the hands of management to wear down union members over time.

We are now negotiating our first contract since the 1993 strike. Compliance is not one of the things we can discuss during negotiations, according to labor law. We do have a fairly decent contract but if it is not complied with over a long span of time, union members begin to wear. You begin to lose your membership, since this is a right-to-work state. So I would like to hear from someone else about labor laws. Are they just another stepping stone that we will have to overcome?

For instance, you have the people who work on the inside doing food, prep and other things. And you have the people who work outside transporting the food and beverages to the airplanes. These two departments are contractually divided. But the company is not complying with the contract; it brings in the workers from outside to work on the inside. We are told to grieve it.

Meanwhile you have people being laid off on the inside and hired on the outside. If they can bring these guys in to work inside during their down time, they can lay off on the inside. They also cut teams from outside to use inside and add extra flights to the teams left outside. Therefore they can see that everyone is very unhappy.

Once they tell us to grieve it, they know this is a long procedure. It goes first to the grievance committee, then to arbitration for seven months to a year. Meanwhile the same thing is going on and people are getting downhearted.

I want to ask this: is there an avenue left to the working people to take beside the grievance procedure? Labor laws are killing us. Most employees feel management is trying to take us back about 20 years. There is still fight in us but we feel using this fight in the grievance procedure is no longer worthwhile. We are looking to stop this setback for every working-class woman or man.

We held our ratifying meeting on Saturday, Sept. 30, and voted to accept the contract. But people were mad at how they're trying to break down our solidarity and are going to give them a harder time from now on.

I don't want to go back to the slave mentality, to not being able to stand up for myself. I want to sit down and try to work it out, to have a voice.

— Black woman worker

U.C. affirmative action fight

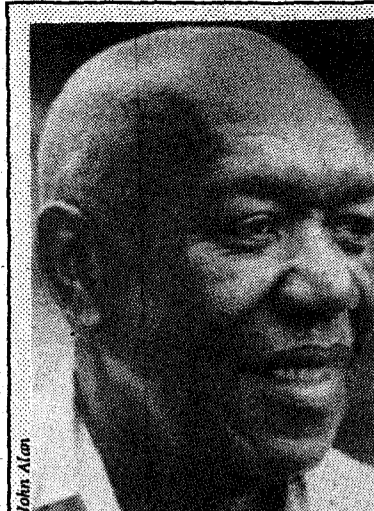
San Francisco—Students, faculty and staff have demonstrated at universities around the Bay Area and protested the University of California (U.C.) Regents since school began this Fall. For instance, in mid-September, over 300 people, mostly students of color, attended a discussion of affirmative action on the campus of San Jose State University which connected the exploitations of capitalism to the bureaucratic racist attacks by those opposing affirmative action.

That same week, students, staff and faculty (principally from U.C. Berkeley) managed three times to disrupt a U.C. Regents meeting, the first since the Regents' infamous political capitulation to Pete Wilson's anti-affirmative action declaration in July.

In a rally planned to urge students to come protest at the Regents meeting, a student group at U.C. Berkeley staged a guerilla theatre with a larger than life-sized puppet of Pete Wilson sporting a big red ribbon reading, "Mr. President." Surrounding the puppet were several students wearing suits and covering their faces with paper plate masks. During a speech following the act, one African-American student urged the crowd to help build a movement which could change the way affirmative action is viewed in this country. "We can all be a part of making history," he concluded.

A new group called Queers for Affirmative Action has formed in San Francisco to mobilize the les/bi/gay community against the California Civil Rights Initiative, and to combat racism in the queer community and homophobia in the progressive coalitions around the Bay.

—Julia Jones and Jennifer Pen



Charles Denby • News & Letters editor, 1955-1983
• Author, *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*

TO ALL THE PEOPLE I talked with ... It was only opportunist politics that caused the revolutionary leaders of that period to turn into their opposite. I believe it was more than that ... Once you have lost your philosophy of liberation ... you almost automatically end up wheeling and dealing."

Voices of a new generation of workers and activists speak for themselves in News & Letters
Begin your subscription with this special issue!
\$2.50 per year (10 issues)

To order, see lit ad, page 9.

UP pays millions to block union at Overnite

Memphis — Three years ago Union Pacific Corporation purchased the most profitable nonunion truck line in the U.S. — Overnite Transportation Co. In three short years Union Pacific (UP) inserted a totalitarian style of operations as they have done to other companies for the last century. UP dismissed management personnel, restructured the company and installed "Hitler" type management.

Suddenly Overnite, according to UP, was losing money. The employees sacrificed pay raises, put up with poor working conditions, lost insurance benefits and were enslaved into believing this was necessary for our jobs to survive. We watched the cost of living eat away at our paychecks, only to find out through UP stockholders reports that the CEO and his staff were making millions in bonuses.

When UP was finally recognized as the "black hole" that it is, the employees decided to turn to organized labor to try to secure their future. They wanted the right to a voice in their workplace, better insurance coverage, to be treated with respect rather than as a brainwashed idiot and the right to a grievance procedure.

UP told its employees it would do any and everything to stop the union from coming into Overnite. They made good on these promises. We had a 78% margin of employees for the union at the start of the campaign. UP spent over 30 million dollars nationally and three million locally to stop the union and they succeeded. How?

Endorsed by UP, management threatened, physically assaulted, harassed, verbally abused, and forcibly brainwashed employees. They held weekly meetings with anti-union videos, handed out anti-union literature and brought in anti-union employees from out of town. They gave a \$1.50 per hour raise after three years of no raises. They held closed meetings with as many as three management personnel against one union-supporting employee. They harassed and surveilled union supporters. UP had retired employees vote against the union, and forcibly divided employees by race.

Looking at UP's management staff it's plain to see the racism split is controlled from the upper level of management all the way through its lower levels. Black job applicants are assigned a code number so upper management can discriminate on their hiring. The race issue was used to help break up union activities!

All rights to seniority have been taken away. If you're not a suck-up to the boss you're his enemy. Job duties, working conditions and hours are at his discretion.

Since the loss of our election last April some union supporters are battling UP/Overnite through the NLRB with unfair labor practice suits. The Teamsters International is trying to win a NLRB ruling that UP unfairly overturned 17 Overnite elections nationally. The ruling would place these facilities under bargaining order, giving each terminal that lost automatic union representation because of its severe unfair labor practices.

UP has stated they will not accept any bargaining order from the NLRB and will go to the Supreme Court to fight it. UP has already managed to eliminate a vast number of charges against them that were pending with the NLRB.

UP is in fact now lobbying Congress to do away with the NLRB so the American worker will have no legal recourse against corporate America. As we battle for our rights, UP battles to eliminate the NLRB.

So I'm in a position now where I am fighting the government. My company is hauling government freight and is subsidized by the government. And now they're trying to destroy the NLRB, a branch of the federal government. We're in a Catch 22 in trying to get the NLRB to help us.

The Overnite workers have a hard battle to achieve their goal of fair representation. Are we on our way back to the slave and sweatshop labor of the 1920s? If companies such as UP have any say we will be there shortly.

—"Dedicated" white employee

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

Editor's Note

We present here Raya Dunayevskaya's critique of the first public squabble among China's rulers for the mantle of Mao Zedong, which first appeared in the July and August-September 1977 issues of *News & Letters*. This text generally follows what Dunayevskaya excerpted for her book *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution*. Chinese names not in book titles have been changed to the currently familiar romanization.

The present vilification of Jiang Qing as the leader of "the gang of four"—which pictures the alleged radicals as the worst of "capitalist readers," who had brought China to the verge of catastrophe until saved by Hua Guofeng—tells a great deal more about the contradictions tearing at post-Mao China than the victors in this power struggle intended to disclose. Ironically, into this game of power politics in China comes a small time "Western" entry—Roxane Witke's biography, *Comrade Chiang Ch'ing*,¹ which the author prefers to call "a history of the revolution largely from Comrade Jiang Qing's point of view." Because this simplistic work is further befogged by a bourgeois concept of feminism as against the genuine revolutionary feminist viewpoint and actual struggle of a Ding Ling, it becomes necessary to disentangle the three to get at the root of what characterizes, not just post-Mao China, but Mao's China itself...

Here is how [Hua Guofeng] wound up the whole of the speech and thus the two remaining tasks—"to learn from Dazhai" to strive "to push the national economy forward," and finally "to study conscientiously and well the works by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, and Chairman Mao's works": "Immediately after smashing the 'gang of four,' the Central Committee adopted a decision on the publication of the Selected Works of Mao." Hua then singled out from the new Volume V—actually writings from 1949 to 1957—"Chairman Mao's brilliant work," "On the Ten Major Relationships"² which is "to guide all" in the fight against Russian revisionism and "the smashing of the gang of four."...

JIANG QING AND THE TALE SHE TOLD

It is necessary to start "at the beginning"—1962....Now, what was so crucial about 1962? I don't mean its significance insofar as the annals of Chinese Communist history, which record 1962 as the Socialist Education Campaign. I mean its significance for Jiang who felt very much discriminated against and underestimated in her own right rather than just the wife of Mao.

Jiang was a revolutionary long before she came to Yan'an and married Mao. And once she became the dominant force in the arts during the Cultural Revolution, she wreaked vengeance on those Communist leaders who hadn't given her her due in the 1930s.

But what predominated all her actions and ambitions was to be a leader in Mao's eyes, and in 1962, for the very first time, Mao permitted her to draft a policy statement on the arts known as May 16th Circular (p. 304). This, then, becomes the year her self-development reaches the high point from which what Mao was later to call her "wild ambitions" took off. So much so that, much as she knows and believes Russia is the enemy, the Sino-Soviet conflict which predominated those very years—1960-1964—plays a subordinate part to her never-ending preparations for what would, four years later, become her zenith: "The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution."

Unfortunately, that is true not only for Jiang but for her professor-biographer who had five years to research something she certainly knew before she ever started, and yet we get not one whiff of the serious theoretical debates of the Sino-Soviet conflict when Mao first began to challenge Russia, not just for Sinification of Marxism, but for world leadership. Yet it is this, this precisely, which preceded the Cultural Revolution, was its leitmotif, and without which it is impossible to understand the changing global relations that, at one and the same time, made it possible for Jiang to exercise influence as Mao's health was failing, and, while he was still alive, led to the beginning of the end of Jiang's reign.

MALE CHAUVINISM

Instead, we get a sort of Chinese version of Roxane Witke on male chauvinism. Male chauvinism surely is rife in China and Jiang suffered from it at various times, even as all suffered from Jiang's philistinism. Shouldn't the author have been more perceptive as to the reasons why Jiang herself did not attribute what she considered her overly-long march to power to male chauvinism? What point was there to interpreting Jiang's competitiveness with Mao as "teaching the Chairman not only to love her as a woman, but also to respect her as a political figure not to be monopolized by any one man" (p. 449)? And what, exactly, does the phrase, "not to be monopolized by any one man" mean at a time when the author does make clear that the measure Jiang thought she was creating was nothing short of "eventually changing the nation's life"?

A more objective and sharper picture of some of Jiang's history emerges from two photographs (among

1. Roxane Witke, *Comrade Chiang Ch'ing* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1977). Pagination below is to this volume.
2. *China Quarterly*, March 1977, carries both "On the Ten Major Relationships," as edited by Hua, and a comparison with other versions of the Mao Zedong speech of April 25, 1956 by Stuart R. Schram.

Sexism, politics and revolution in China

the series following p. 220) than from the lengthy, distorted story of a distorted life. Both are from the decisive years of the War of Liberation, 1947-1949, after Chiang Kai-shek bombed Yan'an to smithereens, and Mao began the final march to power. One shows Jiang as a young soldier following Mao in that march. (She was also a "political instructor" to the People's Liberation Army.) The other is a picture of Jiang as clearly more than secretary to Mao, although Mao himself was later to denigrate the role of secretary.³ It was a most productive period in Mao's life as he both fought and theorized on a guerrilla war and the perspective he saw for the new society he meant to build and called "New Democracy."

When one considers that it was after those two decisive years, followed also by what is called "incognito" work in land reform and marriage reform, that, as her health failed completely and she was shuttled between hospitals in Beijing and Moscow, she was stripped in 1951 of all her posts, one must conclude that there is a greater tale against Mao as male chauvinist than ever there was against Zhou Yang in the 1930s upon whom Jiang wreaked her vengeance.

Again, it was not a bourgeois feminist but a great revolutionary writer and feminist—Ding Ling—who dared



A Tiananmen Square poster that reads: "The People Are With You: Dedicated to the youth who are participating in the May 13, 1989, Hunger Strikers' Group for democracy and freedom."

challenge Mao directly both in Yan'an and in the 1950s, and who summed up the fate of those leaders' wives in a single phrase, "Noras who came home."⁴

BACK TO JIANG

Jiang Qing rode the crest of the so-called Cultural Revolution, as autocrat over the arts, directly into the very core of Party-Army-State power—membership into the Politburo. By the time of Lin Biao's downfall and Mao's complete reversal of Sino-American relations when he rolled out the red carpet for Pres. Nixon in 1972, Jiang took advantage of the presence in China of the host of U.S. journalists, scholars, and what not, to seek out one Sinologist, Roxane Witke. Professor Witke had been commissioned to report on "Chinese female masses," and Jiang asked her to record her solo flight to the echelons of power. The fact that Ms. Witke held that Jiang had "inspired"⁵ the "Cultural Revolution," held leadership in her own right in a "very patriarchal society," surely did earn Jiang a sympathetic ear.

Unfortunately, the wheels of bourgeois research and publishing grind very slowly. By the time—five years!—the "weeklong interview" was expanded to a 550-page book on what Professor Witke fancies is "a history of the revolution largely from Comrade Jiang Qing's point of view" (p. 14), Jiang Qing had been arrested, vilified as a "traitor," not to mention a "maggot." When the "Cultural Revolution" first unfolded in mid-1966 and catapulted Jiang front center stage, she seemed to have no historic past. Whether it was to right the record, or to invent an unwarranted high niche in Chinese history, the truth is that the height of power was, indeed, the beginning of the end for Jiang.

The first flurry of mild anti-Jiang posters appeared in 1973-74, when Mao was still alive and when rumors first surfaced about the biography she was recording via a bourgeois writer. Whether or not Mao inspired those first attacks, Hua now claims that Mao saw through her

3. In a March 1964 speech, Mao said: "'On the Current Situation and Our Tasks' was spoken by me in 1947. Someone transcribed it and it was revised by me. At that time I had contracted a disease whereby I could not write...But if you never take the initiative and rely on a secretary, it is just like having a secretary assume your responsibility for leadership work." (*Miscellany of Mao Zedong Thought*, II, p. 338.) This is the speech Jiang was so proud of having taken down "word for word."

4. Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* enjoyed popularity in Japan, and the heroine Nora who slammed the door on housewifery was used by Ding Ling in her piece on International Women's Day, "Thoughts on March Eighth" (first published in *Jiefang Ribao—Liberation News—Yan'an, China*, March 9, 1942), where she saw wives of leaders as cruelly taken advantage of as they became "Noras who returned home." The article was used in the campaign against Ding Ling, who was purged from the Chinese Communist Party in 1957 for criticizing the views of the party on marriage and love at the time of the Hundred Flowers campaign. The best pamphlet on *Ting Ling, Purged Feminist* was issued in Japan (Femintern Press, Box 5426, Tokyo).

5. For a more comprehensive view of the "Cultural Revolution" see both the chapter on Mao Zedong Thought in my *Philosophy and Revolution* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989) and my essay "Post-Mao China: What Now?" in *New Essays* (Detroit: News & Letters, 1977).

"wild ambitions" and warned her against her "faction of four" in 1974.

A new period had begun at the 10th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, when the undercurrent of revolt in the military following the downfall of Lin Biao compelled the rehabilitation of many of the former Communist Party leaders who had been removed from their posts during the Cultural Revolution. Where Mao did it reluctantly, Zhou Enlai hailed it as a sort of "savior" for the development of the national economy. Indeed, he raised Mao's main "enemy," Deng Xiaoping, to Deputy Prime Minister. Mao could not have been all that hostile to Jiang in 1973-74. And 1975 proved it.

What was at stake was something greater than Jiang. It was a possible global realignment. First, Mao absented himself from the Fourth National People's Congress, which drew up a whole new Constitution as well as both a Five- and a Twenty-Year Plan for the development of the national economy. Mao did not attend that Congress. Instead, he was meeting with every reactionary world leader, from Franz Joseph Strauss of West Germany to the disgraced ex-President Nixon, not to mention taking any side, any side whatever, including apartheid South Africa's role in Angola, so long as Russia was recognized as "Enemy No. 1."

The year 1975 had revealed great unrest in China. There were many strikes and bank robberies. At the same time Russia was winning victories in Africa, especially in Angola, but also in Europe. China felt "surrounded." The climax came in the first spontaneous, genuine mass demonstration at the grave of Zhou Enlai in April 1976. Instead of facing the reality that it was a spontaneous outburst against the regime—the ruling "radicals" controlling the mass media—Mao Zedong moved, this time with the great aid of Jiang, to remove Deng. Hua was to replace him. That was Mao's last hurrah. It was not exactly an anointment of Hua as Chairman, but that top cop knew how to take the "interim" position, and so organize the Party bureaucrats, the military and state bureaucracy behind him, as to need no more than a month after Mao's death to displace in toto all those who had control of the mass media and may have opted for total power.

His preemptive coup succeeded so well that there is no doubt whatever that, whether or not Mao meant to cut Jiang's "wild ambitions" as far back as 1974, Hua surely had it all planned long before Mao died. Why then is he still so preoccupied, in 1977, to totally smash "the gang of four?" Well, it isn't the "four." It is the Chinese masses who are asked to produce more and ever more as China rushes to "overtake" the U.S. by the end of the century. It is Hua's "interpretation" of Mao's "Ten Great Relationships."

It all spells out state-capitalism entrenched and looking for a global role. It isn't that Jiang Qing had fundamentally any different perspective, but she surely had greater belief in "superstructure." It is this fetish that sealed her fate.

The military-industrial-political complex had no difficulty whatever in getting the "mass media" to toe its line once it won total state power. It promptly branded her a "maggot."

One famous Sinologist, Simon Leys, attributes part of the emptiness of *Comrade Chiang Ch'ing* to the author's being "somewhat blinded by her feminist bias."⁶ In truth, however, it isn't Ms. Witke's "feminist bias"; it is her petty-bourgeois kitsch that kept her from penetrating what was actually happening among the masses, women included. Thus, as part of her 1972 assignment, she interviewed women other than Jiang Qing, but, again, it was the pseudo-leaders, rather than the masses, as was the case with her report, "Wu Guixian: Labour Heroine to Vice-Premier."⁷ Here she becomes so great an apologist for Mao's China that she designates the case of that Chinese Stakhanovite thusly: "In today's China she represents women in total control."

And how did that display itself? Well, she quotes Wu

(continued on page 15)

6. See "China's Fallen Empress" by Simon Leys, *New Republic*, June 25, 1977.

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

BY
RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

"THE MYRIAD CRISES IN OUR AGE have shown, over and over again, from Russia to China, from Cuba to Iran, from Africa to Pol Pot's Cambodia, that without a philosophy of revolution, activism spends itself in mere anti-imperialism, without ever revealing what it is for."

\$12.95

To order, see lit ad,
page 9.

Essay Article

by Jennifer Pen

Queer notions: Notes for a Marxist-Humanist philosophy of les/bi/gay revolution

As the repressive Right gleefully bellows its anti-humanism and racism in California's Proposition 187 and the attacks on affirmative action, note that this same Right has been unashamedly attacking lesbians and gays for quite some time. It was in the midst of combating the anti-gay ballot initiatives that the vehemence and totality of conservative attacks on people's self-definition became clear to me. Indeed, these noxious ballot measures served as testing grounds for current linguistic shell-game phrases like "preferences," "special rights," and "quotas." The deliberate attempts to erect a monolithic form of the family, to the exclusion of not only queers but "female-headed households" and "single mothers," reeked of homophobic misogyny.

But queer perspectives on revolution are too often ignored, trivialized, or lost in the babble of postmodern thought. Given the multiple urgencies of the present, it is fruitful to clarify the philosophic ground and affirm the visionary complexities of les/bi/gay revolutionary perspectives. Where and how are we committed to a total transformation of society, and the creation of genuinely new social relationships?

The present situation of queer peoples in the U.S. is deeply split. We have glossy magazines; some in our community have enough money to be sought after by advertisers. There are more lesbian and gay entertainers, characters in movies, and politicians. But these also represent a massive capitulation to the status quo, meaning a pervasive capitalism, imperialism, racism, and sexism. The visibility of groups such as ACT-UP and the Lesbian Avengers has given way to reformism. The lives and perspectives of queer youth, queers of color, and working-class queers are often invisible in these glossy magazines.

Queer experience grows from multiple dimensions of subjectivity, including the body, a network of social relations, and a self-conscious resistance to normativity. In recent decades, the concept of subjectivity has been transferred from philosophy to psychology, where it has been privatized and relativized. Postmodernism has rejected any stable notion of subjectivity, of an essence behind appearance. But revolutionaries need not think of subjectivity as either exclusively personal or as invariably fixed. Thus, I see queer subjectivity as consciousness facing the given, and interrogating it in order to transcend those objective conditions that make our lives less human (and less queer).

Gay and lesbian subjectivity emerges in a discourse of visibility/invisibility, making implicit an unceasing movement of self-definition. Even the most banal descriptions of coming out describe it as an unending, life-long process, rather than a one-time declaration. Coming out is an act of subjectivity, a decisive use of human agency. Whether that is done in the intimacy of a bedroom, the safety of a gay pride parade, or in a hostile environment, it is a creation of ourselves.

Lesbian and gay identity is forged in relation to others. While there are single lesbians, there cannot be a singular, or unique, lesbian. Being queer requires both the individual and a community, and an emphasis on relation. For instance, Adrienne Rich discusses the revolutionary dimension of love while introducing a new book (*Haruko/Love Poems*) by Black bisexual poet June Jordan, whose work captures "moments or ways of being which might make love—in many dimensions—more possible, more revolution-directed."

But our self-definition is not isolated in gay communities. Our very existence challenges the structures of the whole society. For instance, when, in the language of the United Kingdom's openly repressive Clause 28, our commitments are referred to as "pretended family relationships," our conscious choices are disparaged against an ideological construction of the "natural" family. Thus, our self-conscious entry into human relationships lays bare the social construction of "the family."

REVOLUTIONARY RESPONSE TO FAMILY

One revolutionary response to the socially constructed family was bluntly stated in the 1848 Communist Manifesto: "Abolition of the family!" Karl Marx did not mean that human relations ought to be abolished; absolutely the opposite—he was calling for "creative human relations," based on relations between people in their full humanity, not treating human beings as things, or placing relations to things above people.

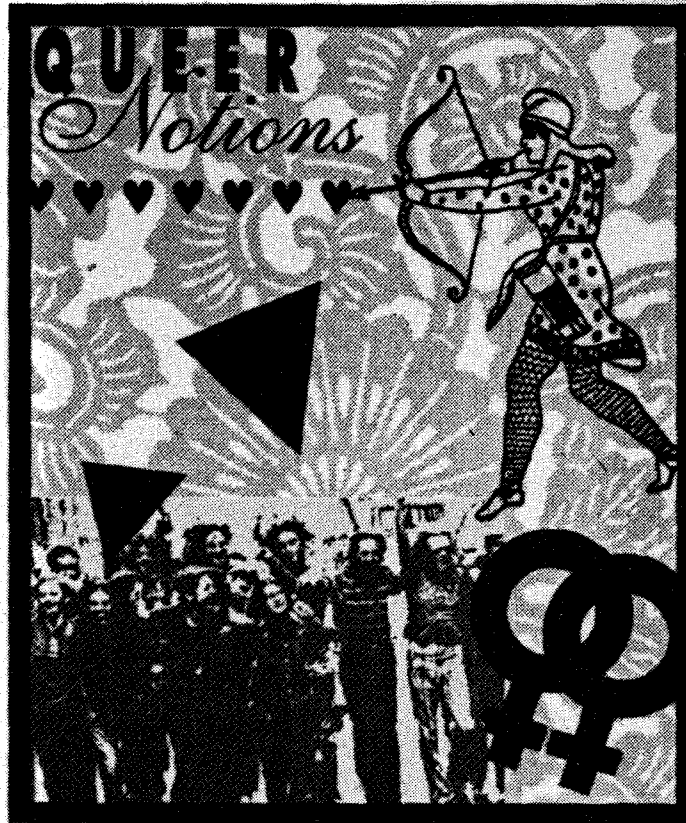
As Raya Dunayevskaya puts it, this is "Why Marx concretized each human relationship as a 'to be' instead of a 'to have'." The family as a structure is concerned with possession, not life, so "the family," as constituted, is an unlikely site for the generation of fully human beings. This does not mean that all families or family relations are in all cases inhuman.

But the need for a sweeping structural critique of the family, the de-mythologizing of the word "family," and the need to maintain this critique in the face of sentimentalizing retrogression—these perspectives have been crucial to any Humanist Marxism, and to feminist and gay/lesbian liberation.³ So while Marx is not discussing

issues of sexuality and sexual orientation per se, he is clearly attacking the formalistic authoritarianism of the family—which is the basis of heterosexism.

Similarly, Marx's discussion of Man/Woman relations points to the "character of this relation" between man and woman as indicating the degree to which "man as a species has become human." One could infer that the relation of male to female needs to be that of human to human, displacing gender (and sexuality) as the sole (or even primary) determinant of social relation; therefore, Marx is jettisoning the heterosexist assumption that "man is for woman and woman is for man's use."⁴

Likewise, when Marx discusses, in his critique of Feuerbach, that materialism must understand "reality, sensuousness" not only "in the form of...object(s)...(but) as human sensuous activity, practice" (i.e., as subjectivity), there is a point of entry for queer thought. The sensuousness of materialism is present in human thought and human activity, and acknowledging and living that



artwork by julia jones '95

human materiality is necessary for a total uprooting of the old. In building subjectivity from the body, the materialism of queer reality is a given, awaiting our philosophic self-development of it.

Of course, Marx does not address the issue of gay liberation directly, but, as Dunayevskaya points out, this is because "there was no gay liberation movement" when he was alive.⁵ Given that Marx's Marxism and Marxist-Humanism, as developed by Dunayevskaya, develop theory and philosophy from active forces of liberation, this is a crucial point. It is not Marx's responsibility to be a seer, to name before the fact every future liberation cause. This renders the specific historic appearance of gay liberation quite interesting.

The movement towards self-definition as lesbian and gay (declaring an entire personal identity rather than simply classifying various sexual acts) began in the late 19th century, and didn't reach the acceleration of its current movement until the 1969 Stonewall riots.

Given these origins, what we have is a liberation movement—a distinct movement of human self-definition—that began only after a philosophy of revolution had been formulated. What does it mean that gay and lesbian self-definition begins once the importance of human self-determination has been explicitly articulated? What do we do with this legacy? Can we understand this as a revolutionary opportunity? Are we the "first fruits" of a new continent of thought?!

In a landmark article, gay scholar John D'Emilio speculated that capitalism created the material conditions for gay existence, by economically freeing people from family-based economic structures. While he calls on gays and lesbians to oppose capitalism, his theory depends on historical determinism. By making queer subjectivity a by-product of capitalist economic relations, he misses the self-development of the Idea of Freedom.

For instance, he doesn't notice the growth of lesbian identification among working class women at the time of World War II, instead ascribing lesbian identification to educational and class privilege.⁶ Even more blatantly (al-

modern industry, all family ties among the proletarians are torn asunder, and their children turned into simple articles of commerce and instruments of labour." This is certainly descriptive of the contemporary scene, where "family values" claptrap is played off against cuts in AFDC and school lunches.

4. This charming quote is from an anti-abortion protester, Ross, who recently attempted to "set me straight" during a clinic defense in California. He failed.

5. Raya Dunayevskaya, *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1985), p. 180.

6. John D'Emilio, "Capitalism and Gay Identity," in *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*, p. 471; the article was first published in 1983.

though with admirable honesty), he admits he cannot explain why, in the first half of the 20th century, "for reasons not altogether clear, urban black communities appeared relatively tolerant of homosexuality." Because he is not looking for subjective self-development, he misses the drive toward freedom, and so his commendable politics are brought to the subject by will alone.

Raya Dunayevskaya upbraids Rosa Luxemburg for a like shortcoming, saying "(a)ll her magnificent descriptions of imperialism have no live Subject arise to oppose it; they (the colonized) remain just suffering masses, not gravediggers of imperialism." When historical determinism delimits the conditions of both oppression and liberation, movements for freedom are reduced to either happy accidents or holographic inventions of theorists.

Dunayevskaya urges us to look to revolutionary subjects and to the philosophy of revolution, because: "(t)he nodal points of a serious revolutionary theory are rooted in self-activity of the masses who make the revolution, and the leadership's singling out of those live forces of revolution, not only as Force, but as Reason."⁷

The simultaneity of force and reason is central to Dunayevskaya's dialectic understanding of Hegel's Absolutes. There is a movement from practice to theory, and from theory to philosophy, where philosophy is a vitally materially active mode of change: "the dialectic (is) the movement of both ideas and of masses in motion towards the transformation of reality...a passion for philosophy is actually a passion for freedom, which strives to acquire, to find, a philosophic expression that would not separate it from the transformation of reality."⁸

QUEER REVOLUTIONARY SUBJECTIVITY

This unity of Force and Reason is crucial to queer revolutionary subjectivity. Feminist analysis of the body/mind split, while forwarding the worthy goal of critiquing dualism, tends to reify these two concepts, leaving them ahistorically abstract. Force and Reason together suggest dynamic and progressive processes which can develop questions of agency, temporality, and a collective movement to freedom.

None of this is automatic, because we live in restrictive circumstances, which are anti-human, anti-life, anti-love, anti-creativity. From within this, we need to "create the conditions for everyone to be able to experiment with choices, with love, with the family."

What Dunayevskaya rightly cautions against is establishing any fixed particular, of maintaining only one type of love-making as correct. What this means is that les/bi/gay subjectivity is not merely a particular in the struggle for universal freedom, let alone a diversion or distraction from other movements (as some Leftists maintained when gay liberation became militant in the early 1970s). Rather, queer revolutionary subjectivity illustrates what Hegel described as the "self-determination or particularization" of the Absolute Idea.⁹ The crucial dialectical move is to ask "what are you going to do to create the new?"

Such a question is not answered with a pre-fabricated, simplistic plan of action. Queer revolutionary philosophers might look instead to developing manifestations of Force and Reason. How are our Force and Reason forms of our passion for one another, our passion for human contact and human relation, our passion for change, and our passion for freedom? Passion is defined as a powerful and compelling emotion, a strong enthusiasm, an extravagant desire or furious anger, as well as having obvious sexual overtones. Combining these shades of meaning, I define revolutionary lesbian passion as a form of motion and deep involvement, which potentially contains both the negation of what oppresses us (that is, our intense anger toward homo-hatred) and the negation of the negation in our positive desire.

Near the end of *Capital*, Marx speaks of how "new forces and new passions spring up in the bosom of society, forces and passions which feel themselves to be fettered by that society."¹⁰ I would say that the revolutionary possibilities of gay and lesbian liberation lie in the importance of revolutionary passion that includes both love and creativity in a drive for the transformation of society and the occasion for new human relations.

Feminist theorist Barbara Gittings once speculated that "because of its chaotic nature, gay liberation could not be subsumed by the left," but I say that our ability, as a community, to be simultaneously many things organizationally and in terms of identity, is exactly something new that we add to the self-development of the Idea of Freedom.

As Hegel said about the Absolute Idea, it is "not so feeble as merely to have a right to exist without actually existing"; likewise, our queer lives are not a feeble part of the reality that is the Absolute, the open ontology of ceaseless movement, the absolutely fabulous chaos of human creative power. I am confident that queer energy—an energy that critiques the emptiness of what is given while embracing each other in a freely associated community—will be a part of the dialectic that transforms the world.

7. Dunayevskaya, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, p. 172.

8. Raya Dunayevskaya, "Hegel, Marx, Lenin, Fanon and the Dialectics of Liberation Today," presentation of Dec. 5, 1976, *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection* #15026.

9. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, Miller trans., p. 824.

10. Karl Marx, *Capital*, Volume One (New York: Vintage, 1977), p. 928.

1. Raya Dunayevskaya, *Philosophy and Revolution*, third edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989) p. 5, emphasis mine.

2. Raya Dunayevskaya, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, second edition (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1991), p. 81.

3. The Communist Manifesto states "The bourgeois claptrap about the family...the hallowed co-relation of parent and child, becomes all the more disgusting, the more, by the action of

Black/Red View

by John Alan

On Labor Day, during prime time, public television (PBS) honored Richard Wright by airing "Richard Wright: 'Black Boy.'" PBS released little advance publicity and the urban press published no serious reviews. Obviously, today the media has only a lukewarm interest in Richard Wright. In the 1940s it was quite different. Wright's novel *Native Son* was a best seller and his autobiography *Black Boy* and articles aroused the hostility of the Communist Party, the hatred of racist Senator Bilbo and criticism from the Black elite.

Madison Davis Lacy, who wrote "Richard Wright: 'Black Boy,'" takes us on a journey through Wright's life, starting with his birth on a plantation in Mississippi in 1908 and ending with his death in Paris in 1960. Lacy's story was converted into a film using old newsreel footage, selections from films of Wright's novels and stories and interviews. He included people who knew Wright personally and others who have opinions and theories about him.

It could be hard to choose where to begin Wright's story. I would have preferred to start at the moment in Wright's life when he discovered the character "Bigger Thomas" and wrote the novel *Native Son*. This was the turning point in Wright's creative and intellectual life.

He had become an important American novelist and like his "Big Boy" had left home. The great Black migration from the South was over, Wright had entered the world of his dreams and he could not find himself. He joined the Communist Party, as Margaret Walker said, with the hope that it had a solution to the race problem and then he discovered "that it had no solution." And now he was facing a new reality in Bigger Thomas, an urban, slum-bred Black youth. From this point, one could look backward and forward in Wright's life.

I thought that Maryemma Graham, Joyce Ann Joyce and Michael Dyson were obscuring the complexity of Wright's development by over emphasizing "fear" as the defining determinant in Wright's writings. Joyce said "fear" was "at the core" of everything Wright wrote. Dyson reinforced this by saying that "all Blacks have had to come to grips with their internal demon."

Fear and "internal demons" were never basic issues for Wright. In his essay, "How Bigger Was Born," the "Biggers" were not "essentially...bad" people, but they were different than leaders because they lived dangerously, they took their lives in their hands by opposing racism, which Wright thought was the "moral horror of

Richard Wright today

Negro life in the United States."

Yes, as Maryemma Graham said, Bigger Thomas is a composite personality. To be more precise, he is a specific type of individual created by the class and race relationships of a specific society and, at the same time, he is not a specific single individual, but a personification of millions of people.

Mark Naison added a concrete contribution to the political meaning of Bigger Thomas when he said: "Bigger Thomas was not a person amenable to any political movement and essentially Wright was saying that there was in northern urban centers a type of person no political movement could speak to. That's a very difficult message for the CP [Communist Party] to take. As a result this caused a crisis in Communist circles."

Naison's statement points to the source of Wright's break with the Communist Party. Wright discovered a new Black subject, and thus a new objectivity. This happened in the early 1940s, when capitalism was gearing-up to plunge the world into another bloody war. Wright left the CP then, according to Margaret Walker, because he thought "the Party had abandoned Black people when it would not support the March on Washington."

As I watched "Richard Wright: 'Black Boy,'" I began to think—as periods of Wright's life went by and commentators gave their opinions on whether or not Wright declined as a novelist in self-exile in Paris—that *Native Son* was Wright's only novel which had a startling impact upon the American consciousness and it was all about a Black slum youth called Bigger Thomas.

Bigger Thomas! A poor, frustrated, angry, violence-prone Black youth, a youth Wright calls "an American *Native Son*," the hidden truth he wanted to bring to America's consciousness—this was the task and the energizing force behind Wright's creativity.

This is what makes Wright a contemporary. He was able to see that American civilization would produce an underclass of estranged, Black youth who are unemployed and poor. He caught a trend which nobody predicted in 1940 and which is now an undeniable feature of American capitalism.

The greatness of Wright is that he described the underclass not just as pure negativity, but as a force that could oppose the existing society. This puts Wright on a much higher level of humanity than some commentators today, like Cornel West, who only see Black youth as a nihilistic force. Our task is to develop the positive element in that opposition to the inhuman system in events like the Los Angeles Rebellion.

militarist in this century, from Grenada to Panama and from the Gulf of Sidra to the Persian Gulf.

In fact, Powell, whether he runs for president or not, is the only politician in the running, including President Clinton, who comes with a comprehensive doctrine of political-military power that has been tested and made operational for the 21st century. This is no Ollie North off-the-shelf operation.

Thus, the last thing in which we can afford to indulge is the media mythology about Colin Powell's "American journey." Powell drew up and executed U.S. imperialist policy for the last 15 years for three presidents. More importantly, in Gen. Colin Powell is embodied the principal post-Vietnam-War-era doctrine of integrating military and political power structures and circumscribing press and public opinion of U.S. imperialist policy.

The actual Powell paradox is that the very press corps that he handled and massaged into a self-censoring instrument of U.S. militarist-imperialist policy is the very one that currently cannot get enough of him. The media manufacture of a "national hero" in the likeness of Gen. Colin Powell is the culmination of the Powell (post-Vietnam Pentagon) Doctrine of a state-capitalist military/political power structure, based on depoliticizing press and public opinion of U.S. imperialist policy.

The effects of the Powell Doctrine is evident in the liberal punditry of Anthony Lewis, who sees in "the General" what "all Americans" (sic) do, "hope, not more ideology" (*New York Times*, Sept. 29, 1995, p. A11). To this "end of ideology" delusion, the prominent international affairs scholar Ronald Steele adds the more wishful "end of politics" chorus that "what Mr. Powell offers us is an escape from politics, which seems to be what we want" (*New York Times Book Review*, Sept. 17, 1995, p. 19).

Despite the media manufacture of Powell "authenticity" and Powell "honesty," large segments of Black America, according to polls, seem to think that the "true meaning of this 'Honesty'...lies in not being so honest as it seems," as Hegel reminds us in his analysis of the ideological self-deceptions civil society is subject to when it is no longer certain of its purpose in the world.

A mini-conference of the Midwest Radical Scholars and Activist Conference

HEGEL, MARX, AND THE PRESENT CRISIS

October 17, 1-5 pm, Multi-Purpose Rm., the Living Learning Center (corner of Sheridan and Winthrop), Loyola University Chicago

South Central 'twist'

South Central Los Angeles—On Sept. 14, my young neighbor went for a ride with a friend and got caught up in "a twist," a drug deal gone bad. My young neighbor was innocent. I know he did not deal in drugs. He and one other Black youth were killed and one was wounded.

While there are many innocents to be found within South Central LA who do not deal in drugs the myth is "either you know and you ain't saying or you are saying and you don't know." The police said they recovered from the scene \$75,000 and five pounds of cocaine (many say that the coke was fake). But obviously the innocent are dying on a daily basis.

The explosive combination of drugs like cocaine, heroin, alcohol, and living with abusive cops and poverty has created a continuous wave of death and destruction within the Black and Latino community. This poverty existence has only increased since the 1992 LA rebellion (leaving drugs as the main alternative to get money).

The condition of poverty "pushes" the desire to numb the consciousness through drugs to prevent madness. Any inner city youth, or "old head," in South Central feels at the breaking point. Tempers flare and death and violence easily follow. Then afterwards, when people are imprisoned, nobody knows why.

This system, dominated by the police and politicians, push de-sensitizing drugs to attempt to destroy creativity and prevent the "next 1992 explosion" from happening again. To physically reach beyond the confines of the ghetto/barrio, whose human relationships reflect self-destruction, means a high level of much needed mass revolt.

Alcohol and drugs allow us to forget the abuses of the past, to escape reality, to "take a chill pill." The dope deals allow a few to "come up," a few high rollers to experience a false sense of wealth while unable to leave the poverty of their minds. Many are unable to leave the few small blocks that they control through violence, drugs and the only money that doesn't leave the hood. Far too many have joined the ranks of the walking dead from crack or alcoholism...on a midnight creep.

The capitalist system practices a form of apartheid when it comes to drugs. Where in South Central you can find a liquor store on every corner, you can also find the cheap and potent form of alcohol, for example Old English 800, on commercial billboards. They call it "the Power" with the picture of a tiger; on the streets we call it "crazy 8 ball." You cannot find this malt liquor in the suburbs.

While whites are smoking more crack in the suburbs than Blacks or Latinos, people of color get busted with the "three strikes you're out" law. The reality is that drugs are being used as a weapon against the minds of workers, youth, unemployed and minorities who are the most rebellious. But don't insult my intelligence by "just say no" to drugs. We need to say yes to everything that's human, and everything that's knowledge and creativity that feeds the mind and not dulls it.

—Gene Ford/G.W.

Protest killer cop

Chicago—On July 30 on Chicago's Near North Side at about 12:30 a.m., Joseph Gould, a homeless Black man, approached off-duty white police officer Gregory Becker and his girlfriend as they left a local bar. Gould offered to wash their car windows. A disagreement erupted in which Becker pulled out his pistol and shot an unarmed



Goled through the skull killing him. Becker left the scene of the shooting. He was only caught because eye-witnesses got his license plate number.

What followed was a classic case of the forces of race, class and the police colliding and colluding. State's Attorney Jack O'Malley, an ex-cop, dropped murder charges. The judge in the case, Associate Judge Robert Bastone, the son of a state trooper, dismissed involuntary manslaughter charges. The killing and the obvious racism in mishandling this case set off a series of protests.

On Aug. 4, friends of Joseph Gould, including other homeless men and women, *StreetWise* vendors (*StreetWise* is a newspaper sold by the homeless in Chicago), and clergy marched from the spot where Gould was killed to the Pacific Gardens Mission. There they lit candles and held a prayer vigil.

Other protests followed in September outside of the State's Attorney's office and in front of City Hall. On Sept. 11 the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, Interfaith Council for the Homeless, News and Letters members, homeless men and women and concerned citizens converged on the State of Illinois building to protest the murder and the dismissal of charges. Protesters shouted "No Justice! No Peace!" as they took over downtown streets in their march to the Federal Building.

The demonstrators wanted to know why the life of a homeless Black man was not given as much respect as anyone else's life. In an earlier interview in *StreetWise*, Gould's cousin Patricia Howell, echoed these sentiments, "Black men are labeled threatening and dangerous. And to be homeless just puts you at the bottom of the pit. But it shocks me that someone could blow him away."

Other protests followed. A week later a prayer vigil and rally was held at the spot where Gould was killed. The protests and pressure made the grand jury indict him on involuntary manslaughter charges, but activists are rightfully demanding murder charges be reinstated.

—Robert Reed

Black World

(continued from page 1)

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he opposed gays and lesbians in the military.

The fight for Black civil rights was not an event that overly concerned Powell, even when Black Power was being loudly proclaimed in the Vietnam War era military by Black GIs fighting racism in the ranks. Yet, it is the struggle for Black civil rights that Powell has calculatedly sought to appropriate as his own, not unlike Clarence Thomas's erstwhile embrace of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X.

In Powell's belated identification with King, he surely could not have solidarized with King's profound anti-war stand against the imperialist Vietnam War that Powell used as a career stepping-stone. And what of that Army that Powell and white America proclaim to be the ideal of an integrated society?

During the Vietnam War more than half of those in the stockades were Black, while a young Maj. Colin Powell covered up the barbaric My Lai massacre carried out by white officers. Even in the all-volunteer Army of the 1980s that Powell was instrumental in shaping, Blacks received dishonorable discharges at four times the rate of whites; Blacks and Latinos were over half those in Army stockades; and Black and Latino recruits were the majority of those classified E-1 and E-2, the lowest job classification in the Army.

Powell's appropriation of the Black civil rights struggle and the legacy of Martin Luther King is particularly insidious, given that his Commander-in-Chief George Bush not only chose to unleash Powell and the dogs of war in the Persian Gulf during the Martin Luther King holiday in 1991, but simultaneous with his presidential infamy of vetoing the Civil Rights Act of 1991.

Bush could divert Black and liberal critics of his civil rights veto and poverty conscription of Black youth by pointing to his Black militarist-imperialist clone, Gen. Colin Powell, head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a position that made him a policy-maker, as well as the one most responsible for carrying out U.S. imperialist policy.

By no means will the reactionary, right-wing Republican Party allow Powell to usurp their retrogressive agenda, no matter how much he plies the oxymoron that he is a "fiscal conservative with a social conscience" (whatever that means).

Where the Right and Powell do share what Hegel in the *Phenomenology of Mind* called a "party interest which he has taken up and defended or maintained" is in the area of extending U.S. imperialism's "new world order." When it comes to U.S. imperialist foreign policy, Powell and the Republican Right are more than natural allies.

Gen. Colin Powell is one of the principal architects and instruments of the Reagan-Bush imperialist foreign policy, which historically has been the most aggressive and

Strikers cost Detroit newspapers dearly

Detroit—On Saturday evening, Sept. 30, over 500 strikers from the six newspaper unions and their supporters rallied at the Detroit riverfront printing plant (where the early sections are printed) to stop distribution of the combined **Detroit News-Detroit Free Press** Sunday edition. News sections are put out in the Sterling Heights plant, where the Detroit Newspapers Agency (DNA) got the courts to issue an injunction against mass picketing.

The DNA has been getting some papers out of the printing plant, so workers are now trying to stop the trucks at the distribution depots in the Detroit area. They left the rally after 11 p.m. in pre-designated groups. The fiercest conflicts with police and private security erupted in Detroit at the Clayton St. distribution terminal. At least eight strikers were arrested Saturday night, but Sunday home delivery was disrupted.

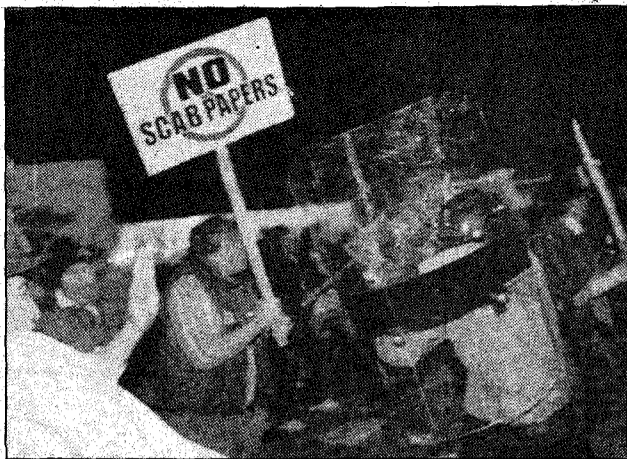
A striking press operator described one basic issue in their contract: who will determine the number of press operators that set up the job. The press operators had already bargained away positions in the last contract, but the DNA now wants near-total control. They have brought in company lackeys who bust ass so supervisors can claim the job set-ups need far less workers.

The DNA's aim from the start is to break the union, one way or the other. They forced the strike. The presence of federal arbitrators has pressured the DNA to return to bargaining, but their position is not even back to where offers stood when the strike began. The DNA runs a highly profitable newspaper operation, but wants more than the millions in concessions the newspaper workers have made since the DNA began. Every worker who's going to cross and scab has done it, and every worker who is out will never go back under the DNA's current terms.

—Strikers and supporters

Detroit—It is more than 10 weeks since the bitter battle of Lafayette Blvd. began here in this cradle of trade union organization where people mark the passing years by the ebb and flow of contract bargaining and the struggle of workers for better wages, conditions and job security. To many union veterans, the fight joined between the nation's two largest newspaper publishing companies, Gannett Corp. and Knight Ridder, Inc., and the six small unions which represent 2500 people who write, edit, print and deliver a morning and evening paper looks more like a fossil remnant of the anti-labor policies of the 1930s.

The unions—the Teamsters, Newspaper Guild, Press-



men, Typographers, Mailers, and pressroom helpers—struck the **Detroit News**, the **Detroit Free Press** and **Detroit Newspapers, Inc.**, July 16. The news and editorial departments of the two papers operate separately and competitively under a joint operating agreement that allows the papers to combine their business, circulation and advertising sales departments.

Under the joint operating agreement, approved by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1989 under the Newspaper Preservation Act, Gannett and Knight Ridder divide profits from the two papers 50-50 for the next 95 years. So while the two newspapers frequently preach free enterprise and government restraint for others in editorials that range from centrist to very conservative, they themselves do business as a government-approved monopoly.

On the pages of the **Free Press** and particularly on the pages of the **Detroit News**, strikers are mean obstructionists bent upon violent mischief. Newspaper managers are patient, forbearing and interested only in protecting their property even when semi-trailer trucks head into picket lines at high rates of speed.

The spin on newspaper strike stories has been so obvious that even total outsiders question the credibility of the **News** and **Free Press**. "They have no credibility. It's right down the tubes," said one editor who like many of his colleagues—who are now producing the two papers in the absence of reporters—is working six-day weeks and 10 and 12 hour days without any premium pay.

But the newspaper managements are pouring millions of dollars into prosecuting the strike and risking millions more in advertising and circulation. More than 200 advertisers, many of them major advertisers, have withdrawn from the papers for the duration of the strike.

Although the newspapers contend they are delivering 90% of their pre-strike circulation, this week newspaper managers acknowledged that they have refused to undergo an independent circulation audit because of "circulation problems" stemming from the strike. Without an independent audit, the papers will be unable to establish secure rates for advertisers who must have insurance they are reaching the audience they want. Even management people in this profoundly union town have been surprised by the amount of money Gannett and Knight Ridder have poured into their attempt to dictate the terms of their collective bargaining agreements.

Out-of-pocket expenses have included two private security forces; guards for newspaper deliverers; payments of more than \$400,000 in overtime to the Sterling Heights, Mich., police force called in to help move papers from the printing plant past picketing strikers; and rented helicopters to fly small numbers of papers out of the suburban plant when the pickets wouldn't be moved.

"Tell me why they couldn't have deferred some of this money into settling the contract and given themselves better prospects for the future," said one retired auto executive. "It certainly does look like they are trying to break the union." But they may have broken more than their word or a few small union locals. A sign chalked onto the sidewalk in front of the News building said it all: "Journalism died here."

The strikers' own paper, the **Detroit Journal**, is also on Internet at <http://www.rust.net/~workers/strike.html>

—Striking Detroit journalist

'Starving' Staley hogs

Decatur, Ill.—Dan Lane of locked-out Paperworkers Local 7-837, is on a hunger strike. Today, Oct. 2, is day 32. It's put a sense of urgency on the struggle with Staley. We tried all along to have this sense of urgency, but now we want other people to sense it and call Pepsi and Coke and tell them to dump Staley. Instead of calling tomorrow, people may make that call today when you know someone's life is on the line. Since the fast began, we know that letters and calls to Pepsi and Coke have increased. Dan has a lot to live for, especially a new contract, and he's not doing this to kill himself.

We had a 40-day fast this summer. It was supported by members of the local, spouses, and community people who signed up for one to three days to fast and even took turns on three-day fasts. Near the end of the 40 days, Dan started. He announced it would be open-ended.

Along with the 40-day fast, we had 12-hour rotational shifts at the gate that the community in Decatur could understand as the rotational shifts that companies here—Staley, Firestone, and Caterpillar—want to implement. People came up with the idea of chaining themselves to the fence. This demonstration ended yesterday, Oct. 1, with a rally of 300-400 people. From the hunger strike, we have started to get some national coverage from the media.

The State Department of Community and City Affairs pulled two out of three of Staley's tax abatements after we succeeded in getting the media's attention. The abatements were in the form of promissory notes to preserve or create jobs. One abatement saved Staley from paying taxes for equipment and machinery. Staley applied for a five-year exemption in 1989 supposedly to retain 1,356 jobs. The other one was a utility tax exemption in December 1992, to retain 1,000 jobs.

But when they reapplied for the sales tax exemption, they said they had saved 880 jobs, well below what they said they had when they applied for the utility tax exemption. That's when we showed they didn't keep jobs for the sales tax exemption either and it should be rescinded. It took a year for the State to say, "You're right." Rescinding the utility tax alone will run \$4.5 million with penalties and interest! The State is auditing the books to see how much machinery they bought during the exemption, and they'll have to pay back that too.

We took a couple of live hogs to the Staley headquarters. We called the media and told them these were the Staley hogs feeding at the corporate welfare trough! We laid out the whole tax abatement scam right there. That was on Aug. 15. Aug. 27 was when the State rescinded Staley's utility tax exemption! If they didn't lock us out, no one would have caught them. But like someone said to the company when the lockout began, "I can screw with you three days, 12 hours a day when I'm working in the plant. Now that I'm out of a job, I can screw with you 24 hours a day, seven days a week!"

—Locked-out Staley worker

'Stop the harassment!'

Chicago—The problem is one of our foremen at Sinai Kosher—Kiran. He had grown women crying one week. We've never had someone over us like this. We need a job, but we don't want someone cursing us out.

We do 1,800 boxes in six hours on the packaging lines—that's a lot of hot dogs and Polish sausage. The women on the line work hard to fill pockets. When bottom filler comes, they pick up four hot dogs in each hand and fill it before it goes on to be sealed.

Sinai Kosher used to have four women on one multivac machine, but since Sara Lee bought the company, they have tried getting by with three. Sometimes one of the women is a new hire. Management knows she'll miss pockets, so they add a fourth woman to help. When the three get tired and don't put the meat in correctly, she fixes it. She also takes out green meat.

A few weeks ago one of the Polish women from another line came over to help pick up pockets the extra woman missed. That makes five, but they were all getting tired running meat for so many hours. When the pockets keep going unfilled, the machine jams. You know management doesn't want the line to stop! Kiran came over and shouted at her, "Why are you missing the pockets!" The Polish woman tried to say something, but he hollered, "Get off the line!" She was crying. She didn't want to go home. She was just tired.

Kiran also makes people stay late. People who come in at 12 a.m. expect to go home at 8:30 a.m. Sometimes they don't want to stay to 12 p.m. But when there is a new product, they want us to stay late to pack it.

Everyone thought when Sara Lee took over Sinai Kosher that things would get better—better pay, better treatment. But they are doing whatever they want. If you have to take the day off, they ask you to call at least an hour before starting time. Still, even when you do what they ask they treat you like dirt. Even when you have a doctor's appointment, they say come to work anyway or they are going to let you go.

We're tired of being threatened. When my kids are sick, I need to be there for them. That's why we need personal days off. Why couldn't the union fight for this? Instead the union and the company opened our contract last year to make some adjustments in our health insurance. The union told us either we were to pay our own insurance, or they could take the raise—which we had just got—and put it toward health insurance coverage. We gave up the raise, 14¢ an hour, until January.

Sinai Kosher profits went up since Sara Lee took over. Everyone thought we were helping them raise their profits, so we were going to get good insurance—and better treatment. It's been nothing like that.

—Sinai Kosher worker

Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

ance....Instead of management devoting time and energy to controlling the workforce directly, workers control themselves." Peer pressure and individual competition emerge within the teams; even mutual support could work to the company's advantage. "Quite simply, when helping other team members keep up, workers in effect supported the speedup." The use of temporary workers, another control mechanism, began after Graham left.

There is a kernel of truth in the rhetoric, if not the practice, of team concept: workers do know best how their jobs should be done. Capital merges that truth with the myth of a common interest between workers and the company: quality plus productivity equals job security. Graham writes that "The essence of the participation workers were granted involved, at best, improving quality; at worst and more commonly, it involved speeding up their jobs," and she sees silence and refusal to participate as forms of resistance:

"The morning team meeting was a ritual of cooperation....Through these meetings Team 1 received status reports in the form of the daily defect sheet from management. This report involved the team in the flow of information and gave the appearance that all of us were privy to information customarily confined to management....After SOP, when the team leader passed around the defect report sheet, instead of carefully examining and reacting to it, team members quietly handed it from one person to another without glancing at it."

There was collective resistance against forced overtime and shift rotation, and over health and safety issues. "Sabotage occurred when workers on one of the car line teams discovered how to stop the assembly line without management tracing their location....This not only allowed people on their team to catch up, it gave everyone time away from the line....At one morning team meeting, our team leader reported that the line had stopped for a total of 20 minutes the day before and the company was unable to account for the time."

My main quarrel with this book is that Graham refuses to name the enemy: capitalism. She writes instead of "the company's drive for profit maximization in basic conflict with the interests of working people"—as though this were a choice a company makes. Just as capitalism compartmentalizes people (you are only a worker while at work), Graham's coworkers do not speak in this book about matters beyond the plant walls.

Graham's discussion of alternatives is confined to unionization. "Once traditional union goals are met, the structures found in the Japanese model provide openings for the union," she writes, "to guide the company in a direction that forces it to make good on its rhetoric of worker involvement." Utopia! But what has happened to the "basic conflict"? It seems to me we must raise our sights higher, to transforming this whole exploitative, racist, sexist society.

How to contact NEWS & LETTERS COMMITTEES	
CHICAGO 59 E. Van Buren, Room 707 Chicago, IL 60605 Phone 312 663 0839 Fax 312 663 9069 MEETINGS Call for meeting information	NEW YORK P.O. Box 196 Grand Central Station New York, NY 10163 212 663 3631 MEETINGS Sundays, 2:30 p.m. Washington Square Church 133 W. 4th St. (Parish House parlor), Manhattan
OAKLAND P.O. Box 3345 Oakland, CA 94609 510 658 1448 MEETINGS Sundays, 5:30 p.m. 2015 Center St. (at Milvia) Berkeley	LOS ANGELES P.O. Box 29194 Los Angeles, CA 90029 213 960 5607 MEETINGS Sundays, 5:30 p.m. Echo Park United Methodist Church 1226 N. Alvarado (North of Sunset, side door)
DETROIT P.O. Box 27205 Detroit MI 48227 MEETINGS Thursdays, 7 p.m. Central Methodist Church Woodward and Adams	FLINT, MI P.O. Box 3384, Flint, MI 48502
INTERNATIONAL MARXIST-HUMANISTS	
ENGLAND BCM Box 3514, London, England WC1N 3XX	

ON OUR PERSPECTIVES: CAN THE IDEA OF FREEDOM REMOBILIZE TODAY'S MASS MOVEMENTS...

Reading the 1995 Plenum Call and the works of Dunayevskaya was like receiving clear and fresh water from the mountains, from an ignored and hidden spring. Imperialism has globalized hunger and depravity, like sewer water poured over the planet, while these fresh waters were hidden under the disguise of those who betrayed the great philosophies and revolutions which were made over mountains of pain. Our constant questioning has been that Marxism, as expressed in "real socialism," did not reach the depth of human behavior and degenerated into Stalinism, abolishing freedom. I have also worried that the problem of gender relations had not been revealed. Now the rediscovery of the humanist Marx constitutes a new beginning as a life force.

Revolutionary
Ecuador

In your Perspectives (August-September N&L) you put your finger on it: computerization and robots replace living workers, and if workers have no income how can they buy all the stuff? Surely I'm not the only one bemused by all the "post-industrial" talk. The computer is not only assembled by female slave labor but the plastics have to be fabricated

from petroleum, which has to be extracted and transported, and metals, which have to be mined, smelted, transported. The post-industrialists also don't seem to notice that we continue to need to eat and that the growing, processing and transporting of food goes on.

Joanne Foreman
New Mexico

Our task is not to articulate a philosophy for others. It is to teach them how to articulate their own ideas, so they can criticize those ideas for themselves. We must teach how to think, not what to think. The best teachers are those who teach by example rather than by words. We should therefore be more concerned with what we ourselves do than with developing a philosophy that we hope will inspire others to action.

Ivan Bachur
Warren, Mich.

The paper has been of great use to me. It tells you about the world — not only what's going on but what the future is going to be like. Most of my friends get interested in it the first time they read it. Long live the struggle!

African woman
London

...IN THE BLACK DIMENSION

Your work toward a statement on the Black situation in America is a worthy undertaking. The travesty of the African-American people can never be overstated. Our founding fathers brought them here in bondage. Compounding that travesty is the way the privileged ruling class offers them as scapegoats to the unprivileged for their failure to share their wealth with the unprivileged. We have created a country within a country — a hostile country that could explode upon the whole.

Working man
Auburn, Cal.

What Raya Dunayevskaya called "the psychology of Jim Crowism" in *American Civilization on Trial* is reinforced by the police, a standing army that tells us we are not invited into the white world. Frantz Fanon called racism a "mental disorder." The psychology of Jim Crowism is an attack on the Black mind. That's what Mark Fuhrman's tape represented. Whites might not have known about the racism of the LAPD but every Black did. The real key to the O.J. Simpson trial is that, even though he did nothing for the Black community, he is seen as Black, no matter how high up he got. When all that hate comes to the surface, you know there's a storm coming.

Black worker
Los Angeles

A Black activist in the health field came into the library where I work last week and said, "Tell me what the demands of the 'Million Man March' are. I don't see any demands." I said that the only demands I read in the *Final Call* were demands that Black men "atone" for their lack of responsibility to Black families and community. "So there are no demands on Gingrich or Clinton?" he asked. "Well I have one that would help millions of Black Americans—raise the minimum wage to \$10 an hour. I'd march for just that."

Librarian
Chicago

Recently I heard a talk on Mumia Abu Jamal's case, by Mary Mitchell, a member of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) and a writer for the *Chicago Sun Times*, at the Women Writers' Conference in Chicago. She was angry about the inaction of the NABJ on Abu Jamal's case. There are 864 members in the Chicago chapter but up until a few months ago no one knew who Mumia was. Later, the NABJ cavalierly issued a statement saying that it could not take a position. Now after Abu Jamal has been denied a new trial, the NABJ has just announced that it wants a full disclosure of the facts. Mitchell criticized the prevalent attitude in the media which makes Black journalists

choose between being Black and being a journalist. "When we cannot be who we are, that is when we have failed." She challenged all journalists who have fallen to the level of repeating what the establishment tells them, and asked them to search for the true facts.

Mumia Abu Jamal's supporter
Chicago

I'm disturbed by Farrakhan's "Million Man March," but not because of whether or not its slogans will be "radical." What concerns me is the whole anti-women message, with women told to stay home and "take care of the kids." We've had two decades of Black feminist organizing and consciousness—and this is what the Black intellectuals and a large part of the community goes for? The sexism of this society deeply worries me.

Black feminist
Chicago

...AMONG THE YOUTH

As another reader said in a recent issue, it's good to find that I am not alone in how I think about things. I was saddened last year when I encountered young Mexican students whose parents had come here for a "better" life and who already feel nothing matters, that they won't get anywhere in this society. I am trying to engage in dialogue with others as often as I can. I researched gender bias in the schools last year and produced a short video that was presented to my class.

Young teacher
Illinois

Matrix II is a beefed up version of Mayor Jordan's program to clean homeless people out of tourist and downtown centers. The new version focuses on the city's parks. Jordan claims that homeless people dirty the park and make it dangerous for children. But half the 200 people arrested in the new sweeps are children themselves—homeless youth. He even passes his program off as a "solution"! If 10% of the money spent on these arrests was spent on shelter and social services there wouldn't be any need for people to live in Golden Gate Park.

Disgusted youth
San Francisco

...VS. THE RIGHT

I was surprised to hear that New York City's right-wing Republican mayor, Giuliani, is depicted elsewhere as a liberal. He recently spoke out against the anti-immigrant measures sweeping other states, but how could he do otherwise when so much of his constituency is made up of immigrants? Giuliani came into office on a racist, pro-police platform and has proceeded to slash all city

Readers' Views

services except police and to end anti-discrimination measures.

The once-powerful city unions have done nothing to stop the cutbacks in city services. Giuliani got the parks workers' union to go along with the new policy of forcing welfare recipients to work in the parks by promising that union employees will be their supervisors.

Angry
New York City

At a meeting entitled "The Rise of the Right and the Threat of Fascism" sponsored by the Bay Area Coalition Organized to Fight Fascism (BACOFF, pronounced "back off") many in the audience shared their views at the open mike. Some challenged the many leftists in the room on their concept of a socialist state as the answer to fascism. One man said, "We need a united front, but who are we uniting with? Remember Rosa Luxemburg was killed by Social Democrats and Stalin had no interest in stopping Hitler."

Despite the number of people who spoke, none even mentioned the fascist Serbs in Bosnia, much less related the global rise of fascism to the growing fascism in the U.S. But many were inspired to join in the fight against fascism in the Bay Area and plan to help in building the coalition.

Feminist
San Francisco

When one looks around these days at the essential aspects of our society, the words of the protagonist in Aldous Huxley's *Pala, the Island* come to mind. He was musing about the fate of insane people in that "sane society": "What is better, to be insane in a sane society or sane in an insane society?"

If one analyzes the major aspects of our society, the logical conclusion is that we are living in an increasingly insane society.

Correspondent
British Columbia



THE IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE

I am constantly amazed at the proponents (such as Bob Dole) who support adopting an "English-only" approach to educational curriculum and methods of instruction. The idea that there is anything "pure" about the English language ignores that this is a country of immigrants and refugees who have contributed their culture, language and richness of experience. They have come to this country full of hope and desire for a better future through hard work, not a free ride.

It ignores common sense to think that immigrants have no desire to learn English. They are keenly aware of the doors that are slammed in their face when they cannot function in the dominant language, but they also quickly realize that it is as much the color of their skin as it is their linguistic competence which results in discrimination. There is one language which surpasses all barriers and is understood the world over by all those fighting for a better way of life. It is the language which is shared by all refugees, and which Raya Dunayevskaya referred to as the universal language of freedom. This is the language which must be preserved.

Erica Rae
Illinois

B. Ann Lastelle wrote in the August-September N&L about "taking back a normal working day." I have been talking with both Latin American and Chinese workers, and work weeks of 63 and 70 hours are now the norm for immigrant labor in garment, restaurant and other industries. It is as though we have been thrown all the way back to the days of Karl Marx when the shortening of the

working day was the first struggle of the factory workers. In the Midwest, the Staley and Firestone workers struggle against the imposition of 12-hour days. In New York, Chinese and Latino workers' centers organize around having wage and hour laws enforced by the government.

It is too early to tell if this is a movement. What is certain is that if they cannot limit their working day, workers will be too exhausted to win any other gains or even think. Or even survive.

John Marcotte
New York

I've been involved in the Philippine community lately and the retrogressive nature of immigration law is uppermost on everyone's mind. On Sept. 1, the law governing entry and employment of foreign registered nurses in the U.S. on H-1A visas expired and has created mass confusion. The INS will continue to receive petitions for nurses to obtain or extend their H-1A status, but no decisions will be made on such filings until the U.S. Congress acts (or doesn't act) to extend the H-1A visa law. Guess which way they'll vote?

Jerry
Illinois

NUCLEAR HORROR 1945, 1995

N&L's focus on the horrors of the atomic bomb attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki (August-September N&L) was a refreshing break from all the articles and books based on a premise that using the weapon was dictated by logic. No matter how well "reasoned," they are no more than rationalizations for acts of sheer madness. The Absolute Freedom and Terror of hitting a vanquished foe ushered in not only the nuclear age, but a new level of overkill against enemies carefully selected for political expediency and inability to retaliate. The cowardice of such tactics is concealed by the rhetoric of the "beleaguered," as in today's whining from the "oppressed" white male community.

D.M.
Alameda, Cal.

In this 50-year anniversary of the atomic incineration of hundreds of thousands of men, women and children, the major political powers are continuing to develop nuclear technologies at top speed. To use an analogy: gunpowder took 1,000 years to reach its mass killing capability — something nukes succeeded at on their first try.

A small neutron device can be launched by a ship or land-based rocket launcher only 25 miles away and be detonated, a mile above its target, seconds later, releasing lethal neutron radiation over a 5 to 10-mile radius and causing severe medical problems out for 5 to 10 more miles — with the attackers in a safe zone, able to enter moments later to collect their booty! This is the type of weapon the French are testing in the South Pacific.

B.F., Jr.
Los Angeles

GAYS/LESBIANS CONFER

The International Conference on Homosexuality in August in Ljubljana was organized by the gay group Magnus and the lesbian group LL. The conference introduced very important themes such as homosexuality and politics, AIDS and discrimination, registered partnership. It was very well covered in the Slovenian media but the organizers expected more Slovenian lesbian and gay attendants. The Slovenian public is not extremely intolerant towards homosexuals and some leftist politicians are supportive of gay and lesbian rights.

Roza Klub
Slovenia

WORKERS AND THEIR UNIONS



It shows the retrogression of society that employers now can dictate shift starting times on a daily basis. Part of the reason our parents unionized was because they had no control over their lives and their organization gave them some control. In the last ten or 15 years these companies have been demanding givebacks and have gotten new people in who don't know what the whole idea of organization was for. Unionization gave workers some power over when things were produced and how. Now it seems that you have no power over anything.

Dennis Chicago

It's amazing to me to not see any mention of us in many papers now, but N&L continues to cover our fight with Staley. Even our international union paper has put it aside. There was a point almost a year ago when the international Paperworkers union pressured us to get rid of Ray Rogers. We were doing "bucket drops" at plant gates for donations on our own with guidance from Ray. They said they would take over where he left off, and they would provide us with some kind of income-getting capability. They wanted him out big time but now that he is gone, they pretend we don't exist.

Staley family member Decatur, Ill.

It is surprising, to say the least, that there were no celebrations of the 15th anniversary of the strike at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk. There were several events commemorating the compromise signed at the end of the strike, but even at those both the workers' negotiators and the government's negotiators got "equal time." Most Poles believe that they are now worse off than they were by the end of the Communist regime. One expressed his feelings this way:

"The essence of the Gdansk accords from August 1980 was to try to improve the lot of workers in Poland. After 15 years one worker's lot is much improved—Lech Walesa's. At this rate in 600 million years the lot of the other 40 million will improve."

Urszula Wyslanka Oakland, Cal.

The 500-600 people who came to support striking newspaper workers outside Detroit's Riverfront printing plant on Oct. 1 were prepared to stay all night and go where needed to prevent distribution of the Sunday papers. People came from UAW autoworkers' locals, the Federal government workers' union, and municipal unions. A veteran sales distributor told us "It all boils down to these two giant corporations' desire to break the unions, which boils down to one reason: money. They want to bring in people at half the wages. But unions mean doing a job well, with dignity and at a living wage. Management doesn't respect the talented and dedicated people in here who have spent so many years putting out a quality product." Despite the vicious TV ads blaming strikers for violence and setting two trucks on fire (known to have been torched by the company), weekly support pickets and other community actions will continue.

Strike Supporter Detroit

JERRY GARCIA

Tens of thousands of people gathered at vigils in San Francisco and in cities across the country in August to celebrate the life of a man who to them represented the utopian visions of the 1960s, Jerry Garcia, the lead guitarist of the Grateful Dead. The runaways, hippies, artists, environmentalists, crafts people and musicians who followed the Dead ("Deadheads") were lured not only by the music, a unique blend of bluegrass, rock and roll, folk and jazz, but also by life on the road, the ideals of sharing, taking care of one another, peace and love. They survived mostly by selling their own crafts in the parking lots outside the venues where the band played. Now the future for these people

is uncertain, as is the future for the Deadhead experiment which, though fraught with contradictions and plagued by wide use of hard drugs, did offer people an (albeit limited) alternative to the 9 to 5 work ethic and a way to survive away from many of the constraints of mainstream society, whether as wage-labor or careerism.

Julia Jones San Francisco

THE BOURGEOIS PRESS

Ever since the Washington Post decided to give in to the Unabomber and publish his manifesto, "Industrial Society and its Future," the American bourgeois press has gone through a hand wringing catharsis on whether it was the right thing to do. Supposedly printing may have saved someone's life but freedom of the press was compromised. Pleezee! Isn't this the same press that was iced out when Reagan invaded Grenada and Bush waged the Gulf War? It could barely raise a whimper!

Journalist Chicago

Because N&L take such care to always capitalize the word "Black," I thought you'd like to know that so does Pulitzer prize winning poet, Gwendolyn Brooks. She recently criticized the print media for refusing to acknowledge it as an extension of the long hard fight Black people had to wage to get "Negro" capitalized. She said Black people have noted "with glee" that African-American comes all capitalized and that white people "seem disposed to accept it."

Long-time supporter Illinois

INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH

The John MacLean Society recently voted overwhelmingly to commit ourselves to the agitation for a Scottish Socialist Republic. We are anxious to make links with groups and individuals dedicated to socialist-humanism and the struggle for socialism from below. We

are particularly eager to strengthen our ties with N&L.

James Young Scotland

N&L is very useful for my teaching and research. It provides much up-to-date information. I lend my copies to my students in the philosophy and sociology departments, who make good use of them for discussions and papers.

Philosophy professor China

Your readers might want to know that the novel, The Rape of Sita by Mauritian writer Lindsey Collen, although banned, has been circulated and widely acclaimed. The novel has received the prize for Best Book of the Africa section of the Commonwealth Writers' Prize, and Lindsey has also been awarded the Hellman/Hammett grant administered by the Human Rights Watch Free Expression Project. We are pleased to be able to inform you that Heinmann's African Writers' Series has published it so you can enquire from any bookstore in your country now.

Muvman Liberasyon Fam Mauritius

N&L is the finest revolutionary newspaper among all those known to me. I am in complete agreement with the ideas expressed and have decided to publish a few selected articles by Raya Dunayevskaya on women's liberation.

Revolutionary intellectual Maharashtra, India

FAVORITE QUOTE

My favorite quote from the Beijing women's conference: An African woman quoted her 80-year old (illiterate) grandmother who had sent her off with the following message to the delegates: "Just remember: There is nothing in a man's trousers that can equal what is in a woman's head."

Jennifer Pen California

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS FROM NEWS & LETTERS

BOOKS

BY RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

- Marxism and Freedom: From 1776 until today 1988 edition. New author's introduction \$17.50
Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao 1989 edition. New author's introduction \$14.95
Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution 1991 edition. New author's introduction. Foreword by Adrienne Rich \$12.95
Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future \$15.95
The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism: Selected Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya \$8.50
The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism: Two Historic-Philosophic Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya Contains "Presentation on Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy of June 1, 1987," and 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes." \$3 paperback, \$10 hardcover

BY CHARLES DENBY

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

BY KEVIN ANDERSON

- NEW! Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism: A Critical Study First full-length treatment of Lenin's studies of Hegel. Special offer extended until Dec. 31, 1995 \$14.50 includes postage

PAMPHLETS

- American Civilization on Trial, Black Masses as Vanguard Statement of the National Editorial Board. Includes "A 1980s View of the Two-Way Road Between the U.S. and Africa" by Raya Dunayevskaya, and "Black Caucuses in the Unions" by Charles Denby \$2
Harry McShane and the Scottish Roots of Marxist-Humanism by Peter Hudis \$3
Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western "Civilization" \$1
Marx's Capital and Today's Global Crisis Includes critiques of Ernest Mandel and Tony Cliff \$2
The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S. by Andy Phillips and Raya Dunayevskaya \$2
25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.: A History of Worldwide Revolutionary Developments by Raya Dunayevskaya \$1.50
Myriad Global Crises of the 1980s and the Nuclear World Since World War II by Raya Dunayevskaya \$2
Theory and Practice, by Rosa Luxemburg First English translation \$2
Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions by Raya Dunayevskaya \$1.25
Frantz Fanon, Soweto, and American Black Thought by Lou Turner and John Alan \$3
Working Women for Freedom by Angela Terrano, Marie Dignan, and Mary Holmes \$2
Dos ensayos por Raya Dunayevskaya \$2
News and Letters Committees Constitution ... 32c

Marxist-Humanist Literature Catalog

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

ARCHIVES

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

NEWSPAPER

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

Mail Orders To:

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

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

Name
Address
City State Zip

U.S., NATO airstrikes push Bosnia's partition

(continued from page 1)

Like all Western powers, the last thing the U.S. wants is for the Bosnians to decide their own fate. Rather than allow Bosnia to effect its self-liberation through the lifting of the arms embargo, the administration made a new push for a U.S.-imposed "solution" to the conflict.

What also helped bring forth the new U.S. plan was Croatia's reconquest, in early August, of the Krajina region, an area of Croatia held by Serb separatists for the past four years. Croatia's rapid military advances, and the resulting forced exodus of tens of thousands of Serbs fleeing Croatia, gave new impetus to the U.S. effort to impose a settlement that would carve up the region of former Yugoslavia into distinct ethnic enclaves.

By mid-August, the basics of the "peace" plan were already in place. As *The Guardian* (London) put it on Aug. 11, "The U.S. appears less concerned to defend the interests of the Bosnians against the territorial realities, and is prepared to consider an imposed territorial settlement. Under this plan, Croatia and Serbia would gain politically and territorially, leaving a landlocked Bosnia independent in name but effectively dependent on Croatia, and to a lesser extent, Serbia."

From the very start Holbrooke planned to use NATO air power to force the contending parties to come to the negotiating table under the rubric of the U.S. plan. The ground for this was laid on Aug. 19, when for the first time the UN ceded its authority for approving air strikes to NATO commanders. On Aug. 27, Holbrooke stated in a TV interview that the U.S. would unleash NATO bombs against the Serbs if they failed to join the negotiating process.

Thus, even before the Aug. 28 murderous Serb mortar attack on Sarajevo, the U.S. and NATO had already decided to embark on a series of air strikes.

With that Aug. 28 attack on Sarajevo, the world was again made witness to the horrid destruction that the Serbian "Chetniks" have rained upon Sarajevo over the past three years. A day later the U.S. announced that NATO would commence bombing raids against Serbian positions unless they agreed to withdraw their weapons surrounding Sarajevo.

Though it may have appeared that NATO was acting to ensure the "peace and security" of Sarajevo, both much less and much more was at stake in the resulting two-week period of air strikes. The strikes were made large enough to subsume any calls to lift the arms embargo, but not so large as to inflict serious damage on Serb positions.

Moreover, under a formula first proposed by Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, NATO agreed to call off the bombing campaign in exchange for a promise from the Serbs to withdraw their heavy artillery 12.5 miles from Sarajevo. Under the terms of this agreement Sarajevo remains under siege, and the Serbs surrounding it are allowed to hold onto their lighter weapons, which have killed thousands there over the past three years. Many Sarajevans wondered what the bombing campaign was all about if this was its only result.

Milosevic's formula for calling off air strikes in exchange for withdrawing Serb heavy artillery from the area of Sarajevo came just in the nick of time so far as U.S. and NATO were concerned, since Russia had threatened days before to cancel any future cooperation with NATO because of its fierce opposition to air strikes.

The intense negotiations that took place behind the scenes as the bombs fell reveals the real reason for the air strikes. The U.S. clearly wanted to exert pressure on the Serbs to ensure that they would come to the negotiating table on U.S. terms. Yet the bombing was directed, not just at the Serbs, but most of all at the Bosnians. The bombing campaign helped cover over the real nature of the U.S. "peace" plan, since it made it appear the U.S. had intervened in the interests of Bosnia even though it favors its partition. At the same time, the bombing campaign placed great pressure on the Bosnian government to agree to the plan, even though it was at first highly critical of it. Having endorsed the air strikes, the Bosnian government found itself boxed into a corner when the U.S. insisted it sign onto the plan.

BETWEEN CROATIA AND SERBIA

This process has led to the present negotiations over the U.S. plan, which for the first time openly allows Bosnia to be divided between a "Croat-Muslim" federation (with 51% of the land) and a Bosnian "Serb Republic" (with 49%) which "shall have the right to establish parallel special relationships with neighboring countries," namely Serbia.

This is not the first time the Western powers have proposed partitioning Bosnia. From the Lisbon Conference of the European Community in March 1992 to the Vance-Owen plan, the Owen-Stoltenberg plan and the "Contact Group" plan of 1994, the Western powers and Russia have consistently favored dividing Bosnia into distinct ethnic units. Yet the present U.S. plan is regressive even when compared with these earlier ones, since it does not explicitly provide for a central Bosnian authority that can overrule attempts at secession by Croats or Serbs.

Moreover, the Bosnians actually end up with much less than even the 51% of the country outlined in the plan, since this is to be shared with Croatia as part of a "Croat-Muslim Confederation." Yet the Croatian rulers have their own ambitions in Bosnia, which does not include preserving a multiethnic society.

From the very inception of the war, Croatia's Franjo Tudjman has sought to achieve hegemony in western Bosnia with the aim of eventually incorporating it into a "Greater Croatia." The rapid Croatian military advances in Krajina and western Bosnia, which now give Croatia

control of 30% of Bosnia, have brought this closer to fruition. The Croatian forces have shown no inclination to integrate the lands they have seized from the Bosnian Serbs with the central Bosnian government.

Tudjman let the cat out of the bag at a state dinner in London in May, when he responded to a question about what Bosnia would look like in ten years by drawing a map on the back of a menu showing Bosnia divided in half between Croatia and Serbia. Although he expresses visceral hatred of "Muslims," he reserves his most vile rancor for the "Bosniak" notion of a multiethnic society embracing Serbs, Croats and Muslims. In this, he is at one with his supposed arch-enemy who was the architect of genocide in Bosnia—Serbia's Slobodan Milosevic. Indeed, at the state dinner in London this former Communist apparatchnik who has been "reborn" as a narrow nationalist referred to Milosevic as "one of us."



Milosevic, meanwhile, is being hailed by U.S. envoy Holbrooke as "the key to peace in the Balkans" because of his strong endorsement of the U.S. "peace" plan. Milosevic is anxious to get the parties to agree to the U.S. plan because it provides him with an opportunity to get economic sanctions lifted against Serbia without risking his dream of a "Greater Serbia."

Despite the recent efforts to recast Milosevic as a born-again "man of peace," he is as determined to hold onto Serb-held territories in Bosnia as Tudjman is to hold onto Croat-held territories. At the very moment he was being embraced by the U.S. State Department, Milosevic dispatched one of the most bloodthirsty killers in the entire history of the genocidal war against Bosnia, Zeljko Raznatovic (aka Arkan), to defend the Serb-controlled town of Banja Luka.

When all the empty talk of "peace" is wiped away, the ongoing efforts of the "great powers" to intervene in Bosnia represent an attempt to return us to the situation of 1939, when Croatia and Serbia divided Bosnia between them at the outset of World War II.

WHITHER BOSNIA?

Though the Serbian extremists opposed to the very idea of a multiethnic society hailed the Sept. 8 U.S.-imposed "peace" plan—as seen in the headline in the Belgrade weekly *Politika* entitled, "Republika Srpska is Internationally Recognized"—the reaction inside Bosnia has been far different.

Many in Sarajevo treated the news of the Sept. 8 accord as a "day of sorrow." As Mimo Sahinbasic, host of a radio show for Studio 99 in Sarajevo, put it, "We fought and died for the idea of a unified Bosnia and now our government has just left us to hang. I feel betrayed." Others reported that the consensus on the street is that "the agreement is cynical, unfair, and American-imposed." As one report put it, "News of the agreement has evoked disappointment and resentment among Bosnian citizens in government-held territory. Many see the elements of this agreement—and particularly the apparent recognition of the territory conquered by the Bosnian Serb forces as a legitimate political entity—as an abandonment by Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic of the unified, multiethnic Bosnia that they had fought to preserve throughout more than three years of war."¹

The situation in Bosnia today remains most unstable, and any number of factors can upset the efforts of the "great powers" to impose an unjust "peace" on the country. Foremost among these are the recent military advances of the Bosnian and Croat forces, which have liberated close to 20% of Bosnian territory from Chetnik control in the past several weeks. Every inch of land liberated by Bosnia will make it harder to impose an apartheid solution upon the country—which is why the U.S. has been so insistent that the Bosnians halt their military advances against the Serbs now that "peace negotiations" are under way.

No less important, however, is what we do here at home to oppose any efforts of our rulers to force partition down the throats of the victims of "ethnic cleansing." We must continue to demand the lifting of the arms embargo so that Bosnia can defend itself; we must

continue to assist Bosnia in its effort to effect its own self-liberation; and we must oppose any attempt on the part of the U.S., whether with or without armed force, to impose an apartheid-type "solution" upon Bosnia—especially when, as currently envisioned, it is to be policed by some 25,000 U.S. troops.

BOSNIA IN THE HISTORIC MIRROR

Though there are many lessons that can be learned from the crisis in Bosnia, three especially stand out in light of the recent events.

1) Today's events prove the emptiness of taking the question of whether one supports or does not support U.S. military intervention as the ground of discussion on Bosnia. The question of U.S. military intervention has proved to be the distorting lens of the Bosnian conflict, especially for the Left. Some who are sympathetic to Bosnia's cause have argued that the events there show we should reconsider the Left's traditional opposition to U.S. military intervention overseas, while others who are opposed in principle to any form of U.S. intervention have downplayed the importance of assisting Bosnia.

If the events of the past year prove anything, it is that the very assumptions upon which both positions rest are nonviable. The truth is that the Western powers, the U.S. included, have been united on one thing: opposition to any serious effort to defend or extend Bosnia's multiethnic heritage, precisely because that multiethnic heritage stands in such sharp contrast to the racist, narrow nationalist politics upon which each of these state powers is based.

This is why the West proved so slow to respond to the crisis in Bosnia, treating genocide against an entire people as a matter of little or no concern. This studied indifference to the plight of Bosnia did not change when the West suddenly decided to take military action. Whether passivity or military intervention is the order of the day, the results are the same—imposing partition and ethnic apartheid—because these are the "principles" upon which today's exploitative societies are based.

2) The events in Bosnia show that the notion that "all three sides are equally to blame"—as if the Bosnian struggle is as deplorable as Serb or Croat narrow nationalism—plays directly into the hands of the imperialist powers. The whole thrust of the West's efforts to impose an apartheid-type solution upon Bosnia rests on the argument that the "nationalism" of the three peoples is all equally deplorable. It does not matter whether that argument is made by a rightist Republican or whether it is made by a Trotskyist, "independent socialist" or anarchist. In each case, to dismiss the Bosnian struggle as one more form of narrow nationalism instead of grasping the liberatory dimension inherent in its struggle for multiethnicity leads one to embrace the stance of the ruling powers which conspire with genocide.²

3) The great difficulties in maintaining the underlying vision of multiculturalism, which so represented the original spark and incentive of the Bosnian struggle, must also be confronted. As Bosnian President Izetbegovic himself stated in an article dated Sept. 16 entitled "The Bitter Taste of Peace," "Despite Bosnian Army success, Bosnia, as a multinational community, is today further away from itself than it was a year ago." This is not only due to the external pressures applied by Serbian and Croatian "ethnic cleansing." It is also due to such internal factors as the rise of forces seeking to redress the wrongs done to Bosnia's Muslims by withdrawing into an exclusive "Muslim" identity. This tendency toward Muslim exclusivism will doubtless be strengthened by current efforts to partition the country.

This does not mean, however, that the struggle for multiethnicity in Bosnia is some mirage invented by idealist observers. Despite growing pressures for ethnic separatism, a great many in Bosnia, especially in areas like Mostar, Tuzla and Sarajevo, continue to passionately defend the vision of a multiethnic society; indeed, Bosnia contains some 150,000 "forgotten Serbs" who oppose Milosevic and remain loyal to a multiethnic Bosnia. Today's events rather suggest that the idea as well as reality of a multiethnic society cannot be truly realized within the structures of existing capitalism.

This is reflected in Izetbegovic's own backward steps, expressed in his response to those critical of his signing onto the U.S. "peace" plan. In his Sept. 16 article, Izetbegovic writes, "The world is as it is, we cannot change it. The thing we can do is to get to know it and not lose our eyes before the facts."

Surely the world "as it is" does not support the idea of freedom, let alone the dimension of a multiethnic society which is central to it. That is precisely why we must go beyond the world "as it is" and envision a different one in which the idea of multiethnicity can be realized. The tragedy of the present moment is that just when the projection of a vision of liberation opposed to all exploitative state powers is so needed in order to capture and concretize the idea of freedom implicit in the struggle for a multiethnic society, a gaping void confronts us in the effort to connect a philosophy of liberation with revolutionary transformation.

This, however, only further underlines the fact that projecting and developing a vision of what the world could be as a prelude to its actual transformation is where the ongoing solidarity with Bosnia must begin.

Sept. 29, 1995

1. This statement from the American Committee to Save Bosnia can be found on the BosNet of Sept. 15, 1995 (Bit. Listserv. Bosnet). In light of the reservations this group has expressed about the U.S. "peace" plan, it is rather remarkable to see it continue to call for U.S. air strikes—as if military policy can be separated from political content.

2. One of the most strident examples of this is the International Socialist Organization, whose Socialist Worker competes with the State Department and Kremlin in spewing invective against "Bosnian nationalism." It is a sad day when the "Left" cannot muster the "insight" to actively oppose genocide.

Youth

'Anarchism: Left, Right, Green'

by Maya Jhansi

I recently ran across a new book called *Anarchism: Left, Right, and Green* (1994) by Ulrike Heider. Since all the hoopla about the militias and the Unabomber has made the issue of anarchism such a pressing one, I was immediately interested in a book that took up both left and right-wing anarchism.

What makes Heider so compelling is her unflinching and critical method. Rejecting what she calls the "typical oversensitivity of anarchists to any critique and to an exaggerated tolerance towards right-wing anarchists," she calls for a critical engagement with anarchism much like Marx's in *The German Ideology* or like the Frankfurt School's emphasis on permanent critique.

Heider begins by situating her book within the context of the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe. Because anarchism has historically been an alternative to both Communism and free-market capitalism, she says, it is logical that anarchism "is making a comeback." However, because the broadest definition of anarchism is "a stateless society of any kind," it has included a wide and often contradictory range within its rubric—from radical ecologists, to neopagans to labor-oriented anarchists.

Much of the book is a historical overview of the main anarchist thinkers—from Bankunin and Kropotkin to Noam Chomsky, Murray Bookchin and a host of right-wing anarcho-capitalists. However, far from just presenting "the facts," Heider isolates what she sees as the

Alternative schools—not!

Chicago—When Mayor Richard Daley took control of the public schools last fall by eliminating the elected school board and hand-picking a new one, he got some nods of approval from some progressive educators for his proposal to create small "alternative schools."

Daley's so-called "alternative schools" actually are maximum security schools where they will dump youth whom the system deems to be "severe disciplinary problems." Daley is also pushing a state law that would cut as much as \$60 from a \$300 monthly welfare check from parents of students who are ruled to be chronic truants.

Daley is carrying out his purely authoritarian measures with a demagogic appeal to people who are suffering from the very real problems of violence and low motivation in a failing education system. First, by calling his new disciplinary schools "alternative schools" he is appropriating the language of the Left and the alternative schools movement that arose with the social movements of the late '60s and early '70s. He is, at the same time, tapping into the anti-welfare hysteria.

His plan to cut the welfare of parents of truant students holds a threat over the heads of the most disadvantaged students that does not apply to students whose parents are not dependent on welfare. It also forces teachers and school clerks who are required to keep an accurate record of unexcused absences to be agents of the welfare system who potentially could destroy a family's sole means of support.

Moreover, Daley chose to announce his new discipline plan at Farragut High School to exploit the past inter-ethnic conflict between Black and Latino youth at that school in order to legitimate his authoritarianism. Two years ago Farragut was the site of a couple of well-publicized race riots, after the rivalry between a Black gang and a Latino gang erupted into a brawl at a school assembly. Since then Farragut has gotten a new principal who has instituted dress codes and strict rules that Daley is holding up as a model.

—Jim Guthrie

Japan anti-nuke solidarity

Tokyo—Fifty years after the bombing of Hiroshima, the thirty-third International Anti-War Assembly was held on Aug. 6. Around 1,600 workers, students and citizens, rallied at the Japan Education Hall in Tokyo.

A video titled "Nuclear Testing Resumed by China and France" preceded the assembly. At President Chirac's claim, "France has right to implement several hundred more nuclear tests," anger rose in the audience.

Comrade Ashihara revealed how a new nuclear testing competition has started among the five nuclear powers with the resumption of the Chinese/French nuclear testing. "At the root of their rush to compete there exists the grave antagonisms of the superpowers, each showing its own bare state egoism," he said.

A special call was made by another member to send a delegation to Tahiti to oppose the nuclear testing in solidarity with the people of French Polynesia.

On Aug. 27 our delegation of ten members of the Japan National Federation of Students' Self-Government Associations (Zengakuren), the Anti-War Youth Committee, and of the Japan Revolutionary Communist League (Revolutionary Marxist Faction) arrived in Tahiti.

They put up a tent near the Peace Village and held demonstrations at the House of Parliament, the Presidential Office, the French Military Guard, and the official residence of the High Commissioner. They hoisted ten-meter-long banners with slogans such as "Against French and Chinese Nuclear Testing."

Together with the men, women and children of the island they yelled slogans, joined the sit-in demonstrations in the streets of Papeete held by the FLP, and participated in the around-the-island march on Sept. 1 and 2.

As Japanese Finance Minister M. Takemura approached them, they leveled criticisms at the deceptive policy of the Japanese government under the nuclear umbrella of the United States.

—International Anti-War Assemblies in Japan

two opposing tendencies of anarchism, its "Janus face"—with one face pointing toward a stateless democratic socialism and the other toward the brutal chaos of "the war of each against all" in the unfettered free market. What we need to recuperate, she argues, is the radical and labor-oriented politics of the anarcho-syndicalist movement.

Heider critiques what she sees as a shift in today's anarchist tendencies from the "urban anarcho-syndicalism" of Bakunin to the "rural communalism and eco-anarchism" of Kropotkin. The chapter on Murray Bookchin, the most in-depth of the whole book, traces Bookchin's "pan-harmonious humanism turning into its opposite," and critiques Bookchin's abandonment of the proletariat as a Subject of revolution.

Heider exposes Bookchin's growing conservative naturalism and his glorification of the past and "traditional, moral values." Though Heider recognizes the importance of Bookchin's critiques of ecological fascism, she argues that his own thinking has paved the way for the conservative ecologism today. As she put it: "Like Pandora, [Bookchin] will not be able to recall the spirits he has set loose."

The second half of the book is an exploration of anarcho-capitalist tendencies and their relationship to Max Stirner's ideas of individualism. Stirner, who Marx called "Saint Max," was a member of the young Hegelians and his book, *The Ego and its Own*, first published in 1844, not only declared the State inimical to individualism but also declared any concept of "humanity" an abstraction. For Stirner, society was to be replaced by a "Union of Egoists," and the question of property to be settled by "the war of all against all."

Heider associates Stirner's ideas with a number of libertarian ideologies which want to abolish all responsibility to society in the name of individual freedom. Heider takes up conservative ideologues like Ayn Rand and Murray Rothbard as well as other libertarian organizations, many of which she shows have sympathies with Nazism—their only critique being that Hitler betrayed the original brownshirt movement.

Ultimately, she argues, it isn't simply individualism versus social-revolutionism that can distinguish between two kinds of anarchism. Both have contradictions which make it hard to draw such lines. She writes: "Far from lumping together leftist and rightist anarchists, I hope to have shown how crucial seemingly small ideological shifts can become, as soon as the left relaxes its opposition to capitalism and becomes less vigilant in its defense of egalitarianism."

The need to be more "vigilant" of ideological shifts has never seemed more pressing. Listening to the anti-bureaucracy rhetoric of the militias, it is hard to see what distinguishes today's left anarchism from their right-wing counterparts. While the book is useful in helping put the militias and the Unabomber in historical perspective, it also brings to light the difficulties that anarchism faces in trying to hold tight to a vision of "a stateless democratic socialism." In the end, the "Janus face" of anarchism seems essentially unresolved and the question remains: how do you hold revolutionary ground in an age when "seemingly small ideological shifts" can throw you into the stinking pit of fascism?

No 'stay' in struggle to free Mumia Abu-Jamal

Editor's note: On Sept. 15, Judge Sabo denied Mumia Abu-Jamal the right to a new trial. This brings new urgency to the battle to free Mumia and calls on all of us to continue and deepen our activities.

Philadelphia—Some 5,000 people demonstrated on Aug. 12 in a national protest to save Mumia Abu-Jamal from execution. The marchers demanded not only that he be allowed to live and receive a new trial, but that he be exonerated and freed from prison. The motion for a new trial has since been denied. It will now go through appeals.

The spirited demonstration came a few days after his execution, scheduled for Aug. 17, was temporarily stayed by the judge hearing arguments for a new trial—the same judge who presided over his railroading to conviction. Fast-growing national and international movements to save his life had made it too embarrassing for the state to kill him.

The demonstrators marched through downtown Philadelphia calling for Mumia's freedom. Most were from Philadelphia and New York, but people came from all over the country, Canada, and Europe.

A Black man from Philadelphia questioned why the Black churches have not come out for Mumia. He answered his own question by likening the situation in the U.S. today to Nazi Germany. In a paraphrase of a famous quote he said, "First they came for the Jews but I wasn't Jewish so I didn't protest. Then they came for the gays but I wasn't gay so I didn't protest. Then they came for the socialists. Then they came for me, and there was no one left to protest."

In contrast to the diversity of the crowd, the speakers were mostly local politicians, prominent Black nationalists, and the Workers World Party. The latter controlled the demonstration, and as it usually does, prevented much discussion by others.

We would have liked to hear some discussion of the fact that capital punishment had been abolished here, but was brought back in the recent ascendancy of the most reactionary "solutions" to the country's social ills. There are currently some 3,000 people on death row, many of whom, like Abu-Jamal, have strong claims for entitlement to new trials.

—Participants

New Korea protests



South Korean students battle riot police in Seoul on Sept. 28. The cops attacked the 300 student marchers with tear gas when they attempted to march on the homes of former Presidents Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo. The protesters were demanding that Chun and Roh be punished for the murder of 200 civilians during the pro-democracy Kwangju uprising of 1980.

Youth in Revolt

by Kevin Michaels

A march of one thousand demonstrators took place in Miami on July 25 to decry the killing of 17-year-old Torrey Jacobs by police exactly one week earlier. Jacobs was shot in a Coconut Grove parking lot by officer Chris Griffin. The cop says that Jacobs, who was Black, pulled a weapon on him, but only a cigarette lighter was found at the scene.

* * *

Black youth threw rocks and bottles at police on July 26 and 27 in Indianapolis after the savage beating of 21-year-old Danny Sales in the course of an arrest. The response of Mayor Steve Goldsmith was to dispatch a force of riot police to cordon off the predominantly Black neighborhood surrounding the intersection of 38th and College, the area where the unrest occurred, for several days.

* * *

Young residents of the Los Angeles neighborhood of Lincoln Heights took to the streets to confront police for two nights following the fatal July 29 shooting of 14-year-old Jose Antonio Guitierrez by an LAPD officer. The weapon the police claimed the youth was reaching for turned out to be a flashlight. The officer involved, Michael Falvo, has a history of brutal conduct.

* * *

Riot police forced angry residents of San Francisco's Ingelside neighborhood off the streets following the killing of William Hankston, a 28-year-old Black man in early September. Hankston, who was unarmed, was shot at close range. Neighborhood residents have since been organizing to demand that the officer responsible be charged with murder.

many of whom, like Abu-Jamal, have strong claims for entitlement to new trials.

—Participants

Chicago—The day Mumia Abu-Jamal was "granted" a stay of execution due to national and international protest, Black and white actors in the Chicago area held a "Multi-Media Event" that brought out about 100 people.

The event began with an introduction by Tonya, a Black actor who said that "Mumia's clear vision" of the human need "not for stuff," and "what we have," but for "what we are—to be free," is something "I didn't think would effect change—that your ideas could do things. But they do. That's what they're killing Mumia for."

She counterposed this to what Mumia, in his book *Live From Death Row*, discusses as the "power of illusion" and "false imagination," especially the right wing's effort to instill the notion that "the 1960s had taken care of social justice once and for all."

Following this was a video on the beating of Rodney King and over ten poems and skits. Some of the performances were taken from the actual text of Jamal's book: one characterized the present generation as "the children of the Los Angeles rebellion" and of that act "as a harbinger of things to come"; another portrayed the racist and total dehumanization of life in prison and on death row and the struggle there to feel human, while another was on Mumia's arrest, showing powerfully the contrast between police brutality and the humanity of the victim.

There were feminist skits and poems as well as poems on South Africa, U.S. slavery, and deadly immigration from the Dominican Republic to the U.S. There was also a performance by high school students about the city invading and tearing down communities under the guise of the "war on drugs," where the city eventually "compensates" the residents only after strong protests.

This event should be performed all over the city as a way to keep the movement around freeing Mumia going and broadly focused. It brought out the depth to which the movement to free Mumia is about and showed that our struggle for Mumia is for ourselves.

—Sonia Bergonzi

Government 'cut' but workers bleed

Chicago—On the 29th floor of the federal building where the government's personnel office used to be, all that remains today is a robot. Get close enough and you can hear it say, to no one and everyone at once, "Welcome to the automated job information service." Until this week, live human beings worked in that office.

For two and a half years Clinton and Gore have been "reinventing" the government. That means only one thing—eliminating jobs, 272,000 of them, and all of this even before the Republican landslide last November. Our federal employee unions, having learned not one damn thing from either the PATCO debacle or the NAFTA fiasco, have kept quiet during this onslaught while embracing their class collaborationist role as "partners" in running the government. Now when a so-called "train wreck" between Congress and the White House threatens to shut the whole government down, the job cuts being forced down our throats by the Republicans make the Clinton-Gore plans look like child's play.

These cuts are not about reducing the deficit. While agencies like the Environmental Protection Agency are preparing for huge layoffs, the Immigration and Naturalization Service is hiring so many new immigration agents—5,000 nationwide—you'd think they were preparing for another Gulf War! And lest anyone think beefing up "la migrá" has anything to do with keeping "illegals" from taking "our" jobs, just remember that the INS knew about that slave labor camp in El Monte, Cal., for three whole years without doing a damn thing about it. As soon as the Labor Department shut it down, Congress slashed funding for the Labor Department!

You only need to look at some of the cuts already ap-

S.F. march for health care

San Francisco—Over 10,000 health care workers and concerned health advocates marched across the Golden Gate Bridge, Aug. 20. They were protesting runaway profit-gouging that is driving the restructuring throughout the health care industry. As one nurse put it, "To them managed health care means only managing money." On its own Service Employees Union Local 250—composed primarily of nurses aides, LVNs, housekeepers, technicians and clericals—initiated the march. However it drew tremendous support from registered nurses, not just from California but from many states and even Canada.



News & Letters

Jesse Jackson, Ralph Nader, and various labor leaders spoke. An immigrant advocate exclaimed, "Health care is a human right," but he added it is "Also a moral right." "It is shameful that this state was allowed to pass Proposition 187. Those who we entrust our children to don't have health care for their own children." He cited cases of children dying because their parents feared enforcement of Prop. 187, that is, being reported as "illegal."

There were huge murals, one called the "Wall of Heroes" with moving depictions of patient suffering and death by "managed care," individual heroes giving real care in the midst of daily deteriorating conditions. The "Wall of Greed" exposed the disappearance of the American health care dollar into the pockets of health czars. Leonard Abramson, president of U.S. Healthcare, was dubbed the "King of Greed." He netted \$805 million in salary and stock options. The combined income of the top ten CEOs in the industry exceeds the total AIDS budget.

The "Wall of Shame" described "unsafe havens," listing all the abuses at Hillhaven, a huge corporate nursing home chain. HMO profit centers created a new category, "sub-acute care," in order to kick patients out of hospital beds and dump them in nursing homes. A 25-year veteran nurse's aide at Hillhaven said, "I've seen a lot of turnover, mostly of the young in this profession. They come and get certified, but then they begin to see the work is too hard, the wages too low, and no respect for the work. They have managers on top of managers. In some respects, we're treated like slaves. Like masters, all these managers never lift a finger."—Health care worker

Gays protest bashing

Chicago—On Sept. 28, over 100 people rallied and marched through the streets of the Lakeview neighborhood, protesting the violence that gay men, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered people face. The march and rally focused on many issues: queer bashing, discrimination, domestic violence, racist violence, sexist violence and police misconduct. Time was even given to the Mumia Abu-Jamal cause.

The march especially opened my eyes to the issue of domestic violence in the queer community. Because of the alienating society's homophobia, many people feel trapped in abusive relationships when their partner can say to them, "If you leave me, I'll tell your boss or your ex-wife that you're gay, and then you'll lose your job or never see your kids again."

The march was affirming for those of us there because we collectively vowed to never again be silent victims! But getting our brothers and sisters "Out of the bars and into the streets!" is still a problem that must be addressed if we are ever to have real freedom!

—Tom Williamson

proved by the House for the Department of Labor to see what this is really all about:

- one-third less money to retrain workers who've lost their jobs due to NAFTA, and not one nickel to create summer jobs for youth;

- one-third less money for Occupational Safety and Health Administration enforcement, which translates into laying off 500 of their 2,000 inspectors. This cut was spearheaded by Rep. Ballinger from North Carolina—where all those Black women workers locked in an Imperial Foods Poultry factory were killed by a fire three years ago.

- twelve percent less funding for Wage and Hour investigators. These are the people who enforce child labor laws, overtime pay, and the minimum wage as well as tracking down sweatshops in the garment industry—most recently including those 72 Thai workers in El Monte.

I just wonder if that robot has a family, or votes, or pays union dues.

—Jan Kollwitz

Starvation welfare

Oakland — As of Oct. 1, about 11,000 Alameda County welfare recipients will see their general assistance payments cut by about 30%, from \$300 to \$221 a month—the lowest among the Bay Area's urban counties, much lower than San Francisco's \$345 and Santa Clara's \$300.

Designed to save the county \$9 million this fiscal year, the cuts are being criticized by neighboring jurisdictions in fear of sparking a migration of poor people. Many welfare recipients at Lafayette Square in downtown Oakland, where homeless people gather, said moving across the bay seemed like the best solution in light of their county's cuts. San Francisco's Department of Social Service said since the program is state-mandated but entirely county-funded, this may force the county to lower its grant.

Many people at the welfare lines in Oakland were eager to tell their stories. One single mother with a child explained that she has been on AFDC for one year, had recently graduated from high school and is trying to find a job. "I can't even survive at \$490 a month," she said. "Are they expecting people to go homeless? I got pregnant early and my mom didn't want to support me. If you're young and can't take care of a child, I think abortion should be an option."

Another woman said she just moved her family from Santa Fe, N.M., to the Bay Area because she thought it would be easier to survive. "They just told me in there that I couldn't receive assistance because I quit my job back in Santa Fe. They told me it would be different if I was laid off." She asked, "What does that mean? It's like I don't have a choice where to live. I have to stay where my job tells me? They tell me I can reapply in three months. Well, I told them I'll be dead in three months."

— Sharon Cannery

VOICES FROM WITHIN THE PRISON WALLS

by D.A. Sheldon

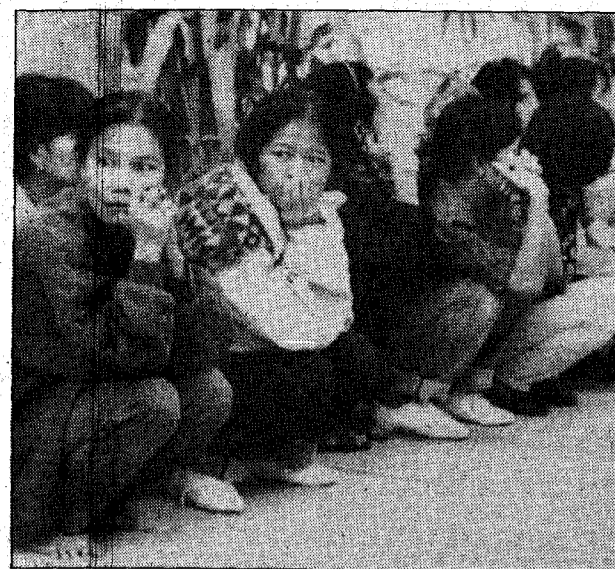
Throughout my incarceration in this dungeon of misery, one of the predominant atrocities inflicted on me and fellow prisoners is the psychological games prisonrats and their lackeys utilize in harassment and restraint of the prison population. These games are a major part of the ruling-class scheme in oppressing those whom they fear and want to control: the proletariat.

The severity which a prisoner may endure depends upon the level of rebellious attitude s/he has towards the system, though every prisoner gets a share of this treatment without exemption. These mental games include threats of bodily harm against the prisoner, their family or their visitors; the passing of false rumors to enforce paranoia and alienation between prisoners; and the constant threat of a disciplinary report even when the prisoner has not violated any institutional rules. These three are especially used to discourage even the smallest thought of rebellion.

Other techniques include verbal harassment containing derogatory or racial statements, the censoring of personal and legal mail, and slamming of heavy metal doors and food slots to repeatedly remind an individual of their locked environment. Additionally other nerve-racking noises are used throughout the day to disrupt a normal sleeping schedule. The serving of cold and tasteless, sometimes vermin-infested food, denial of hygienic supplies and showers thus degrading the prisoner's overall appearance—the list of atrocities is endless.

Now for those prisoners confined to a small cell 24 hours a day and in some cases years at a time, the psychological effect is much more profound on the sanity of that individual. Eventually emotions such as hopelessness, boredom, paranoia, anger, anxiety, loneliness, depression and restlessness become a part of the prisoner's world, and because there is no release valve within a prison society feelings can accumulate to such an extreme that the "victim" is psychologically damaged for his or her natural life.

Once prisoners are released back into society their mental disorder plays a substantial part in whether the individual will commit a crime of greater severity, usually involving violence, giving the current bureaucracy an excuse to build more prisons and control more of society.



Some of the 70 Thai workers who toiled behind razor-wired walls confined to a squalid garment factory in El Monte, Cal. under pain of beatings and threats to family members. A raid Aug. 2 by U.S. immigration officials shut the compound down.

Editorial

(continued from page 1)

tional, rather than an exclusively southern regional phenomenon. Similar programs in Wisconsin and California include provisions even more vicious than those in the South.

While driving down the costs of labor has always been an objective of capitalists around the globe, the urgency with which U.S. government and corporate leaders today are using extraordinary means to drive down the real wages of the American workers stems not only from the general problem of "global competitiveness" in an era of falling rates of profit, but from the continuing resistance to poverty wages being put up by the poorest layers of the American working class, Black workers especially.

Nearly 10 years ago, *News & Letters* pointed to the "unresolved variable" in the Black youth unemployment crisis—"the resistance of Black youth," their refusal to accept or stay in minimum-wage, dead-end jobs, even while suffering long-term unemployment. "Such aspirations," we said, "show to what extent Black youth actually reject the subservient caste structure imposed on them." ("Black Youth Unemployment Crisis," *N&L*, October 1986).

By the mid-1990s, high-tech capitalism's intensified hunger for a plentiful supply of the minimum-wage sweated labor upon which it rests, is what is forcing it to strip away many of the social guarantees with which it attempted to hold off class upheaval during the Depression. The poor as a whole—and not only the recalcitrant ghetto youth—must be forced into poverty-wage jobs.

At the same time, other measures are being taken to reinforce this coercive program: 1) legislation now before Congress will gut Medicaid, the only medical insurance for 37 million poor Americans—including those on welfare—now have; 2) massive cuts have already been ordered by Congress in programs that provide legal aid for the poor, at a moment when the coming changes in welfare, immigration and civil rights laws are sure to increase demand for their services; and 3) the rate of imprisonment and new prison construction continues to skyrocket, with disproportionate numbers of poor and minorities among the inmates. In 1948 the prison population of the entire U.S. was 155,000. In 1995, Texas alone has more than 155,000 prisoners.

IDEOLOGICAL WAR ON THE POOR

In his *Grundrisse*, Karl Marx described the England of 500 years ago, when governments carried out the most cruel measures to provide capitalism with its first labor force. "History records the fact," he wrote, "that [the toiler] first tried beggary, vagabondage and crime, but was herded off this road on the narrow path which led to the labor market by means of gallows, pillory and whip. Hence the governments of Henry VII, VIII, etc., also appear as conditions for the existence of capital."

What separates that era of government intervention from the present state-capitalist one is the all-embracing unity of economics, politics and ideology which characterizes capitalism's attempts to maintain its class rule in the face of continuing crisis. The ideological elements of the War on the Poor loom especially large in this more retrogressive era. How else can the rulers explain why the standard of living of American workers has plunged over 20% in the last two decades, and continues to drop while the gap between rich and poor grows ever larger? Since the fault cannot possibly be with the capitalist system and its need to constantly drive down the cost of labor in an attempt to maintain its rate of profit, the "enemy" must lie elsewhere.

Thus the ideological component of the War on the Poor becomes crucial. The soul of American capitalism in time of crisis has always been racism; in the 1990s the ideological attack seeks to demonize Black men and disparage women on welfare, to shut out immigrants and ridicule youth. All efforts are aimed at deluding at least a segment of the American working class—a predominantly, though not exclusively white segment—in thinking that their interests lie with the rulers in the War on the Poor. To fight this delusion, to "speak truth to power" at such a bleak moment in our history, requires not only activism, but philosophic clarity. It is this clarity that we need more than ever today.

Sierra Leone: the struggle for power

by Ba Karang

The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) claims to be on the eve of taking over the capital city of Freetown, Sierra Leone. The military junta of Captain Strasse seems to be already weakened by the victories that the rebel forces have been registering. The junta had been pending more than any previous government of Sierra Leone on military equipment and mercenaries to put an end to the rebel offensive. Last December the military junta bought a Russian made helicopter gunship for \$4.8 million. And on May 20 they hired 100 mercenaries through a South African based company.

The good relationship between the RUF and the Charles Taylor rebel forces in Liberia became a rallying point for other West African countries (with Ghana as the driving force) to send military forces to fight alongside the military junta of Captain Strasse. Even Nigeria, which has conflicts with Ghana over Liberia, is sending military forces to the military junta.

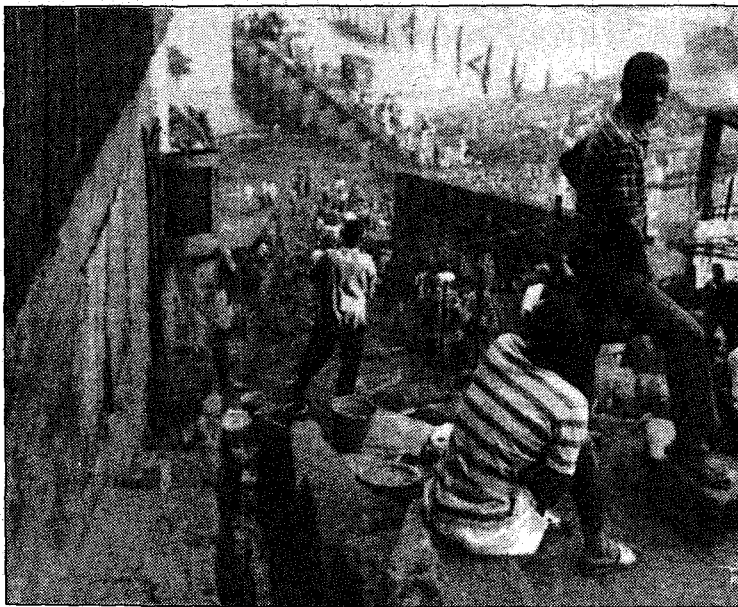
This is a sign that the military alliances and conflicts among West African countries is taking a new direction. The two main forces, Nigeria and Ghana, both of whom have been struggling for political hegemony in the region, seem to be getting closer to each other.

The advancement of the rebel forces in Sierra Leone seems to indicate that they are not depending on any rear-guard support. The rebel forces are depending more on their own resources than on Charles Taylor.

The ideological standpoint of the RUF seems to be very confusing. Despite the fact that the RUF leader today Sonko claim that the military junta is not politically conscious enough to bring about democracy in Sierra Leone, one has to wonder about his own political consciousness. He has stated very clearly that he does not believe in classes. This will not give the struggle the revolutionary dimension that it needs. And many in the Sierra Leonean Left are labeling the RUF as nothing but a bandit organization.

The fact that RUF forces have been so near Freetown indicates that they are operating with mass support. Particularly since they are fighting against such sophisticated armies as those of Nigeria and Ghana.

It is not accidental that the RUF is enjoying mass support. The poverty in Sierra Leone is fertile ground for rebel forces. The economic conditions have worsened with



Freetown ghetto shows ravages of neocolonialism and ongoing war.

the structural adjustment program implemented in 1994 by the IMF. Some 66% of the population of Sierra Leone live in poverty. Between 1990 and 1993 about 30,000 workers were made redundant as part of IMF sponsored adjustments.

But will this mean a fundamental change in the life of the people of Sierra Leone for the better, with rebel victory? The raw experience of the African masses when it comes to hijacked revolutionary victories must be remembered.

The brutal economic realities are not going unchallenged. According to the Pan-Africanist magazine, *African World Review*, the Sierra Leone Labour Congress succeeded in forcing the military junta to accept a "Social Action for Poverty Alleviation" program. And they called for more drastic improvements in the economic life of the working class. But calling for reforms as opposed to a revolution will not answer the question of poverty in Sierra Leone.

That the Left has not been a countering force in this political crisis reflects the general situation of the African Left. What will become of the Left forces in Sierra Leone with a rebel victory is yet to become clear.

Pan-Africanism and the British 'Left'

by James D. Young

In October 1945 the Fifth Pan-African Congress took place in the English city of Manchester. An event of major significance in British and international politics, it marked the advent of a major anti-imperialist force in the world. Committed to the struggle to get rid of Western, and especially British imperialism, it also devoted inordinate attention to racism in Britain and the British Empire.

Writing in the *New Leader*, organ of the Independent Labour Party (ILP) in June 1945, the English socialist writer, Frank A. Ridley asserted that "The Pan-African Federation, an institution of much greater historical significance than the United Nations Organization, has an invaluable role to play in Africa itself and in Britain." The standpoint of the Pan-African movement was well-known to readers of the ILP through George Padmore's writings in the *New Leader* in the 1930s and 1940s.

C.L.R. James was another major figure who played a key role in developing Pan-African ideas in the British labour movement before he left London for New York in 1938. What distinguished the Pan-African Congress of October 1945 from its predecessors was (1) its "plebeian character" and (2) its militant determination to throw the imperialists out of Africa and the Empire. But this historic Congress did not develop in a vacuum: it was the outcome of black and white Britons' struggles against the "colour bar" in English hotels, restaurants and dance halls, racism and imperialist barbarity.

From the 1880s until the Bolshevik revolution the British socialist movement was permeated with racism and English ethnic nationalism from top to bottom. Opposing the agitations of Jim Connell, the author of "The Red Flag", James Connolly and others inside the nominally Marxist Social Democratic Federation, H.M. Hyndman and Ernest Belfort Bax refused to publish Connell's pamphlet "Brothers At Last: An Appeal to Celt and Saxon" to intensify the struggle for Irish independence and the break-up of the British Empire. But Connell's pamphlet was published in Glasgow by the ILP in 1898.

The English labour movement was always characterised by its sympathetic attachment to such imperialist ideas as "England for the English" a la Robert Blatchford and dismissal of Black Britons. This "socialist culture" of Brits like Hyndman and James Ramsay MacDonald was not eradicated by either the Easter Rising in Dublin or the Bolshevik revolution. Furthermore, despite the presence of an anti-imperialist tendency in the ILP, English leftists like Norman Leys, who were nominally anti-imperialist, asserted that "it is so difficult to explain to people who have never lived in Africa how dreadfully ignorant Africans are and what a disabling thing barbarism is."

Inheriting a rotten imperialist tradition, the English Left annoyed such socialists as Lenin. At the Second Congress of the Third International in Moscow, in 1920, Tom Quelch clashed with Lenin. As Ralph Fox ex-

plained: "Quelch, the son of the revolutionary who spoke up so boldly against English imperialism at Stuttgart," told Lenin that "the rank-and-file English workers would count it treachery to help the enslaved peoples in the revolts against English rule."

As a result of the dominant pro-imperialist attitudes in the English labour movement and the impact of the anti-imperialist Bolshevik revolution, advocates of Pan-African ideas, including the pro-Irish and pro-Pan-African Londoner R.M. Fox, increasingly challenged the white English Left from an internationalist standpoint. Notwithstanding Claude McKay's and Fox's important anti-imperialist articles in Sylvia Pankhurst's newspaper "Workers' Dreadnought," it was not until the early 1930s that a militant Pan-African movement of Black Britons developed substantial support for the break-up of the British Empire.

In England a significant, though small, number of Black British workers as well as intellectuals and writers fought for the ideas of Pan-African socialist internationalism. Once the Stalinists lost the Black workers around their magazine the "Negro Worker" at the moment of their betrayal of the anti-imperialist Blacks, when the Italian fascists invaded Ethiopia/Abyssinia in 1934/35, Harry O'Connell, Chris Jones, Arnold Ward, Ras Makonnen, Dr. Harold Moody, and other Black Britons formed the Coloured Colonial Seaman's Union to fight the active racism of the National Union of Seamen. Under the leadership of Dr. Harold Moody's increasingly militant League of Coloured Peoples, the 1930s and early 1940s saw a significant growth of Black workers and intellectuals' Pan-African organization in and outside of organized Labour.

The Pan-Africanist movement in England by 1945 was not at all like any of its predecessors. As well as being more militant, it was also more nationalist in its orientation. As Peter O. Esedebe said: "The moderates' criticisms of the colonial regime, hitherto tempered with polite phrases, henceforth assumed a tone of marked harshness... The new militancy culminated in the 1945 Manchester Pan-African meeting — the adoption of the strategy of 'positive action' and the enlisting of mass support in Africa and the West Indies."

Insisting that "the European Left had forfeited the right to lead the anti-imperialism struggle," Peter Abrahams justified the decision of the Manchester Congress to "go it alone." He was realistic to admit to the dangers implicit in such an approach when he said: "There are dangers in it.... Dangers of a black-white struggle without a socialist basis... But then 'white chauvinism' has had a long day. However, two evils do not add up to anything but evil."

It was a major aspect of the tragedy of the 20th century that the struggle for decolonization in Africa began without a socialist basis. If the predominantly white Left had taken Lenin's advice to support the struggles of the colonial workers before 1945, today's internationalist Left would have been much stronger than it is, and the tragedy of Bosnia would not have occurred.

Solidarnosc 15 years later: What happens after?

Karol Modzelewski, *Dokad od Komunizmu? (What after Communism?)*, Polska Oficyna Wydawnicza "BGW," Warsaw, 1993

Karol Modzelewski, Polish national Solidarity leader during 1980-81, takes up Solidarity's transformation into opposite in a recent book, *Dokad od Komunizmu?* ("What after Communism?"). It is a retrospective, self-critical discussion of why he remained in the opposition after Solidarity took power and why the Solidarity government had become such a total failure.

For Modzelewski the critical difference between 1980-81 and 1989 was mass creativity, keeping leaders like Walesa "in check." "The strikes of 1988 didn't bring the generals to their knees but convinced them to negotiate....The breakthrough wasn't a confrontation between workers and Communist authorities in uniform, but as an understanding between elites....The result of the process of changing rule and the fall of communism happened without the workers coming on the scene again."

Modzelewski himself was elected to the first post-Communist parliament. He noted a view that became popular almost immediately among Solidarity leaders: "a concept of social justice is a socialist anachronism." Solidarity of 1980-81 had the totally opposite principle: "It was a time when bus drivers struck for decent wages for nurses. The readiness to fight was for those who are wronged rather than yourself, especially protecting the weak. This principle was unambiguously first."

He traced this transformation back to what happened to Solidarity in the wake of the December 1981 imposition of martial law. With the masses off the historic stage the single unifying element became opposition to the regime.

Accepting state power, Solidarity's leaders latched on to "shock therapy" from the "Chicago boys" as supposedly the western opposite to Communism. "Shock therapy was to take six months. A few inefficient companies would go under and in a few years everything would be fine. Instead we got wholesale bankruptcy....Nothing shook their dogmatic belief."

Most poignant is Modzelewski's self-critical retrospective view of the need for revolutionary leaders to not limit their thinking about possibilities for the future: "None of us soberly thinking leaders and advisers of the great union of 1980-81 or underground from 1982-88 expected such a vast decline of Russian empire and the fall of communism. We were thinking realistically how to wrestle from under communist control areas of social independence. How to force partial reforms....Self-limitation in political activity led to self-limiting of our thinking. The Solidarity elite, into whose hands the rule of the country fell, were unprepared."

Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program* was likewise written after the greatest moment of mass creativity in his lifetime, the Paris Commune. Though the Commune lasted only three months and was destroyed from the outside, Marx addresses precisely the question that preoccupies Modzelewski—what principles guide the new society after the conquest of power. Marx not only reaffirmed the Communards' concept of social justice but also how that cooperative form transcended the commodity-form of appearance of objectivity.

Modzelewski was most directly relying on Marx back in 1964 when, along with Jacek Kuron, he analyzed the capitalist nature of the Polish economy in their *Open Letter to the Party*. That analysis was addressed to the ruling Party as the embodiment of a Marxist organization. When they were ready to break with the vanguard party as the form for speaking to the future, they broke with Marxism the way they understood it. Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program*, in which Marx's vision of the future is inseparable from organization, is a critique of precisely that type of organization.

Despite his unwavering belief that the creativity of the masses is the only way to create a truly new world, Modzelewski, himself, was left with no concept to help "the workers come on the historic scene again." Couldn't returning to Marxism as philosophy and not just economics help fill that void? Doesn't mass creativity cry out, not for a blueprint which hems it in, but rather a philosophy of revolution and its new sense of objectivity in order to make the drive for new forms of genuine democracy ongoing and permanent?

— Urszula Wislanka and Ron Brokmeyer

HEGEL'S ABSOLUTE AS NEW BEGINNING

by RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

Lecture to the 1974 convention of the Hegel Society of America

\$1 (plus 85¢ postage)

Order from News & Letters, 59 E. Van Buren, #707, Chicago IL 60605

NEWS & LETTERS

Vol. 40, No. 8

October 1995

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

Raya Dunayevskaya

Chairwoman, National Editorial Board (1955-1987)

Charles Denby

Editor (1955-1983)

Oiga Domanski, Peter Wermuth, Co-National Organizers, News and Letters Committees. Lou Turner, Managing Editor. Michael Flug, Marxist-Humanist Archivist. Felix Martin, Labor Editor.

News & Letters is printed in a union shop.



Latin teens tell of free trade zone hell

Chicago — Central American teens Judith Viera and Claudia Molina are workers in the free trade zone garment factories that assemble clothes for The Gap. In a recent visit to Chicago, they revealed firsthand that this supposedly benevolent corporation is more than willing to inflict brutal poverty and slavery conditions on its young workers in the pursuit of ever greater profits.

The free trade zones, or maquiladoras, permit U.S. corporations to operate in foreign countries without paying import or export tariffs. The price workers must pay is high.

Until she was fired for joining the union, Judith worked in the Mandarin garment factory in the San Marcos free trade zone in El Salvador, which assembles clothes for The Gap, J.C. Penney and Eddie Bauer. She earned 56¢ an hour. At 18 years old, Judith routinely worked 14-hour shifts Monday through Thursday. On Friday she worked an 18-hour shift that ended at 3 a.m. Since there is no transportation at that time of night, she had to sleep in the plant Friday night so she could be at work Saturday morning.

FOR PENNIES AN HOUR

"Inside the plants it is hot and they play loud music to keep us working fast," Judith said. "We are not allowed to talk. If we fall behind, they scream at us and throw the shirts in our faces. They tried to give us drugs to make us work faster, but the workers began fainting."

Also fired for union activity, Claudia worked in a Honduran clothing plant that contracts with Fruit of the Loom, earning 30¢ an hour. She worked 12-hour shifts Monday through Friday and a 22-hour shift on Saturday. Now 17, Claudia began working in the factory when she was 14 years old.

"We are allowed to use the restrooms twice during a 14-hour shift, and we are timed while we go. We are only allowed five minutes," she said. "If you are even one minute late, they will put you outside and force you to work in the sun all day."

There has been no attempt to share prosperity from the maquiladoras. As Honduran exports skyrocketed, real wages for workers declined by one-third. In El Salvador, while exports to the U.S. rose from \$10 million to \$398 million in ten years, real wages have fallen by more than half. At the Mandarin plant, 40 workers produce \$30,000 worth of shirts in one day, but take home only \$180 in combined wages.

Far from 56¢ an hour being a living wage in El Salvador, as some would maintain, that wage only provides 18% of the cost of living for a family of four. To get by, working families are forced to live in tin shacks without water or electricity, and eat the barest of diets. A two-pound box of pancake mix alone costs five hours of wages. And with so many families unable to afford meat, fish, or even milk, malnutrition is on the rise in El Salvador.

The plants themselves are patrolled by armed guards who enforce inhuman piece rates by beating and threatening women workers—who make up the majority of the

'Dreams and nightmares' of an immigrant worker

New York—Welcome to the American dream, even though you don't speak English. We know that in our impoverished town where we come from, it is impossible to find the economic means to live as human beings. Since there is no alternative, I throw a few clothes in a suitcase, I put the money (at high interest) into the "coyote's" pocket and put in my thoughts the hope of arriving safely.

I uproot myself from life itself to come to die slowly in the factories and streets of New York. I carry with me the dream and the nightmare of my absence. One thing is certain—you have to carry many illusions with you, so that you won't pay any mind to the chain of injustices that you will find on the way.

So at last, sleepwalker, dreamer, competitor and winner, I arrive. Here I am free. How can I not be free if in reality I have nothing, nothing but my labor to sell to some boss who, of course, is free to use me or not. But if I can just get that job, I'll be fine.

Life here is more convenient. I take the train to work. I learn to work the machine to make more than the other guy. At night I watch TV, the disastrous news or the soap opera, and then to sleep—to wake up and work again. On the train I put on my blinders so I won't see or hear anybody since here everybody's got their own problems. In the factory, you are worth as much as you produce, and if you work more hours, you make more money. But today there is no work, so it's "go home" and tomorrow they tell me: come at 11 and if I need you I'll call you, and don't complain because I'm doing you a big favor hiring "illegals."

And when I get home, my buddy tells me, "I'm tired of dreaming, of work, of life, of being just another piece of the machine! I feel I have lost my life. Now I cannot even be myself."

But we realize we are all going through the same thing and something must be done to give real meaning to our daily existence. Are we to have a beer, sit around and cry, only to go on with the same existence tomorrow? Or are we to pose ourselves the possibility of creating alternative spaces where we can come together, to help us live with greater consciousness and meaning, in peace, harmony and capacity for mutual aid? This second choice sounds better

—Latin American worker

work force in the garment industry. Sexual abuse is rampant. Pregnant workers are illegally fired. In some cases, women employees are forcibly injected with birth control drugs.

"One woman went to the company doctor because she didn't feel so good—she didn't know she was pregnant," Claudia sadly recalled. "The doctor gave her some pills that he said would make her feel better, but they were actually to make her lose the baby."

UNION-TO-UNION APPEAL

Union members are prime targets. The San Marcos free trade zone is owned by a former colonel in the Salvadoran army who told workers that "either the union will behave, leave, or people will die." Since then hundreds of pro-union workers have been illegally fired. Many have been severely beaten and threatened.

Under Salvadoran labor law, the Ministry of Labor should be fining the Mandarin plant \$1.2 million for the illegal firings. But the government, not disposed to losing the factories and foreign investment dollars, has failed to impose a single fine.

"We have come here for help because we do not have the support of our government," explained Claudia. So she and Judith have turned to their union brothers and sisters in the U.S. They are asking them to contact the companies that contract with the maquilador manufacturers to end the abuses or else they'll be boycotted. They also want unionists here to push U.S. representatives to pressure the Central American governments to enforce existing labor laws, and to write or fax the Salvadoran Labor Ministry and demand an end to Mandarin's union-crushing.

—Chicago unionist

Visitor witnesses Chiapas in struggle

Los Angeles — The 1994 Chiapas rebellion, a reaction to the unfair policies of NAFTA and one-party rule, set into motion a chain of events destined to change the face of Mexico. The Zapatistas and the EZLN, the armed faction of the insurgent militia, have prompted a humanist revolution impacting Mexico on economic, social

and political levels. The earth, working productively within communities, and integrating the political and the spiritual in such a way that all peoples begin to resolve our alienation with modern life while at the same time preserving our political, spiritual and cultural identities.

—Human rights activist



Chiapas villagers voted in August to continue the rebellion.

and political levels.

My five-week experience in Chiapas involved a human rights fact-finding tour of troubled communities in the zones of conflict, participation in the fifth round of peace dialogues between the government and the EZLN in San Andreas Larrainzar, and a three-week encampment in a war-torn indigenous community. The community where I was invited to live had experienced severe harassment from the army because it was considered a Zapatista stronghold. During our encampment we observed heavy military presence throughout the region. Volunteers and community members experienced constant harassment by the army and were present for a confrontation with soldiers who entered the community against a presidential order.

Civilians in the encampments became more than just human rights observers and peacekeepers within the zones of conflict. In most communities volunteers taught school, helped in building projects and participated in cultural exchanges. All participants agreed they learned a great deal from their experiences living in a communal ejido, and the difficulties of day-to-day life without electricity, water and plumbing plus food shortages. Perhaps the most significant differences we experienced were between our Western individualistic orientation and non-Western concepts of communal life.

Our group taught school to the more than 50 children in the community. Many residents speak only their indigenous languages and classes were bilingual in Spanish and their native Tzeltal. Cultural exchanges included dances, activities for children and a visiting Catalonian circus troupe that provided entertainment in an area where television and radio are nonexistent.

Our experiences made it clear that this political struggle is not a matter of bringing these oppressed peoples up to a "first world" level through charity and hand-outs, but rather a matter of allowing them to make a fair and just living on their own terms. The indigenous peoples of Mexico don't want to live in poverty, but as well they don't want our highly industrialized society to impinge itself on their world in the form of environmental and ideological pollution.

At this time in global history it is the indigenous peoples of Mexico and other parts of the world who may offer the much needed solutions to living in harmony with

Fire breathed into UFW

Salinas, Cal.—Over 5,000 farmworkers and supporters marched Sept. 17 to kick off a new organizing campaign against prominent Salinas valley vegetable growers like Bruce Church. The march marked the 25th anniversary of vegetable workers beginning their historic 1970 Salinas strike. There were many supporters from other unions—five Service Employees locals and Communications Workers—and students from many campuses supporting a new drive to organize farmworkers.

The effort now is centered not so much on boycotts as on the workers themselves. The UFW had dwindled over 15 years from 100,000 to 15,000 members. However, in the last 16 months the UFW has won 12 straight secret ballot elections and signed more than two dozen contracts with growers. The latest UFW contract was signed last week for 450 workers at Monterey Mushrooms in Watsonville after they tossed out a company-backed union. Currently membership has risen to 24,000.

While the march was touted as an AFL-CIO event led by Federation presidential candidate John Sweeney to begin "escalated organizing," the reality is that this re-birth grew out of the depth of opposition to Proposition 187, passed almost a year ago. Immigrant workers reacted very strongly to Prop. 187 on the grounds that it is both racist and anti-labor.

As one mushroom worker reported to us during their organizing campaign a few months ago, "Prop. 187 means we need a new union movement today. Workers are feeling more and more under siege. We have to reunite behind the UFW because it is one of the few organizations that was very forceful in fighting against Prop. 187. There is a resurgence among the new generation for the UFW and groups like that. Prop. 187 has created a new unity in the movement."

—Supporters

Bianca fleeces workers

New York—For four months, Roberto Villa worked 12 hours a day, six days a week at Bianca Restaurant, a midtown Manhattan pizzeria, receiving just \$10 per week for his labors. Management claimed the pay rate was a "training wage" but there's no such provision in either New York state or federal laws. In two years of employment Villa's salary never reached \$3 per hour, nor did he ever receive overtime pay despite his 72-hour weekly schedule.

A co-worker of Villa's, Jose Curiel, suffered the same exploitation during six years of service when he never received minimum nor overtime pay. His salary peaked at \$250 for a 72-hour work week!

Under state and federal labor laws, Bianca owes Curiel and Villa more than \$54,000 in back wages. The workers filed a complaint with the state Department of Labor, but it will likely take months to even begin an investigation. In the meantime, Curiel and Villa and supporters at the Latino Workers Center are backing demands for back wages for the two, plus compliance with labor law for the other workers now and in the future.

The center backed up the demands with a demonstration in front of Bianca Restaurant on Sept. 21. To expose the restaurant and other employers who routinely cheat and exploit immigrant workers, the center also held a Town Hall meeting on Sept. 23.

Latino workers testified about abuses and inadequate responses from labor agencies, amounting to a crisis facing immigrant workers. They proposed: that the state Department of Labor create a task force to investigate violations in New York City's restaurants; that the federal Department of Labor hire more Spanish-speaking investigators for the restaurant and garment industries and that both departments use their powers to implement 100% damages for nonpayment of wages.

Workers from four boroughs and several industries testified, including restaurant, delicatessen, garment, construction and homecare. Juan Valentin, who is an organizer with the center, declared, "As the twentieth century comes to a close, we're fighting the same sweat shops and slave labor conditions that other immigrants confronted when this century began."

Global warming: deaths in Chicago, capital's momentum

Chicago—After this summer's heat wave that killed over 700 people, few in Chicago doubt the reality of global warming. Now comes the draft report of a United Nations panel of 2,500 scientists from around the world cautiously approaching the same conclusion. The increasing scientific consensus is that we are seeing the beginning of the climatic effects.

Theory and computer models predict rising sea levels that will inundate some coastal cities, islands, wetlands and beaches, creating millions of environmental refugees; frequent and more severe droughts, heat waves, fires and floods; the vanishing of some forests.

Squarely facing such disaster, Congress has boldly decided to slash funds for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases! They are even slashing funds for research on climate change, just as in every environmental area they are cutting research funds and restricting the public's right to know.

One pitfall of the environmental movement being on the defensive, as it is now, is the risk of our goals being

narrowed to the protection of legal and regulatory gains won by years of struggle. "Such a narrowly pragmatic vision is potentially paralyzing," warns Bill McKibben ("Not So Fast," *New York Times Magazine*, July 23), precisely because it's possible to address some environmental problems within that framework.

McKibben argues that such an approach omits the "more systematic troubles"—like global warming—that result from "civilization's basic momentum." There is no technological quick fix for global warming. The urgent need is to sharply reduce the release of greenhouse gases carbon dioxide and methane into the air.

That can only be done by drastically cutting use of oil, coal and natural gas. "This could not happen in a world that closely resembles ours," observes McKibben. "The only way out of this dilemma is to rethink what we mean by 'development.'"

The problem is that McKibben cannot conceive of a fundamental change in social relations, and therefore neglects the class basis of "civilization's momentum." Consequently the radical change he advocates is confined to individual behavior, as if that did not grow out of a social base. His agenda is a narrow one of reducing population and living standards: "an all-out drive for deep thrift, for self-restraint, for smaller families."

McKibben's economic critique is that "we" are "addicted to growth," and the concept of development he advocates differs only quantitatively from the dominant one: "The systemic environmentalism...has one question

to ask: 'How much is enough?' How much convenience, how many people, how much money?"

McKibben exhibits the capitalist ideology that equates living standards with consumption, and that subsumes all economic activity under consumption, spiriting away accumulation of capital. In capitalism, production drives environmental destruction, and it is production for production's sake, not for satisfying human needs. The overriding fact is that world carbon dioxide emissions come mainly from production.

The sphere of consumption is bound to the needs of production. For instance, dependence on cars is built into the physical structure of suburban sprawl driven by the greed of real estate "developers," racist white flight and capital flight from urban labor revolt.

Consequently, nothing short of a revolutionary restructuring of society, from production to man/woman relations, can turn around "civilization's basic momentum." It is true that we are faced with systemic environmental crises, from global warming to species extinctions, that demand a radically new kind of development. Narrowing the new concept of development to austerity can only be a barrier to the real need: fully human development.

—Franklin Dmitryev

Sexism in China

(continued from page 4)

Guixian as saying that she prefers to remain with her First National Textile Mill of Xianyang rather than go to the center of power because of the work she puts in. Thus, "I have one child born last year. That kept me away from work only one month; I did not need the usual 56-day leave." As for her self-development intellectually, we get it straight from Professor Witke that Wu was grappling "in plain language with the contradiction between thought and action; idea and practice..." and therefore she wanted to work out "her dialectical examples from cotton spinning and weaving..."

That, dear reader, is not the product either of Ms. Witke's "feminist bias," or Jiang Qing's "wild ambitions." Rather, it is the product most directly of Mao's retrogressionism.

7. "Report from China," *China Quarterly*, December 1975, pp. 730-740.

8. As against Ms. Witke's apologia, see my Hong Kong interview with Jade, printed in *News & Letters*, June-July 1966, and Jade's report of the achievements and retrogressions since the Chinese Revolution, "Women's Liberation in China," included in *Notes on Women's Liberation* (Detroit: *News & Letters*, 1970).

Philosophy and Revolution From Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao

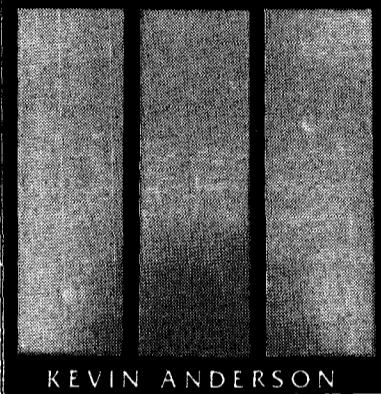
(Original edition 1973; new expanded edition 1989; also available in Spanish, German, Italian, Russian)

See literature ad on page 9.

NEW from UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS PRESS!

Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism

A CRITICAL STUDY



"It sheds entirely new light not only on Lenin, but also on Hegel... This study bears the unmistakable character of a good book, namely, that the reader wonders why it has not been written long ago."

— Louis Dupré

Special offer: \$14.50, postage included (regularly \$15.95 plus \$1.80 postage). Offer extended to December 31. Send to **News & Letters, 59 E. Van Buren St., #707, Chicago IL 60605.**

Why this special 16-page News & Letters?

On the August-September issue of *News & Letters* we shared with you the Draft of our Marxist-Humanist Perspectives for 1995-1996 which asked: "Can the Idea of freedom re-mobilize today's mass movements?" At a moment when we confront nothing less than a new stage in the rulers' wars — both abroad as seen in our lead on Bosnia, and at home as in our editorial on the war on the poor — it has become clear that the need for a revolutionary new beginning allows for no separation between theory and practice, workers and intellectuals, "inside" and "outside," philosophy and organization. It is why we consider it important to share with you the presentations that were made (see "Reports"), and ask for your participation in the decisions reached at the National Gathering held in Chicago over the Labor Day weekend.

Our perspectives for the year ahead revolve around the focuses of the three sessions:

First, what we call "politicalization," which is the very opposite of the vanguardist practice of program-hatching, and means the needed concretization of the philosophy of revolution for our age in all our

activities and discussions with as many as we can reach.

Second, the writing and publishing of a **Statement on the Black Dimension for the 1990s**, the need for which is underlined, on the one hand, by the stark reality of two societies, sharply divided, that reflect the crisis

of capitalism today, and on the other, by the new passions and forces we have seen arising — as witness the organizing activities of Black women in the South you have read about in our pages.

And third, a new **Collection of Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya** on

the **Dialectic**, the study of which we see as what can point us beyond today's retrogression toward the new beginning the revolutionary movement has been seeking.

It was the outpouring of material from both "inside" and "outside" that followed the National Gathering that impelled us to publish this one special 16-page issue as both a manifestation of the determination not to retreat, but to **EXPAND** in the face of today's retrogression — and as our appeal to all our readers to help us answer in a resounding affirmative "Can the Idea of freedom re-mobilize today's mass movements?" You can help in a number of ways:

- A financial contribution will help us cover the \$500 for printing, and several hundred more for postage and distribution which the additional four pages for this special issue cost.

- Can you send this issue to a friend or library through a gift sub, or order a small bundle to distribute in your locality?

- Most of all, we need the contribution of your ideas, your participation in the discussion that only began at the Labor Day meeting and will be worked out in the year ahead.

REPORTS

From The News and Letters Committees Plenum, September 2 - 3, 1995

Session on Politicalization and Philosophy
POLITICALIZATION AND THE DIALECTICS OF MARXIST-HUMANIST PHILOSOPHY AND ORGANIZATION
Olga Domanski, National Co-Organizer

NEWS & LETTERS AND POLITICALIZATION
Jim Mills, Resident Editorial Board

Special session on The Marxist-Humanist Statement on The Black Dimension

MARXIST-HUMANIST STATEMENT ON THE BLACK DIMENSION: CONTINUING WORK-IN-PROGRESS
Lou Turner, Managing Editor, *News & Letters*

NO SEPARATION BETWEEN PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE: TODAY'S STRUGGLE OVER THE MEANING OF BLACK HISTORY
Michael Connolly, Marxist-Humanist Archivist

Special session on A New Collection of Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya on Dialectics

CAN A DIALECTICAL PHILOSOPHY OF REVOLUTION POINT US BEYOND TODAY'S RETROGRESSION?
Peter Wermuth, National Co-Organizer

PUBLISHING RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA ON HEGEL AND THE DIALECTIC: FROM THE EARLY WRITINGS TO THE 1953 LETTERS ON HEGEL'S ABSOLUTES, AND FROM MARXISM AND FREEDOM TO THE DISCUSSIONS OF LUKÁCS
Kevin A. Barry, Resident Editorial Board

Plus Perspectives for 1995-1996
Can the Idea of Freedom Re-Mobilize Today's Mass movements?
The Resident Editorial Board

To order, send \$2 plus \$1 postage to **News & Letters, 59 E. Van Buren St., #707, Chicago IL 60605.**

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

On Sept. 5, France detonated the first of a series of nuclear devices it plans to set off between now and next spring. Set off at Mururoa, an island in the South Pacific where France has been testing for three decades, this nuclear device, "small" by the standards of today's doomsday weapons, nonetheless carried more destructive force than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945. The 1995 device unleashed untold environmental and health damage across thousands of acres.

Anti-nuclear protests, which had been building for months ever since French President Jacques Chirac announced the tests, reached a crescendo in the days following Sept. 5. Demands to end the region's status as a French colony have merged over the past weeks with the indigenous anti-nuclear movement.

In Papeete, capital of the French colony of Tahiti, there were mass demonstrations and clashes with riot police by youths. In the mistaken belief that Gaston Flosse, a top colonial official was on board, crowds at-

Canadian police attack native peoples' occupation

The killing of Anthony (Dudley) George on Sept. 6 by Ontario Provincial Police riveted attention on native peoples' struggles for land and life against the Canadian government. George was shot to death by the police during the occupation of Camp Ipperwash military base and adjoining Ipperwash Provincial Park by Kettle and Stoney Point Chippewas. He was killed outside the park and two others with him, including a teenager, were wounded. Police have admitted not seeing any firearms among the occupiers.

The takeover began over land claims. The Kettle and Stoney Point peoples have fought to regain some 2,200 acres which the Canadian government took over for a military training base during World War II, but never returned. After years of court battles, a group of mostly young activists set up encampments on the Lake Huron beach of the military base in 1993.

A year later, the Canadian government agreed to return the now nearly-inactive base pending its cleanup. However, nothing was done to start removal of toxic wastes and live munitions. The occupation of the base began in late July and of the park on Sept. 5, which is when the police moved in.

The blame for George's death is being laid squarely at Ontario Premier Mike Harris' feet. Harris, a Tory with well-known anti-native racist views, called the occupiers "trespassers," refused to negotiate and termed the crisis a police matter. Last year he publicly stated that native peoples were getting too much money for land claims. He refused to intervene after George's death.

Immediately after the shooting, Kettle and Stoney Point people took to the streets and set up barricades. Native supporters from nearby Walpole Island and across Canada began arriving to show support. At least a thousand people attended George's burial at "Stoney Nation 43" inside Camp Ipperwash. A man at the barricades for two sleepless nights said, "Wounded Knee happened in 1890. That's 105 years ago. It's now 1995 and it is still happening." The occupation continues.

Thousands protest French nuclear tests

tacked a French jet and then sacked airport buildings, causing the international airport to be shut down for a few days. Protesters also looted posh downtown stores where tourists shop.

Some demonstrators pointed to their Molotov cocktails, telling reporters: "This is our bomb. France has



got theirs and this is ours" (InterPress Service, Sept. 9). Anti-nuclear activist Roti Make stated: "The French have treated us as rubbish, as rats, and now you see what happens" (The New York Times, Sept. 8).

On Sept. 2, a week before the test, large demonstrations took place in the Pacific region. In Tahiti roads were blocked and a general strike declared by A Tia i mua, the pro-independence trade union federation. These Tahiti demonstrations were truly international, with delegations from numerous European countries, Latin America, other Pacific countries such as New Zealand and Australia, and most notably a large Japanese

Sudanese student uprising

The Sudan, along with Iran a training ground for Islamic fundamentalists the world over, has suddenly had to face an internal, class conflict emerging from the very "masses" the fundamentalist reactionaries claim to represent.

Responding to a decree allowing bread prices to rise 50% and to arrests of opposition leaders, thousands of student protesters came out into the streets of Khartoum and other cities to battle the regime beginning on Sept. 12, chanting slogans such as "The People Are Hungry" and "No to Peddlers of Religion." Attacked violently not only by police but also by fundamentalist goon squads armed with iron bars, the students, soon joined by the urban poor, gave a good account of themselves. At the end of the first day at least one fundamentalist thug lay dead.

The military regime, propped up ideologically by the internationally known fundamentalist theoretician Hassan al-Turabi, has visited rape, forced conversion to Islam, slavery and even genocide on the Black Christian and animist population of the South.

The government's claim that the student revolt is a Communist plot has so far fallen on deaf ears. For their part, the students are calling for the overthrow of the regime and autonomy for the South.

delegation which was asked to lead the march while singing the moving "Song of Hiroshima." In Tokyo, 10,000 demonstrated the same day, singling out not only the French nuclear tests, but also the recent ones by China.

A day earlier, French commandos had stormed three Greenpeace ships off Mururoa, arresting their crew which included people from a multitude of nations among them Tahitian independence leader Oscar Temaru and Eni Falcomavaega, American Samoa's delegate to the U.S. Congress.

In the early 1960s, De Gaulle crushed Tahiti's independence movement, jailing its immensely popular leader Pouvanaa Tetuaapua Oopa. Then, in 1965, after "losing" Algeria, France moved its nuclear tests to near Mururoa. Today France faces a newer, stronger independence movement which has massive international support at a time when the French public is itself increasingly hostile to nuclear testing.

Israel-PLO agreement

The Sept. 24 agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization could prove to be a major turning point in the peace process begun two years ago. However, as we go to press, few details of the 400-page agreement have been made public.

Israel did agree to release some more political prisoners and to begin military withdrawal from some major parts of the West Bank, a territory inhabited by 2.4 million Arabs which Israel has occupied illegally since 1967. But when this will actually take place is unclear—although it might take as long as a year.

Even when (or if) this limited withdrawal happens, will leave many roads and other areas under Israeli control, thus allowing not only economic strangulation of the West Bank as a whole, but even the cutting off of one town from another. The agreement allows Israeli troops to remain behind to "protect" the 130,000 Jewish settlers who have moved into the West Bank since 1967, now around 5% of the population.

Over 20,000 of these settlers are armed fanatics living in military-style encampments. Hebron is a particular flash point, especially after a local settler, Baruch Goldstein, massacred 29 Arabs there in 1994. To much of the local settler community, Goldstein is a hero because the Book of Genesis supposedly sanctifies Hebron as Jewish land "from here to eternity" despite the fact that its present population consists of 120,000 Arabs and 40,000 Jews.

The Israeli government refused to budge even on Hebron, and it will maintain a garrison there under what is being termed Palestinian rule. This has sparked protests from the Hebron Arab community. It will also fuel the continuing suicide attacks by Islamic fundamentalists opposed to any type of peace agreement.

Ongoing unrest in Mexico

In Mexico, two events underline the continuing social unrest:

In Chiapas, Zapatista negotiators have reportedly agreed with the Mexican government to join in a national multi-party team charged with reforming the electoral and political system. As yet, the details of this are very general. But separate talks on indigenous rights, land reform and other questions specific to Chiapas are scheduled to resume in October.

The Zapatistas have not abandoned armed struggle but now are also following the results of the "grassroots" referendum they initiated over the summer, which asked: should the Zapatistas become an independent political force, should they join with other groups, do they have support for basic demands (housing, health care, education, electoral reform)? Out of 1.1 million ballots, around 53% agreed they should become an independent movement.

In Guerrero, the official National Commission of Human Rights issued a report condemning state police and top officials in the killing of 17 peasants last June. The governor of Guerrero, Ruben Figueroa, has admitted directing aides to "dissuade" the peasants from going to an anti-government rally. Figueroa is a "dinosaur" (party hack) of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party and close friend of President Ernesto Zedillo.

The massacre was covered up to the level of the state attorney general and chief of police, but the Commission report stopped short of indicting Figueroa, although he surely knew about it. Figueroa's father, governor of Guerrero in the 1970s, bloodily suppressed an armed peasant rebellion, but conflicts have continued.

Iraq: splits at the top

The sudden flight into exile in Jordan, along with their families by two of Iraq's top military leaders, Hussein Kamel and Saddam Kamel, each of them married daughters of supreme ruler Saddam Hussein, showed that the fissures in Iraqi society have reached even the regime's inner circle. Both defectors, but especially Hussein Kamel, are associated with some of the regime's worst atrocities: the genocidal repression in Kurdistan in the 1980s, the equally horrific massacres of Shiites during the 1991 uprising and the 1993 effort to wipe out the Marsh Arabs by drying up their water supply.

This spring members of another group within the ruling circles, the Dulaimi clan, staged an abortive revolt. As Lenin pointed out long ago, splits within the ruling classes, if accompanied by a generalized societal crisis, can be the harbingers of revolutionary changes to come.

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* (1968); *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

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

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

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.