

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2003

50¢

WORKSHOP TALKS

'For a few dollars more'

by Htun Lin

At the HMO where I work, new machines are being introduced that can identify someone based on their fingerprints, voiceprint, and eye patterns. These will not be used to track terrorists and criminals, but to track us workers, to make sure we comply with their new cash-handling procedures.

The company official instructing us made us sign an agreement that said "failure to comply...may lead to loss of employment." One young Latina who works as a receptionist said, "Why do I have to give up my fingerprints just to keep my job? It feels like I'm being treated like a common criminal."

The instructor assured us that this agreement was drafted with the approval of our union officials—the union's name is right on the letterhead of the company form. What's new for us is that the union has now become a full partner in carrying out management's disciplinary apparatus.

DEGRADING WORKERS AND PATIENTS

What both management and the union want to push into us is that these new "security" measures they are imposing are absolutely necessary in a world where everything, even healthcare, has become mere commodities. Capitalists need to track their commodities. And we workers have become mere appendages to their machines, which track those commodities.

One of those commodities tracked now is the number of times a patient uses a hospital bed. Sometimes it feels like our job is to punish the frequent user (the sicker and older patients) with a higher "sick tax," because they owe another huge co-payment for each admission. We are told daily that our increased performance in "revenue recovery enhancement" will determine the size of our annual bonus.

One of the biggest lies is their assertion that reducing costs is for the benefit of healthcare consumers. This is how HMO executives justify increasing co-payments imposed on patients, while at the same time

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BLACK/RED V I E W

Reading, writing, revolt

by John Alan

A recently published book by Elizabeth McHenry, *Forgotten Readers: Recovering the Lost History of African-Americans Literary Societies*, recounts how African-Americans in northern states, during the early decades of the 19th century, organized literary societies and began to read and write. In McHenry's words: "[Those] individuals were vividly aware of the general perception, especially among white slaveholders in the South, that black literacy and education posed a significant threat to the future of the slave system and to maintaining black subordination generally."

DAVID WALKER'S 'APPEAL'

McHenry's thesis is that northern literary societies, where African-Americans met to write, read, discuss and publish issues relevant to slavery and freedom, were the spiritual engines for African-American slaves' rebellion during the first three decades of the 18th century. She could have been thinking about the 1831 Nat Turner revolt or the 1822 Denmark Vesey conspiracy. However, McHenry's focus is on David Walker's 1829 *Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World*.

Walker, a Black minister living in Boston, published this 76-page pamphlet on the wretchedness of Black life during a period when slave revolts were causing fear and panic among slaveholders. Eventually, anti-slavery activity brought on the Civil War and ended slavery in America. African-Americans, free and enslaved, were clearly in the vanguard of that historic movement to universalize freedom in the U.S. Walker's critique upset not only Southern whites, but also some whites in the north who were abolitionist but thought that the *Appeal* was too inflammatory and vengeful.

McHenry claims that: "Throughout the *Appeal*, Walker contrasted the sense of allegiance black Amer-

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International protests demand Indonesia troops out of Aceh!

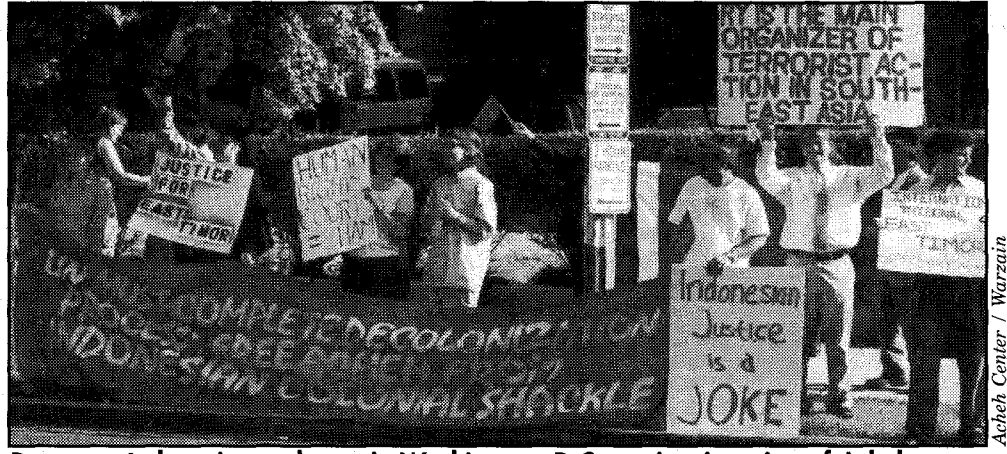
by Anne Jaclard

The government of Indonesia declared martial law in Aceh on May 19. Troops were sent in to the already militarized province on the northern tip of Sumatra island near Malaysia, along with aircraft, bomb and ships to blockade it. Indonesia is determined to destroy Aceh's popular separatist movement by killing or jailing the small guerrilla force named Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and activists who have been demanding a referendum on Aceh's status for the past five years. Students, women's groups, farmers, fishermen, small business people—nearly the entire province—have been involved in grass-roots movements against Jakarta's repression and exploitation which GAM has fought since 1976. Some 12,000 Acehese were killed before the current war began.

Two months into the war, the military (known as TNI) boasted that 1,277 suspected GAM members had been arrested and 531 killed. More credible reports are that fewer GAM members but hundreds of civilians have been killed, as the TNI routinely kills villagers during offensives it calls "shock therapy" after the U.S. war on Iraq. Rape and other torture are common.

JAKARTA'S DOUBLESPEAK

At the same time that the TNI boasts of rapid progress, it also says martial law may have to be extended from six months to long as 10 years. This seeming contradiction is typical of the government in Jakarta's double-speak by which it casts the dirty work of its armed forces as "self-defense."



Protest at Indonesian embassy in Washington, D.C. against invasion of Aceh.

The current war has also relocated about 40,000 Acehese into displaced persons camps as the TNI seeks to destroy the guerrillas' support in the countryside. These camps lack clean water and medicine; cholera and other diseases have broken out. Some villagers have been sent home from the camps, but only to still greater hardship because the TNI routinely robs their houses, livestock and stores, and burns down the houses and schools.

The Jakarta government claims its repressive operations throughout the archipelago are due to ethnic and religious conflicts, but the Acehese are Muslims like the vast majority of Indonesians. Attempts to paint them as extremist fundamentalists who oppose secular government are absurd. Acehese practice a brand of Islam which honors women's rights and religious tolerance. West Papua and Maluku, which also have active independence movements, are predominately Christian, but the uprisings there are also based on exploitation and abuse, not religion. "Religious" conflicts in Maluku have been created by the TNI, which foments fighting between the long-time Christian population

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Eyewitness report: new stage of revolt in Iran

Tehran, Iran—The student protests against privatization that started in Tehran on June 10 have spread across Iran, involving thousands of ordinary people. Their slogans are not only against the "Supreme Leader" Khamenei and President Khatami but also against the entire Islamic Republic. Islamic security forces have tried to stop this new uprising.

On July 9 (the anniversary of important student demonstrations in 1999) representatives of a student coalition held a press conference to announce they would not be able to hold widespread demonstrations as expected because of the degree of government repression. They denounced Iran's judiciary and the country's "political and social apartheid." Minutes after the press conference ended plainclothes police entered the room and held guns to the heads of the students, kidnapping them in front of reporters. University dorms were closed and the students were taken to the notorious Evin prison, once used by the Shah of Iran to torture his opponents.

Later on July 9 protests took place at Enghelab Square in Tehran and in Mashhad, leading to new clashes with the police. This is not the end of the struggle in Iran; it is just the new beginning.

Ansar-e Hezbollah—the organized Islamic vigilantes loyal to the regime—have used knives, chains and cattle prods to attack demonstrators, causing many injuries. Special guards or Basig—who originally pretended to be mediators between the opposing forces—are also involved and arrest anyone they can. Students, ordinary people and journalists have been beaten, jailed, tortured, and killed.

Some say that members of the special security forces speak Arabic. The suspicion voiced by many students is that the regime is using mercenaries brought to Tehran from various Arab countries.

As of June 28, based on government figures, 4,000 demonstrators had been arrested—800 of them students and the rest ordinary citizens. Parents of the arrested have gathered in front of Evin prison, forming protest committees and demonstrating for the freedom of those arrested.

Zahra Kazemi, an Iranian-Canadian photojournalist, was arrested on June 23 while taking pictures outside of Evin. The government is so afraid of news leaking out of the prison that it doesn't tolerate the basic

rights of journalists. Kazemi suffered a fatal skull fracture after being beaten by a government interrogator.

At the time of one of the demonstrations I was planning to go to a dormitory to witness what was happening, but friends stopped me, saying security forces will arrest anyone they can find. I was told they beat anyone arrested for days before even asking their names.

REGIME IN TOTAL CRISIS

There is no freedom in Iran, either politically or socially. Reality has been twisted so badly that people make jokes about the government all the time. When there is no freedom of speech and expression, this is how people express themselves.

To give one example, I bought a copy of *Time* magazine in Tehran. It was only a little different from what we have in the U.S., except that every picture showing any part of a woman's or man's body was scratched out with a black marker. People call this "body censorship." I also got a small book containing reproductions of some of Rembrandt's paintings. One shows a woman sitting with no clothes on (the original is in the Louvre). In this book her picture was covered with a dress from top to bottom. Even Rembrandt is censored.

With so much repression, the struggles of women permeate every aspect of society. At a recent student demonstration in the Narmac area of Tehran women demonstrated their scarves and maghnaeh (a big scarf which covers an entire head) into the street as a rejection of the Islamic code against women.

The situation facing the youth is terrible. In some colleges, women and men cannot even be friends with each other. I heard of a young man and woman who were questioned by university authorities. They had no sexual relations with each other. Yet the authorities insisted that they marry. One official said if they do not want to marry permanently, they should get a "temporary" marriage (in the Islamic code this is called

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ON THE INSIDE

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Solidarity with women of Afghanistan

by Terry Moon

Today the Afghan women's experience with fundamentalist Islam and with phony U.S. "liberation" is being watched by the worldwide women's movement—particularly by women in Iraq who fear the willingness of the U.S. to sell out women's lives in Afghanistan is evidence of their willingness to do the same in Iraq. The situation of women in Afghanistan reveals their fears are well founded.

Today, the ability of Afghan women to gain even a minimal amount of freedom is being severely hampered by the U.S.'s support of the Northern Alliance and fundamentalist warlords, a repressive male-dominated culture, and the hold that fundamentalist ideas have on the countryside. We look to the struggle of women in Afghanistan to see Woman as Revolutionary Force and Reason in the most difficult of circumstances.

AFGHANISTAN TODAY

Despite the claim by President Bush in his speech to the nation on May 1 that "We continue to help the Afghan people lay roads, restore hospitals, and educate all of their children," the Education Department in Afghanistan's Balkh Province just announced closing 180 schools due to lack of funds. This leaves over 4,000 teachers and school employees jobless and stops 170,000 students' education. Many teachers have yet to receive salaries since the academic year began ("School Closures in Balkh Province Leave Teachers, Students Stranded," July 23, 2003, by Farangis Najibullah, rawa_supporters@yahoo.com).

The escalating attack on girls' education was addressed directly on International Women's Day, March 8, in Parwan province when a teenager, Mahera, said: "The world is going to the moon and across the Internet, but Afghan girls are living under fanatical prejudices. We want these mullahs to be quiet."

The director of the Panjsher school district in Parwan province confirmed that there were no schools for girls because of opposition from fundamentalist Islamic scholars. In Herat province rules were announced in January which prohibit men from teaching girls and impose strict sex segregation in schools. A shortage of women teachers restricts the ability of girls to go to school at all. Warlord Ismail Khan, who rules Panjsher, ordered increasing restrictions on women and girls over the past year, including immediate mandatory gynecological exams for women and girls found alone or with unrelated men, walking on the street or riding in a taxi.

Even the appalling lack of security has its own sexual politics. Over 150 people are wounded by land mines or unexploded ordnance in Afghanistan every month. But if a girl or woman is maimed, she becomes unmarryable; it is "also difficult for them to make friends, nobody really accepts them," reports physiotherapist Rohajza Naudri, who herself lost a leg to a mine when she was 11.

U.S. BETRAYS DEMOCRACY

Afghanistan has a chance of becoming a place where its citizens can enjoy some freedom, but at every opportunity the U.S. stopped it. One such opportunity was the *loya jirga* of July 2002, which set up the government structures and chose who would run it. It was preceded by the Bonn Summit in November 2001, where the transitional government was formed. Out of 57 delegates, only five women were selected by male delegates in, as Medea Benjamin of Global Exchange tells us, "a completely undemocratic fashion."

The manipulation of the *loya jirga* takes on great significance given the present reality of Afghanistan: the warlords are again fighting among themselves; the Northern Alliance is raping women of the Pashtun ethnic group and imposing Taliban-like restrictions on women; the Northern Alliance and warlords have been using U.S. money to build up their own private armies and power bases and to attack those of other ethnicities and those who support the Karzai government.

The forces responsible for countless brutalities under the former Rabbani government were the ones decreed by the U.S. as the decision-makers. It did not start out that way. As delegates to the *loya jirga* Omar Zakhilwal and Adeena Niazi tell us: "Men and women mingled openly and comfortably. In tolerant and lively exchanges, we discussed the compatibility of women's rights with our Islamic traditions. Women played a leading role at these meetings. We were living proof against the stereotypes that Afghans are divided by ethnic hatreds, that we are a backward people not ready for democracy and equality.... The one issue that united the delegates above all others was the urgency of reducing the power of warlords and establishing a truly representative government."

There was a grassroots movement to nominate the former king, Zahir Shah (a Pashtun) as head of state as a counterbalance to the Northern Alliance. This move was not favored by the warlords of the Northern Alliance and other tribal leaders who want to maintain a weak and decentralized Afghan state in order to preserve their lucrative enclaves of power.

To appease them, the U.S. postponed the *loya jirga* for close to two days while it strong-armed the king into renouncing any role in the government-to-be. This allows the U.S. to drop a bomb or snatch a terrorist whenever it pleases, rather than risk a recomposition

of a centralized Afghan state.

After any semblance of democracy was destroyed by the U.S., Zakhilwal and Niazi report, "the atmosphere at the *loya jirga* changed radically. The gathering was now teeming with intelligence agents who openly threatened reform-minded delegates, especially women. Fundamentalist leaders branded critics of the warlords as traitors to Islam and circulated a petition denouncing the Women's Affairs Minister Samar as 'Afghanistan's Salman Rushdie.'" The warlords terrorized their critics and came out controlling the armed forces, security services, foreign affairs, and ministry staffs—in short, the country.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

With U.S. collusion, Afghanistan is slipping back into chaos, misery, starvation, feudalism. Now more women are being raped because of ethnic rivalries; deepening poverty means the practice of selling girls as brides—some as young as eight—is escalating. Selling women is against Islam, but that hasn't stopped the practice.

While the oppression can seem overwhelming, we have learned from our Afghan sisters how universal is the concept of "two worlds in every country." Just as women organize themselves to fight our government and culture, and oppose Bush's war in Afghanistan and now in Iraq, so women in Afghanistan, South Asia, and the Middle East—in fact women worldwide—reveal themselves as militant fighters for freedom against their own governments.

You can see the dialectic at work—self-development through contradiction—as women confront a key characteristic of their oppression: their complete dehumanization. The Taliban and the Northern Alliance have reduced women to their sexual function and view women as things. That reality means these women put their lives on the line to experience self-development, to insist to themselves and to the world that they are full human beings.

During the Taliban years, women ran hundreds of

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WOMEN WORLDWIDE

by Mary Jo Grey



Wambui Otieno in 1987 with supporters outside of court.

In Nairobi, Kenya, where widows are shunned, revolutionary feminist activist Wambui Otieno, 67 years old, sparked huge controversy by marrying Peter Mbugua, 25. In the 1950s she fought for Kenya's independence from Britain as a Mau Mau scout, was imprisoned, raped and impregnated by prison guards; in the 1960s she married out of her tribe; in 1987 she fought her first husband's tribe over where he would be buried, arguing that women should make that decision despite tribal customs. While headlines proclaim "Granny's toy boy scandalizes Kenya," and men are quoted saying, "She's disgusting," Otieno proclaims that "Women must rise against the attitude that only older men can marry younger girls."

The U.S. Supreme Court upheld—by refusing to hear an appeal—a lower court decision ruling that "wanted posters" with pictures of abortion doctors are illegal threats of violence (not free speech). The American Coalition of Life Activists must therefore pay damages under the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act.

Police in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, forced the cancellation of a planned march, July 20, to protest a rising number of sex crimes. About 25 activists from the All Women's Action Society showed up anyway and, despite police harassment, unfurled a 12-foot long banner which read: "Citizens Against Rape: Towards a Violence-Free Community." They attached notices to the banner charging "Cancelled! Our rights to peaceful protest denied."

The ruling Christian Democratic Party in Slovakia is threatening to throw out Cabinet members who voted, in July, to extend abortion rights to allow pregnancies to be terminated up to the 24th week if the fetus might suffer genetic defects. The right-wing coalition government in that heavily Catholic country is said to be in crisis.

Contradictions at women's conference

Editor's note: In the July N&L we discussed the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) Conference. Below are reports of several workshops.

"Women as Third World Citizens," was so permeated by postmodernist thinking that it offered little of the internationalism found in revolutionary feminist and Third World theory.

Laura E. Sjoberg was to speak on Iraqi women, but had decided not to because "stories about women in Iraq have endings with consequences" for which she did not want to be responsible. Instead, she discussed her agreement with Jean Baudrillard that "inquiry into reality removes us from truth."

Gurleen Grewall's paper, "The Case Against Development," described Indian women's movements against new dams and destruction of subsistence farming which had fed people and preserved the land better than the technology of the "Green Revolution." The other panelists were Helena Halperin, who described women's cooperative ventures in Kenya, and Wairim Njambi, a Kenyan, who spoke about women-to-women marriages there.

In the discussion, I gave out a flyer about Iraqi feminists, suggesting we could say something about them—and help them. I warned against failing to mention that one Indian feminist Grewall discussed supports the fundamentalist BJP government. Njambi objected to criticizing Indian feminists' support of the BJP: "You American feminists supported Clinton." Of course, I said that I did not, and that those who did had set back the women's movement.

—A.J.

At the session on "The Politics of Place in Latin American Women's Literature," a paper was presented by a Brazilian woman, Erica A. Salles, about the book *Child of the Dark* by Carolina Maria de Jesus. It was great to hear the cross-generational dialogue with the poor Black woman living in the 1950s in a Brazilian favela (slum).

The workshop on "Women in Black" (WiB) focused on academics as participants in the movement. I learned about WiB beginning as a silent protest by Jewish and Palestinian women against the Israeli government in support of the first intifada in Jerusalem in 1987. It spread around the world, including women demonstrating in Belgrade against Milosevic's genocidal war.

Lee Sharkey spoke of how silence can transform political protests. She gave a historical sweep of women's mourning as a form of political action since 1955.

This workshop showed feminist contradictions in the movement. Mary Joe Agerstoun started a WiB Art Project. But the participants could not agree to send their creation to Israel because they did not know how to distinguish their opposition to all wars, including Palestinian extremists' condemnation of the existence of Israel. The inability to define their opposition to war in ways that cannot be confused with non-liberatory opposition caused the death of this project.

—Urszula Wislanka

There were three fascinating presentations at "Neoliberal Fare, Day Care and the Red Scare: Making Socialism Relevant (Again) in the Classroom," a workshop that aimed to "consider how feminism and socialism can be introduced in courses that focus on women and development, religion, and feminist history."

Kristen Ghodsee briefly traced the history of the women's movement in the U.S., stressing how it "was always connected to issues of race and class." She mentioned Clara Zetkin and Alexandra Kollontai as socialists who "saw sex as fundamental to revolution. Even in the French Revolution women were an issue." She said that NWSA's program links gender, race and ethnicity but seems scared of class. She wants to "question what is going on with the absence of class and feminism's ability to deal with late capitalism."

In the discussion I brought up the left's failure to project a liberatory vision of the future because each presenter touched on how, as Ghodsee put it, her students didn't know, and couldn't imagine, how an alternative economic society could be structured. She said, and the other presenters agreed, that it was "hard for her students to understand a non-price-driven mechanism for distributing resources."

—T.M.

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Firing spurs Berkeley Bowl union rally

Berkeley, Cal.—Berkeley Bowl, a store noted for its organic produce, has fired union organizer Chuck McNally. It came as a shock to many shoppers in one of the most liberal cities in the U.S. that Berkeley Bowl was not already unionized. On July 21 about a hundred people came to an informal rally in front of the store to show their support for Chuck and for the unionization effort. Employees have already voted, by signing union cards, to join United Food and Commercial Workers, but the store refuses to recognize the election.

The store fired Mr. McNally on bogus, trumped-up charges. It has engaged in other anti-union activities as well: telling employees that they doubted the union would help them and distributing anti-union flyers. Bosses have even asked workers if they signed union authorization cards, a clear violation of federal law.

Verizon demand

New York—Sisters and brothers, as many of you know the contract between Verizon and over 75,000 workers is up in August. Our unions (CWA/IBEW) are currently involved in difficult and tough negotiations, as the Verizon overlords are demanding deep cuts in the living standards of our workforce.

For three years, Black telephone workers, under the leadership of the Black Telephone Workers for Justice, have been waging a struggle to make the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. a paid holiday from Verizon for all of its employees. Verizon has confirmed our accusations of racism and hypocrisy as they have so far rejected the demand for a paid holiday in these current negotiations.

We are asking for your help in our struggle. We are calling on you to send an email to Verizon's top overlord. Please send an email demanding that Dr. King's birthday be made a paid holiday, or you will participate in a national boycott of Verizon products. The address is ivan.g.seidenberg@verizon.com. Please send a copy to ronmwwashington@aol.com.

Thanks for your support! The Struggle Continues!
—Ron Washington, BTWFJ

WORKSHOP TALKS

(Continued from page 1)

reducing services. They insist they have to cut services and impose new costs on patients, in order to reduce costs. In other words, they have to harm the patient in order to help him. Even George Orwell couldn't have been more ironic.

TARGETING THE SICK

While I hear a lot of economic clichés about "supply and demand" to rationalize price increases, in practice, healthcare organizations are manipulating both supply and demand to milk all sides of the system for their gain. With bean counters in charge, the sickest are targeted for the greatest financial pressure.

I've heard patients say things like "It doesn't pay to be sick," or "I never should have let that doctor examine me in the first place," or "Next time, I'll just keep him at home, it's cheaper." People in effect weed themselves out of healthcare, based on their inability to pay. Patients are beginning to catch on to the words of one bumper sticker: "Our National Health Plan: Don't Get Sick."

Senior citizens on Medicare are the HMOs' favorite target for price-gouging through increasing co-payments. The goal is to reduce their healthcare demand. Seniors are now in the crosshairs especially because the Bush administration deliberately underfunded healthcare these retired workers have already paid for. Every time I see an old patient on Medicare being punished by huge co-payments, I see their money going towards Bush's war, and his tax cut for the rich.

HARVESTING PATIENTS

The huge Tenet Hospital chain shows another deadly side to healthcare run primarily for the bottom line. It is the most egregious example of how unparalleled revenues are brought into a multi-billion dollar company. In Redding, Cal., Tenet and its Chief of Cardiology were engaging in criminal activity by performing unnecessary angiograms and heart-bypass surgeries on patients who didn't even need them. When there's a pool of money available to dip into, health care managers find a way to artificially boost "demand."

Nurses and doctors appealed to Tenet's management to conduct an administrative review of the practices. Management rebuffed their appeal, and instead promoted the cardiologist and put his face on Tenet's ads because, to them, he was their star performer in enhancing their bottom line. He marketed a lucrative commodity even if it had no use and in fact did enormous damage.

We have entered a brave new world where patients are treated either as financial liabilities or opportunities for revenue enhancement. Health workers are treated as either mere labor cost to be cut, or as enforcers of revenue enhancement.

There's no other way out of this dehumanized world of all against all dictated by capital's perverted form of social "cooperation" unless we begin to consciously strip away the commodity form out of not only healthcare but also other areas of life and labor in society in general.

For the workers the issues are uneven pay and arbitrary pay raises, poor working conditions, lack of healthcare coverage (they have to wait a full six months before becoming eligible for coverage) and management's ability to fire anyone at will.

The people at the July 21 rally were, by and large, the same people who fought to have Berkeley Bowl locate in its present store. Several years ago, when the local Safeway closed, a chain McFrugal was slated to occupy the space. Local residents pressured the city to instead give Berkeley Bowl tax breaks so it could move into the space. One of them said, "We used to be the Committee for a Full Service Supermarket, we now need to become the Committee for a Full Service UNION Supermarket."
—Union supporter

Congress Hotel strike



Congress Hotel Workers show support for Gelmart Factory workers in the Philippines, who have done the same for the hotel union. Both the factory and the hotel are operated by Albert Nasser.

Chicago—We learned a lot of things during the strike against the Congress Hotel. We learned that Nasser is cheap. Also if he cared about the employees, he wouldn't have made us go on strike. He hasn't negotiated with us since the strike began June 15.

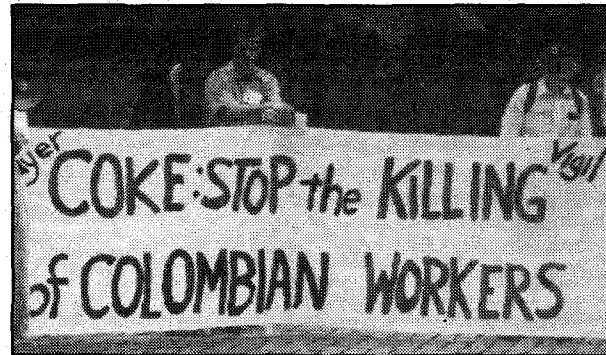
We also learned that we could stay strong. Some thought we would go back before now without getting what we need—the same wage as the rest of the hotel workers in Chicago, \$10 an hour.

Some people out here got jobs somewhere else during the strike, but I haven't been able to find one. I worked at Congress Hotel for nine years. Some are so mad that they say they might not come back to the Congress Hotel even with a new contract.

People are wondering why we don't see members of our union from other hotels on the line. We need their help, but HERE Local 1 stopped getting them here after a few weeks. Why? We know people haven't forgotten us because other unions show solidarity by coming out here, like SEIU.

I feel sorry for the guests during the strike. The kitchen is nasty. There are lots of flies on the prep line. The kitchen is supposed to be cleaned between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m., but the chef says he doesn't have the time to get it done. Just this morning, we turned back eight people. A wedding party canceled because of all the noise we make. A wedding party moved to the Palmer House Hotel. Congress Hotel lost thirty thousand dollars. So we know there are people who care and that Congress Hotel is losing money.
—Striker

Coke union support



Atlanta—Picketers at the Underground Plaza here in the city where Coca-Cola's world headquarters is located, protested the complicity of Coca-Cola in the murder, by paramilitary death squads of union activists at bottling plants in Colombia. The event was on July 9.—Ray B.

Nursing home abuse

Chicago—People usually try to prepare for events such as funerals, education, promotions, but few of us plan for the time when we are elderly or incapacitated. Some senior citizens have life insurance policies, but they didn't plan on being sick. Many of them fall prey to the corporate machine of the nursing home industry which will eat up most of their income and resources.

The problem is not that most of the income of seniors and others is taken, but the fact that many are given inferior services, sometimes by uncaring staff. At many nursing homes, patients with Alzheimer's disease or other mental incapacitations wander unsupervised. A patient might have a seizure and collapse foaming at the mouth and bleeding with no help in sight. Sometimes defecation is not cleaned up promptly from the floor. I have seen housekeeping staff reuse dirty water to mop floors.

The most despicable thing about the nursing home industry is the attitude of dehumanization produced in some of the staff after they've been there awhile. There are excellent staff people in the nursing home industry, too, but some staff people talk to patients as if they were dogs. If they holler in pain from bed sores they will be ignored and their problem not treated.

At one nursing home a staff member who was delivering snacks dropped a cookie on the floor. His co-worker said to throw it away. He replied, as he put it back on the table, "They don't know the difference."

His statement summed up for me the attitude of the institution that is supposed to care for our sick and elderly. Many are disabled, have no families or friends

who are able to care for them, are sick, poor, and can't take care of themselves. Some are at a point where they don't really understand what's going on around them. Mistreatment of such people is unacceptable!

There needs to be action taken when the sick and elderly become the oppressed.

—Akili



Many thanks to Greg Staples who contributed the photo with the story "Support for union drive at Fred's" last month.

Felix Martin speaks to today's struggles

Soledad, Cal.—I enjoyed *The Revolutionary Journalism of Felix Martin* so much I read it in one single day. This book is really good at shedding light on racism in this country, as well as the many struggles Felix Martin participated in as a blue collar worker.

The article "Nixon smokescreen" made me think how history repeats itself, as now I see a Bush smokescreen, especially concerning "weapons of mass destruction." Martin was comparing U.S. workers to Russian workers and foresaw the government coming down on strikers to the point of "making Russia look like a bunch of play kids." I was amazed that Felix Martin's simple style of writing packed such a punch to

the capitalist beast.

So did his revealing to students at a college campus that they would someday be the "mental labor" while the workers were physical labor. But Martin spoke of the need to bridge the gap between the two. I feel, as Marx wrote, that both mental and physical labor are labor. To unite the two benefits both groups of workers. Their division is for the benefit of capitalism.

Martin referred to anti-busing racism as a tool of capitalist society aiming to divide workers on the shop floor. These capitalist tools have not been disposed of—they merely change appearance or are delivered to us in a smokescreen, as Felix Martin would say.

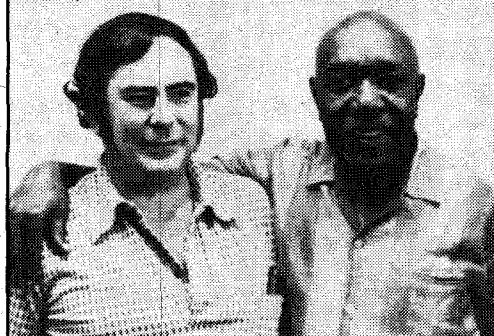
—Soledad prisoner

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From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya
MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES

The cooperative form of labor vs. abstract labor

In our present society, where humanity is but a cog in a machine, the proof that the division between mental and manual labor—that attribute of all class societies—has under capitalism reached its apex, is self-evident.

With this truth shining forth in increasing tensions, crises and wars, it becomes well-nigh impossible to have the worker fulfill the capitalistic function of machine-made higher labor productivity.

The workers' antagonism to the machine has traveled a long way from the time when they simply wished to smash it. Now what they want to have done with is their very work. They want to do something entirely different—express all their natural and acquired powers in an activity worthy of them as human beings.

They wish to appropriate the science, heretofore wholly incorporated into the machine while they were turned into its appendage. They feel that in a much greater way than seems apparent to the naked eye. Their capacity to engage in a wide variety of activities, change from job to job, tinker with machines in off hours, create things for their own use on government-plus contracts is a good beginning to making the machine an extension of their powers rather than them being slaves to the machine.

All that needs to be done now is that they and their fellow workers engage in a self-activity so different from their present work as to make the scientists in the cubbyholes outside of the plants as unnecessary as is the capitalist inside the factory.

In no other way can a fundamental change in society be achieved. In all other ways capital has retained its domination over labor. Marx was right when he insisted that only when cooperative labor replaced private labor from the ground up will social control become the natural attribute of individuals cooperating in labor and who have become thereby truly social individuals.

Otherwise cooperation is a snare and a delusion, that capitalistic caricature of social control called private management of industry. That is to say, it is cooperative labor forced into the value form to which all concrete labors have been reduced by the "planned despotism" of capital.

Just as there is no such animal as "abstract labor"—you must be engaged in concrete activity, mining, tailoring, machine production [and so forth]—so there is no cooperative labor where the autocratic control over labor sets the pace the workers must follow.

It is the process of reduction of your laboring skill which transforms the labor process into a process of extraction of surplus value—that is, unpaid hours of labor. The capitalist's "werewolf hunger" for unpaid hours of labor dominates over that labor process and also over technology which is constantly called upon to reduce the hours of labor socially necessary to produce commodities to win the battle of competition on a world scale.

Let us take another look at the form of cooperation. Under capitalism it takes the form of value. But value in production means one thing, and in the market something quite different.

In the market it means exchange-value or money and private property. In production it means the time clock which sees to it that no matter what your concrete skills you produce so much and so much—a whole mass of abstract labor no different from that of your fellow workers, no matter what your individual private skills are which fashion concrete commodities.

But the capitalist doesn't trust the clock in and of itself to set the pace, so he has a foreman over the belt line. But suddenly you find that it isn't just one foreman but a hierarchy of control over you. Why? You can do the work, so why all these composites of a Frankenstein monster?

It is because neither you nor your fellow workers are interested in the work. It is a question of forcing you to labor and it is because it is forced labor that such a hierarchy is necessary. They are there to see that everything is subordinated to that one function, of extracting from you as much labor as possible.

They are not there because it is not just you but many of you who are working. That is not because labor is social, cooperative. They are not there because they work, or even know how to very often, but only to exercise that despotic control which forces all your labors into that value form.

Now the capitalist tries to identify his despotic con-

EDITOR'S NOTE

As part of our ongoing discussion of Marx's critique of capitalist production, we publish here for the first time anywhere Dunayevskaya's essay, "The Cooperative Form of Labor Vs. Abstract Labor," which she wrote on March 2, 1951 as part of her work on what ultimately became *Marxism and Freedom, from 1776 until Today*. All boldfaces are in the original. The piece has been slightly edited.

control over labor with the social character of cooperative labor. But that you know is so much poppycock, only it isn't a joke because he has all the cards in his hands and the only thing private belonging to you—your capacity to labor—is of no value outside of the factory. So you continue to sweat it out. But you are not fooled. You know that the planned despotism in the factory arises not out of the cooperative form of labor, but out of the antagonistic relationship between between you and he who lords it over you.

Marx knew that too, and that is why he so sharply separated the nature of the cooperative form of labor from its capitalistic integument or value-form.

1. a) Cooperation, in itself, a productive power of social labor, is a power due to cooperation itself. b) Cooperation, under capitalism, is forced into a value mold of undifferentiated abstract labor which hides not only its concrete character but the division between paid and unpaid labor. Indeed cooperative labor is allowed to function only to the extent that it is possible to produce surplus value or unpaid hours of labor. That is what the capitalist's private property means, the labor of others.

2. Cooperative labor, in itself, allows the laborer to strip off "the fetters of the individual and develop capacities of his species."

That is to say not you alone make a commodity but you and your fellow workers. In losing a skill you have also acquired however a new, a social power.

b) Cooperative labor, under capitalism, necessitates control by a whole army of foremen, superintendents, straw bosses, big bosses, etc. Planned despotism thus "takes the forms peculiar to itself," the hierarchic structure due first to the capitalists having been relieved of actual labor and the labor of superintendence, and then due to the necessity of ever greater masses of abstract labor. Reducing a human to a cog in the machine you begin to realize is no small matter and it is this which requires the monstrous creation of monotony, speed-up, uniformity, listlessness and more speed-up.

3. a) The "peculiar form" of the planned despotism is also due to the fact that the laborers have sold their individual, isolated labor power. But since there are

many such laborers, the capitalists must make cooperators out of them, but cooperators who must fructify with their living labor the value of the past labor incorporated in the machine but which is in actuality labor of the laborers themselves in alienated form.

And just as that past labor no longer belongs to the laborers, so the living labor of these cooperators no longer belongs to themselves, having been sold to the capitalist. These cooperators are now appended to the special working mechanism also belonging to the capitalist. This is no longer just a machine; it is capital, a social relationship of production established through this instrument, the machine, which has long ago been alienated from the laborer.

b) So that, while cooperation in itself requires social control by masses, under capitalism cooperative labor means capital's management of industry, "which is an

attribute of capital as in feudal times the function of general and judge were attributes of landed property."

4. Finally, the new power that cooperation, in itself, is cannot develop freely and fully under such conditions for while it must fit into the value form, its human capacities are thwarted. The social power of labor which appears as the productive power of capital is indeed a capitalist caricature of this new productive power which will release its energies only when it becomes the new center of gravity of a new social order.

We can view cooperative labor from another angle, the division of labor. (We concern ourselves here only with the division of labor under capitalism.) The seeming planlessness of the social division of labor as it is reflected in society, that is the market, is in truth the direct opposite in the factory where it turns out

to be the undisputed authority of the capitalist.

While the detail functions of the laborer remain a technical necessity in the manufacturing period, in the movement from manufacture to machinofacture, the machine sweeps away the technical reasons for "the annexation of the worker to a detail function." But while this undermined the subjective authority of the capitalist, it encrusted the planned despotism with the objectivity of the machine which took over the disciplining of labor.

It is here, says Marx, that dialectics separates itself not only from the vulgar materialism of capitalism, but also from the abstract materialism of natural science, and in history and its process sees the truth; there is no development of technology outside of the historic process.

And so it happens that technology does not mean the freeing of the laborer from his function as an appendage to the machine, nor of the lightening of his labor, nor of any "abstract" development of the productive forces other than through the sweat of the worker.

The fact therefore is that where the capitalist is there "in person" or not, or whether the technology "in itself" needs the detail laborer or a man fit for a variety of functions, the worker is confronted with an already existing

material condition of pro-

duction. He can do nothing but subordinate himself to it, to this alien force. Management over social labor which in manufacture was "purely subjective" is now "purely objective."

But here, too, is "the absolute contradiction." The nature of modern industry necessitates variations in labor, fluidity, mobility, while in its capitalistic form, it reproduces the old, ossified division of labor. The latter is the condition of laboring for one separated from his instruments of labor.

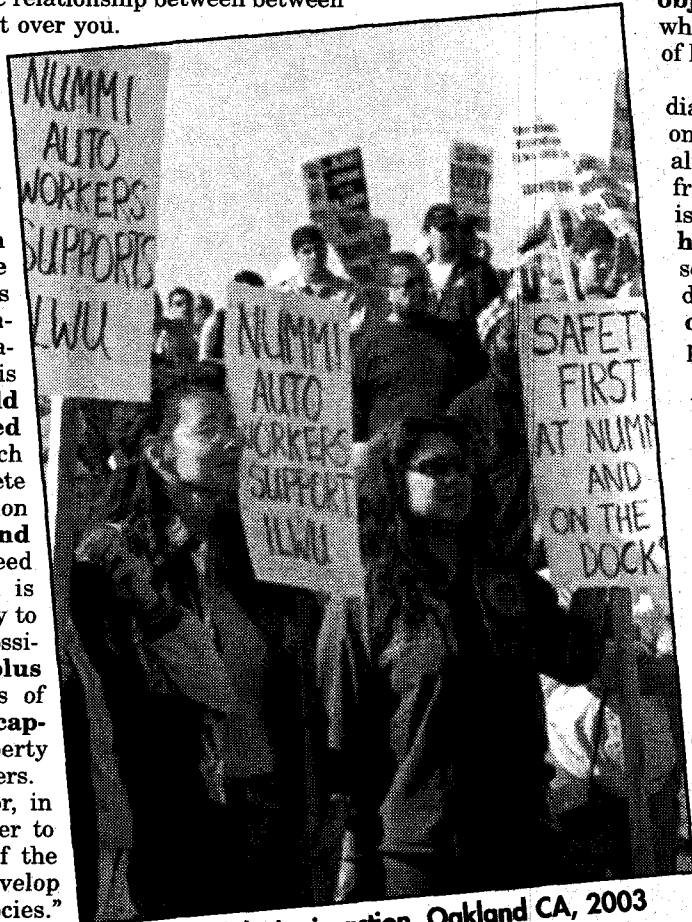
While the workers' revolt moves from the fight against the instrument of labor to struggles against the capitalistic misuse of that instrument, the capitalist ideologist discovers the "stupidity" of fighting against the machine which gives him power over nature. In other words, while the worker discovers that, although it first enslaved him, his tools can gain him freedom—once the division of mental and manual labor is done away with—the bourgeois economist tries to spirit away the present enslavement:

The contradictions and antagonisms inseparable from the capitalist employment of machinery, do not exist, they say, since they do not arise out of machinery, as such, but out of its capitalist employment! Since therefore machinery, considered alone, shortens the hours of labor, but, when in the service of capital, lengthens them...since in itself it is a victory of humanity over the forces of Nature, but in the hands of capital, makes humanity the slave of those forces; since in itself it increases the wealth of producers, but in the hands of capital, makes them paupers—for all these reasons and others besides, says the bourgeois economist without more ado, it is clear as noonday that all these contradictions are a mere show of the reality, and machinery considered in itself, that as a matter of fact, they have neither actual nor a theoretical existence.*

But the contradictions aren't just "show" but the historic truth. Indeed, there is no technology outside of this historic development of capitalism. The abolition of the division of labor would mean its bursting out of the old value form and an entirely new mode of labor in an entirely new form would appear. The immanence of this breaks down entirely the psychology of civil society. The worker balks at the productivity of labor as a capitalistic function of order, monotony, uniformity, intensity which is entirely at variance with the nature of modern industry which needs variation of labor, a fully developed social individual.

It shows itself in the antagonisms of anarchy and authority, in the order and catastrophes of a society which lives under a Damocles sword: the penalty of death hanging over capitalist production for not having developed the worker's humanity. But rather than "giving in" capitalism becomes more autocratic, more hierarchic in structure, more monstrous in content.

* Marx's *Capital*, Vol. I (New York: International Publishers, 1967), p. 441.—Ed.



Workers' solidarity in action, Oakland CA, 2003

"If, dreamed Aristotle, the greatest thinker of antiquity, if every tool, when summoned, or even of its own accord, could do the work that befits it, just as the creations of Hephaestus went out of their own accord to their sacred work...then there would be no need either of apprentices for the master workers, or of slaves for the lords! Oh those heathens! They understood nothing of political economy and Christianity. They did not, for example, comprehend that machinery is the surest means of lengthening the working day."

—Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I

ESSAY

Solidarity with women in Afghanistan

(Continued from page 2)

clandestine schools for girls, despite the fact that their discovery could mean at least a severe beating and, at worst, death.

Women resisted in every way. At the Bagrami Clinic, for example, Dr. Mir Faziullah and his four women staff members continued to treat men, even though the Taliban checked the clinic three to four times a month. Aqela Sarwary, a 49-year-old nurse, said: "Sometimes, as we took turns watching the front, a mullah might come in through the back. When the Taliban came, I'd close the curtains and cover my face. Then they would leave and we'd go out without burqas, and all the men patients could see our faces and didn't care." Daily evasion of Taliban law by women health workers and medical professionals was extensive.

Women's defiance took many different forms. Some girls like Laili, 10 years old, wore pants and kept her hair cut short. "I pretended to be a boy and studied in the boys' school," she said triumphantly. "It was the only way for me." Another girl, too old to pass as a boy, passed herself off as a teacher, while still a student. What we see is a fantastic self-development through the contradiction of what the Taliban tried to impose. This is the heart of the dialectic and the movement of history: self-development through contradiction.

FACING INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS

Women are not only fighting an imperialist outside force—which is what much of al-Qaida and the Taliban were in Afghanistan. They are also fighting, as women's liberationists have had to fight in every country, their own indigenous culture. This is clear from incidents like the one last November in Kabul when a crowd of burqa-clad women shouted "yes, yes" when asked whether they wanted to shed it. But then a man shouted: "No. They need food, they don't need to take off their burqas." In fear, the women became silent.

The Northern Alliance deputy prime minister, Abdur Rasool Sayyaf, publicly opposes women voting, and says women should remain veiled and not mix with men in public. But burqa or not, women want freedom, as is clear from a woman who fled to Pakistan after the Taliban took power. Here she speaks for herself:

There has been much discussion about how Afghan women have been...abused, tortured and killed. But these discussions...have done little to solve our lack of basic human rights. Many Afghan women look to the West in the name of freedom and expect people in the West to promote our rights. But in the West they neither consult us about the issues that affect our daily lives, nor do they uphold or promote on our behalf the standards by which they themselves live...All our hopes have been consigned to the dustbin of history. Our voices have been buried without any recognition that our hands have carried swords to fight against our enemies...Those who have come to power, those with guns, continue to leer at us, to make fun of us, to take pleasure in harassing us. These men who think of themselves as the defenders of our faith, as our fathers and brothers sent to protect us, are the same ones who call us "Honey"...Others tell us that we are "live wires that must be covered." It is a pity they don't recognize us as individuals, as fellow human beings.

Her words reveal that women's fight is total: they fight their government, their culture, and in many cases the men who are closest to them. This reveals at least three things: 1. That the uprooting of the old society must be total from the start; 2. That freedom for women is not some "Western" imperialist idea imposed on women but springs from indigenous soil; and 3. That it is not enough to oppose U.S. imperialism without also opposing all religious fundamentalisms that want to send women back to the dark ages.

These points are implicit in why the Revolutionary Association of Women of Afghanistan (RAWA) insists that "Revolutionary" remain part of their name. As

RAWA member "Sahar" said: "What we want is full human rights for women; we want women to be recognized as human beings; in Afghanistan, this in itself is considered 'revolutionary.' We want a secular, democratic government, with freedom of thought, speech and religion for everybody. This too is revolutionary...For Afghanistan we have to be radical."

DEMAND FOR NEW HUMAN RELATIONS

Implicit in Afghan women's demands is the need for new human relations—which cannot be without a completely transformed society where sexism, racism, and capitalism are what is "consigned to the dustbin of history." To achieve that total uprooting requires a unity of the movements from practice with a philosophy that encompasses and makes explicit those desires.

Afghan women's struggles, and our own, challenge the idea that all we need to do is sit back and let the U.S. "liberate" a country—or we only need to fight against the U.S. and its economic and military policies. Even if we are successful in ending Bush's endless war on terrorism, does that mean that women will be free? Women's struggles and demands reveal why the anti-war movement must not limit itself to only being against Bush and not also condemn terrorists who kill innocent people and religious fundamentalists who enslave women and deny our humanity.

Women fighting for total freedom challenge the Left

Dialectics of Latin American liberation

The Concept of Other in Latin American Liberation: Fusing Emancipatory Thought and Social Revolt, by Eugene Gogol (Lexington Books, 2002)

by Roger Hollander

Anyone who has lived and/or followed the Latin American experience/reality in the post-World War II era will have experienced a Sisyphean frustration with respect to the rise and fall of liberation movements and the hope for new human relations to which they aspire. In the eight years I have lived in Ecuador I have witnessed two successful "leftist" coup d'états that have resulted in absolutely no fundamental social, political, or economic change whatsoever—to the contrary, the economic/political crisis deepens.

In Ecuador, the 1980s saw intense grassroots organization within the indigenous community that culminated in the formation of a national indigenous organization, CONAIE, whose power was expressed in the 1990s through massive protests against oil exploitation in the Amazon rainforest, privatization of social security, and reactionary agricultural laws.

The indigenous revolt of 2000, its contradictions and the reasons for its ultimate failure is taken up in *The Concept of Other in Latin American Liberation*. Gogol points out the contradictions within the leadership of the indigenous movement between those who relied on the creativity of the masses and those who allied themselves with government power. This has come to a tragic fruition with the Gutierrez government, causing disunity within the indigenous movement that may take decades to repair. These events in Ecuador are in a sense a paradigm of the failures encountered in post-World War II Latin America.

In the first section of the book, Gogol argues that the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic is a *sine qua non* of truly liberatory revolutionary activity that intersects most dramatically with Latin American historical reality. To those who dismiss Hegel, Gogol shows that they do so at the peril of sacrificing the methodology that can keep revolutionary thought and revolutionary activity dynamic and in sync with social reality.

He takes us upon a philosophical journey touching upon the concept of Other and consideration of the dialectic in the writings of Latin American thinkers including Octavio Paz, Leopoldo Zea, Augusto Salazar Bondy, Anibal Quijano, Enrique Dussel, and Arturo Andrés Roig. He outlines the unique, important and positive contributions made by each, but concludes that in each one encounters an inability or unwillingness to delve deeply into Hegel's "voyage of discovery."

In the second section—"Imprisonment of the Other: the Logic of Capital on Latin American Soil"—we find a review of major Latin American thinkers of the 20th century—like José Carlos Mariátegui, Enrique Semo and Roger Bartra. Again, we encounter a richness in thought and analysis of capital's stranglehold on the masses, showing us that the work of Marx as well as Hegel has taken root in Latin American soil. But we do not yet see the Other unbound. What we find again is the failure to recognize the second negation, the positive in the negative, the pathway to genuine liberation.

In discussing liberation theology's inability to sus-

tain its momentum in the face of the changing realities and setbacks of movements in Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador, Gogol asks: "If one develops a concept of social change, without such a theoretical labor flowing from a fullness of philosophy of revolution, then what happens to one's theory when the social movement, the historic moment, has changed?" (p. 115).

Referring to Marx's economics, not as economic determinism, but rather as a "unity of humanism and philosophy;" not a mere sociology but as a philosophy of liberation. Gogol demonstrates how one expression of revolutionary subjectivity after another has fallen prey to the dead end of state-capitalism or reformist accommodation with different forms of capitalism.

The third section of the work is a journey through selected contemporary liberation movements in Latin America. From the Rio Grande to Tierra del Fuego, we see different forms of revolutionary subjectivity in action: urban, rural, indigenous, women, workers, students, and others. In each of these, be it the tin miners in Bolivia, labor organizers in Guatemala, labor organizers in Bolivia, labor organizers in Mexico's maquiladoras, the Madres de la Plaza of Argentina, or the Landless Workers' Movement in Brazil, Gogol shows us how self-liberation re-creates itself in its own social environment, creating new pathways towards liberation.

In the Zapatistas of Chiapas, he finds the freshest and most innovative expression of revolutionary subjectivity. In their rejection of focosism, and in aiming not to take state power for themselves but rather to unify the various expressions of Other in Mexico, the Zapatistas broke new ground. Instead of adopting the dead-end, vanguardist "dictatorship of the proletariat" strategies and philosophies which the original urban radicals had brought to Chiapas, what emerged was a re-creation of the principles of collectivity in decision making, that were already inherent and deeply seated in the ways of the indigenous peoples of Chiapas.

As one concerned with understanding and changing Latin America, I see this work as of supreme importance. Although there are a few omissions (the most glaring being a failure to discuss the Colombian situation), the work is comprehensive and probing.

The book concludes with a discussion of philosophy and organization, noting, "It is the theoretician-philosopher(s) who catches the mass self-activity from below, and labors to give it meaning by rooting it within the Marxist-Hegelian philosophic expression...Marx was not afraid to speak of 'our party' even in the times when it was only he and Engels" (p. 343).

As one who lives and observes on a daily basis both the ravages of globalized capitalism and the frustration of liberation movements in Ecuador, I can attest to the urgent need for new beginnings in Latin America. And in the light of the Bush doctrine of permanent war and his plans to augment existing U.S. military force in Ecuador, Colombia, Peru, Aruba, Puerto Rico, Cuba and Honduras, and with new bases in the Galapagos, Brazil, El Salvador and Argentina, the Marxist-Humanist primary task takes on renewed urgency: "To the barbarism of war we pose the new society."



Women's march in Chiapas, Mexico

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WAR, RESISTANCE & THE NEEDED ALTERNATIVE

The part of the Draft for Marxist-Humanist Perspectives printed in the July issue of *N&L* that spoke most strongly to me is the quote from the Constitution of News and Letters Committees on the opposition to war. The key is the phrase "to a man, woman and child control their own lives." When we talk about the battle of ideas, we're not talking about tenured professors doing battle with other tenured professors at international forums. We're talking about the "man, woman and child" of the streets being able to argue those ideas. Intellectuals may think that ideas are for the learned. But as long as the ideas affect me, I want to have something to say about it. The unqualified man on the street cannot be treated as someone who has no responsibility to dig into dialectics.

**N&LC Member
Bay Area**

I agree on "the servility the mass media displays to the prevailing powers in this country." I'm especially concerned about the radio companies like Clear Channel and Infiniti who have been buying up more and more stations and channels, which will then broadcast only conservative positions. Artists more and more will have to project only what the government leaders believe in order to get recording contracts. That's how they will perform censorship.

**P. Dan
Detroit**

In its obvious thrust to achieve world hegemony, Mr. Bush managed to abrogate almost all international treaties regarding anti-ballistic missiles, nuclear testing, Kyoto, and on and on. Now they even want to develop smaller atom bombs to be used in front-line attacks. The U.S. has the greatest arsenal in the world of every kind of weapon and wouldn't let the UN or any international body inspect or supervise it.

**Correspondent
Canada**

On this 100th anniversary of George Orwell's birth, everyone is getting to understand how "Orwellian language" works in 2003—"war is peace" and "occupation is liberation."

**Ron B.
Oakland, CA**

Some left-liberals accept the idea of the U.S. going into Iraq and taking Saddam out of power. They see it as a liberation. Christopher Hitchens broke with *The Nation* over the Iraq war, saying the U.S. should take care of Hussein as if that would establish democracy.

**Computer analyst
Memphis**

If the U.S. really wanted to convince the Iraqis about democracy, they would have gotten Hussein's sons alive and put them on trial. There wouldn't have been any question of their identity, either.

**Asian American
California**

Some leftists make it sound as if they hate everything about American culture, including Americans, and then think they will be able to influence them! It amazes me.

**Labor activist
Memphis**

I would not have said "impotence in peace." After all, the oil is flowing, but the water and electricity are not. That is deliberate. On the other hand, I couldn't agree more that Bush's contention that outside military intervention is the only way to liberate people is dangerous. The looming threat of Islamic fundamentalism taking over is especially not lost on the women who have a lot to lose in the most secular of Middle East countries.

**Hospital worker
California**

I thought the view of experts was that an anti-ballistic missile is totally useless in destroying the multiple warheads of any incoming missile or even to

sort out which of the warheads are dummies and which one is actual. It's obvious you can't use anti-ballistic missiles against commercial airlines or people armed with box cutters or suicide bombers. The only reason I can see for going ahead with a renewed "Star Wars" project is to provide huge profits to Boeing, Raytheon and the other such beneficiaries of the industrial-military complex. Surely, people know that the millions they are throwing out the window would be better spent giving people half decent living conditions, lessening the reasons for terrorist activities.

**Giorgio
Vancouver**

I'm struck with how the principle, "to the barbarism of war, we pose the new society," is key to the whole Perspectives. It opposes that to the ideological pollution that says people can't free themselves but need the U.S. to do it for them. Spontaneous movements do look for organization and a set of ideas to guide them. One of the pitfalls of the 20th century was that shortcuts were always offered that stopped the revolutions short. In the Iranian revolution the ideology of Islamic fundamentalism took over and was able to present itself as the revolution in place of the activity of the masses. That's why it's so important to have a philosophy that projects a new society as growing out of the spontaneous forms so they can preserve their own significance.

**Supporter
Tennessee**

The most startling part of the Perspectives Draft was pointing out that the current military adventure is cheaper than during the height of the Cold War. Those arguing that we can't afford this war, would be shocked by the fact that it's kind of cheap. It means that the refutation of the war has to be at a deeper level. It's true that terrorism and war are in a vicious circle and despite their mutual animosity they are reinforcing one another. A war has a way of making you choose sides, which most of the Left is doing.

**Anti-war activist
California**

One graduate student I know wasn't happy about the \$5 tax rebate on his check that he got the other day. He said sarcastically, "Oh this is really going to stimulate the economy!" Coming from a right-winger I thought it was significant.

**Activist for patients rights
Memphis**

THE INVINCIBILITY MYTH

The article by Raya Dunayevskaya on "The myth of the invincibility of totalitarianism" (June *N&L*) was a terrific bit of history but the question is whether it has any meaning for today. I think it has several layers of meaning. It certainly shows empirically, even if you are neither a Marxist, a humanist, nor a dialectician, that you would be wrong to deny the continuous possibility of human beings taking their lives into their own hands and trying to remake their world. That is important to grasp for those who have given up on social revolution, whether due to claims that the masses' thinking is too confused by patriotism, consumerism, or whatever to be able to include the idea of an alternative.

The question of whether meaningful change comes only from the outside is also still being hotly debated. The issue Dunayevskaya presents is deeper than "don't rely on any state power." Who can you rely on when you don't have the strength to win by yourself? Her ideas inform our political practice, such as our advocacy of "people to people" solidarity work with freedom fighters, from women in Afghanistan to students in Aceh. But even more we can see how Dunayevskaya's writing on events such as the East German and Vorkuta revolts concretized theoretically such abstract concepts as continuous negation, self-movement from within, and transformation into opposite in her continuous development of philosophy as crucial to social transformation.

**Anne Jaclard
New York**

READERS' VIEWS

HISTORIC FREEDOM MARCH

Well over 10,000 people took part in a 40th anniversary "Walk to Freedom" here on June 28. They were marking the historic march for freedom that took place in 1963 when thousands marched down Woodward Ave. in Detroit with Martin Luther King Jr. That march had ended with King reading his first version of what became his famous "I have a dream" speech a few months later in Washington, D.C. After this year's march, the president of the Detroit Branch of the NAACP, Rev. Wendell Anthony, said "We are here not just to march or dream. The problem comes when we march but have no destination. We have unfinished business in America."

Many of us who marched had been there in 1963. It is noteworthy that there were a lot of politicians there, as well as workers from the Detroit Department of Transportation who were picketing against the mayor.

**Still marching
Detroit**

BLACK STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

I just came across John Alan's column in the July 2002 *N&L* titled "Racial Privacy Fraud" and want to commend him for his stand on the issue. We have little time left to mount an effective campaign to defeat the heinous lie of Ward Connerly's "Racial Privacy Initiative." Perhaps we can get the sides of city buses covered with signs that read "Connerly Code: Racial Privacy—Jim Crow Revived," to redirect people's fears in the proper direction. As Alan says, it isn't about keeping government out of our private lives. It's about keeping government from telling the public what it already knows it's doing wrong. It's about a Police State and everybody too scared to challenge its lies. Let's look at where Connerly's money comes from. Perhaps you can do another piece on that specifically?

**Steve Greaves
San Rafael, CA**

As a longtime activist, I remember well the Black nationalist movement which is making a resurgence today. To Black nationalism, everything in Africa is the "motherland" and it's all good. It shows people don't know their own history. Part of the new society we envision will have to have a confrontation with cultural relativism. It's not as simple as thinking that the West is all bad and the rest is all good.

**Black Christian feminist
Tennessee**

Why do you capitalize "Blacks" to refer to African ancestry but do not capitalize "whites" to refer to European ancestry? Are "Blacks" superior to "whites"? Do you think that such reverse racism is helpful to organize the people here and now to defeat fascism?

**Prisoner
Texas**

Editor's note: It took a decades-long struggle by African Americans against the attempt of white racist America to render them invisible, before they succeeded in getting first Negro and then Black capitalized. For the history of this struggle, consult the work of Carter G. Woodson, the founder of Black History Month.

FIGHTING EXTREMISM

Eric Robert Rudolph is one of Uncle Sam's ex-soldiers. It seems to me that when you are looking for someone who

kills for right-wing causes you don't have to look far. It seems as though all you have to do is look to some branch of the U.S. armed forces or somebody who has some dealing with law enforcement (FBI, DEA or even CIA) connections. The FBI we are told was looking for five years and spending who knows what trying to find Eric Robert Rudolph and came up empty-handed. Luckily for the government, a rookie deputy who was not complacent about his job finally caught the "good old boy." It leaves me wondering whether this puts the rookie deputy on the KKK/neo-Nazi hit list?

**Nouveau Toussaint
Illinois**

Bush has now sent warships to Liberia, where rebels are trying to overthrow the murderous Liberian dictator Charles Taylor. Taylor is a business partner of the TV evangelist Pat Robertson, an extremist who would severely curtail freedom in the U.S. if he could and whose connections abroad have in the past included many repressive regimes. He tried to get the ban on Taylor lifted so the dictator could visit the U.S. He was also in business with Mobutu, the ruthless former-dictator of the old Zaire. In fact, Robertson has been deeply involved with repressive regimes around the globe. Wherever they are found, fundamentalists, whether Muslim or Christian or any other sort, are not known for respecting human rights. We need to oppose the Christian fundamentalists here as strongly as we oppose the fundamentalists in Muslim nations.

**D.T.
Louisiana**

A small victory against the Bush administration's decimation of our civil rights was won on July 22 when a federal judge dismissed the charge of supporting terrorism against lawyer Lynne Stewart. Attorney General John Ashcroft had publicly overseen Stewart's arrest in April 2002 in the first case based on evidence obtained under Ashcroft's new rule allowing the government to monitor jailhouse conversations between lawyers and their clients who may commit "future acts of violence or terrorism." Her client, an Egyptian cleric convicted of plotting to blow up New York landmarks, was hardly allowed to speak to anyone but her. She was accused of aiding his efforts to send a message to his followers while visiting him in prison.

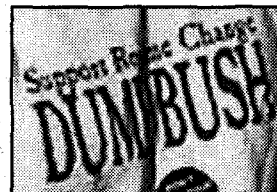
Federal District Judge John G. Koeltl called the charges unconstitutionally vague and ruled that the anti-terrorism statute could not apply to a lawyer doing her job. Charges that she lied and defrauded the government still stand. The U.S. has not announced whether it will appeal the dismissal of the more serious charges.

**Observer
New York**

SUPPORT REGIME CHANGE—DUMP BUSH

I wore my "Dump Bush" T-shirt all day today, and I can't tell you how many stares I got, how many quizzical looks. I had maybe half a dozen people walk up to me and talk about the war. I directed those who wanted to buy one of the T-shirts to go your offices. I hope they follow up on that.

**Chris
Chicago**



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CUBA—WHAT COMES AFTER

Despite the bourgeois media in the U.S. writing about "Castro's revolution," what should really be commemorated is the courage of the Cuban people who overthrew Batista and took history into their own hands. The fact that the revolution turned into its opposite and now wears the face of one man shouldn't stop revolutionaries from saying that there is an alternative to the way things are, one that lies in motion and not the authoritarian Party or cult of personality of Castro.

Brown Douglas
Memphis



I don't agree with the Draft Perspectives printed in the July issue of *N&L*. I read an interview with Castro who said that Cuban hijackers, when they get to the U.S. get asylum, even with their weapons, and the U.S. arrests the innocent passengers. The three guys who were killed were tried under Cuban laws and executed. I may not agree with their laws, but Castro was just trying to protect his country from being invaded. The Draft Perspectives is a lot of over-analyzing and no solutions. What are we calling for the masses to do? Come to meetings?

Carlos
California



A group of Cuban women from different provinces have joined together to appeal for international solidarity with Martha Beatriz Roque Cabello and to pressure the Cuban authorities to release her from prison. She is an economist and was the only woman among the 75 oppositionist intellectuals sentenced to long terms a year ago. She is 58 and has not received the medical attention she needs. These women fear she may die in prison. Readers can email ilk@mail.interlog.com to get information on how to help them.

Supporter
Florida

WORKERS FIGHTING AGAINST CAPITALISM

Formal negotiations between the UAW and the Big 3 (GM, Ford and Daimler-Chrysler) are under way to replace the present contract due to expire Sept. 14. The biggest issues are a major push to force workers to pay more for their health care and to get concessions from the unions on flexibility in the work place (in other words, speed up in production) and more freedom to close plants. Unlike the more militant Canadian UAW which split from the American-dominated UAW years ago, the UAW has consistently lost ground and will lose more with the new contract with its concessionary union policies. Rank-and-file sentiment is clearly opposed to the leadership. Facing layoffs, speed-up and plant closings they don't feel they are in the "same boat" as a management that is paid millions while they face hardship and uncertainty.

Contract watcher
Detroit



I want to send my best wishes from Britain to the Tennessee nurses in their efforts to unionize reported in the July *N&L*. Their story is the same around the world—under-resources and attacks on labour. In some cases the attacks come not just from management but the unions themselves. Lip service is paid to democracy at work, while the workers pay a heavy price in bad backs, stress, violence and depression. I have often thought that more feminist theory and support should be given to this group.

Male nurse
Britain



In the article on "War, resistance, and the need for a new alternative" (July *N&L*) you say that "the key question facing us is whether the forces of revolt will project a viable alternative to this stage of capitalism." I would suggest that what the proletarian movement needs is a shock and awe campaign of our own against capitalism.

Retired postal worker
Michigan

THE ISRAELI SCENE

The neo-conservatives have cast their shadow over Israel, and our new economic reform is, wouldn't you know it, good for the rich and bad for the poor. Vicky Knafo, a gutsy single mother who walked into Jerusalem from her home in the Negev, managed to inspire dozens of Israelis to join her at her encampment opposite the Finance Ministry (now headed by former Prime Minister Bibi Netanyahu). Those joining have included not only other down-and-outers, but also contingents from both the peace and social justice movements. These movements are finally building bridges to each other after many years of working in unproductive isolation. A spur-of-the-moment feminist conference, in which all the women's organizations are participating, was called in the park adjoining Vicky's encampment.

Gila Svirsky
Jerusalem



At least George Bush called it a "separation wall" and condemned it. The Israeli government calls it a "security fence," trying to tone down its immense size and ascribe to it powers of "immunity" that it does not have. It commits two cardinal sins: First, it is constructed inside Palestinian territory and not on the original border between Israel and Palestine. That means it is destroying more homes, cutting more Palestinians from their property and land, and directly harming at least 210,000 Palestinians. Second, the area adjacent to the wall will probably be declared an "open-fire zone" endangering the lives of anyone who approaches it. The last thing we need is an open-fire zone in our backyard.

Outraged Israeli
Jerusalem



On July 30 the front page of the *Chicago Tribune* carried a picture of the hideous "security wall" that is being constructed in the West Bank. The very next day, July 31, their front page carried,

among other stories, a headline "New neighbors draw the line at Cabrini" with an accompanying picture on the back page that showed a seven-foot-high wrought iron fence that has separated Orchard Park—one side housing the low-income residents, the other their more affluent neighbors. This complex was billed two years ago as "the future of public housing" where former Cabrini-Green residents would live side by side with those who could afford expensive condominiums. I was stunned because I had not heard anything about such a fence now being constructed. Whether or not the *Chicago Tribune* had intentionally run these stories one right on top of the other, the message was powerful. And sickening.

For a human world
Chicago

THE SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE

I think you need to explain the Socialist/Communist alternative better. Explain why there will be no exploitative social relations, how we get rid of money, buying and selling, accumulation cycles and such. You also need a better critique of media "head fixing." The bosses' media attacks Marxism regularly. Is it asking too much to counterpunch them a bit? Your paper is informative/educational on workers' activity but the "activity" must have a forward motion and linkages. Otherwise it is turned backwards. To sum up, you need to get into the ABCs of socialism for ordinary workers more. A lot more. Here's my subscription renewal.

Longtime subscriber
Los Angeles



News & Letters is my link to the outside world internationally in a more direct and realistic manner than usual news provides. You assume the reader is an informed person, and the paper takes it from there. Yet it will take time to decipher/understand the Marxist-Humanist philosophy. I'm trying because you show how important those ideas are for all of us. Please thank the one who gave me my donor sub.

Prisoner
California

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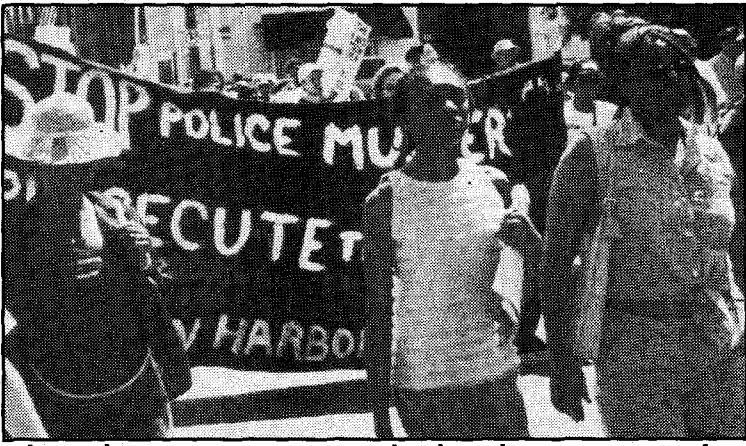
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Benton Harbor, Michigan copes with class, race revolt

Benton Harbor, Mich. is a work in progress for Governor Jennifer Granholm. She has assigned a task force to deal with a more than 90% African-American community with 25% unemployment that competes for the highest murder rate in the U.S., where a revolt took place on two nights this June.

Causes for the mid-June outburst have been brewing for many years: lack of educational and job opportunity; slumlord conditions; 42% single parent households with 130+ teen births per year (population 11,500); excessive force/harassment by police, and a series of wrongful convictions whose cause is the sentencing of Ephraim Paredes, 16-year-old honor student, to three life sentences for crimes he did not commit.

Things weren't always so grim in this beachfront town. Benton Harbor used to advertise the world's largest outdoor fruit market, and was 75% white. African Americans migrated here to work the farms and factories. There were foundries, parts plants, Clark Equipment, Heath do-it-yourself radio kits, and Whirlpool. The steamer Roosevelt brought Chicagoans over as tourists. Benton Harbor supported many churches and grocery stores. Today however, Interstate 94 has no exit to Benton Harbor.



July 12 demonstration against police brutality in Benton Harbor.

From the 1960s to the 1990s global competition killed the factories. In the 1970s Benton Harbor schools were found guilty of racial discrimination. When the federal government issued a desegregation order, white citizens moved to the surrounding communities.

Benton Harbor students could choose to be bused into the surrounding, more prosperous (and whiter) towns, but not the closest, St. Joseph. Today there is no busing for high school students. Benton Harbor has become, as Jesse Jackson said, "The hole in the doughnut - an island of poverty in a sea of prosperity." Since 1986 Benton Harbor and St. Joseph have been represented in congress by Fred Upton, a "Newt Gingrich Republican," whose family established the Whirlpool corporation.

With white flight, institutions left—the newspaper, YMCA, FBI offices, the hospital. There was a big split in the First Congregational Church and much of it moved to St. Joseph. A proclamation from the state that court functions, including misdemeanor court, were to come under county jurisdiction was another blow to Benton Harbor. The jury pool whitened.

The motorcycle death of Terrence Shurn in the wee hours of June 17, which Benton Harborites believe was

caused by a police chase, triggered the June revolt. Mr. Shurn was a popular and valuable citizen and his loss cut Benton Harbor to the quick.

Three non-profit organizations existed in Benton Harbor before Governor Granholm's task force was formed. Cornerstone Group is an outgrowth of the Whirlpool Corporation; the Committee for World Class Communities (CWCC) is a phony civic group established by Whirlpool; and Citizens for Progressive Change (CPC) was formed at the grassroots in response to corrupt law enforcement, crooked prosecution and stacked courts. These groups serve Benton Harbor and St. Joseph, the traditional "twin cities." Two members of the task force were drawn from Cornerstone and CWCC. No one from CPC was selected.

But according to a CPC activist, Cornerstone Group and CWCC don't reach the people. They are "gatekeepers," controlling corporate money, funneling it into towns around Benton Harbor, not dealing with the core problems of depressed lives. "Whirlpool, with lower taxes, favorable land deals...and other corporate demands, has profited from the dire situation of the Black population."*

The executives of Cornerstone and CWCC have no interest in developing a creative street life in Benton Harbor, which is literally deserted and has no "downtown." Small businesses at the center of town are failing one by one because very few people go there. Thus, those organizations that for years have presided over development-in-reverse of this depressed community were included in Granholm's task force. Meanwhile, CPC is struggling to maintain its identity as a criminal justice advocacy group and is being steamrolled by the "giant" task force. It has to fight for criminal justice as a defined "task" for the "force."

—January

* A scathing expose of CWCC can be found at <http://wearemichigan.com/city/BentonHarbor/comments/071003.htm>



VOICES FROM THE INSIDE OUT

by Robert Taliaferro

In the 1960s President Johnson decided that there needed to be an escalation in Vietnam. A ship was allegedly attacked in the Gulf of Tonkin, and a decade later, 58,000 American men and women, and countless Vietnamese, lay dead.

In 2002 and 2003 President Bush and his administration pushed for an invasion of Iraq based on intelligence estimates regarding an allegedly viable nuclear and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) program operating in Iraq. With American troops dying daily, and a morale problem that is starting to be reflective (to a lesser degree) of Vietnam, we now find that at least one part of Bush's reasons for going to war with Iraq were false.

There can be no doubt that Saddam Hussein needed to be removed from power. He was a despot in the model of Stalin, Pol Pot, or Hitler. There is a question, however, if a manipulated war by the Bush administration was the proper recourse.

THE MORAL LOW GROUND

It is hard to stand in judgment of others when your closets—after opening—are full of the skeletons of deceit. It is hard to stand on the moral high ground when you place your young people in harm's way, shouting juvenile schoolyard phrases like "Bring it on!" as you send young men and women off to war.

It is hard to contemplate or define actions that you call right, that only a generation ago, you once condemned as violating national rights. When we look at the lessons of history, we can look at Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Afghanistan, and scream about the Russian invasions of those countries with righteous indignation.

The U.S. government stood on the sidelines as Hussein used poison gas against Iranians and Kurds in the 1980s and the government turned a blind eye to American companies supporting his WMD programs. Ironically, the U.S. also supported the Afghan war against the Russians at about the same time. Now, when those former friends of our political agendas have worn out their welcome, they have become the enemy.

Bush talks about people attempting to "revise history" because they challenge his presumptions and untruths regarding reasons for war. In fact, we now find that if history is revised, the Bush administration is the party holding the red pen.

Recently a question of troop morale has arisen, which is starting to have rather dire consequences, not only on the troops who are expressing their opinions, but on mainstream journalists as well.

UNTRUTH AND CONSEQUENCES

Troops who were lied to by their commander-in-chief are now being disciplined; a journalist who reported those opinions is being attacked by the White House as they attempt damage control after Tony Blair failed to appease Americans' growing questions about the intelligence that led to war.

In Great Britain, the man who accused Blair of exaggerating the nuclear threat of Iraq recently turned up dead. A coincidence, we would hope, that still gives us chilling reminders of other countries who deal with those who disagree with the government in similar fashions.

'History' according to Bush

We hate to discuss conspiracies and conspiracies within conspiracies at the highest levels of government, but when we are not in country-wide denial, we finally realize that in three decades our leaders have lied time and time again, and that many conspiracies actually had basis in fact. No one will be sad to see a post-Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq. But we do expect that such causes be justified and supported by truth.

We must remember that Bush still has countries on his Axis of Evil slate, and ironically those countries are building nuclear weapons as a deterrent to Bush's bully politics that are so reminiscent of the expansionist rhetoric once espoused by the former Soviet Union. In essence, we are using the same language, the same tactics, the same lies to support the rhetoric which we—as a country—now espouse.

As CIA Director George Tenet falls on his sword for the Republic, and Blair soft-shoes in front of Congress, the fact still remains that the responsibility for war, and the reasons of war, lie squarely in Bush's lap. As young men and women die in Iraq daily let us not forget that the continued loss of life is as much in his hands, as those who trigger the rocket-propelled grenades or AK-47s at those young men and women in the field.

Rios Montt's 'coup'

Guatemala—The ruling Frente Republicano Guatemalteco (FRG) attempted what may have been a coup in support of a presidential bid by their leader Efraim Rios Montt, who was responsible for the genocide of thousands, perhaps tens of thousands of indigenous Guatemalans in the 1980s.

The Constitutional Court authorized Rios Montt to be a candidate on July 14, but the Supreme Court temporarily suspended that ruling. The 1985 Constitution clearly banned from the presidency any coup leader or anyone who had become head of state as a result of a coup. The second category includes Rios Montt. (The Constitutional Court reaffirmed its decision to allow Rios Montt to run on July 31.—Ed.)

Busloads of his followers, including paramilitaries armed with machetes and guns, then entered the capital city and attacked groups of people, journalists, and critics of the general. They have threatened media offices and human rights organizations. Hector Ramirez, a journalist, died of a heart attack while escaping a mob, and other journalists narrowly escaped lynching.

I am safe and staying away from the capital right now, but many of my friends here will not be safe if Rios Montt becomes president. The actions of the international community may be the reason we are safe right now and will likely be safe until elections in November.

Please call your Congressperson, the Capital switchboard is (202) 224-3121. Ask for their foreign affairs legislative assistant, explain to them what is happening and ask if they will support or introduce legislation that: 1) condemns the actions of the FRG, 2) commits to sending election monitors to Guatemala immediately, and 3) calls for the United States to suspend foreign aid to the Guatemalan government.

—Correspondent

BLACK/RED VIEW

(Continued from page 1)

icans feel toward their 'mother country' with their perceived distance or separation from it: rather than deserving citizens they are treated by white Americans as 'brutes,' 'talking apes' and 'orang outangs' who 'ought to be SLAVES to the American people their children forever' (p. 29).

Walker's *Appeal* is the foundation for this exploration into literary societies because for African Americans literacy was a dimension of the struggle to be free. Walker knew the great power of words. In his critical onslaught against slavery he showed no mercy. He opened the preamble of his *Appeal* by saying: "we (coloured people of these United States) are the most degraded, wretched, and abject set of beings that ever lived since the world began; and I pray God that none like us ever may live again until time shall be no more."

U.S. SLAVERY WORSE THAN ROMAN

He went on say that slavery in the Christian U.S. was worse than ancient slavery in Egypt, Rome and Sparta. He felt it would take a Josephus or Plutarch to explain it. Karl Marx, living in the age of nascent capitalism, was able to show that the African-American slaves were living in "barbaric horror" because cotton, the commodity they labored to produce, returned a tremendous amount of wealth for slaveholders when sold on the world market. Hence the slaveholders overworked their slaves, often consuming their lives in seven years.

Although Walker didn't know why slavery in the U.S., in comparison to ancient Roman slavery, was more brutal, he was certain that as long as slavery existed there would be no peace. As he stated: "And yet, those avaricious wretches are calling for Peace!!! I declare, it does appear to me, as those same nations think God is asleep, or that he made the Africans for nothing else but to dig their mines and work their farms, or they cannot believe history, sacred or profane."

LITERACY AND FREEDOM

On Aug. 28, 1963, 134 years later, Martin Luther King Jr., another Black minister, stood in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. and said: "100 years later, the Negro still is not free; 100 years later, the life of the Negro is still badly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination; 100 years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty, in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity; 100 years later, the Negro is still languished in corners of American society and finds himself in exile in his own land."

The "wretched" African-American condition that Walker described has been an historic constant, even though some social and economic changes are made after militant protest movements. This reveals that the revolutions over two centuries have remained unfinished, even as it also reveals the permanence of the African-American struggle to be whole, which includes seeing literacy as a way to amplify the power of the idea of freedom.

Californians rally against PATRIOT Act

San Francisco— A campaign against the USA PATRIOT Acts I and II kicked-off here on July 7. The rally heard from an Oakland high school organizer (bottom left in photo montage), who related her principal's suppression of any opposition to the war: from throwing away all of her leaflets to calling in the FBI to intimidate and terrorize three students who made a disparaging remark about Bush in their class. She ended by saying that her principal's every oppressive measure was in fact legal under the PATRIOT Act.



News & Letters / Urszula Wislanka

Another speaker, an Iraqi-American (center), related the persecution faced by her son, a UC Davis student, whose car was towed and who was held in jail though he broke no laws. The police's "excuse" for the harassment was that the car registration was with his mother at home, not with him.

A Japanese-American preacher (right), whose parents were interned during World War II, said the difference between then and now is that then no one spoke up. Now he reported his entire congregation signed a petition to oppose the PATRIOT Act.

A reporter, who was fired from the *San Francisco Chronicle* for being arrested in an anti-war demonstration, spoke not of his own case, but of the *Oakland Tribune* story which brought to light that the brutal attack on the peaceful demonstrators at the Oakland port came after the California Anti-Terrorism Information Center warned that this anti-war protest is a "terrorist act."

The unity of the many emerging voices represent a new challenge to the increasing intrusion into all aspects of our lives by this government.

—Urszula Wislanka

Police board secrecy

Chicago—The Chicago Police Review Board meets once a month—in theory to hear citizens' complaints about police brutality or other concerns. The board meeting was notable as the last to be presided over by outgoing Superintendent Terry Hillard. He didn't show up, but a number of people did come to express their concerns about the selection of a new superintendent.

Representatives of the Justice Coalition of Greater Chicago and Citizens Alert pushed for an open process. David Bates of the Justice Coalition suggested Black policewoman Pat Hill, who has often challenged the status quo, as a nominee. They were told that the executive recruiting firm Maximus Inc. would be handling everything in closed Maximus sessions of the board. The public would have no input.

You didn't get much sense from this discussion that anything more than formality was involved. You certainly did feel that the victims of brutality spoke.

Larry Marshall spoke for the family of police brutality victim Timia Williams when he said: "I don't care about some so-called new superintendent right now, I want to talk about the old one who didn't do anything when people were beaten. I assume his hands were tied. The law says that you can't beat a child, but Timia was beaten by three white police officers and left to bleed in the street. They weren't interviewed by the superintendent. They weren't even questioned, just given 15-day suspensions. Each day that goes by I get angrier."

"If I had been there when it happened, I'd be in jail serving my time right now. You can talk all you want about a new superintendent, but if he also comes in with his hands tied, he or she can't do nothing."

—Attendee

Killer cop trial

Chicago—The civil trial of white police officer Kenny Lunsford, along with the City of Chicago, for the killing of Michael Russell is a major event. Lunsford killed Russell, a 20-year-old Black man, on April 20, 1998 outside the Cabrini-Green housing projects. Russell was caught up in a situation where one man, Craig Winn, had shot another man, Marrio Morgan, and then Winn was in turn shot by police.

Russell was shot a number of times in the back when he tried to take cover. He was unarmed and uninvolved. Craig Winn and Marrio Morgan have testified to that effect, denying Lunsford's lawyers' attempts to smear him. Morgan also testified that Lunsford tried to coerce him in 1998 to implicate Russell in his shooting by pressuring him on a drug case in which Lunsford was the arresting officer. Morgan's lawyer at the time corroborates this.

A police internal affairs investigation found Lunsford guilty of lying about the shooting, but no action was taken and the ruling was overturned by the Office of Professional Standards. Callie Baird, the former head of OPS, was recently rewarded for such services by being appointed to head the Cook County Jail.

Michael Russell was one of three young Black men murdered by police at Cabrini-Green in 1998, along with Brennan King and Leroy Reed. Across Chicago, 71 people were shot by police that year and 15 of them died. It would be good to see a little belated justice done in one of these cases. It is also important to remember justice undone.

—Gerard Emmett

EDITORIAL Bush's war on freedoms

The Bush administration has decimated our constitutionally guaranteed civil rights and constructed the legal underpinnings for a police state. It has achieved this with the USA PATRIOT Act passed just after September 11, 2001, the Pentagon's Total Information Awareness, now renamed Terrorist Information Awareness, as well as executive orders stopping the release of information under the Freedom of Information Act. If Bush's Justice Department under John Ashcroft gets its way however, there will be an even more draconian assault on civil liberties.

The Justice Department has secretly prepared the Domestic Security Enhancement Act of 2003—dubbed PATRIOT Act II. Some of its more shocking provisions are: 1) giving the government the power to take away anyone's citizenship if they are a member of, or even giving material support to, an organization deemed to be terrorist, 2) prohibiting release on bail for anyone suspected of terrorist activity, 3) terminating all consent decrees that limit state police from gathering information about individuals and organizations, and 4) prohibiting the disclosure of information about an investigation of a detainee suspected of terrorism.

In other words, all the government has to do is accuse someone of being associated with a group considered by the attorney general to be terrorist and their status as a citizen and their rights as citizens disappear. They, too, will no doubt disappear like over 1,000 non-citizens who were detained under the first PATRIOT Act. For the most part there is still no public information on who was detained, except that none were criminally charged with terrorism or shown to have anything to do with the September 11 bombing.

In addition, human rights groups all over the world have condemned the U.S. treatment of hundreds of detainees at Guantanamo, including some under 18 years of age, who are denied any legal recourse and are held without any oversight.

None of the proposed legislation was developed in consultation with Congress and legal watchdogs fear it will pop out and be jammed through in the next crisis. This administration has always been very calculating in promoting its war agenda in concert with its insatiable appetite for amassing executive power and secrecy.

BUSH'S FOCUS

After the war in Afghanistan, that country's welfare was abandoned as was the focus on Al Qaeda, which in October last year had a hand in killing some 200 in a Bali nightclub. Islamic fundamentalism has never more deeply penetrated Pakistan, which is considered a friend of the U.S. and has real nuclear capabilities. A congressional report released July 24 on pre-September 11 intelligence showed how little preventing terror was a priority in the government. Even now, on national security grounds, the CIA refused to let a recent report include information implicating officials in Saudi Arabia, another friend of the U.S. government. While under Saddam Hussein the link between Al Qaeda and Iraq was totally fabricated, Al Qaeda may now indeed be moving, after Saddam's fall, into Iraq.

The administration has its own agenda for its permanent war abroad and an unprecedented concentration of executive police power against the population at home. The war on Iraq was marketed as necessary

because of an imminent threat, including the visions of a nuclear mushroom cloud incinerating masses of Americans.

Some brave souls from within close-knit and usually tight-lipped intelligence circles in the government have spoken out against the reasons Bush used to sell the Iraq war. Former Ambassador Joseph Wilson exposed Bush's pronouncement in his State of the Union address that Saddam tried to procure uranium for a nuclear bomb from Niger.

Wilson, charged with investigating that assertion, told top levels of the administration in February 2002 that it was totally bogus. When he went public with this information on July 7, he became a target of the administration, which leaked to columnist Robert Novak the name of his wife and the fact that she is an undercover CIA operative. This treatment as an enemy of a state of one of the government's own suddenly woke up a number of Democrats in Congress who recognized that no one who questions Bush is safe. They noted that this not only ruined the career of Wilson's wife but seriously endangered her life.

Over 30 years ago Daniel Ellsberg—another insider, this time in the Pentagon—leaked papers revealing government lies during the secret escalation of the war in Vietnam. Ellsberg was added to the Nixon administration's enemies list.

Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office was burglarized as was the now-brought down Watergate Hotel. These events eventually brought Nixon's government and safeguards were erected to stop widespread abuse in the form of FBI domestic spying on over 10,000 citizens. The PATRIOT Act has erased those safeguards and everything Nixon's government did in its reach for totalitarian power with a secret shadow government, including his surreptitious entries to gather evidence, is now openly legal.

RESISTING AUTHORITARIANISM

There is a growing movement of opposition to the PATRIOT Act and the looming PATRIOT Act II, especially among librarians, asserting the freedom to read without being snooped on, and over 100 local governments, some of which have made complying with the PATRIOT Act illegal under local law. Even with the anti-war movement has died down there are new demonstrations against the PATRIOT Act with ordinary people telling their stories about their mistreatment by the government.

Even some in Congress are having second thoughts. Because of what Congressman Bernie Sanders calls "massive discontent with the anti-civil liberties provisions of the PATRIOT Act, the House appropriations committee voted 309 to 118 on July 22 to cut any funding for secret break-in searches.

Bush's reach for totalitarian power comes under the rubric of bringing "democracy" abroad. This strategy works in so far as the Left fails to go beyond bare opposition to U.S. imperialism and fails to project its own positive democratic vision against all reactionary contenders, especially Al Qaeda or totalitarian regimes like Saddam Hussein's. We need to return to Marx's vision of genuine democracy based on new human relations on the ground, in the workplace and our everyday lives, that can overcome the pull of the logic of capital with its global reach now based on permanent war.

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International protests demand Indonesia out of Aceh!

(Continued from page 1)

and Javanese sent to Maluku to destroy the independence movement. Thousands of Malukans and Papuans have also been killed by TNI's "low intensity warfare."

International pressure had produced a peace accord between Indonesia and GAM in December that ended with martial law and the arrest of the GAM negotiators. They are currently being tried for treason and face 20 years to life in prison or the death penalty. However the Bush administration is now rewarding Indonesia by restoring military aid cut off in the early 1990s in response to its repression of East Timor.

President Megawati Sukarnoputri (known as Megawati) was an early supporter of Bush's "war on terrorism." She felt the wrath of Islamic fundamentalists at home when a bombing in Bali last Oct. 12 killed close to 200 people.

Under public pressure the Senate in May and the House in July passed resolutions canceling \$600,000 allotted for training the Indonesian police and military next year unless Indonesia prosecutes the killers of two American teachers at a picnic in West Papua last summer. Congress is now at odds with the Bush administration which seeks to "normalize" relations with Indonesia with \$50 million in military aid already sent.

U.S. aid gives the green light to continued military suppression. On top of that, members of the military profiteer while suppressing the popular movements. Soldiers receive most of their income from the businesses they run on the side. In Aceh this includes illegal logging that destroys the rain forest as well as the usual extortion.

ECHOS OF 1965 PURGE

Jakarta's recent actions against the liberation movements are reminiscent of the 1965-66 anti-Communist purge that followed a coup against Indonesia's first president, Sukarno, who was not a socialist but was allied with the three million-member Communist Party. At least half a million and as many as two million people were killed at that time, and the Suharto military dictatorship, called the New Order, was installed for the next 28 years. Today censorship, loyalty oaths for civil servants, forced participation in government rallies, fascist militias and other characteristics of the New Order have reappeared, not only in the rebellious provinces but throughout the country.

In spite of continuing repression, many new movements have arisen. Indonesia's labor movement has flourished since the end of the dictatorship although the government and TNI still frequently intervene in disputes to help employers. Strikes erupt from long-standing grievances, employers blocking union branches, or denial of legal benefits and rights.

In 2000, some 9,000 workers at a state aircraft manufacturer went on strike to protest the firing of the chairman and secretary of their union and demanded a three-fold salary increase. They won some wage increases. The same year labor activist Ngadinah, an employee of a company that produces shoes, was

Eyewitness report: new stage of revolt in Iran

(Continued from page 1)

sigh). The authorities said they should either accept this or cease to talk or be together at all. If students do not follow this, they face problems in their future advancement.

This is one example of how young people are treated in Iran. It is why during the last year 160,000 of the brightest Iranians have emigrated.

ECONOMIC CRISIS

In addition to demands for freedom and democracy, the student uprising has its roots in economic conditions. Inflation and price increases for basic necessities create an unbearable situation. Prices for some items have increased 100% during last year. I am not talking about luxury items.

The price of housing has increased 200% in the last year. This is the result not just of the global economy but the regime's greedy policies. The Tehran city housing policy encouraged investors to build high-rise apartments to deal with the huge increase in the city's population. It charged a tax for each additional floor on high-rises. This made lots of money for managers and investors, while creating terrible living conditions for ordinary people.

Apartment prices are rising daily and rents are skyrocketing. Monthly rent is \$240 to \$365 (in Iran's currency that is 200,000 to 300,000 tomans) and renters must leave an initial deposit of \$3,600 to \$10,000. The average monthly wage is \$120 to \$240. Most young people, including married couples with children, live with their parents because they cannot afford to buy or even rent an apartment.

One working woman in Tehran said about the situation facing renters: "The apartment building owners are sucking our blood and the Islamic regime is supporting them in the name of Islam."

In Iran it is easy for people to recognize class differences. The price of a Mercedes-Benz is 100,000,000 tomans, 10 years of a worker's wage.

According to government figures, the price of food and utilities increased 16% over the past year. In reality prices have increased 25% to 100%. The minister of the economy stated on TV that the increase in the cost of living has been the same as the rise in wages. Every-

acquitted of criminal charges filed by her employer after she helped 8,000 workers stage a strike for better wages.

Aspirations for freedom by women have grown as well. The Indonesian Women's Coalition is raising awareness of physical and sexual abuse of the country's migrant workers, 73% of whom are women, and of the 70,000 women known to be victims of sexual abuse and people trafficking.

In July, the People's United Opposition Party (Partai Persatuan Oposisi Rakyat, Popor) was founded. It is headed by a woman labor organizer, Dita Indah Sari, who says, "Our platform is clear, anti-New Order, anti-militarism and anti-global capitalism." Popor is composed of mass organizations of workers, students and farmers.

OF NATIONAL MOVEMENTS

When Suharto was forced out of office in 1998 by the economic crisis that began in 1997 and by demands for democratic reforms, and when East Timor finally won independence in a 1999 referendum, other provinces' independence movements took inspiration. East Timor has a different history from Aceh, however. East Timor was bloodily invaded and annexed by Indonesia in 1975, whereas Aceh has been part of Indonesia since 1949 when, after four years of widespread guerrilla warfare, the Dutch East Indies were forged into a nation composed of 6,000 islands.

Moreover, Aceh is more strategically located and richer in natural resources. ExxonMobil extracts and processes natural gas, producing millions of dollars for the government while leaving the Acehnese impoverished. Two years ago, Acehnese villagers filed a lawsuit against ExxonMobil for its complicity in TNI atrocities, but the case has been stymied by the U.S. state department.

Passions for self-determination are growing, such as those expressed by Reyza Zain, an exiled activist in the pro-referendum student organization SIRA:

It is the universal right of every nation, big or small, to determine its own future. So the question is not whether Aceh, a nation state that existed hundreds of years before the creation of the artificial Republic of Indonesia, should or should not have that right, but only whether the Acehnese want to exercise that right.

When Aceh was incorporated into Indonesia, promises were made about the form of the nation that was going to be created, in which Aceh would have a

special status for governing its own affairs. But those promises were never kept. Aceh was treated as a mere colony, worse than under the Dutch. A mass civil movement developed throughout Aceh after Suharto fell, culminating in a pro-referendum demonstration in the capital, Banda Aceh, on Nov. 8, 1999, attended by approximately half the province's population of 4.3 million (see reports in N&L since 12/99).

The independence movements in Maluku (Moluccas) and West Papua (Irian Jaya) also grew in the last few years. West Papua is Indonesia's easternmost province and it is rich in natural resources. It was joined to Indonesia in 1969 after the UN arranged for just 1,022 people to vote. Megawati recently ordered Papua split into three provinces. "They are scared we Papuans will be strong as a nation. Dividing our province is one way to create disorder between us," declared Free Papua Organization spokesman Joseph Prai in June.

Maluku (once called the Spice Islands) first declared independence right after the formation of Indonesia and was invaded by the central government. In 1999,

the TNI began a campaign there of burning homes, churches, mosques, businesses and schools. A non-violent organization, "Maluku Sovereignty

Front" (FKM), was formed to resist. On April 25 of this year, the 53rd anniversary of Maluku's declaration of independence, scores of FKM supporters were arrested for sewing or flying flags of the outlawed republic.

Since becoming independent last year, East Timor has sought justice against those who perpetrated the slaughter there, but Indonesia will not permit a trial of its top people. A few show trials have been held—

Indonesian officials reportedly asked the U.S. how many people it needed to convict in order to receive U.S. aid money. The highest officer tried, Major General Adam Damiri, who is suspected of having orchestrated the razing of 70% of the East Timorese capital, Dili, in the aftermath of the referendum, was allowed to miss his own trial to participate in the military assault on Aceh.

'PANCASILA' TURNED AGAINST MASSES

Indonesia's problems extend back to its origins in 1949, when the revolution against colonialism failed to deepen into socialism. The state ideology became *Pancasila* which stresses nationalism and self-reliance. To divert from the continuing poverty of the masses of Indonesians, the government constantly invokes its nationalist origins to justify repressing worker, student and national liberation movements. As Reyza Zain puts it, "Aceh is being held by force within the Republic, which is of course colonialism."

So strong is the popular assumption that nationalism equals "the unitary state" that even most of the Jakarta student Left opposes the war in Aceh only on the basis of human rights violations, not in support of Aceh's right to self-determination.

At a forum by Indonesian and Timorese activists in New York in June, Aderito de Jesus Soares of East Timor advanced a notion of what independence has and has not meant for that new nation. He reported that the World Bank and the UN had planned East Timor's future before it even held the referendum on its status. "Is self-determination just having your own flag and government," he asked, "or is it people really deciding what to think and do?"

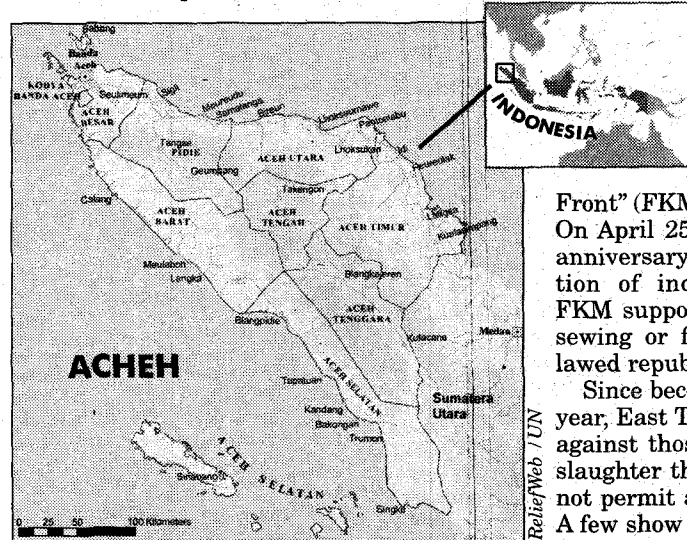
At the same forum, Wani, a former Jakarta student leader, described the rise and fall of the student movement:

When the 1997 economic crisis made it difficult for people to live, the students decided it was time to make a change. Hundreds of thousands took to the streets; a million people were in the streets of Jakarta the day before Suharto stepped down in 1998. But then the student movement fell off dramatically. People thought everything would be fine, but a few months later they realized nothing had changed. We got a little freedom of speech and press, but then thousands were killed in East Timor and we were still repressed.

Wani nearly died after being shot by the military at a peaceful demonstration in Jakarta in 1999. She added:

Now the situation is getting worse. The military and reactionary Muslim groups are doing violence all over. But the student movement is starting to grow again because students realize that the system Suharto built is still here. We learned a lot by students struggling hand in hand with the East Timorese until it became unbearable for the Indonesian government and they let East Timor go. Today some students are moving to the Left and linking their struggles to those in Aceh, Maluku and West Papua. There will be no independence for those provinces without a big change in Jakarta. We need to build this kind of people-to-people solidarity around the world.

Build solidarity with the freedom movements in Indonesia, Aceh, Maluku, and East Timor. Contact Aceh Center: (717) 343-1598, or acehcenter@yahoo.com, or *News & Letters*.



ReliefWeb / UN

YOUTH Iranian student movement deserves our support

by Brown Douglas

State powers—Western, Middle Eastern, or otherwise—never tire of attempting to prove to their people that “there is no alternative.” But the oppressive power that rulers like Supreme Leader George W. Bush and Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei of Iran wield over social justice movements doesn’t stop the movements themselves from being. One of the most recent revolts that gives us hope of there being an alternative has been Iranian youth fighting against fundamentalist theocracy and its anti-freedom philosophy.

REMEMBRANCE OF 1999

Chants of “Oh Islamic dictatorship, the anniversary of the dormitory attacks is approaching!” resounded all over Iran in early June after student demonstrations at Tehran University against privatization of education spread and turned into demonstrations against the whole status quo headed by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei (see “Eyewitness report,” page 10). Violent repression and attacks on the demonstrators from the state and fundamentalist vigilantes ended in over 4,000 arrested and detained, but also seemed to elicit more and more support, seen in nightly demonstrations on the streets of major cities all over the country.

The “dormitory attacks” refer to the July 9, 1999 attack on students during their revolt against their leaders that was bloodily put down. We wrote in *News & Letters* then that “July 1999 will be remembered as a historic turning point in Iran, a new chapter for the struggle for freedom that was for too long driven underground under the whip of a counter-revolution-

ary regime and ideology.” Because the Iranian revolution of 1979 against U.S.-backed Shah Reza Pahlavi transformed into its opposite, it is vital that we solidarize with the indigenous forces fighting for freedom against a fundamentalist, theocratic government.

Iran is a country of mostly youth; 70% of its 68 million people are under age 25. The youth who helped make the revolution of ’79 had to deal with many political and social advances being negated as the clerical leadership trampled on the banner of a popular, working class insurrection in the name of forming an Islamic Republic.

One Iranian student youth said of his generation, “I have heard that in America, our peers are known as ‘Generation X.’ But in Iran, we are called the ‘burnt generation.’ We started our political lives early. As tiny children in kindergarten, we learned to march and beat our fists, shouting: ‘Down with America!’ ‘Down with Israel!’ (or from time to time, depending on the politics of the day, Britain or Russia). No one ever bothered telling us anything about why we were supposed to harbor such ill-will towards the ‘satan-of-the-day.’”

THE NOT SO GREAT ‘SATAN’

I don’t think that we should harbor any illusions that by teaching children to chant “Down with America” the Iranian rulers were expressing internationalist solidarity with oppressed peoples. The liberal use of the word “Satan,” thrown into many condemning phrases by religious leaders in Iran, is very telling. It’s not about anti-imperialist revolution when religious jargon is used by the State to whip up blind hate of another people, especially among schoolchildren.

Unfortunately, many activists in the U.S. don’t pay enough attention to grassroots, indigenous opposition to dictatorships so long as they are “enemies” of the U.S. But we can’t base our international solidarity on knee-jerk reactions. Grasping youth as a Subject of revolt in every country is crucial to movements here in the belly of the beast when we oppose not only our own rulers, but those everywhere repressing self-determination and revolution.

BANNER OF FREEDOM

Without a universal, international banner of freedom against all oppressions, we can get stuck in false dualisms. This is made even easier by hypocritical leaders like Bush pretending to come out in support of peoples’ revolts. It is understandable that people have a knee-jerk reaction against something the warmongering president endorses.

The appeal of the students urges that, “even as we Iranians push against our regime, we wish to share with you our story, in hopes of arousing in you an urge to lend moral support to our desire to end the mullahs’ regime. Clerical militancy has not only brought upon us the wrath of the Western world, but has also led to desperation for the many Iranians suffering under the Islamic Republic.” As we insist around the globe that another world is possible, we should stand firmly with those in revolt fighting home-grown oppression.

Chicago Social Forum

When you look around your community what do you see? Job loss, lack of affordable housing, public education in crisis, cuts in public transportation, a growing prison industrial complex, union busting, racism, immigrant bashing, attacks on civil liberties, cuts in social services, militarism, pollution, alienation and other problems.

Join those of us who believe that **another Chicago is possible!** Become part of the process of seeking and building alternatives—help to develop the Chicago Social Forum.

A Social Forum is an open meeting place that brings together a variety of people from a wide variety of struggles for reflective thinking, democratic debate of ideas, and interlinking for effective action! We are inspired by the highly successful World Social Forum, which has been held for three years in Porto Alegre, Brazil. This movement of movements has helped to develop global actions such as the international march against the war on Feb. 15, 2003 as well as spawning local and regional social forums all over the world.

A Social Forum is a convergence of labor, students, people of color, women, immigrants’ rights groups, community organizations, cultural organizations, artists, activists and many others. Our first Social Forum is currently scheduled to take place Jan. 31–Feb. 1, 2004.

Building the event is only one part of this ongoing dialogue. As stated in the World Social Forum Charter of Principals, “The World Social Forum at Porto Alegre was an event localized in time and place. From now on, in the certainty proclaimed at Porto Alegre that ‘another world is possible,’ it becomes a permanent process of seeking and building alternatives, which cannot be reduced to the events supporting it.”

We build the Social Forum in Chicago with that spirit. Of particular importance is the linking of local struggles with global concerns and creating a space for a plurality of voices in envisioning ways to overcome barriers on both the local and the global level. We hope you will join us not only to build this unique event but also to be part of the process of building a vision of another Chicago.

More information about the World Social Forum and other regional forums can be found at the following web sites:

<http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/home.asp>
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ChicagoSocialForum/>

U.S. military resisters speak against Iraq war

Oakland, Cal. — Stephen Funk, a Filipino-American, joined the Marine Corps reserves a year ago, but soon realized it was not for him. He applied for Conscientious Objector (CO) status. On July 29 he spoke to more than 50 mostly high school Asian youth to try to convince them to not fall for military propaganda. He said he joined because he felt alienated. As part of Bush’s “No Child Left Behind” program, which mandates that school districts give contact information for high school youth to military recruiters, he kept being pursued by recruiters. He was invited to go to an obstacle course, which sounded like fun. “They sold me on things like leadership, money for school, teamwork, and I joined.

“The training was intensive. We had to shout out ‘kill’ constantly. You get in trouble if you were not real aggressive, real violent. I talked to the chaplain and he told me not to think about it, just go along with the program. They never told me about the CO status, which was really irresponsible. So I went public [with my application for CO]. I held a press conference in April so that other

people who enlisted would know what their options were. Many people think that CO status went out with the draft. There are people I know who would file if they knew about it.”

After his court martial in September for desertion he faces a possible year in prison and a bad conduct discharge. The military is punishing him for going public.

All other CO’s have been released already.

When a youth asked if there is any reason to join the military, Stephen said that most people don’t reenlist because it’s not a good place to be. “You lose all individuality, all sense of who you are.”

The following day there was a fundraiser for his legal defense. The hall was overflowing with more than 100 supporters. Several other resisters spoke.

Edward Hasbook was a high-profile non-registrant during the brief time President Carter tried to force young men to register for the draft. He said that people make the choice not to participate in the military at all stages, from refusing to register to refusing orders on the battlefield. The real victory is having people refuse to participate in wars.

Eric Larsen was a CO during the first Gulf War. He spent six months in the military brig for his decision not to fight. He initially faced the death penalty, and he credited people organizing for his defense with the much lighter sentence he actually got. He urged support now for Stephen Funk and many others who are questioning what they are doing in Iraq.

Aimee Allison signed up at age 17. She wanted to go to college to be a doctor and was assigned to be a medic. Medics learn to triage by who is least injured, because it helps put the soldiers back in fighting units. It felt wrong. She was told to give seriously injured soldiers a shot of morphine and let them die. When her unit was called to the Gulf War to deal with an alarming rash of suicides, she asked herself if she was willing to kill for President Bush (the elder). She was not.

Jeff Patterson joined the Marines in ’86 when he was 18. He says he didn’t know much. He saw *Top Gun* and military ads. It was not until he was sent to Korea and Okinawa that he found out what the Marines did. When he refused to go to Iraq in 1990, he faced five years in prison for “making disloyal statements” among other charges. It was pressure from outside that made the military realize it would be better for them to discharge him than to keep trying to punish him.

During the discussion Stephen Funk added that aversion to killing is core to being human. While he admitted to being gay on his CO application, he chose not to make that the grounds he was asking for discharge, because it would have been dishonest. He wanted to tell the truth about not wanting to kill. He decided to go public with his decision after he spoke to a meeting of youth organized by the ACLU, who had good questions that he thought deserved more attention. He urged getting “No Child Left Behind” out of schools as the first priority.

To read more about Stephen Funk visit www.notinourname.net/funk. For his legal defense, send checks payable to Stephen Funk Legal Defense Fund, 1230 Market Street #111, San Francisco, CA. 94102

—David Mizuno’Oto and Urszula Wislanka



Stephen Funk and Aimee Allison in Oakland

News & Letters / Urszula Wislanka

California's recall

Oakland, Cal. — A hundred years ago, when the legislature was in the pockets of railroad magnates and robber barons, proposition and recall initiatives were put in place to make government more accountable to the people. Now propositions are put up by big money, with underemployed people paid to collect signatures. The signatures for Governor Gray Davis’ recall were bought for \$3 million by right-wing Congressman Darryl Issa, a wealthy Southern Californian.

It is true that nobody loves Davis. He is so firmly bought by the prison guards’ union that while schools have been drastically cut in the last few years, prison guards get to keep their 30% raises. But the reason trumpeted by the right-wing, the state’s budget problem, is mostly the result of the economic collapse of California’s high-tech industries. It is also a result of today’s robber barons in the energy business, Bush’s friends who bought him the White House.

Davis is not blameless there, either. During the height of the energy crisis, many wanted to let the energy companies turn off the lights, declare a state of emergency and take over the now-proven-to-be-criminal enterprises. But Davis played middle-of-the-road and signed the extortionate energy contracts, which California is still paying for.

Since it takes a two-thirds vote to pass California’s budget, a minority of Bushites with veto power have made democracy impossible. They will not allow tax or fee increases, only spending cuts including the unconscionable idea of cutting the first two years of elementary school! They would make California the first “late-start” instead of “head-start” state.

The legislature passed a gimmicky budget that borrows against the future. Pundits are joking about the recall, with so many candidates on the ballot. But on the ground, important services are disappearing and the suffering people are yet to be heard.

—Ron Brokmeyer

News & Letters Read/Subscribe/Write

“The way I see it, capitalism has produced a nation of addicts, alcoholics, workaholics, overeaters, sexaholics, gamblers, because this system fragments the human being, separates thinkers and doers, tears us up into small pieces, our hands separated from our minds, our minds separated from our feelings.” —Felix Martin, Labor Editor

**Start tearing down the walls...
\$5 a year...Donate for prisoner subs!**

OUR LIFE AND TIMES

by Kevin A. Barry

As we went to press, 2,000 U.S. Marines were poised to intervene in Liberia, alongside West African peacekeepers. This belated and limited action came after months of pleas from the Liberian masses that something be done about their country's rapacious warlords. Their desperate cries received strong support from human rights groups and African-American activists. Many pointed to the Bush administration's utter hypocrisy in claiming to have invaded Iraq for humanitarian reasons, while Africans were crying out in vain for a far more limited type of international assistance.

In recent years, Liberian President Charles Taylor, a warlord and indicted international war criminal, has fought rival factions for control. Taylor has also backed murderous and predatory insurgencies in neighboring countries, especially Sierra Leone. Each of these conflicts has been marked by extreme brutality toward civilians—torture, rape, mutilation, and mass murder.

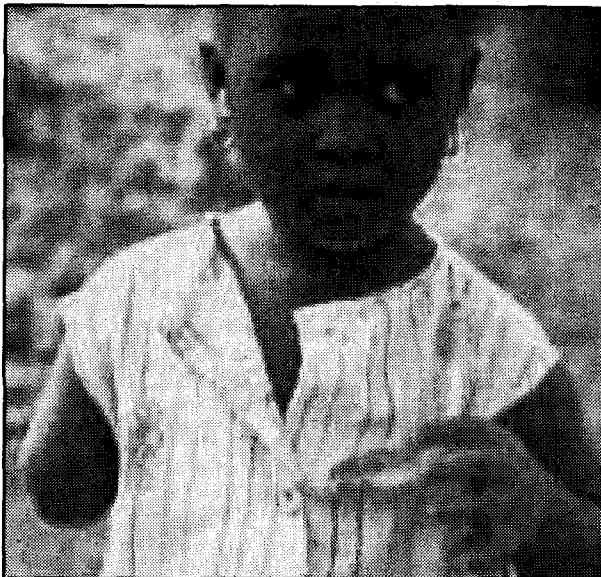
In repeated demonstrations, the Women in Peacebuilding Network—which comprises Muslims as well as Christians—and other grassroots groups have made clear that the problem is not only Taylor, but also his rival warlords. In fact, the problem is the whole neo-colonial system of strongman rule, built up across much of Africa with Western imperialist support in the wake of the radical threat that emerged from the liberation movements of the 1960s. It is the collapse of that system into civil war in much of West and Central Africa that lies at the heart of the present crisis.

Nothing better demonstrates the shocking neglect of Africa by the U.S. and global capital than George Bush's recent five-day tour, which was supposed to show the opposite. In Senegal, his first stop, Bush held a photo-op at the Gorée Island slavery museum, but he was careful not to promise anything concrete, whether

Bush's Africa tour masks real crisis

on aid to impoverished Senegal or reparations. During his visit, the 1,000 inhabitants of Gorée were put under virtual arrest for "security" reasons.

In South Africa, it was a similar story. Bush's bullet-proof and even sound-proof limousine insured that he could not hear the numerous demonstrators denouncing his "imperial agenda." In a dramatic snub, Nelson Mandela refused to meet Bush, pointedly flying out of the country on the very day he arrived. The stop in Uganda, however, was the most surreal, since Bush did not even leave the airport. Nor did he mention the murderous conflicts that continue to unfold in neighboring Congo, and in which the U.S.-supported Ugan-



One of the victims of war's brutality in Sierra Leone.

dan government has played no small part.

The hollowness of the economic "boom" of the 1990s, as far as Africa is concerned, is shown by the annual United Nations development report, released during Bush's trip. It noted that 30 of the world's 34 poorest countries are located in Africa, where externally-dictated "free market" policies have created even deeper inequality. The richest 1% of the world's population receives as much income as the poorest 57% combined. The disparity between Africa and the wealthy developed countries has continued to widen in recent years, it also reported.

And, as is well-known, Africa faces the world's largest AIDS epidemic. AIDS researchers have predicted that the disease will create 20 million orphans in Africa by 2010, as against five million in the rest of the world combined. Meanwhile, the even more reactionary U.S. Congress is seeking to slash \$1 billion out of Bush's much-heralded but woefully inadequate pledge of \$3 billion to combat AIDS in Africa next year.

Turkish murders

More than 5,000 women worldwide are murdered by their family members in "honor killings" every year. In Turkey, protests by women's rights organizations as well as the requirements of membership in the European Union, have recently forced the Turkish parliament to approve a human rights law that puts an end to lenient sentences for murders in the name of "family honor." For years, men and occasionally women who killed a woman family member could invoke Article 462 of the Turkish criminal code that reduced their sentence by 80%.

The recent case of Cemse Allak in the Kurdish city of Diyarbakir attracted much attention because she lay semi-conscious with a crushed skull after her brother stoned her and the man who had raped her. During the seven months she lay in a hospital bed, her family members refused to visit her. Only members of a Diyarbakir women's organization, Kamer, visited her. Even when her death was announced, her family members refused to claim her body. Kamer members saw to it that she had a coffin. They flouted religious tradition by carrying the coffin into the municipal cemetery themselves.

—Sheila Sahar

Iraq: contradictions of occupation

The death in a firefight with U.S. occupation troops of Uday and Qusay Hussein, Saddam Hussein's sons and two of the Ba'athist regime's top leaders, will surely lessen the current of fear that lingers over post-Ba'athist Iraq. While Uday's crimes were the more spectacular ones—kidnapping and rape of numerous women, torture of the national soccer team when it lost—Qusay was in fact the bigger criminal. Although he kept a low profile, it was Qusay who after the 1991 uprising supervised the revenge killings and the draining of the marshes of southern Iraq, in which 100,000 met their deaths. More recently, he had thousands of regime prisoners tortured and massacred. Referring to Saddam Hussein, still on the run, the human rights lawyer Esam Saadi declared: "The evil crow's two wings have been cut off."

As we went to press, this victory for the U.S. occupation forces had not lessened the almost-daily killings of U.S. soldiers in the Sunni Muslim triangle northwest of Baghdad, long a Ba'athist stronghold. More ominously for the U.S. occupiers, ordinary Iraqis, while glad to learn of the demise of Qusay and especially Uday, laced their expressions of satisfaction with resentment against the U.S. occupation.

Inside the U.S., support for the war and the occupation has also plummeted, with some soldiers and their families demanding that the troops be brought home. One such report was run in Georgia's *Augusta Chronicle* of July 12, hardly a pacifist publication. Sgt. David Uthe complained bitterly of doing guard duty in 120-degree heat for a multinational corporation tied to Vice President Dick Cheney's Halliburton firm: "The main reason we're still here is to support Brown and Root," he declared. Two days earlier, the Bush administration announced that the occupation was costing \$3.9 billion a month, twice previous estimates. Bush's belated admission that he included a false report

about Iraq's nuclear program in his January State of the Union Address, has also increased opposition to the occupation, especially in Britain.

On July 13, after substantial pressure from below, the U.S. finally got around to appointing a somewhat representative 25-member Governing Council for Iraq, whose members ranged from Shi'ite clerics to Kurdish leaders and to the heads of the Communist Party and the Iraqi Women's Organization. However, other tendencies, most prominently the young fundamentalist Mullah Moktada al-Sadr, have declared that the Council is unrepresentative. So far, Sadr seems to represent a minority of the Shi'ite community, but his power is growing. Due to fundamentalist pressure as well as rampant criminal assaults that have targeted them, most Iraqi women have been forced to don conservative Islamic clothing or to stay off the streets altogether, a tremendous retrogression in what has been one of the Middle East's most secular countries.

Anti-globalization activist Medea Benjamin summed up the contradictory quality of the present situation in a July 10 eyewitness report for *Alternet*: "Iraqis are just only now discovering new found freedoms like freedom of speech, assembly and association. We accompanied workers at the Palestine Hotel who went on strike and successfully got rid of an abusive general manager. We walked with women from a newly formed women's group demanding their rights and a say in the new government...."

"But despite these positive openings, most of the people we meet say their lives were better before.... Before, at least women were not afraid to walk the streets. Many ask, 'How come the Americans were so prepared and competent when it came to making the war but so utterly unprepared and incompetent when it comes to rebuilding?'"

Hong Kong protests

More than 500,000 demonstrators in Hong Kong on July 1, the sixth anniversary of Hong Kong's reversion to China's control from British colonial rule, forced Tung Chee-Hwa to withdraw a proposed draconian security law. It would have undermined free speech and other civil liberties guaranteed until 2047 under the Basic Law of Reunification by, among other provisions, permitting warrantless searches and making future demonstrators and even truthful reporters liable to charges of sedition against China.

This was the largest outpouring in Hong Kong since as many as a million demonstrated in solidarity with the Tiananmen Square martyrs in 1989. It was the equivalent of 20 million Americans rising up against the comparable PATRIOT Act.

The unelected Tung, appointed by Jiang Zemin directly from Beijing, at first pretended to ignore popular opposition, but then accepted the resignation of his Security Secretary and withdrew the security law. If Tung survives despite no local support, it will be as a crony that Beijing's rulers hesitate to discard.

Appropriately, on July 9, the very day that the security law was to have been passed, 50,000 demonstrators ringed the Legislative Council to demand the return of power to the people.

—Bob McGuire

NEWS AND LETTERS COMMITTEES

Who We Are And What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that since its birth has stood for the abolition of capitalism, both in its private property form as in the U.S., and its state property form, as it has historically appeared in state-capitalist regimes calling themselves Communist as in Russia and 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.

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-1987), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the

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

This body of ideas challenges all those desiring freedom to transcend the limitations of post-Marx Marxism, beginning with Engels. In light of the crises of our nuclearly armed world, it becomes imperative not only to reject

what is, but to reveal and further develop the revolutionary Humanist future inherent in the present. The new visions of the future which Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are rooted in her discovery 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. This 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*.

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 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, heterosexist, class-ridden society, we have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead." We participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our *Constitution* states: "It is our aim... to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the *Constitution of News and Letters Committees*.