

Theory/ Practice NEWS & LETTERS

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

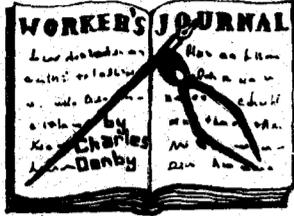
VOL. 28 — NO. 8

27 13 Printed in 100 Percent Union Shop

OCTOBER, 1983

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March on Washington 1983



by Charles Denby, Editor

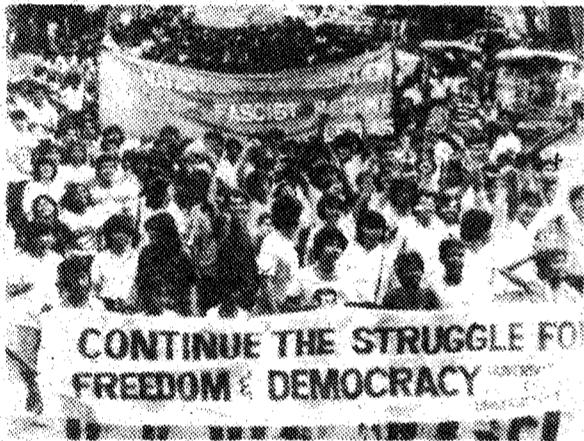
Author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*

I am turning my column over this month to Lou Turner for a report on the March on Washington for Jobs, Peace and Freedom. — C.D.

As it was to so many who had driven through the night to get there, the early morning scene on the Mall in Washington, D.C., of masses of people arriving in buses, cars, on bicycles, or on foot with banners and buttons, tired but excited about making history a living memory, was in itself a very moving experience for me.

I was too young in 1963, when the Civil Rights Movement reached its first turning point with the March on (continued on page 10)

Struggle in Philippines, p. 12



Students at the University of the Philippines demonstrate against Marcos regime.

From the U.S. to the Philippines, Lebanon and Latin America

Philosophy of revolution needed to confront global crisis

Editor's Note: As we go to press, the events in the Philippines, in Lebanon, in Chile — and here at home — have reached a new intensity. They make more necessary than ever the Marxist-Humanist total Perspectives of opposition, delivered to the Constitutional Convention of News and Letters Committees by Raya Dunayevskaya on Sept. 3. We print here excerpts from the three Parts of that Perspectives Report. The full Report — including as Appendix the paragraphs which have been added by the author to Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution since its publication — is available from News & Letters for 75¢ plus 50¢ postage. See ad, p. 9.

FROM PART I — The Reagan Retrogression Era Confronts The U.S. with Myriad Economic-Political-Social Crises

That supreme artificer and B-picture actor, President Ronald Reagan, seems to be overconfident that Teddy Roosevelt would come out of his grave to congratulate him on the fantastic job he is doing with his advanced technology, which has translated Teddy Roosevelt's "big stick" and "gunboat diplomacy" to the armada Reagan now has surrounding Latin America, just to intimidate the small country of Nicaragua. Reagan also has the MX Missile to show off, as if that other nuclear Titan, Russia, doesn't have tricks of its own for the final confrontation.

If he doesn't soon learn the difference between reality and play-acting about a "winnable" nuclear war, these "war-games" may very well end in nothing short of the actual nuclear holocaust that will mean the end of civilization as we know it.

The true determinant — true because it is the human way — is, however, the opposition at home and abroad to Reaganism, his economic, political, philosophic retrogressionism . . .

LET US LOOK FIRST at the economic front — Not only do the percentage figures about "growth" that are being bandied about sound "good" only because they are comparisons with the highest unemployment since the Great Depression, but none can hide that we are still in deep recession. First, there are no less than 10 million still

unemployed . . .

Secondly, no less than 20 percent of those working work only part-time — which means that they swell those living below the poverty level. The official figures reveal that no less than 34 million of us live at that level. That is the highest rate since the mid-1960s, at the start of LBJ's so-called "war on poverty." And, once again, the rate for Blacks is three times that for whites, and the rate for Hispanics nearly as great as that for Blacks.

What we have still not touched in all these figures is the status of women. There the poverty level is so great that the only suitable phrase for it is the "feminization of poverty." This summer the Census Bureau revealed that by 1982 more than 45 percent of all poor families were headed by women. If you look at poor Black families, it is 70 percent! We surely need not go to the poor countries of the Third World to know hunger. It is right here in the richest country of the world.

(continued on page 8)

ON THE INSIDE

Chile 1983: repression and resistance . . . p.4
What direction for workers' struggle? . . . p.5

An urgent appeal to readers for your help in continuing News & Letters

At a moment when Reaganism seems to be succeeding in destroying every gain won through decades of struggle by rank-and-file workers, the Black Revolution, Women's Liberation and the anti-war youth; when the tentacles of U.S. imperialism are strangling freedom fighters everywhere — most bloodily in Central America, but reaching out to every corner of the globe from Africa to the Philippines to the Middle East; when we witness a Congress so "in step" with Reagan's march to war that they approve his bombardment of Lebanon — the heaviest naval bombardments since Vietnam — and dare even to renew production of the nerve-gas that world outcry had finally stopped 15 years ago — at such a moment of total crisis, the voices of revolt from below MUST BE HEARD.

Never has it been more important for a paper like NEWS & LETTERS to continue — a paper created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard not separated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. It is the only forum of its kind anywhere in the world — a paper edited by a Black production worker where the revolutionary forces speak for themselves as revolutionary Reason, and become integral to the theoretical analysis of the crucial questions of our age. In this issue, on p. 4, you will find a young labor activist writing on shop floor struggles in this country; on p. 5 Chilean activists speak for themselves on the new stage of revolt in Chile today; on our front page you will read both an in-person report on the March on Washington and excerpts from the Report on a Perspectives of opposition given at our Constitutional Convention by Raya Dunayevskaya. Yet, at the very moment

when it is urgent for us to expand our activities, we face enormous and ever-mounting bills. We cannot continue our work without your help.

In this Marx centenary year, we have expanded Marxist-Humanism's restatement of Marx's Marxism for our age in three critical new pamphlets:

- The mass opposition to Reagan-racism, Reagan-sexism, Reaganomics, Reaganpolitics, was heard loud and clear at the March on Washington on Aug. 27. So urgently needed is a philosophy of revolution along with that outpouring, that we rushed to have a new and expanded fourth edition of *American Civilization on Trial*, *Black Masses as Vanguard* off the press in time to take it with us — just as the first edition had greeted the historic march in 1963 and at once became a textbook in the Freedom Schools North and South. We must now meet the bill for that new edition.

- At the same time, we have just reprinted from the *South Asia Bulletin*, with important additions, a study of Marx and the Third World by Peter Hudis. It is a significant contribution toward working out new paths to revolution and the relationship between the technologically developed and under-developed lands, which has become imperative as the Third World remains caught in the vortex of the super-power conflict. We must also now meet the bill for that new pamphlet.

- Finally, we have been urged by labor historians and activists alike to bring forth the true, and still untold, history of the Miners' General Strike of 1949-50, in which we were participants. That historic moment marked not only the new stage of production, Automation, brought onto the historic stage, but the new stage of workers' revolt and

the new stage of cognition revealed in the miners' profound question: "What kind of labor should human beings do?" Whether it be the participation of the women or the way the rank-and-file miners wrested the power out of the labor bureaucracy's stranglehold, so urgent is this story for today, when Automation has become the crisis of Robotics and when Marx's projection of a permanent army of the unemployed has moved from theory to reality, that we already have this new pamphlet in progress. But we must find the funds to get it published.

ABOVE ALL, WE CANNOT CONTINUE NEWS & LETTERS, THE VOICE OF MARXIST-HUMANISM, WITHOUT YOUR HELP!

Our rent, postage, supplies and printing bills have never been higher. While many readers have spontaneously sent extra donations with their renewals and literature orders, and some have become Sustaining Subscribers, pledging a definite sum on a monthly basis, we must now appeal to all our readers to help keep us alive.

PLEASE GIVE AS GENEROUSLY AS YOU CAN TO OUR 1983-84 SUSTAINING-PUBLISHING FUND! Clip the form below and send it to:

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WOMAN AS REASON 'Memoirs of Louise Michel'

Dear Sisters:

In reading the *Memoirs of Louise Michel*, I felt that if anyone had lived Rosa Luxemburg's idea of what it meant to be fully human, it was Louise Michel. This woman's liberationist, innovative teacher, leader of the Paris Commune of 1871 — on the barricades and in her vision of the new society — threw herself into the revolutionary fight for freedom, never stopping until her death at age 75. She died in January, 1905 just days before the beginning of the Russian Revolution — a spark which would have lifted her heart which had been so saddened by the defeat of the Paris Commune.

The Paris Commune should be of great interest to feminists today because it was the first time in history that workers created and lived the new society and women were absolutely central to its every aspect.² Michel's *Memoirs* reveal all the passion for freedom, for the new society, the creativity that was the Commune, all embodied in one extraordinary woman. None of these aspects of her personality were separated from her feminism. Michel's anger at men's judgments of women and her own confidence in women's revolutionary nature appear throughout her whole life and throughout the *Memoirs* as well.

MICHEL ON MAN/WOMAN

There is one all too brief chapter directly on women's liberation. What strikes you immediately is that to Louise Michel there is nothing to prove; it is simply a fact that women are men's equals — if not superiors: "How marvelous it would be if only the equality of the sexes were recognized, but while we wait, women are still, as Moliere said, 'the soup of man.'" At one point Michel exclaims, "The first thing that must change is the relationship between the sexes."

Reading the *Memoirs* compelled me to read Marx's summation of the Paris Commune, The Civil War in France, because I wanted to see what he saw in this fantastic self-activity of the Paris masses; what also compelled me was that Michel's *Memoirs*, while summing up her life, didn't sum up the experience of the Commune, and thus didn't leave me with a direction for our age, but simply with a feeling of great sympathy and admiration for her. Part of this was, I think, because these *Memoirs*,

¹The *Red Virgin: Memoirs of Louise Michel*. Edited and translated by Bullitt Lowry and Elizabeth Ellington Gunter. University of Alabama Press, 1961.

²The *Women Incendiaries*, by Edith Thomas, was published in France in 1963 and in English translation in the U.S. in 1966 (New York: George Braziller), but is long out of print. So far there has been no paperback edition.

LA garment workers strike against sweatshop rollback

Los Angeles, Cal. — We have been on strike at the Southern California Davis Pleating Company since our contract expired July 31. I have worked there for over 20 years, and all that time we have been organized with the International Ladies Garment Worker Union (ILGWU) but this year the boss decided he wanted to break the union.

We were just asking to keep the terms of the existing contract, but he wants to take everything away. For example, sewing operators earn \$5.45 an hour and different people's wages vary according to their work as sewers, pleaters, tuckers, etc. His proposal is for everyone to earn minimum wage! He wants to take away seniority rights, cost of living, vacation pay — everything we have fought for over the years. He wants a sweat shop like they had in the early 1900s.

It's not that conditions have been so great up to now. It gets very hot; the fans don't do much good. The boss keeps trying to raise production: let's say someone makes 20 garments an hour, then he will want everyone to make 25. He will threaten people, and try to get you to correct mistakes on your own time, after you have punched out. Some of the women were pushed into doing this, frightened of losing their job. I told them, "No, we have a contract, we don't have to do that."

Most of the workers here are Latinas, many the sole support of their family. But not all women are on our side: there is one forelady who pushes us harder than anyone. Close to 200 of us are out on strike. The boss has hired scabs, but they aren't able to do the work. We have heard that they are making a lot of mistakes.

We have picketed at some of the companies that send us work. For example, we do a lot of pleating for Campus Casuals, and they have now agreed not to send any more work until the strike is over. We also went to the churches in the neighborhood, and the priests are asking people to join us at our picket line/demonstration on Sept. 23.

What is happening to us is happening to a lot of other workers too. I don't think very highly of Reagan. It's not that I want to be getting worse off as time goes by. We can't allow these things to happen.

— Latina worker

written when Michel was 56 in 1886, end in a tone of mourning.

I don't think that anyone who is not a revolutionary can understand what Michel suffered when she knew that her great revolutionary friend, Theophile Ferre, was assassinated by a government firing squad. She saw those that she not only loved, but who were the hope of a new society, simply mowed down. Marx, as well as Luxemburg, had written of the barbarity of the slaughter of the population of Paris. Louise Michel writes: "In May 1871 the streets of Paris were dappled white as if by apple blossoms in the spring. But no trees had cast down that mantle of white; it was chlorine that covered the corpses."

By 1886 it was not alone those killed in fighting for the Commune for whom she was now grieving; it was as well for those who died in exile, who died on the ship on the way home, and who, partly because Communards could get no work and thus lived half starved, died back in Paris.

NEW POINT OF DEPARTURE

Louise Michel's conclusion to her chapter on the Commune was: "The Commune, surrounded from every direction, had only death on its horizon. It could only be brave, and it was. And in dying it opened wide the door to the future. That was its destiny." Marx too, in a letter in April 1871 wrote, "The struggle of the working class with the capitalist class and its State has entered a new phase through the Parisian struggle. No matter how the thing turns out now, a new point of departure of world importance has been won."

In Marx's summation of the Commune he singled out its very existence as a new beginning for his age — and ours: "The great social measure of the Commune was its own working existence." He tells in great detail what that meant, how the Communards changed the entire government, how the labor and property relationships were transformed, how education was being recreated, in short, what exactly was the "working existence" of the Paris Commune. Marx saw that the Commune did nothing short of create "the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economic emancipation of labor." To Marx, the Communards had "no ideas to realize, but to set free the elements of the new society with which old collapsing bourgeois society itself is pregnant."

Louise Michel's whole life was an example of the "elements of the new society" existing and fighting to change the old. Marx recognized the great thought that went into the Commune, the Reason within women like Louise Michel, and was able to see how that historic event, put down in rivers of blood, could be more than just brave, could be a new beginning. In that context, Michel's life too becomes more than only brave. She has shown our age how to be a revolutionary women's liberationist, how to be a full human being.

— Terry Moon

Minneapolis

Take Back the Night

Minneapolis, Minn. — The fourth Take Back the Night (TBTN) March in Minneapolis was held on Aug. 6, with over 8,000 women and men gathering, to march through the downtown area. At the rally preceding the march, women spoke about their survival of violence in their own lives, and the necessity for women to be more than victims and to take control of their lives.

One difference this year was a series of workshops held during the afternoon. Some 500 people attended over 25 different workshops, covering a range of issues. A number of the meeting rooms were packed to overflowing. Some of the best attended sessions were on incest, an overview of violence against women, and the Seneca Women's Peace Encampment. A "women's forum" for evaluating the workshops, and for discussion of directions for the future, ended the afternoon.

This year's events were organized by Twin Cities for Take Back the Night, a new group, most of whom hadn't worked on past marches. Many women expressed the sentiment that we also heard from others on the night of the march! "This is a time when I can express my anger, and make a statement about ending violence against us."

Many of those who worked on TBTN plan to be involved next year, and hope it will become an annual event. But I think the tendency is to see this march as an end in itself, and not to consider other activities, or where we might go from here.

Although the workshops addressed the concerns of many different women, and there was a diversity of women participating in the rally and entertainment, the group attending TBTN events was largely white. The Twin Cities has a large Native American community, as well as a significant Black and Southeast Asian population. The organizers did discuss how to reach these, and other groups who haven't been present at marches in the past. Some beginnings were made this year, but clearly, the future success of TBTN depends upon the involvement of the diverse groups in this community.

— Marj Thera

Merritt-Peralta hospital workers win 5% increase



Oakland, Cal. — "Hospitals especially have a responsibility to treat all workers fairly. They come in contact with all kinds of people, rich and poor. Are they going to treat the poor patients differently now that they want to pay poor hospital workers less...?" That was the reason one hospital worker came to the rally in support of others striking against Merritt and Peralta hospitals here.

The Hospital and Institutional Workers Union Local 250 went on strike in July when Merritt and Peralta hospitals decided to "gain a competitive advantage over other hospitals in the area by forcing their employees to accept substandard wages and working conditions."

The issues involved not just wages. The hospitals settled with the skilled, mostly white lab workers, X-ray technicians and California Nurses Association for 5%. But when it came to Local 250, which represents dietary and laundry workers, housekeepers, ward clerks and licensed vocational nurses, two-thirds of whom are minorities, they only offered 3.3% and pressured for other contract changes. During rallies to support the strike, many nurses and even doctors came out and 1,500 signed a petition urging the hospitals to settle.

The March on Washington was celebrated in its own way. "We're not going to forget Martin Luther King," one striker said, "civil rights are also economic rights — a right to a living wage, to a job."

After two months the hospitals settled on Sept. 17 giving 90% of the workers the 5% increase they asked for.

— Supporter



women-worldwide

National Demographics Ltd., a data marketing firm, employs 75 clerical workers in Barbados to tap data from questionnaires onto computer tapes which are then flown back to headquarters in Denver. Such "Offshore offices" are increasingly common and Jane Blood of "9 to 5", a national office workers' association, expressed concern at the displacement of American data-entry workers and the exploitation of Asian and Caribbean workers who are paid only \$1.50 per hour.

Women, Immigration, and Nationality is a new group organized in Britain to fight the racism and sexism of the (January 1983) Nationality Act, under which Blacks, especially women, from Commonwealth countries are not permitted the same freedoms as whites. The group intends to form a national women's campaign to fight these issues and the ways they affect other areas of women's lives, such as access to health and social security benefits.

Information from Mukti, London

"In summer, arrive at the company earlier... for your make-up might run in hot weather... "It is not good to go to lunch with women friends all the time. When you are asked to have lunch with a male colleague, you should go with him, it will enrich your world". These excerpts were released from "The Glossary of Common Sense for Considerate Office Ladies" at the Sumitomo Shoji Personnel Department in Japan. Japanese women are now challenging the entire employment policy through a women's support group — the first time in Japanese history. Women's earnings in Japan average only 53% of those of men and over half of Japan's companies stated that promotions are not provided for women.

On Aug. 30, Judge William Marutani ruled that heretofore all-male Central High School in Philadelphia must admit three women students who had previously attended Girls High School, saying that the two schools were separate and unequal. He noted that Central has twice as many computers and twice as many books in its library, as well as 38 courses for the "mentally gifted." (Girls have 13 such classes.) A 1974 challenge to Central had been thrown out of court on technicalities.

Farmers raising less corn, more hell

by Felix Martin, Co-Editor

On my trip across the Midwest this month I got to talk to farmers, workers, and the unemployed. But what was scary was the drought and how everyone is being affected by it. Most of the farmers I spoke with are on the verge of bankruptcy and a lot of them are selling off their stock.

The big farmers, agri-business, don't have as much to worry about as the smaller farmers. They could at least afford the expensive irrigation equipment which a lot of them use in eastern Colorado. But the smaller farmers have seen well over half of the corn crop dry up.

One farmer told me that corn prices will probably go to ten cents a pound. To feed his cattle this corn would bring cattle prices to \$1.00 a pound just to break even. Selling cattle at that price on the hoof for slaughter would push up beef prices to astronomical levels. Working people, unemployed, and the poor just won't be able to eat.

A farmer in Indiana told me, "The farmers in my neighborhood are talking about whether to sell what they raised or keep it and share it with the poor people around here. We should let the rich eat their money." He said if another drought hit next year, hell would break loose in

Stakes high at ATT

Oakland, Cal. — Everyone knows about the strike this summer at ATT, where strikers were picketing over job security, especially the fact that so many people have been declared surplus. I don't think the actual settlement speaks to what people on the picket line were saying.

The best pickets were women, women operators in particular, who are facing an industry which has the domination of dead over living labor. They face it in a very demeaning and concrete way with the computer controlling them in terms of the incoming calls.

Over 800 operators were declared surplus in New York. It is not the first time that that has happened. The phone company has cut back about 10% of their personnel since 1981. But what is new about it is that it means for the first time those people won't get another job in the company.

It is just the beginning of something in that industry and in the economy as a whole, because the whole purpose of ATT divestiture is to push to the limit this technical revolution in the economy. In particular the phone company has plans to automate retail functions to even put people who pump gas out of work.

Their newest concept is called telecommuting which the Service Employees International Union is warning against as a return to cottage industry. What that means is that with a computer you don't need a boss, you have a record of everything you do, people can work from their home, and it is being touted as the answer to child care and the preservation of the family — a dimension of the feminization of poverty!

The divestiture will also release any responsibility to have unionized workers. Each one of these companies that the phone company is breaking up into is going to be held by a holding company which in turn is going to spin off all kinds of new companies, new technologies which will try to be non-union. None of these issues were addressed by the contract.

— Ron Brokmeyer

FLOC march on Campbell

Detroit, MI — This past summer, members of FLOC (Farm Labor Organizing Committee) marched 560 miles from our headquarters in Toledo, Ohio to the Campbell Soup Co. headquarters in Camden, N.J. Sixty-five farmworkers and supporters walked all the way, many others marched part way.

Some 2,000 farmworkers in Ohio have been on strike against farmers who are under contract to grow tomatoes for Campbell. This September for the fifth year as we had picket lines in the fields. We had anywhere from 15 to 60 people picketing a field with our flags. Nowadays, most of the fields are harvested with mechanical harvesters which cut off the whole plant. About eight farmworkers riding on top separate out debris, green tomatoes, etc. It means less farmworkers, but also a poorer harvest.

On the days when we picketed we would usually get one or two workers to come out of the field either to join us or to leave completely. But Campbell is so big that they really don't care about 2,000 workers on strike. It doesn't hurt them. So we have organized a campaign against their products.

The march to Campbell headquarters was to publicize our boycott. On the march local people in small towns often came out and offered us water. At fruit stands people would give us fruit. In Pennsylvania one farmer met us and said my farm is your place. For many of the farmworkers, who are Mexican-American, it was the first time a farmer had expressed his solidarity with them.

— A FLOC boycott organizer

The Campbell's boycott includes Campbell's Soup, Mrs. Paul's Frozen Fish, V-8 Juice, Prego Spaghetti Sauce, Vlasic Pickles, Bounty Products, Franco-American, Pepperidge Farm, Swanson Frozen Dinners.

this country because even the middle-class farms would go out of business. Other farmers were interested in the idea of the penny auctions of foreclosed farms which was in the August/September issue of News & Letters.

The farmers I spoke with weren't blaming nature for the drought. They were blaming Reagan. With his "payment in kind" program (PIK) Reagan encouraged farmers to plow under a third of their crop so grain prices would rise. Once the drought hit the farmers had nothing to fall back on. The PIK program also encourages increasing yield per acre, which requires bringing more machinery onto the farm. This year the apple orchards haven't broke even because of all the farmers spent on spraying and machinery. For grain farmers it's worse.

The depth of this crisis is drawing unemployed workers and farmers together in some areas. One unemployed worker told me, "We used to think of farmers as kind of conservative. But in the last few years they have become more human. A lot of them would like to see a change."

In one small town in Indiana an unemployed youth was running for sheriff. His campaign promise was to "throw all the capitalists in jail who are making money while we are starving."

Even those with a steady job said they didn't expect to last long without getting laid off. "With ten million workers laid off, there's no market for anything," one worker told me. The crisis of this system has become so deep that not only can't workers afford to buy cars — soon they won't be able to eat. Never before has the necessity for a total uprooting of this system become so clear.

FROM THE AUTO SHOPS

Rouge Steel

Detroit, Mich. — They pulled a fast one on us at Rouge Steel. They had the whole Rouge complex and not just Rouge Steel vote on the concessions contract. They did this while telling the workers that if Rouge Steel closed because the concessions were turned down, there would be bumping from steel and other auto workers would be pushed out of the plant. They even put out a special leaflet putting pressure on low seniority workers.

And of course they didn't give workers a chance to discuss the agreement, which included taking away a week's vacation every year, cutting back on Sunday overtime where we have a seven-days-a-week operation, losing holiday premium pay and cutting back on incentive pay. All the units, except those concerned directly with Rouge Steel and Tool and Die didn't meet before the vote.

The Rouge Steel workers did have an opportunity to meet, but it was three separate meetings at three separate halls for each shift. Nine meetings in all. And what was the line the union leadership threw out at these meetings? A lot of the time was spent talking about what happened at the Sheffield, Ala. aluminum casting plant where the workers refused to accept concessions and the plant closed. They even had the International Rep. from Alabama to push the line.

At the coke oven meeting I attended, and I heard it was the same at other meetings, the workers wanted to know why did the union leadership wait until one day before we met before telling anyone what was going on.

Among the workers whose jobs were on the line — coke oven, the rolling mill — the vote was very close, perhaps even turning down the agreement. That is why the union and the company worked together to have a plantwide vote, which could overwhelm the Rouge Steel workers. It is pitting workers in one unit against workers in another.

— Rouge Steel worker

GM/Toyota Fremont

Fremont, Cal. — Over 400 GM Fremont workers came to a Sept. 27 meeting called by the UAW International to sell the "Letter of Agreement" they reached with the GM-Toyota joint venture (JV). About another 50 workers stayed out in the parking lot. Most who came were concerned about recall rights and seniority, and benefits they had earned by GM. The UAW representative, Bruce Lee from Region 6, said Toyota will be running the plant and though hiring for the 2,500 JV workers will be made from the 4,000 former GM Fremont workers, it will not be on "pure seniority" but "greater experience."

A lot of workers asked what this double talk means. One man with close to 20 years seniority said he built seats before, but if seats are shipped to the JV, how will Toyota determine his "experience"? Instead of answering him, Lee said that is why the UAW is fighting outsourcing. Another worker with 20 years wanted to know if he got disabled after 5 years at the JV, would he have 5 or 25 years of seniority to draw disability on? Whenever work-

Profit lust shuts Agar

Chicago, Ill. — On Sept. 18, Agar announced that the company intends to close the plant on Oct. 23, throwing 700 people out of work. There was no warning about the closing, no time for workers to prepare themselves. Two hundred people were already on lay-off, and the company closed two more departments on the Friday following the announcement.

The union was also caught by surprise. Union officials are willing only to assume the role of enforcing the provisions in the contract dealing with severance pay, pensions and vacations. "It's their plant. We just work here. They can close it if they want to," is the union's position.

Up till the end the company has pushed for more and more profits, as is already evident in the converting department on a new line workers call "the chain gang." Where before each boner boned out a whole ham, they now each make one cut as the hams move down a conveyor belt. The new method of work has resulted in more hams being boned by fewer workers. But that still wasn't enough for Agar.

What "right" does the company have to disrupt our lives? Haven't we created the wealth that the company claims as its own? That wealth is turned against us to extract ever more profit, and, when even that isn't enough, we are thrown out on the street. Every day we experience what it means to live under a system where profits are more important than people. We understand it, and we can change it. Our strength is the unity we can build with other workers, both employed and unemployed, to assert our rights as human beings.

— Agar worker

ers asked specific questions Lee's answer was that it was not a contract but a letter of agreement. Workers will be in production before contract negotiations even begin in January 1985.

This meeting was in sharp contrast to the meeting that Fremont workers held last August 16. Then nearly 300 members of UAW Local 1364 met on a baseball field when the UAW international locked them out of their own union hall. While the local union officials demanded that their local charter be reinstated by saying "Local 1364 or war!", many who came said they wanted to take back their hall right then.

The local officers told of the history of the betrayal of international officials, who claimed to have misplaced many written pleas to have a resolution demanding rehiring of Fremont workers at GM/Toyota by seniority, placed on the agenda at the recent convention in Dallas.

One of the rank-and-file participants in that August demonstration commented: "I felt really inspired by the meeting on the baseball field. I felt we would get together and call each other. But most of the fighters are already gone to Kansas City, St. Louis, and Oklahoma, making us more fragmented than ever. They were forced to uproot their lives and take those jobs with no seniority, not even a guarantee that they wouldn't be fired before their probationary period is up.

"With a 'new' local here, all the initiation fees go to the international. We were known as a radical local and the wildcat strikes here forced the international to win many things like secured return rights. Now they are beating us to death with these forced moves. If I'm the last one left, I'm ready to fight."

GM Oklahoma City

Oklahoma City, Okla. — We've only been out here from California for three months, but already we're facing lay-off after lay-off. Last week we only worked one day, supposedly because of lack of spare parts. And a lot of workers have been laid off after working here 89 days, before getting their probationary period in.

Last week the union called a meeting of all workers who had to come to work here from California. They answered questions on the Guaranteed Income Stream (GIS) and other benefits. Over 300 workers came, but they didn't hear anything they didn't already know. When some workers took the floor to say we should demand corporation seniority, the leadership told them there was no way we could get it. That means a lot of workers will remain in the position I'm in — after 17 years seniority at GM South Gate in L.A. I'm forced to come here, and start off from scratch on seniority.

Everyone here is a little angry because no one knows where they stand. We might work a day or two, and then face another week's lay-off. Last week the foremen were already passing out lay-off cards. It's getting to the point where you can't think about a future within this system. We don't know if tomorrow we will have a job, a house, or any place we can live!

— GM mobile worker

Chile 1983: repression and the struggle for freedom

Despite the massacre in cold blood of 29 unarmed demonstrators in August, the movement in Chile to topple the fascist dictatorship has only deepened its struggle. In September new mass protests broke out. Demonstrations and conferences are being held all over the world to support the Chilean movement. Some 200,000 marched in Spain. From a Polish prison came a letter of support to the Chilean people from Adam Michnik, the KOR leader now imprisoned for his activities in the Solidarnosc movement. He signed his message: Adam Michnik, Investigation Prison, Rakowiecka St. 37, Warsaw.

At the University of Michigan a conference, "Chile: 1973-1983, Ten years of repression and struggle," reviewed the ten years of Pinochet rule as well as the latest struggles against the Junta.

Among the speakers were David Quintana, a former mine worker in the copper mines and a political prisoner after the coup in Chile and Hernan Castellano, a writer in exile. Below we print brief excerpts from their talks.

From Chile, Rodolfo Seguel, the leader of the Chilean mine workers union who has most directly challenged the Pinochet government has been arrested for a second time and is now on a hunger strike. Below we print excerpts from Seguel's statement.

Finally, when the Allende government was brutally overthrown by the Pinochet junta, News & Letters issued a statement on the coup and on the Allende years. We print excerpts because of its relevance for the direction of the movement in Chile today.

Hernan Castellano, writer

Editor's Note: In a workshop entitled "Repression and Exile: its impact on Chilean artistic creation" Castellano first spoke of his own life, how he came to be a writer and poet, how he was arrested shortly after the coup against Allende, beaten, blindfolded and threatened with execution. Released and told to return the following day, he took refuge in the Italian Embassy and was able to leave for Italy, living there for several years. He now lives in the United States. Second, he spoke of his generation and what it means to be in exile.

We are a generation that had an apex in the first three years of the seventies. We lived in a social process that had begun in the decades before. We were 25-35 during the Allende years and gave our blood to have a new society. We grew feeling and thinking about the enormous differences, injustices, where everything was shared by a small minority. A person with the temperament of the artist has no choice but to be in the process of social change.

Two things are essential which may be the same: the fact of identity; the fact of language. With the coup and exile we were losing our language. We were trying to keep our identity. In that period we did not know much from Chile. All our bridges were broken. It was not so much physical survival, but the spiritual, the literary survival. It was anything but easy. We were fighting to keep our identity. It was what we were searching for, what we were trying to recover.

The problem was trying to survive without our world of language. A person without his language . . . it is not a matter of words.

The diaspora created a confusion in our goals. For five years I didn't know what was happening in my country. I lived floating in no land. But then there arrived signals from Chile. Young people, perhaps age 10 at the coup, 20 now, were writing wonderful poetry. They are a bridge to us.

The coup broke our language, not only spoken but the whole code that affected our song, our literature, even our way of dress. All this has been broken. This destroyed our world. For years and years I have been thinking like a

Protest immigration law

Chicago, Ill. — On August 20, 50 people, mostly Latino, marched downtown from Pilsen, a mostly Chicano/Mexican Chicago neighborhood, to protest the anti-immigrant Simpson-Mazzoli Bill. Many marchers were high school students, most from a youth organization representing many different Latin American nationalities.

We chanted in Spanish and English as we passed through Latin, Black, and white neighborhoods, and our number grew to 300 by the time we got downtown where another group was waiting, including a group from Chinatown who applauded the marchers' arrival. They were pleased to see News & Letters' reports on demonstrations around the Vincent Chin case, and expressed strong concern over the Simpson-Mazzoli Bill's effects on the Asian community.

One of the speakers, Dennis Brutus (who, with the support of U.S. opponents of apartheid, won his two-year fight against the attempts of the Immigration and Naturalization Service — La Migra — to deport him), compared that bill's "immigration reform" and its national ID cards to the pass system in apartheid South Africa, with which he had had so much personal experience.

— News and Letters participants



Demonstrators in Santiago, Chile march under banner: "We want democracy."

shipwrecked person. The only solid earth was my language, my own language.

We have to have an active nostalgia, a positive nostalgia. With our work it was not alone to remember the past, but to be witness to a generation which has given its thinking and its blood.

The Allende time was a time for having a language, and a way of distributing that language. It was a miraculous period in which the language exploded. Poetry is energy, and it exploded in all forms of expression. All that has to be studied and recovered.

Rodolfo Seguel, union leader

First and foremost, worker participation. We do not wish to be mere actors, characters who must receive instructions. No one, absolutely no one, must forget the workers, particularly now when our demands are not all that great. We know that the reconstruction of this country will demand sacrifices, but the acceptance of these sacrifices must be accompanied by worker participation in everything concerning the country, by respect for union organizations, by their recognition as valid interlocutors, by the widest possible union leadership and their organizations. On this basis we can enter more detailed discussions concerning the workers and the unemployed; any future policy must begin with the provision of jobs for the unemployed and the satisfaction of basic needs such as health, housing and food.

David Quintana, mine worker

I was born under Yankee rule, in a copper town, Rancagua, where all the rules were dictated by the U.S. Kennecott corporation. I was foreign in my own country. We had to do what the Americans told us to do in our own country.

The town was divided into three sections, the Yankees, the Chilean-Americans and the Chileans. The American town had very nice houses with everything. The Chilean-Americans, who always wanted to be called "Senor" lived in pleasant houses. The houses where the Chileans lived were barracks. Sometimes you had to walk two blocks to go to the bathroom. No running water in our section of town. It was in this way we learned what international corporations were when growing up.

When Salvador Allende had been elected in 1970, copper was the most important thing. We nationalized the copper and the U.S. turned down everything we wanted. All our machinery needed spare parts, but the U.S. wouldn't send any parts. Instead the U.S. sent money to the right wing newspaper El Mercurio and to Patria y Libertad, a fascist group that organized the killings in our country.

In 1973 they organized the coup that took most of our union leaders who worked with the government or agreed with the government and arrested them. On Sept. 27, 1973 I was arrested. They took me from my house and kept me in jail three years.

We have had ten years of this situation, and the Chilean people are still fighting. Right after the coup they tried to kill any type of organization. But the workers kept their organizations in one way or another. The mine workers organized in a new form, and in 1975 they issued a statement. The military government couldn't understand how.

By 1978 there was coordination of the union on a national level. That same year the Minister of Labor created a Labor Law. But the people called it the "anti-labor law". One thing it did was to try and prevent one union of all the workers in a plant. Even if only 20 workers out of 400 wanted a certain union, they could have it. It was to break up the union. Before 1978 there was not the right to strike. They gave the right to strike, but only for 60 days, then you would have to return to work.

The people still keep organizing. In 1980 the copper miners in the town where I was born had the first strike.

In March of 1983 there was a demonstration of students who were going back to school and didn't have money for registration in the high schools, the technical schools. A big demonstration was repressed. From March to May no

large demonstrations.

On May Day a large demonstration. People walking to a meeting were assailed with chains and clubs. The mine workers led by Rodolfo Seguel called a one-day demonstration on May 11. They called for peace and jobs. They got bullets. On June 11 it was supposed to be a one-day demonstration, but it became two days. In July, three days. In August, five days. In September it has been almost every day a day of demonstration.

We have had over 40 people dying. We have had thousands upon thousands arrested. Rodolfo Seguel was arrested, released, rearrested. He has been on a hunger strike. This is the real situation of how people live in my country.

September 11, 1973

"This is the most tragic day in the history of Latin America. In 1970 when Salvador Allende was elected president of Chile, it appeared that Cuba would by no means be the only country that was able to defeat American imperialism and Batista. Now the bloody victory of the military coup and the horrible murder of Allende is a victory of counter-revolution that, though it falls mainly on the Chilean masses, will by no means end there. Indeed, it is a start of counter-revolution not only in Chile, but in U.S. imperialism's continued strangle-hold on Latin America . . .

"The tragedy, unfortunately, has become fact, not only because of the oligarchy that resisted Allende's agricultural reforms, the comprador bourgeoisie which was in collusion with U.S. imperialism against the nationalization of basic industries, and the fascist Patria y Libertad (Fatherland and Liberty), but also because of the grand illusion of reformism. Because Allende gained power through a popular election and parliamentary means, he thought he could rule with the military intact as if they would obey him just because he was the duly elected 'commander-in-chief.'

Worse still, he did not create a workers' militia for self-defense, for coping with the counter-revolution that was preparing its coup ever since he gained power, for making sure that workers' control of production and not just the nationalization of industry would be the only guarantee of socialism. This was a sure way of guaranteeing that instead of a civil war, we would have a massacre.

"As usual with Communists, they were instrumental in keeping the workers unarmed, in making sure that everybody lived under democratic delusion by having their central slogan, 'No Civil War.'

"Will anyone in the Left learn not just to be against what is, but to create such foundations for human relations that cannot, can not, succeed without unifying theory and practice, philosophy and revolution, workers' rule unbound by coalition governments with the bourgeoisie." (Reprinted from N&L leaflet, Sept. 1973) — Sept. 13, 1973

Deportation flights ended

Los Angeles, Cal. — Over fifty people, including young El Salvadorans, teachers, and anti-war activists, turned a protest demonstration in front of the Mexicana Airlines office into a victory celebration, when we learned that our struggle had forced Mexicana to stop its death flights — deportations of refugees — to El Salvador. At the same time, everyone vowed to continue the protest against the U.S. government's deportation of El Salvadoran refugees.

For months now a national campaign has been waged by Latin American support groups. The first target was Western Airlines which was forced to stop taking refugees back. Then Mexicana took over, but with so many demonstrations in front of its offices it also had to stop the flights.

These and other kinds of solidarity actions with the Latin American revolutions give only a glimpse of the widespread opposition to Reagan's war-mongering. As he intensifies his counter-revolutionary drive in Latin America, he will be facing a lot more opposition.

— Member, News and Letters Committees.

A young labor activist writes

How to aid birth of workers' own forms of organization

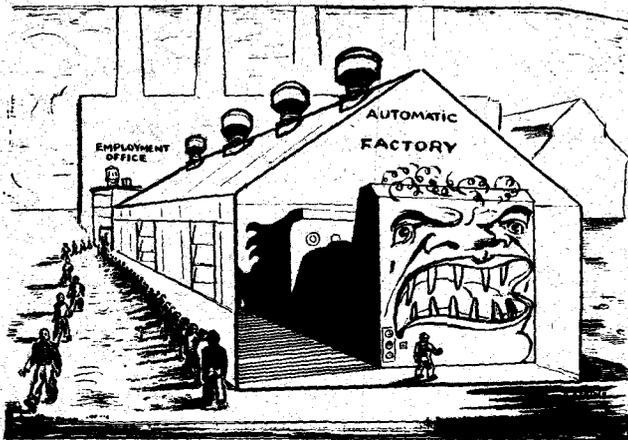
by John Marcotte

This year has shown no let up in the sharpest attack on U.S. labor in decades. The attack has been political — Reaganism, economic — depression, and ideological — unions forcing concessions on workers.

I felt last year that all this would breed a tremendous rank-and-file revolt. It is true there have been important strikes this year, many anti-concessions strikes. But they are as yet individual and isolated. Everyday I feel in the shop the very real objective force of massive unemployment and fear of losing your job, keeping workers down. There can be no setting a timetable on the reaction to Reaganomics. And you can really see at work how the labor bureaucracy is the last barrier to the self-organization of workers for freedom.

But I believe the unions have dealt themselves a death-blow to any credibility they had left with these concessions. With the first great concession of the No-Strike Pledge during World War II, union leadership started down its suicidal path of class collaboration. This collaboration bore fruit early, in McCarthyism's anti-labor Taft-Hartley Law in 1948 which gave birth to "right-to-work" laws. Unions failed to organize the South, and allowed the firing and blacklisting of militant workers from their unions.

Then came the unions' acceptance of Automation, first by John L. Lewis with the introduction of the continuous miner in the coalfields, which miners fought with



their wildcat general strike in 1949-50. This path of collaboration has led today to the virtual self-destruction of many unions who know only how to retreat before the onslaught of Reaganism.

Just as the transformation of the unions into the opposite of what they were created to be is total, the workers' break with the labor bureaucracy is total. The form the opposition will take is all that remains to be worked out. Production workers are even saying, "Better with no union to sell you out."

Here in New York the Art Steel workers are a good example. Their office furniture plant had declared bankruptcy and used that as an excuse to withhold half their vacation pay. After a year of the union giving them the run-around, Art Steel workers went right down to the District 65/UAW headquarters after work and held a demonstration inside the offices complete with leaflets showing a cartoon of their organizer taking money from the company and passing it to the union president.

Their attitude is that the union is the immediate enemy standing in your way to fight the company, that there is no hope of changing anything in the union, no work from within is possible, you can only attack it. The workers in my shop, for all the fear that prevents action for now, have exactly the same attitude. I think only some of the Left have not shed their illusion of reforming the unions.

ON THE SHOP FLOOR

What does this mean for our own work in the shop? First seek shop-floor unity, the union of the workers.

Without this, nothing is possible. This can include a struggle to organize a union or get certain reforms in your local. There is no contradiction in that. I reject any fatalism on the part of workers that, since the unions can't be reformed, there is nothing to be done. But because I recognize that nothing less than the abolition of the capital/labor relation can solve our problems, I cannot respond with only activism without bringing in Marx's understanding of our situation and the way out of it.

I am not talking about what others say Marx said, whether they are state-capitalist powers calling themselves Communist or professors here. I mean the vision Marx developed showing both how labor is of necessity an object, just one commodity among others to the capitalist and how that capitalist must constantly, by law of competition, invest more and more in machines to employ relatively fewer and fewer workers; and of the opposite to this, how only workers acting and thinking their own thoughts can free themselves and create a new form of freely associated production relations.

The force of this vision together with the shop floor struggles form the process that must begin today to lead to the classless society. I reject the Left's attempts to organize factions in the unions and get elected to positions, not because that may not be the right tactics for certain struggles, but because of the way I've seen it done. I feel that among the Left there's a lack of respect for and serious dealing with, what workers are saying about "you can't change things that way." There is a fine line between fatalism and the truth! You've got to deal with it. The Left, including anarchists I have worked with, goes on like the Old Left in unions, and the reforms and union positions are taken too seriously, divorced from a real rank-and-file movement.

OPPOSITION CAUCUSES

Some fellow union members tried to set up an opposition caucus of sorts this year. They felt the time was right because of tremendous dissatisfaction in the union over loss of membership, financial mismanagement, corruption and a question of where the union was going. The meetings were attended by various shop stewards and some opposition staff workers.

I felt uneasy at the lack of rank-and-filers but I said o.k., who knows? If it can present itself to the workers in the shops as an alternative, and if the workers decide this is a form of struggle they want, and make it their own... well, it's a chance. But the gap between the caucus, which included several kinds of Leftists including anarchists, and the shop floor was too great.

A caucus like this could work if it was the result of a shop floor struggle, which got to the stage of seeing the need to reach out beyond the one shop, and a caucus of shops, in opposition or in struggle, formed. The way it was, I would go to a meeting, learn all the crap that was going on in the union, and of plans to oppose this at the general meetings of stewards and local officers — which is the wrong ground, is the ground of the bureaucrats, and as we found out in a battle of words, they are the meanest.

I thought our function should have been to simply try to open up communication between the shops, with a newsletter which could both share some of this information with the members and invite them to share their experiences and ideas. Then we would see if we had something. But the "caucus" wanted to fight the bureaucracy themselves, and got nowhere.

So I'd go back to the shop, and the workers' attitude was, the union is the enemy, it's a mafia, you can't reform it. So what's the use of tactics to oppose this or that corruption of the bureaucrats if it's not part of the shop floor struggle, if it's not a step in the self-organization of the workers? It means nothing to them, no more than voting for a Democrat instead of a Republican. It's not the workers' form of struggle.

The Left cannot hear the workers' criticism even in their seeming passivity. I liked the anarchists compared to the rest of the Left for their position on labor. But in practice Marxist-Humanism is far more radical than anarchists on labor. Despite their professed ultimate goals of a classless society, anarchists share with the social-democrats or reformers a ready-made idea of what form the struggle must take, instead of really listening to what workers are saying. There is also their lack of fully appreciating how women and Blacks and other minorities have their own ideas and demands.

WORKERS — WOMEN, BLACK, LATINO

Look at how women are treated in my shop. The assembly departments are the only ones that hire women. The better paying jobs, including the skilled toolroom jobs and training positions, hire men only. And only men get transferred to those jobs, even if they start in assembly.

One of the men whose wife works in assembly recognized that though his work is heavier, the women work harder because they are stuck at their machines all day and do the same task over and over again, with the boss standing over them. Yet there is one older woman, past retirement age, who got hired in the pressroom around the time of World War II and she is still working there. She is neither stronger nor weaker than most women. I

know it is the same at Art Steel, where once plenty of women worked but only three are left from that war period and none have ever been hired since.

The discrimination against Black workers takes a different form, from what I have seen in my years in various small shops. The problem starts with many bosses who won't even hire Blacks most of the time, especially young Black men.

One department I worked in did hire two young Blacks from a union training program, but the foreman started singling them out right away for harassment and writing them up. After a few weeks he even started getting on my case. My work had not changed or slowed up and I wasn't talking more, so I could only figure it was because these two workers and I got to be friends. The foreman didn't really get off my case till one of these young workers was fired for no reason and the other one laid-off.

Working with immigrant labor has its own particularities. A Latin American friend in another shop has found them when faced with the tremendous exploitation and abuses in a shop and the seeming passivity and fear of the workers, he has had to first help his fellow workers know their rights and what's in the contract, since first it's in English and second it's kept a secret by the union anyway.

He would then help the workers gain the confidence to begin demanding those rights, using tactics which all could agree on, such as a letter to the union signed by a majority of the workers. In his experience, this patient work has been able to initiate a whole process of struggle which escalates with each new victory and each new reaction by the company.



The point is to not get impatient of the process. Activity in labor is not to gain any particular reforms no matter how great, nor any union positions even if you could take over the local. The means is the end — helping the growing self-organization, self-confidence and self-awareness of labor as Subject of history, from individual workers to whole shops, which necessitates both this practical experience and what we call Marx's Humanism.

UNITY OF WORKERS AND INTELLECTUALS

As long as capitalism exists, any reforms can be reversed, but this "intellectual sediment" (as Rosa Luxemburg called it in the mass strikes of Russia and Poland in 1905) is what remains to build on and to create the new society based on Freely Associated Labor. The unity of workers and intellectuals, of workers' own way of knowing, through their experiences and own activities, with Marx's method of knowing not only the present but the future inherent in it, must be worked on now, and for that we in News and Letters Committees participate in these struggles.

Marxist-Humanists cannot simply wait for new forms of workers' organizations to spring up like Solidarnosc (Solidarity Union) in Poland — recognizing Solidarnosc sprang up spontaneously not in a void but in the ground prepared by KOR (Committee for Social Self-Defense), which did bring together workers and intellectuals. I hope workers who read this will write to me at News & Letters to continue an exchange of ideas about where we can go in labor.

Coming next issue

"A 1980s View of the Two-Way Road Between the U.S. and Africa" by Raya Dunayevskaya (from new edition of American Civilization on Trial)

An in-person report on Women's Liberation in Japan

News & Letters
 Vol. 28, No. 8 October, 1983

News & Letters (ISSN 0028-8969) is published ten times a year, monthly except for January-February and August-September for \$2.50 a year (bulk order of five or more — 15¢) by News & Letters, 2832 E. Grand Blvd., Detroit, Mich. 48211. Telephone: 873-8969. Second Class Postage Paid at Detroit, Michigan. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to News & Letters, 2832 E. Grand Blvd., Detroit, Mich. 48211.

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AFTER MARCH ON WASHINGTON: THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

Today it is one month since a third of a million marched on Washington for Jobs, Peace and Freedom. Like those who went, I did not believe that the March would achieve its goals overnight. But the horror of this class-ridden, racist, militarist society in just one month is stunning. Every day as I open the paper, I see blood in the streets of the Philippines, Lebanon, El Salvador. I read of Reagan getting Congress to approve the MX missile and nerve gas production. I listen to James Watt speak racist comments and retain his Cabinet post. And in my own city I watch the soup kitchen lines grow longer, and the unions signing concessions contracts lowering the wages of those who do have jobs.

The reason I read N&L is that I know there has to be a way out of this insane society. It is time that those who are doing the dying and the suffering get to do the thinking and the living.

Working woman
New York

We have heard story after story about how Reagan is setting up "re-training" programs for workers. Most workers I know say they will never get a job out of "re-training," because in a few months after getting a new job they will be forced out into the streets by some robot. Reagan may think he is putting something over on us, but we see through his schemes. We want real jobs, and he isn't offering any of those.

Laid-off worker
Los Angeles, Calif.

Some reporters were saying that the March on Washington was "nostalgia for the '60s'." I was there and I don't think so. Sure there were many people there who had been at the March in 1963. And there were many others who weren't even born then who had heard about the 1963 March from their parents or from TV. But that isn't why they came this year. We came because we are still dreaming Dr. King's dream of an America freed of racism and hatred, and we know that with a man like Reagan in the White House it will never come true. I was glad to see so many people there, and so many different groups. We can't stop now!

Young Black man
Washington, D.C.

The continuing economic crisis and Reagan's budget cuts are bringing out all kinds of reactions here in Detroit. The Library Commission announced that they would close 14 branch libraries — most of the neighborhood system — due to deficits. Then community groups began sit-ins, book check-outs and demonstrations, and they stopped the closings temporarily. But only to launch a fund-drive to get rich individuals and corporations to give \$1 million to keep them open. GM and several other corporations turned the fund down cold. To date they have only raised \$65,000.

Now they say more branches will have to close. If we have to rely on the charity of the capitalists to provide working people and our children with books and libraries, we'll soon be reading nothing at all. Another route has to be found.

Library patron
Detroit

A Ford Rouge worker told me the difficulty he had trying to go to the March on Washington through the UAW. He found out he had Friday and Saturday off that weekend and asked Local 600 if he could get on a UAW bus. They said no, it was full. He asked how many were going, and they told him two workers per unit at Rouge. Ford Rouge has something like 15,000 workers, and I think nine units. Therefore they sent about 18 workers out of 15,000! Some support for the March on Washington.

Disgusted
Michigan

Did you read about the vote on the Teamsters contract? Jackie Presser, the new President of the IBT, negotiated a pact that would have allowed trucking firms to ship much more by train, cutting out the jobs of more road drivers. It also

called for a \$2.85 an hour cut in wages and other concessions. The members voted it down by some 80% opposed. Presser said he was "shocked and saddened." I wasn't. I am hoping that this means a turn-around in the thinking of rank-and-file workers about these damn concessions contracts.

Union member
New Jersey

Standing at the News and Letters literature table during the March on Washington was an exciting experience, mainly because the titles of our pamphlets were able to elicit comments from other marchers about their conception of freedom. One man who had previously been attracted to Fanon's concept of justifiable violence, became so interested in how we single out Fanon's internationalism and "new humanism" that he bought *Frantz Fanon, Soweto and American Black Thought and American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard to find out what Marxist-Humanism is about*. Many bought *American Civilization on Trial* as soon as they found out about its use as a textbook in the Mississippi Freedom Schools.

Marxist-Humanist
Los Angeles

CRISIS ON THE FARMS

Your article by Azadkar and Bob McGuire on the farm crisis meeting (Aug.-Sept. N&L) was one of the best articles you have ever carried. I discussed it with many people on a recent trip across the country, including members of my family who are usually not talking in revolutionary terms. But now the situation for both farmers and workers is so extreme, so desperate, that people are thinking differently. I thought a long time about that one South Dakota farmer you quoted whose 16-year-old son died in a farm accident. Why was he doing a dangerous job? Why wasn't he in school full-time? It is a horrible system that makes parents exploit the labor of their own children to keep from losing their farms.

Ex-farmer
California

I thought that the farmers' article in the last N&L was really exciting with its global dimensions, and its connections with the women's movement, the peace movement and Solidarnosc. Farming today is a multi-billion dollar industry and is increasingly run on a factory line basis. Farmworkers are four times as likely to die from job-related accidents as the average American worker and their life expectancy is way below average. In Britain this summer in one week alone three farm workers were mutilated by combine harvesters which didn't have the proper safety gadgets. The Thatcher government's cutbacks have left only six officials to check all the farms for safety. Whilst people in the Third World starve, the West produces mountains of waste foodstuffs and owning a farm doesn't mean you can make enough to live on.

Feminist
London

THE FLIGHT OF 007

The Russians' shooting down the Korean airliner, killing 269 people, couldn't have helped Reagan more if he had planned it. The way I see it, Reagan was in trouble before this happened. The shooting down of the plane let Reagan send more Marines into Lebanon, and escalate his war in El Salvador. It got his MX missile funded. The Russians shooting down the Korean airliner was Reagan's dream come true. It makes one wonder who those two Russian pilots were really working for!

Unemployed worker
California

The capitulation of Congress to Reagan on flight 007 was disgusting. On the cold war resolution only Conyers and Crockett refused to be stampeded with the red men-

Readers' View

ace hysteria. But being disgusted isn't enough. Look at the nerve gas production Reagan will be getting. And the troops we have in Honduras and Lebanon with only the mildest of protests from a minority in Congress. Reagan has been playing that flight to the hilt with Congress.

But most frightening of all is the realization that the U.S. and Russia are on a collision course, not alone one plane shooting down another, but thousands of nuclear tipped missiles aimed at all of us. 007 only makes us realize the insanity of the nuclear trigger that both Reagan and Andropov have their fingers on. Neither of them can be trusted, and certainly Congress is no real opposition.

Frightened
Detroit

REGISTERING FOR SCHOOL

Talk about angry youth! The day I registered for classes at the University, I had three arguments. The first was that even though I'm a woman, I had to say why I wasn't registered for the draft or I wouldn't get my financial aid. Then I found that \$104 of my already increased tuition was a service charge for the company that sells the food and "entertainment" to the students. Then, when I went to get my financial aid, I found that it doesn't even cover my tuition. I said to the clerk, "My God, the tuition is outrageous" to which she replied, "It's cheaper than a private school." Well, isn't that just great!

Student
Univ. of Illinois—Chicago

CHILE: FIGHT FOR FREEDOM, SONG OF FREEDOM



In New York, 500 marchers banged pots and pans to commemorate the 10th anniversary of General Pinochet's bloody rule in Chile and express support for the massive opposition he is facing there. As the demonstration turned down 14th street toward Union Square large crowds on the sidewalks of this Latino neighborhood joined in chanting, "Chile Si, Junta No!" At the rally a broad coalition gave notice to Reagan that no one has forgotten the U.S. role in toppling Allende and bringing Pinochet to power.

Marcher
New York City

Last week I went to see "The Battle of Chile" tellingly subtitled, "The Struggle of The Unarmed People." Today, 10 years after Allende's death, it is particularly poignant, with violent riots on the streets of Santiago and large demonstrations here in New York. Allende made the deadly mistake of sticking to a "legal" and democratic form of government, despite mass support from peasants, workers and youth. The film clearly shows how the bourgeoisie must never be underestimated as the plotting for a coup began right after his electoral victory.

After the film I spoke to a student from Nicaragua who said that today you have a global perspective of the complete crisis of capitalism and that he felt that people had learnt a fatal lesson from Allende's overthrow.

Visitor in the U.S.A.
London, England

John Alan's beautiful piece on Language, Consciousness and Freedom in Azania (Aug.-Sept. N&L) has echos throughout the world. Recently I heard a Chilean speak about what the 10 years of Pinochet rule has meant. He is a poet in exile and has deeply felt the inability to communicate with his country. To him language was his identity and as he expressed it: "I felt like a shipwrecked person."

Here we are on the edge of 1984 with reminders all around us that Orwell's Newspeak language has become a living reality. The refusal to accept the language of the oppressor even when he speaks the same tongue, has been with us throughout our history. Language is our humanity and its fullest expression can only be a song of freedom.

Reader
Detroit

ANTI-NUKE MOVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL STRUGGLE

West German crew members aboard the Hapag-Lloyd container cargo ship, the *Allemania Express*, docked in the port of Oakland on Sept. 21 amidst cheers of anti-nuclear activists carrying the banner "Allemania Express — bravo — crew — Atomraketen Stop!" Before leaving Germany they had signed a petition appealing to other sailors of the Hapag-Lloyd Line to refuse to transport Cruise and Pershing missiles across international waters to Europe.

When the captain of the *Allemania Express*, which is scheduled to carry arms to El Salvador as well as Cruise and Pershing parts to Europe, was subsequently fired, the crew wouldn't budge till Hapag-Lloyd promised that no more disciplinary actions would be given. On arrival in London, however, two crew members were dismissed.

Having combatted these threatening actions, the sailors expressed great excitement at their welcome in Oakland. Not only were they met by members of the Livermore Action Group, but longshoremen who were also on the scene are now considering how they can show their own solidarity.

Anti-nuke activist
Oakland

Just think if all the mothers and fathers bought guns every week instead of food. Everyone would say that was stupid. But that is what I see this U.S. government doing. Where will it all end? Reagan talks like he belongs to the stone age.

Black youth
New York City

RUDI BAHRO IN RETROGRESSION

Over 800 people came to hear Rudi Bahro speak on the Greens and social change during his tour in the San Francisco Bay Area last month. Bahro limited himself to describing the dangers of nuclear weapons and the decline of both superpowers. The audience repeatedly challenged him on many issues, including revolution, which he tried to dismiss as "getting off the historical merry-go-round."

I took the floor and pointed to the many revolutions that are emerging and asked what is the responsibility of the revolutionary theoretician to them? Bahro said the workers are incapable of opposing the ruling class and instead he turned to a "spiritual revolution," which would establish a new culture — a culture supposedly not based on industrialization. A model of the new "culture" can be found, according to Bahro, in the commune organized by Bagwan Rajneesh in Oregon! He intends to start a similar one in Germany as soon as he returns. Many left feeling that if the foremost theoretician of the movement can adopt such a position, where is the movement going?

Urszula Wislanka
San Francisco

MARXIST-HUMANISM IN THE BATTLE OF IDEAS

I would like to commend you on the content and style of the new edition of *American Civilization on Trial*. It is a very fine history which points in an exciting direction — towards self-organization and liberation. I also like to commend you on your newspaper. Of the left papers I've seen it seems to be the best at showing a worker's point of view and putting it in with the theory of Marxism — as the masthead of the paper says, "Theory/Practice". I like your paper so much that I'd be interested in getting five copies every month to distribute.

I first learned about state-capitalist theory through the writings of Tony Cliff. But after reading *Philosophy and Revolution* I must agree that his theory ignores the human side of the state-capitalist regimes, the revolt. He treats the economic side without looking at the human forces. Cliff's book, *State-Capitalism in Russia*, seems to be based on the argument: "Look at the numbers . . . that describes the class relations". To me this is wholly insufficient. The argument has to be: "Look at the human relations . . . it is a class society where man rules man."

Just now I have given *Marxism and Freedom* a quick and excited reading. This book brought me a fuller understanding and expression of my thoughts on a humanist Marxism. In fact it has convinced me that Marxism is a Humanism or it is meaningless . . .

New Reader
Covington, Kentucky

We're happy to exchange newspapers with you. We really enjoy the coverage, which is a lot less strident and more "meaty" than other progressive attempts at national/international movement reporting. Say hello to our brothers and sisters from Appalachia who've migrated to the North!

Mountain Life and Work staff
Clintwood, Va.

N&L describes political and social aspects of society in ways different than the more conventional publications. It is an honest and straightforward outlook.

Anti-war activist
Seattle, Wash.

At a recent conference of radical social scientists in New York most of the participants were quite hostile both to Marx's Marxism and toward workers, minorities, and women as subjects capable of transforming today's capitalist society. They spoke of an all-powerful bureaucracy and its hegemonic ideology as conquering

nearly all revolutionary impulses, and looked for salvation only to "alternative visions" which they could conjure up themselves by going "beyond Marx".

At a workshop, however, a professor from Nigeria spoke, and depicted his country as experiencing "a disjuncture" between the ideology of the Nigerian ruling class and their imperialist supporters and the poverty and rebellion of the Nigerian masses. He said that this "disjuncture grows more extreme every year". The European and American social scientists protested that even if this were true (and they doubted the existence of such widespread revolt), it was true only in the Third World and didn't apply in their countries. Furthermore, they said, the ordinary African knew virtually nothing about the issues of neo-colonialism and modernization.

Finally, a literature teacher told of his experience in Ghana in the years immediately preceding the overthrow of Nkrumah. George Orwell's *Animal Farm* was required reading then in the school curriculum, and all across Ghana, students were discussing that book as an analysis of Nkrumah's Ghana, asking whether "modernization" had to follow either his path or that of the USA. They were looking for a different direction entirely. The "beyond Marx" group had no response to this story openly. But privately they said that those who insisted on Marx's relevance (especially the Marxist-Humanists in the conference), seemed also to find human subjects of revolution everywhere around the globe. I think they were right about that one point.

Conferee
New York City

While we were in Denver we met with a graduate student from Pakistan. He was doing work on Luxemburg's theory of imperialism and was very helpful in taking us around to friends and giving us a feel for the university. He bought both the new edition of *American Civilization on Trial* and our latest pamphlet on *Marx and the Third World*, and was especially interested in the latter, since he is interested in questions of social revolution in the Third World and their relation to Marxism. When in Pakistan as a youth he had been a Maoist, but broke in 1971 over China's betrayal of Bangladesh. When I mentioned Raya's important analyses of that event in relation to the Nixon visit to Peking, he wanted to know much more, not only about that, but about our organization . . .

Marxist-Humanist
Travelling through Denver

POLAND AND NIGERIA

Aug. 14 and 31 marked the third anniversary of the historic strike in Gdansk and the signing of the agreement hammered out between the strikers and the Polish government. Both anniversaries have been celebrated by protest marches, public transportation boycotts, slowdowns, and special masses. In Nowa Huta on Aug. 31 police attacked the march of 10,000 people; in Gdansk 3,000 tried to march with Walesa to lay flowers at the monument to workers killed in 1970 while later over 5,000 people chanting "Solidarity" confronted water cannons.

The urgency to preserve Solidarity's ideas is also seen in the statements of those who could not march in any protest: Ewa Kubasiewicz and Adam Michnik, both still in prison. Ewa Kubasiewicz refused to sign the loyalty oath that could have meant her freedom and instead wrote: ". . . Such a declaration would be a denial of your own self, would wipe out your life's meaning . . . By choosing the human condition of a political prisoner, you are preserving hope."

Polish exile
California

I was in Nigeria at the time of the recent elections and witnessed the sham nature of the whole operation. Shagari, who supposedly won, rigged the elections to show that he had the support of 17 states, whereas in reality he only won in two states. He used the threat of murder and harassment against anybody who didn't vote for him. And when some of his agents were killed in the states of Ondo, Oyo and Ogun, he sent the army there and killed 200 people.

Young Nigerian
Los Angeles



**ON THE
CRITIQUE OF
MACKINNON**

As a long-time Women's Liberationist I wanted to say that I loved Terry Moon's critique of Catherine MacKinnon's articles. What made me think of Moon's article again was reading Marx's *Communist Manifesto* for a study group. In the *Manifesto*, Marx has a devastating critique of what is right up MacKinnon's alley — jurisprudence: "Your (the bourgeoisie's) very ideas are but the outgrowth of the conditions of your bourgeois production and bourgeois property, just as your jurisprudence is but the will of your class made into law for all . . ."

To me an important difference between Marx and MacKinnon is that whereas MacKinnon's conclusion was that "Just-

tice will require change, not reflection — a new jurisprudence, a new relation between life and law"; Marx broke altogether with law, jurisprudence, and bourgeois society, and looked for revolutionary change to come from the real struggles of humanity.

Feminist
Chicago

APPEALS FROM PRISONS

Yesh G'vul ("There is a limit") was founded a month after the beginning of the war in Lebanon by reserve officers and soldiers who oppose the war and see it as senseless aggression. We have circulated a petition signed by 1,700 reservists asking the government not to call us to military duty in Lebanon. They have not honored our request. To date 76 of our members have been courtmartialled and sent to military prison for refusing to serve in Lebanon. We established a special fund to support the families of those who go to jail.

We must confess that our circle of active supporters is quite small, because we have violated an inviolable precept in Israeli society — that one should serve in the army regardless of one's politics — so that many who disagree with the war find it difficult to support us. To meet our on-going and growing expenses, we are appealing to sympathetic organizations and individuals abroad. The address of our fund for supporting jailed soldiers is:

Yesh G'vul Fund
c/o Gideon Spiro
Halamed Hey 8
Jerusalem 93661, Israel

As described in Aug.-Sept. N&L Irish republican socialist Nicky Kelly continues to be in jail in Southern Ireland framed with two colleagues for political reasons for a robbery none of them committed. After his 38-day hunger strike he has been having health problems, particularly with his eyes, and a recurrence of ear trouble first caused by police brutality at the time of his arrest and forced "confession" in 1976. Despite this, he insists that unless he is released he will have to resume the hunger strike in late autumn.

A law suit is being started in Nicky's behalf, and attempts are being made to take his case to the European Court. This will cost a great deal. Pressure on the authorities has to be kept up during the coming weeks. People in the USA who wish to help this Irish activist jailed for his political views, please contact:

Free Nicky Kelly Coalition
135 West 4th St.
New York, NY 10012

PUBLICATIONS FROM NEWS & LETTERS COMMITTEES

- American Civilization on Trial, Black Masses as Vanguard**
Statement of the National Editorial Board. Includes "A 1980s View of the Two-Way Road Between the U.S. and Africa," by Raya Dunayevskaya, and "Black Caucuses in the Unions" by Charles Denby \$2 per copy
- Marx's Capital and Today's Global Crisis**
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Philosophy of revolution needed to confront global crisis

(continued from page 1)

WHAT REAGAN RETROGRESSIONISM does not count on are the human responses — the American people in the second America who are girding to fight him and building support committees for Latin American, South African,

Middle East, and Asian rebels against the imperialist outreach.

The Aug. 27 March on Washington showed the breadth of the coalition today, with Black still as central, but with

Hispanics, the WLM, the anti-nuke movement and the Left all readying themselves for battle against Reaganism both at home and abroad, especially in Central America, while Asian fighters were there to let none forget that battle for Freedom.

FROM PART II — U.S. Imperialist Tentacles Circle The Globe

There are so many points of world crisis that it is hard to even begin to choose what to focus on as the most immediate point that needs to be worked out in a Perspectives of opposition. Let me give you one example by quoting the note I wrote to myself on Wednesday, Aug. 17: "Just because the Philippines are not now in the headlines does not mean that that impoverished country has no movements against its own rulers and against U.S. imperialism. The Philippines are especially important now because it's there that the biggest base is and it's in that country that the first great resistance movement following World War II — the Hukbalahaps — very nearly won."

Four short days later (Sunday, August 21) news flashes reported the incredible murder — one that would have been inconceivable anywhere except in Hitler's Germany — of Benigno Aquino, the most important opponent of that dictator Marcos. . . . And what were the first words out of President Reagan's mouth? He said he would not be stopped by that act to change his plans.

That the trip to that bloody tyrant Marcos was still on should, I suppose, not surprise anyone who knows that U.S. imperialism's hands have been no less bloody ever since the Philippines were first betrayed after winning freedom from Spain in 1898. Karl Marx's designation of the West's intrusion into Asia as "these order-mongering powers" holds even more true today. Who, looking at Reagan's friend, Marcos, can forget that Clark Air Force and Subic Naval Base in the Philippines are two of the most important bases not only in Asia but for reaching the Middle East, since the U.S. lost its protectorate, the Shah's Iran?

Could we look forward to as great a revolution in the Philippines as occurred in Iran? Now that the Iranian Revolution has been transformed into its opposite — Khomeini's counter-revolution — we must intensify the criticism Marxist-Humanism has always maintained for revolutions lacking a philosophy of revolution.

LET'S TAKE A CLOSER look at Lebanon. There is no doubt that Israel's genocidal invasion of Lebanon, which the U.S. secretly encouraged, is the cause of the much-aggravated situation all around — but the ground for it

was laid in the unfinished 1975 Civil War in Lebanon.

Last year's imperialist invasion of Lebanon by Israel showed its class nature, and it did not have its ambitions satisfied, even though militarily Israel won against the PLO, even though it also succeeded in getting the U.S. directly involved, even though Lebanon is now partitioned *de facto* as was its aim. But look what faces Israel now.

The other occupier of Lebanon is Syria — a Syria that has been rearmed by Russia; a Syria that achieved its imperial ambition of a "Greater Syria" when it entered Lebanon in 1976 and was gleefully greeted by the PLO, whom it has finally succeeded in splitting, with itself lording it over that section of the PLO which is in the crucial Bekka Valley; a Syria that reintroduced a Russian presence in the Middle East so that now both nuclear Titans are in a place chosen by others!

Seven years after that 1975-76 Civil War in Lebanon we must take another look, not because history repeats itself, but because the "repetition," where not resolved in a revolutionary way, appears in a more retrogressive form. Thus, back in January 1976, Arafat seemed to be in top form both in his dramatic appearance at the UN to sponsor the UN Resolution against "Zionism," and because, above all, he was heading a revolution in Lebanon. It was then that we warned against confining a revolution to the narrowness of the PLO-type of nationalism which sought to subordinate to itself the genuine, indigenous, Lebanese revolution.

Returning to that analysis today is not for purposes of any "I told you so," whether that be the warning against PLA or PLO, nor is it that we will not continue to fight against the horrors of Israel's genocidal invasion of Lebanon as well as solidarizing with all freedom fighters, including the Israeli dissidents fighting their own government.

No, it is for bringing home — and that includes the freedom fighters in Central America — the inevitable result of lacking a philosophy of revolution; for, without it, history repeats only abysmal retrogressions set off by wars and counter-revolutions. Thus, the Israeli slaughter of Palestinians became but one step in an unending series of rolling history's clock backwards. The *de facto* parti-

tion of Lebanon by both Israel and Syria, not to mention the so-called "sovereignty" of Beirut, under control of the fascist Phalange propped up by the U.S., France, Italy and other so-called "democracies," became the second step. And the disarray of the PLO is the third in what followed after the unfinished 1975-76 Civil War.

ALL OF THESE POINTS of crisis have not diverted Reagan from his preoccupation with attempts to strangle the Central American freedom fighters. Take the immediate, concrete armada in Central America — the battle group with the Coral Sea that was ordered from the Atlantic, the Carrier Ranger and the battleship *New Jersey* ordered from the Pacific. Above all, look at Operation Big Pine II, in which 5500 U.S. troops are to descend on Honduras and stay there for no less than six months. And let us not forget where the Guantanamo Naval Base is located — Cuba!

With this awesome display of military hardware, Reagan certainly hopes to provoke a war, if he can get the Latin Americans, especially Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua (and let's not forget Guatemala) to do the fighting and dying for him. Kissinger, who engineered the coup in Chile in the Nixon era, is now heading a "bi-partisan" commission on the Central American cabal — ready to supply the "erudition", not to mention the imperial conceit of being able to create "mind-forged manacles." He had better first look at Chile in revolt today, ten years after he saddled them with the dictator Pinochet.

None are about to be fooled by the imperialist power that forced them into a native fascist dictatorship, whether that be the erudite Kissinger who engineered it first, or whether it is the ignoramus Clark who now bears the august title of Assistant to the President on National Security. Latin America suffers from both and their passion for freedom is a passion also for a philosophy of freedom, for those "new paths to revolution" Marx hewed out.

* See *Political-Philosophic Letters* "The UN Resolution on Zionism and Ideological Obfuscation also on the Left" (January, 1976) and "Lebanon: The Test not only of the PLO but the Whole Left" (August, 1976).

FROM PART III — Marxist-Humanism's Challenge To Post-Marx Marxists And To Other Alternatives To MARX'S Marxism, ITS Dialectics Of Liberation

Marxist-Humanists celebrated the Marx centenary with the publication of our latest work, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, along with the re-publication of our two other fundamental theoretical works, *Marxism and Freedom and Philosophy and Revolution*. Naturally, it is with eyes of today that this trilogy of revolution traces both the revolutions in Marx's day and those in Lenin and Luxemburg's day.

The expression, "with eyes of today," refers of course not just to 1983, but to the new world epoch opened in 1950 when new forms of revolt and new forces of revolution emerged — workers against Automation in West Virginia and against new work-norms in East Germany; Black revolt both in the U.S. and in Africa; the birth of a whole new generation that aligned with the Black dimension and against the Vietnam War; indeed, the emergence of a whole new Third World — in Asia, in the Middle East, in Africa, in Latin America.

Marx in his last decade had been working out, as new paths to revolution and to thought, a new relationship between the industrialized West and the non-industrialized East. . . . What the Marx centenary is challenging this age to do is both to work out Marx's "new moments" and to reexamine the very beginnings of his discovery of a new continent of thought and of revolution, because both periods are urgent for the post World War II world. In that same critical year of the Miners' General Strike against Automation, 1949-50, when something so new came from the movement from practice, a new, though false, challenge came supposedly from theory, with the new type of national revolution that emerged from Mao's China.

That which had given the appearance "of a new world" — a Sino-Soviet orbit — soon turned, however, into a Sino-Soviet conflict, and it was then that Mao rose to offer himself as the "storm center" of nothing short of "world revolution." Mao's "Cultural Revolution" did succeed in becoming a polarizing force for the world's youth, totally alienated from existing society and desirous of short-cuts to a "continuous revolution" which included "new" life-styles. To examine this, it becomes necessary, while holding on tight to the "new moments" of Marx's last decade, to return to his early moments, including aesthetics and art, to see what a new Universal meant to the young Marx.

In his simultaneous struggle to separate himself from Hegel and to battle against Prussian censorship, what the young Marx chose to make a Universal of was freedom of the press. . . . Whether he was examining religion or Art; aesthetics or the peasant theft of wood; individual artist or masses in motion, the young Marx felt he was witnessing paralysis setting in, disintegration abounding, unless a way was found to release vast, untapped, creative energies for universal self-development.

The process of Marx's jamming up reality against philosophy led to Marx's discovery of a whole new continent of thought and of revolution he called "a new Humanism" and "Revolution in permanence," concretized as materialist foundation, with history disclosing the direction of human development, and with dialectics — "negation of the negation," the Absolute Method for continuous revolution — as the determinant.

AMERICAN YOUTH OF the 1960s, attracted to Mao's so-called "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution," failed to see that the manner in which Mao articulated Culture (with a capital C) was not only an evasion of the class nature of China — state-capitalism — but was also philosophically wrong. It is true that a great writer — a Shakespeare or a Tolstoy or a Melville — can envision the "human element," and "original character," and give us a glimpse of the future.

Melville felt that the way to define this "original character" was to compare it to "a revolutionizing philosopher." The point, however, is that the great artist is not that revolutionizing philosopher, or, more plainly put, that "philosopher of revolution" — Karl Marx. Not being that philosopher of revolution, aiming to transform reality, he, more often than not, does not understand the masses in motion that have inspired his vision. He remains the "outsider looking in."

For us, as revolutionaries, as Marxist-Humanists trying to catch the link of historic continuity with Marx's new continent of thought and of revolution of the 1840s, and the trail to the 1980s he left us in the 1880s, we must finally meet the challenge Marx put to us to work out the new paths to revolution. This demands that we see revolutionary forces not only as muscle but as Reason; it demands, at the same time, that we do not relegate those forces to

"characters" (original or otherwise) on a play stage, but see them on the historic stage with the masses in motion transforming reality.

Doing this for the last three decades, we have both paralleled what came from the movement from practice, and met its challenge to rise to philosophy, grounded in practice in a way that not only changed the whole relationship of theory to practice, but also made historic-philosophic contributions — as the trilogy of revolution shows. This year these are extended in the three new pamphlets we are issuing — a new edition of *American Civilization on Trial*, a new pamphlet on *Marx and the Third World*, and our projected work on the 1949-50 Miners' General Strike.

[See Appeal, page 1 — we need your help!]

The forces from below show anew, at one and the same time, that the movement from practice was itself a form of theory and how it challenged the movement from theory to rise to a philosophy.

OUR THEORETIC-PHILOSOPHIC contributions during the past three decades have earned us an historic right to existence, and therewith the right to challenge post-Marx Marxists and other alternatives to Marx's Marxism. What the challenge is now in need of is the recognition of what the practice of philosophy has revealed in this age of unfinished revolutions — and that is that even such fundamental contradictions as that between Party and spontaneity are not absolutes. That is to say, not only is each by itself one-sided but even in a new unity, where spontaneity does, indeed, tower above Party, that cannot provide a direction out of soured revolutions so long as they remain outside of "revolution in permanence."

The new paths to revolution that Marx was working out and that we need to concretize for our age demand that spontaneity and organization in unity be so inseparable from the philosophy of revolution in permanence, that the actual revolution can be released, not alone for the day of but the day after.

— Raya Dunayevskaya
Detroit, Mich.
September 2, 1983

The Iran-Iraq War decimation continues

With the shift of the Iran-Iraq war front to northeastern Iraq, the Iranian regime aims at both destroying the Kurdish resistance in Iran and at cutting off the main Iraqi oil pipeline in Kirkuk by trying to use remnants of the Barezani Kurds. It is only under the cover of "fighting the Iraqi enemy" that Khomeini has been able to send his army to Kurdistan, since many soldiers had refused to fight Kurdish pishmargans (the guerrillas) and have staged mutinies and run away from their garrisons.

On the other hand, with the frustration of no major victory, the Iranian regime has entered into a war of attrition aimed at the economic destruction of the Baghdad regime by trying to capture the Kirkuk territories with their predominantly Kurdish population. It is here where the Iraqi oil pipeline runs through Turkey and is the sole source of income for the beleaguered Ba'ath government of Saddam Hussein.

Saddam Hussein, who sent 50,000 Iraqi soldiers to meet their death in the deserts and as many more captured by the Iranian forces, all in a deadly gamble to satisfy his thirst for power in the region, has brought Iraq to the verge of total economic collapse. Due to the war Iraq's export of oil has dropped from 3.8 million barrels a day to 650,000. Since September, 1980 Iraq's economic activities

have dropped more than 40%. Only the sum of \$25 billion, given by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the Arab Emirates, and the increasing military help from France, has saved Saddam from collapse.

The Iranian economy is not in much better shape. Despite exporting 2 million barrels of oil a day, the financial crisis as well as massive unemployment has been increasing. In order to regain financial credits and to reestablish relations with the West, the regime of Mullahs has embarked on a "generous" payment, including interest, to the claims of financial losses by Western banks and industries during the revolution. The latest figure is some \$419.5 million paid to the Export-Import bank of the U.S. To the millions of Iranian masses this has meant a staggering 20% inflation rate and long lines for often unobtainable necessities such as eggs and soap.

But the resistance is mounting on both sides of the war zone, especially by the mothers and families of the youths who have lost their lives in the war. These youths on the Iranian side sometimes include children under 10 years of age who have been given an intoxicating liquor called "Imam's juice" by Mullahs and sent in human waves to face Iraqi guns. Their hair-raising testimony from Iraqi prisons or Red Cross camps has made infamous, not only the toll of human loss, unprecedented since the two previous world wars, but the horrid atrocities committed by both Iranian and Iraqi forces can only be compared to the Nazi era and the Phalangist massacre of Palestinian refugees in Sabra and Shatila.

The threat of using Exocet missiles by Iraq against Iranian oil installations and the counter-threat of Iran to strike the oil fields of Saudi Arabia, and block the Strait of Hormuz, has brought the Persian Gulf into the focus of a major power confrontation.

To protect its massive investments and loans to Iraq, France is now exceeding Russia in pouring military hardware into Iraq. *Le Monde* reported the figures at no less than \$5.8 billion since September, 1980. But what seems nearly unbelievable is France's recent decision to rent to Iraq five Super Etendard airplanes capable of firing the Exocet missiles. This, despite the fact that the Iraqi foreign minister said they intended to use them to destroy the Iranian oil facilities.

The "forgotten" Iran-Iraq War has become the focus of all small and big war merchants, involving not only France, but South and North Korea, and even the dictatorship in the Philippines, and of course the two nuclearly armed titans, the U.S. and Russia.

— Azadkar

The welfare runaround

Norwalk, Cal. — After six years as a boilermaker the work has stopped, and I went last week to apply for food stamps. I've had no income for several months and have moved in with my mother out of desperation. But after spending the better part of the morning at Social Services I was informed that I'm ineligible, because I have no income! The social worker told me I would have to drive across town to apply for General Relief, because they don't accept such applications at my local office.

On the next morning I invested a large part of my remaining assets in gasoline and drove to the Relief office where I sat three more hours waiting to see someone. They are very efficient. They call three people at a time into a cubicle and take everyone's information at once — the sort of information that's considered "confidential" among the "better classes." I soon found the limit of their efficiency, though: we were told that this was just a "screening," and we would have to return the next day for an appointment with "our" workers.

Once again I had to drive across town, this time without enough cash left for lunch. I tried to be optimistic — at least this time I had an appointment. But two hours past the time of the appointment my mood had become a mixture of anger, frustration, and depression. The room was filled with at least a hundred somber people coming and going constantly. Finally my name was called.

The social worker was a classic bureaucrat. She talked from the back of her head. She asked me questions that I had answered in triplicate in the paper work. She informed me that I'm not eligible for food stamps because I'm living with a relative. (My 70-year-old mother is living on Social Security and has to draw \$100 out of her vanishing savings each month just to keep herself eating.) I was told to return with all sorts of documents, and to meet with another social worker about doing work for the county — I think they call it "workfare."

Suddenly I was aware of being shown the door. Stunned, I asked when I would be getting some money. "There is a 30-day processing period," she said mechanically.

"What do people who don't have any money do for 30 days?" It occurred to me that I was one of those people. By now I felt really angry, and beyond self-restraint. She stepped by me into the hall, repeating with finality, "We are required to wait 30 days."

It was early afternoon, but when I got back to my mother's I had one desire, to go to sleep. I laid down on the bed and began my 30 days of processing.

— A worker waiting for relief

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Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees, an organization of Marxist-Humanists, stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of a new human society based on the principles of Marx's Humanism as recreated for our day.

News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard not separated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. A Black production worker, Charles Denby, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, is the editor of the paper. Raya Dunayevskaya, the Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees, is the author of *Marxism and Freedom, Philosophy and Revolution and Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, which spell out the philosophical 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.

Where *Marxism and Freedom*, whose structure was grounded in the movement from practice throughout the 200 years from 1776 to Today, discloses Marx's "new Humanism," both internationally and in its American roots, *Philosophy and Revolution*, in recreating Marx's philosophic roots both in the Hegelian dialectic and in the actual revolutionary movements of his day, articulated these forces of revolution as Reason — Labor, Black, Youth, Women — of our day. By tracing and paralleling this age's 30-year movement from practice to theory with our own theoretical development for the same three decades, Marxist-Humanism in the U.S. has met the challenge of the "new moments" in the last decade of Marx's life by disclosing in them a trail to the 1980s. It is this trail, these paths of revolution — be it in the birth of a whole new generation of revolutionaries, including the transformation of Women's Liberation as an idea whose time has come into a Movement or the emergence of a whole new Third World — that form the content of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's*

Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution.

This work challenges post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism. At a time when the nuclear world is threatened with the extinction of civilization itself it becomes imperative not only to reject what is, but to reveal the revolutionary Humanist future inherent in the present.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcats against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation — activities which signalled a new movement from practice which was itself a form of theory. Vol. 1, No. 1, came off the press on the second anniversary of the June 17, 1953 East German revolt against Russian state-capitalism masquerading as Communism, in order to express our solidarity with freedom fighters abroad as well as at home. Because 1953 was also the year when we worked out the revolutionary dialectics of Marxism in its original form of "a new Humanism," as well as individuality "purified of all that interferes with its universalism, i.e., with freedom itself," we organized ourselves in Committees rather than any elitist party "to lead". The development of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S., 1941 to Today is recorded in the documents and on microfilm available to all under the title, *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, on deposit at the Labor History Archives of Wayne State University.

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

WORKER'S JOURNAL

(continued from page 1)

Washington, to have been there. But, in 1983 I had come with the new edition of *American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard* 20 years after it was published to talk about with those who were there in 1963 and with those who weren't. The title of the pamphlet alone was enough to bridge the 20 year span of time between the two marches because in 1983 American civilization is still on trial. And what one could hear in the ranks of the marchers is being heard today throughout this country.

GRASS-ROOTS IN THE STREETS

One discussion I had with a brother stands out in particular. He was a Vietnam vet and was now unemployed living in Washington, D.C. He hadn't come with any of the contingents or organizations. Like so many people in the area, he had come alone.

Looking at the cover of *American Civilization on Trial* while listening to one of the many speakers that day trying to imitate Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech, this brother recalled how he and other Black GIs in Nam first heard the news that King had been assassinated. "You know, the U.S. government never told us that King had been shot. It was Hanoi that told us. And when we found out the situation got very ugly over there. It took them a few days to put down the rebellion of Black troops in Nam in 1968."

As people gathered on the Mall amid the trade union banners and Coalition of Conscience placards, every so often you could catch a glimpse of what Malcolm X had described in his *Autobiography* as "overall rural Southern Negroes, small town Negroes, Northern ghetto Negroes . . . talking 'March!'" It was these poor Blacks, North and South, from rural Georgia and North Carolina in old church buses and pouring in from the D.C. and Baltimore ghettos who revived the memory of the 1963 march, not as nostalgia but as a stark reminder that little had changed for the masses of Black people in the 20 years of "Black progress."

"TALKING MARCH"

In the weeks following the March on Washington Black people continued "talking March." At an Afro-American cultural festival in downtown Detroit the day after the march Black youth created their own cultural expression with drums and chants: "We want jobs and Reagan ain't s---, but when the revolution comes . . . when the revolution comes!"

Inner-city education

Los Angeles, Cal. — The Los Angeles School District has recently come up with a new test for teachers that is especially targeted against minorities working in the inner city areas. A lot of us who got emergency credentials until we pass our full credentials are now faced with a new test called CEBEST.

The test is pitting us against a lot of people who are unemployed and are looking for a job to support their families. It replaces minority teachers with ones who are brought in from outlying areas that have no understanding of the community. They are hardpressed for money and tolerate the situation only because of the pressure. When the day is over they take off, but the children need someone to talk to about problems at home.

I can't see how Reagan's idea about "merit-pay" will do us any good. Who is going to evaluate us? What kind of standard do they want to impose that will adequately evaluate every individual? When I look at inner-city schools, some teachers will take the students who have the aptitude and the disposition for a certain subject and groom them. But that still leaves the body of the people. That is only the one percent of students who have made it through the system.

It is the same concept as the "model worker" to say to masses of people: you have to perform the same way that this one percent elite does. That is what they are doing to us teachers with CEBEST, and what they want us to do to our students: push, push, push. Instead of developing ourselves and our students as all rounded individuals, we are all pitted against each other.

With the present unemployment situation, they are hyping the so-called "hi-tech" computer jobs. This is what they did a few years back with engineers. Look at it today; they are being laid-off every day. Computers might be the "science of the new age" but I tell my students that they must develop themselves as well-rounded individuals.

These tests and more tests are part of that turning of the clock back on the Black movement's achievements, to make us feel less than a person, or incompetent. But I say it is they who are incompetent, Reagan and all the fat cat "experts" that surround him. The whole brunt of Reagan's education policy, which is in fact planned illiteracy, is to make you doubt your potentials.

— Black woman teacher

March on Washington 1983

In a Black studies class a Black worker who recalled the 1963 march thought that "a lot of people went to the march this year just to say that they were there. It wasn't like 1963 when people were ready to throw down because there was a movement that was really out to turn this country around." Later, a young Black woman said, "I went with SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference) to their conference before the march and they never even told us what the march was for."

Or listen to a laid-off Detroit Youth Corps worker who was born the year of the 1963 march: "I was glad to see the March on Washington because people need to join each other. But the emphasis on voting won't help us. I hear Jesse Jackson is running for president but how can he change the system? The white man will still tell him what to do. We still can't vote in the South and even in Detroit where we have the majority we can't find a job."

SHARP SEPARATION OF LEADERS AND MASSES

Perhaps there is no definitive way to sum-up what the Aug. 27 march meant 20 years after the 1963 march and 40 years after the first March on Washington Movement led by A. Phillip Randolph ended with a compromise with the Roosevelt Administration in 1943. However, whenever Black people get together to discuss the 1983 march there is no ignoring the fact that that 40 years history of struggle is on our minds.

The march of more than a quarter of a million not only showed that the Black dimension at this moment leads the opposition to Reaganomics and that that opposition is a very multi-dimensional coalition of Black, Hispanic, labor, women's liberation and anti-war activists. It revealed as well the gulf separating today's leaders from the very forces they were out to lead.

The Urban League gave its luke-warm endorsement because it claimed that the Coalition had issued too many demands and the focus on civil rights was lost. It is true that in recent years you would have to look hard to find the Black dimension in women's liberation and anti-nuke demonstrations because for the most part Black has remained invisible to these movements. However, because these same movements wanted to march to commemorate the Civil Rights Movement's 1963 march, it proves the very opposite of the Urban League's claim. It shows instead that



Despite the lack of support from some national labor leaders, the United Mine Workers of America was one of the many local union contingents that marched on Washington for "Jobs, Peace and Freedom."

Black masses are the vanguard of America's freedom struggles.

While Black people and workers may not have noticed the retrogressions in leadership before the march, no one could miss it at the march in listening to the speakers. All along the Reflecting Pool of the Lincoln Memorial where people stood or sat, the predominant attitude to the speakers was indifference. Even Jesse Jackson who had wanted to use the march to build momentum for his presidential candidacy found the "running" hard when it got down to presenting a serious alternative to the Democratic Party politics that Black people are even more indifferent to these days.

The great numbers who turned out for the 1983 March on Washington certainly showed that far from being an end, it is the beginning of a new stage of struggle. Indeed, the lower and deeper you go into this country's inner cities the more you hear "a national bitterness: militant, unorganized, and leaderless." The voices and thoughts are of those who couldn't afford the bus fare to Washington and who want to change American civilization once and for all, so that after 1943, 1963 and 1983 we won't have to march on Washington in the year 2003.

— Lou Turner

Interview with Lybon Mabasa, president of AZAPO

Editor's note: The following are excerpts from an interview in London with Lybon Mabasa, president of the Black Consciousness Movement organization AZAPO (Azanian People's Organization). Lybon Mabasa was involved in the famous Black Consciousness trials in 1976 and was among those teachers who refused to teach the racist Bantu education curriculum which Black students protested in 1976 leading to the June 16, 1976 Soweto revolt. Mabasa was instrumental in forming the Soweto Action Committee which helped launch AZAPO. Many in South Africa also know Mabasa as a Black Consciousness playwright. The interview was conducted by the British Marxist-Humanist group.

We do not think the problem in our country is simply one of apartheid. There are so many anti-apartheid movements that people tend to think our problem is apartheid. They believe that if the government was to change and open all doors for Black people then the problems will dissolve. Our problem is not only apartheid.

There is the national question that our land has been taken by force and the entire Black nation is oppressed. On the other hand, there is the fact that all the wealth is concentrated in the hands of the white minority which is capitalist. The Black workers are being exploited day to day, therefore, apartheid, so far as we're concerned, is a point of departure not the main theory.

UNITY AND THE ORGANIZATIONAL QUESTION

The chauvinist attitude of the West wants to put its borders in Africa, to decide for the people of Africa, while forgetting to find out what is happening in these countries. They did that in Zimbabwe and Angola. They continue to do so because their perception is that they should protect Western investments in Africa and even protect the interests of the Soviet Union for various reasons . . .

The question of the Soviet Union has been debated internationally. The debate has varied from socialist to state-capitalist. I wouldn't say it was the best model when we talk about socialism. I doubt whether anyone who really wants socialism would stop at the Soviet Union. I think that is what Biko meant.

As we see it the BCMA (Black Consciousness Movement of Azania) has struggled against the regression of those parties who would compromise and against Stalinism, i.e., unity without principles. It's something which is characteristic of the Left.

BCMA acknowledges the historical presence of the

ANC (African National Congress) but is able to make a principled criticism of the tail-ending of Stalinism. I do think most of those who have left the BCM have left because people find themselves under economic strangulation . . . People stay and resist but they're being threatened with phrases like, "It'll be very easy to get bread if you talk to me" and ultimately some people give in. It's a very unfortunate situation.

We have never fought for an Azania without whites or an Azania that should oppress anybody. But, we've said in this interim period of struggle we realize the role which the white people have played in perpetuating our oppression and how they continue doing so. We do not think it is in their hands to change the system. They can't because they're part of it.

People like going around quoting Marx. When you go to the nitty gritty and how Marx's concern is about the workers — and in South Africa the workers are Black — they turn around and say you're racist because they can't cope with the logic of what they say they believe in . . .

WOMAN QUESTION AND THE UNIONS

We have a dual approach to the woman question in AZAPO. We have been one of the very few organizations who have had women in the leadership as presidents in AZAPO. In 1980-81 the president was a woman and therefore we believe that in the organization they enjoy equal rights. There's no consideration of sex. But because of the socio-economic situation in the country where exploitation still continues of women simply because they are women, at that level it does necessitate having organizations that will relate specifically to women. We have an organization called Black Women Unite. It's not that it wants to develop separately, but to address itself to the socio-economic situation that exists in the country . . .

I look at trade unions with a very political eye. For several reasons, trade unions can be used as buffers for the struggle basically because the unions have to adapt themselves to the question of more wages. What governments do all over the world is give trade unions concessions in installments. Every time there's a strike, there's a little they can give them and as a result you find the question of political struggle becomes a non-issue to the workers. We believe that strikes and trade unions are necessary for their political content. When the workers are striking, time and again they get the chance of not being at work and being outside where we can talk about these things.

YOUTH

Livermore anti-nuke activists

San Francisco, Calif. — On Aug. 13-14, some 200 anti-nuclear activists met at the second annual Livermore Action Group (LAG) Congress to plan activities for the next year. Coming after a year of ongoing protests and a more total opposition to war that drew many activists into Latin American solidarity work, the proposed agenda which took up tactics separate from a discussion of direction for the entire movement was overthrown.

Indeed, the planned agenda was all tactics, including a proposal for a year-long campaign involving educationals as well as actions. Because this strategy was put forth without a discussion of its content, many suspected it would result in a centralization of ideas. Subgroups reported back frustration with this "upside-down agenda," and the desire for political ground on which to base any tactical decisions. Right then and there the rest of the agenda was unanimously discarded and the question of where the movement is going explicitly taken up.

In the ensuing meetings, I realized that the massive N.Y. anti-war demonstration of June 12, 1982 had truly opened a new stage — including new problems — for the whole movement. The deep anti-militarist, anti-Reagan opposition which emerged then and in the year since with so many new voices of revolt, make any hold-outs for a single issue anti-nuclear movement anachronistic. Yet LAG has been unable to connect with Blacks and workers, despite serious attempts at "alliance building," and has also experienced internal turmoil, especially from women's liberationists and youth wanting to push the movement deeper.

One man at the Congress asked, "The last anti-war movement narrowed to a single issue. Now the U.S. is getting deeply involved in war and much revolt is beginning. How will we connect with the militancy of other freedom movements?" Another participant voiced frustration with reducing the relationship to Blacks and workers to "handing out a radical economic analysis of root cause of militarism and thinking people will join us."

Several people expressed interest in the alternative ground I posed for both "getting to the root" and connecting with other struggles, based on the way Marx put it in 1844: "To be radical is to grasp things by the root. But for mankind the root is man himself." The increasing militarization of society, beginning at the point of production — where it will take much more to quell the revolt of workers facing concessions, lay-offs and inhuman working conditions — cannot be separated from the U.S. and Russian imperialist drive for world domination. Then we can look differently at all the human dimensions which can transform society, from the women's liberationists and youth in the anti-nuclear movement to the deepest opposition of Blacks seen at the Aug. 27 March on Washington to the burgeoning ferment among rank-and-file workers.

Never before in LAG have we had the space for this

Mexico student protest

Los Angeles, Cal. — Three years ago I came to the U.S. from Ensenada where I was involved in a student strike at my high school in 1978. It was around the time of the local elections when the students in my high school decided to have a demonstration in front of the election campaign office. We made placards in defense of the workers and in protest against the Institutional Revolutionary Party which has been in power for 50 years.

The government officials, who were afraid, thought of appeasing us with promises of money, but we would not be bought. Finally they labeled us "Communists" and "Reds" and forced us back to school under the threat of arrest. We defended the rights of the workers not only because the wealth of the country rightly belongs to them but because we knew that such wealth could be used for improving our schools, hospitals and other aspects of life.

Today, the Mexican government pretends to be democratic, but if you rightly define them as thieves, you will disappear. One of my teachers disappeared for three months, and when she came back we found out she had been put in prison for having political views. Four months ago when I was in Ensenada, they discredited a socialist candidate by calling him "immoral" in newspaper headlines.

The workers in Mexico today live on \$35 a week, and with the devaluation of the peso everything is so expensive that if you want to buy a pair of pants, two-thirds of your weekly wage is gone.

We Mexicans work hard all our lives and have a dream of coming to the U.S. But here, the situation is not much better. Here I sell watermelons in order to make a living and go to school, but they call me an "illegal." We are so frustrated in our barrios that we get involved in gang fights. But we cannot fight against our own people. We are not the illegals. This land belongs to us. It is Reagan and his government who are the illegals.

I think the young Latin Americans can learn a lot from the experience of student protest in Mexico. My experience made me think of myself as a socialist-humanist. I'm sure many others feel the same way, too.

— Latina youth

type of discussion, and I left excited by the searching for new beginnings in thought and activity. But as against the fullest development of these new pathways and forces for transforming this inhuman, militarized society, the diversions of either compromise or vanguardism loom as serious threats as we face both the upcoming October of intense activity as well as first strike nuclear weapons and ongoing wars in the Third World. The need to continue this discussion is thus just as urgent as the demonstrations themselves.

— Laurie Cashdan

Youth in Revolt

Students calling for an end to the military dictatorship of Pinochet fought at the University of Chile campus with supporters of Pinochet on Sept. 6. School boycotts have been held each month since May, and during the nationwide mass protests of Aug. 12 and Sept. 8 groups of teenagers, who face especially high unemployment, set up barricades and threw rocks at riot police firing automatic weapons.

Demonstrations across the world marked the anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. Over 500 were arrested in actions from Ramstein, West Germany, to Toronto, Canada, from Greenham Common, Britain, to dozens of localities in the U.S., including one of the Midwest's largest civil disobedience actions ever, at the Strategic Air Command's nuclear targeting headquarters in Nebraska, where 208 were arrested.

Draft resistance movements in the Netherlands, Denmark, West and East Germany, and the U.S. have sent expressions of solidarity to Paul Vertegaal and Herbert Bitter, on trial for draft resistance in Holland, and Dirk Torfs, captured at their trial and sent to Belgium for his own draft resistance trial. Meanwhile, a U.S. appeals court reinstated charges against David Wayte of Los Angeles, claiming that he wasn't singled out because of his outspoken defiance of registration.

During a government-sponsored march in June in Prague, Czechoslovakia, part of the World Peace Congress, 300 youths broke away from the crowd, shouting, "We want peace and freedom!" and, "Disarm the soldiers!" Police dispersed them and five were arrested.

— Information from Labor Focus on Eastern Europe

Internationalist Marxist-Humanist Youth Meeting

Dear Youth:

This year, the meeting of our Internationalist Marxist-Humanist Youth Committees on Sept. 2 in Detroit, was held in a very exciting atmosphere. While many of us had just come back from the March on Washington, others had new experiences with Latin America support committees, campus protests, and anti-nuclear activities such as the most recent Livermore Action Group Congress in the Bay Area.

The impact of the March on Washington however, was on everybody's mind. For those of us who had seen the 300,000 marchers present there, in a variety of national and international contingents, there was no doubt that something beyond mere anti-Reaganism or even voter registration for the next election, had attracted people to the protest. As one who had many conversations with Black and white men and women at the News & Letters literature table, I witnessed a great desire to discuss and learn about Black history, the revolutionary Black thought of Frantz Fanon, the interest of Black women in revolutionary feminism and its articulation in our pamphlet *Woman as Reason of Revolution*, and the ideas of Marx and Marxist-Humanism.

"BACK IN THE STREETS"

With such maturity and interest among the marchers, the limited conception of change that the leadership offered was especially disappointing. At our youth meeting, Gene, a young Black worker who also participated in the march, summed up such an attitude best, when he said: "There was a definite lack of thought from the platform of the march." He was able to contrast such lack of thought to the thoughts of the Black masses when he related some of his discussions and experiences with Harlem youth and the Black community in Los Angeles which wants to "get back out there in the streets." To Gene, we could actively participate in such an atmosphere of revolutionary passion with our work around *American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard* which brings together the Black struggle in the U.S. and Azania, Black revolutionary thought, Marx and Marxist-Humanism as an anticipation of deeper Black revolts in the 1980's.

The truth that the revolutionary nature of youth was not limited to the Black dimension could be seen in the words

Black youth recreate the underground railway

Detroit, Mich. — A group of Black youth retraced the steps of the 19th century "underground railroad" of Black slaves in search of freedom this August, in an effort to highlight the need for continued Black struggle today. Starting in Louisville, Ky., the march (sponsored by the NAACP) culminated in Detroit, where some of the marchers participated in the Sept. 5 Labor Day rally.

The trail to freedom in 1983 is still full of contradictions. While the established Black leadership such as NAACP President Benjamin Hooks calls for an end to Reaganomics and registering eight million Blacks to vote, the minds of many Black youth are on things other than Jesse Jackson becoming President.

One of the Black youth who participated in the walk told me how sad the youth on the march felt when they got to such cities as Cleveland, where each corner they turned seemed to have the unbearable stench of poverty and poor living conditions. "Most cities we walked through treated us very well," he said. "In some communities we were given plaques for walking the 200 miles and we also were able to be at Solidarity Day along with 100,000 others."

What this youth and others feel is that the capitalist crises have turned city after city into homes for misery and destruction. It is that reality, not the pseudo-reality about voting and having a Black presidential candidate, that is concrete for them.

The underground railway of the 19th century that these youth were commemorating helped spark new ideas for freedom, such as David Walker's *Appeal*, and that kind of challenge is with us again today. Walker appealed to the free Blacks of the North to make the cause of the slave their own because the wretchedness of the living conditions of the "free" Blacks was directly due to slavery. Whereas politicians like Thomas Jefferson referred to the Negro's color as "unfortunate", Walker said "My color will yet root some of you out of the very face of the earth!"

Black and labor are at the heart of Reagan's drive for capitalist destruction today, whether at the point of production or the unemployment line. It is their force and Reason, not simply electioneering or voter registration drives, that will make the spirit of the underground railway truly come alive.

— Eugene Ford

of another speaker, Maria, a Latina high school student from Los Angeles who had recently formed a youth study-discussion group in her neighborhood. Maria, whose interest in Marxist-Humanism had truly arisen from the oppressive conditions of her life, told us that whereas before, the idea of a new society had just been a dream to her, her experience with Marxist-Humanism and her organizing work with the youth group proved the contrary. Her Latino and Black friends were all interested in a discussion of new non-oppressive relationships between men and women, youths and adults, Blacks and Latinos.

"DEVELOPING NEW PATHWAYS TO REVOLUTION"

Peter, an anti-nuclear activist from California, stressed that Marxism is "not a dogma or a series of polished conclusions, but a process of developing new pathways to revolution." To him, what we could all learn from Marx was that he did not develop his philosophy aside from on-going revolutionary movements. Rather, he was always open to new revolutionary upsurges, new forces of revolution such as women and the peasantry, and therefore, new pathways to revolution. Thus, we could not stress our philosophy on the one hand and the movement or subjective revolts on the other hand. Rather, we needed to open our eyes and ears to the world in such a way as to recognize those ideas brought up by mass movements which made a live connection to a developing philosophy of revolution.

We left the meeting with many concrete ideas for a new type of activity in the coming year. Gene's suggestions of working with *American Civilization on Trial* along with leaflets which addressed the particular questions of the Black community in which each of us lived; Maria's on-going youth group which intended to read Marxist-Humanist writings; further work with Latin America support activities, anti-nuclear protests and high school and college youth were all among our perspectives. However, in our activities we intended to be so attuned to the new philosophic questions raised by youth about oppressive existing conditions, as to make the need for a new type of total revolution explicit and concrete for all.

— Ida Fuller

OUR LIFE AND TIMES

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

Hundreds of thousands of Filipinos marched, rallied and fought running street battles with the police and soldiers of President Ferdinand Marcos on Sept. 21, a day marking two anniversaries: the date when Marcos declared martial law in 1972, and one month after his regime pulled the assassin's trigger and murdered the dissident political leader, Benigno Aquino, Jr. One million people poured into the streets during Aquino's funeral on Aug. 31, and since then the demonstrations against Marcos have intensified.

On Wednesday, Sept. 21, 500,000 demonstrators rallied in the afternoon in Manila for six hours, as speakers from all the main opposition groups called for Marcos' immediate resignation and an end to political repression. After the rally, close to 10,000 students continued the protest into the evening, shouting for "Revolution" and "Freedom" as they led a march toward the Presidential Palace where Marcos has been holed up ever since Aquino's assassination.

The demonstrators burned police cars and buses being used as barricades to guard the palace. When the youth began to throw rocks and insults at the police and mar-

ines, they were answered with a barrage of tear gas, clubs and gunfire as the troops charged into the demonstrators. Street fighting continued throughout the night, and by morning 11 people were dead and hundreds more wounded and under arrest.

The following day, students again rallied and attempted to hold two marches: one on the Presidential Palace again, and one on the U.S. embassy. But police stopped both with tear gas and water cannons. The almost daily protests by the students have focused on U.S. complicity in keeping the repressive Marcos regime in power, and the students have been among the most vocal in demanding the dismantling of Clark Air Force and Subic Naval Bases, for which the U.S. recently agreed to pay \$900 million for new leases.

While Marcos' response to the protests has been to make threats, especially aimed at the Left, of a reimposition of martial law which supposedly was lifted in 1981, his regime has been disquieted by the fact that even a large sector of the business community has joined the mass protests as well as holding anti-Marcos rallies of their own. The deep discontent has also pushed church

leaders like Cardinal Sin and politicians like former Sen. Salvador Laurel into being more militant and calling for Marcos' resignation, after having lived with him as the "loyal opposition" for so many years.

The discontent is not limited to Manila, although that is now the focal point. On Sept. 24, 30,000 residents of the island of Mindanao demonstrated at a rally in Cagayan de Oro. And it is in the countryside itself where two guerrilla armies have been fighting for years.

The growing determinants now are the massive and spontaneous demonstrations in the streets. Marcos is trying to write them off as the work of "radicals" and dared to claim, after Sept. 21, that Reagan can be protected and "has no enemies" in the Philippines. But all the anti-Marcos organizations have vowed to "welcome" Reagan if he comes to the Philippines as planned in November, even if he chooses only to stop at the U.S. military enclaves. What many are recalling are the last days of the Shah of Iran, when all the aid of U.S. imperialism could not maintain that repressive government against the might of creative mass activity.

Polish government charges dissidents

Eleven jailed Polish dissidents have been charged by the Polish government with trying to overthrow the Communist system. No trial dates have been set.

Four members of KOR — formed by intellectuals in 1976 to aid worker protestors and subsequently banned by the government — have been charged under a section of the penal code that could bring them up to 10 years imprisonment. They are Jacek Kuron, Adam Michnik, Zbigniew Romaszewski, and Henryk Wujec.

Seven Solidarity activists have been charged under a different section of the law which could bring a sentence of up to eight years imprisonment. They are Andrzej Gwiazda, Marian Jkuczynski, Serweryn Jaworski, Karol Modzelewski, Andrzej Rozplochowski, Grzegorz Palka and Jan Rulewski.

Uruguay

More than 80,000 Uruguayan students and workers opposed to the ten-year-old military dictatorship of President Gregorio Alvarez came out into the streets of Montevideo on Sunday, Sept. 24. The three-mile long march had been organized by students demanding that they have more control of the universities, but it quickly became an anti-dictatorship protest with marchers demanding democracy and freedom for political prisoners.

On Aug. 25 more than 2,000 people had marched in Montevideo and other cities, one of the first open protests in the past ten years of military repression.

The regime in Uruguay, which Reagan's Administration calls a government "engaged in a transition to democracy," had banned even the establishment Blanco and Colorado parties at the beginning of August. Over the past decade of military repression, the people have been subjected to everything from torture, jailings and death, to living under a system of political classification which determines voting rights and whether or not a person can get a job.

The dictatorship in Uruguay, like Pinochet's regime in Chile, took over in a coup in 1973. But as the protesters in Chile and Argentina are chanting, "Ya caeran la dictadura militar," the days of Alvarez are numbered too.

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Filipinos battle daily to topple Marcos

Inuit conference

The Inuit determination that their Arctic land will not become a "highway to hell" was expressed in many ways at the third Inuit Circumpolar Conference held the last week of July at Iqaluit (Frobisher Bay, Canada). Close to 400 representatives of the 100,000 Inuit of Greenland, Canada, and Alaska (Russia has never allowed a Siberian delegation to attend any of the conferences) met and debated how to halt the "pinstriped army of invaders" from the south. As one delegate put it, "We were a sovereign people before we were colonized and Christianized . . . To us the Arctic is a homeland. To the southerners it is a frontier. While we look at the region in its entirety, they are only interested in its resources."

The conference voted to demand the Arctic become a nuclear-free zone. The would include a ban on uranium exploration and reactor testing, nuclear waste dumping, the testing of cruise and MX missiles. At the same time, the delegates took up questions of "greater-self-determination" for Arctic peoples, including the plan to found an Inuit University for students from all over the Arctic and to create an alphabet which would unite the four Inuit dialects. Those in attendance also raised the need to have equal representation of women at all future conferences beginning with the next one in 1986.

The consciousness movement of the Inuit expressed itself to the world in 1977 when the first conference was held. Since then they have successfully stopped a project to ship natural gas out of the Arctic in supertankers. Recently the Inuit living in Canada have begun to discuss the creation of their own autonomous state within Canada which would be more responsive to their needs.

Pakistan

The persistence of rural protests in Pakistan, now entering their second month, have shaken the military regime of General Zia and surprised even the newly-formed anti-Zia coalition, the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD). Leaders of the MRD called for a campaign of civil disobedience to begin Aug. 14, the anniversary day of Pakistan's independence from Britain.

While those leaders were demonstrating and courting arrest Gandhi-style, tens of thousands of Pakistanis aimed their actions directly at Zia's rule. They have stormed jails to release prisoners, expropriated warehouse stores, as well as destroyed banks, government courthouses, tax bureaus, and the edifices housing the offices of the "Support Zia Campaign."

The government sent the army in to occupy at least six towns in Sind province where mass protests have occurred almost daily. This is also the home province of former president Ali Bhutto whom Zia overthrew in 1977 and later executed. When Zia dared venture into Sind to show that all was "under control," his motorcade was stoned. Zia has responded to the calls for his removal by killing over 100 protesters. Oppositionists who have not been arrested have gone back underground. Those arrested have been sentenced to fines, hard labor and floggings.

The MRD is demanding an end to Zia's military rule, immediate elections and a return to parliamentary rule. The coalition has brought together diverse political and social forces — from socialists, to nationalists, businessmen and landlords. The MRD has also been joined by mullahs who are not in agreement with Zia's kind of "Islamization" of Pakistan, which has ranged from new taxes supposedly based on the Koran, to sex-segregated bus stops. But the real depth and promise of the current mass unrest can be seen in reports of protest marches held by women in two traditional rural towns during August.

Sri Lanka

Once again the Sinhalese majority has gone on a racist murder spree in Sri Lanka, this time killing over 300 of the minority Tamils, who constitute 20% of the population, and yet are completely excluded from political power. In August, Tamil-owned villages were burned, women raped and massacres took place. One account stated: "A mini-bus full of Tamils was forced to stop in Colombo. A Sinhalese crowd doused the vehicle with gasoline and then set it on fire. The crowd blocked the doors to prevent the Tamils from escaping. Hundreds of spectators were present at this burning to death of around 20 Tamils." Even tiny babies were killed by the mobs.

The conservative Jayewardene government "deplored" the rioting but did little to stop it. Once it was over, the government charged not Sinhalese racists but "foreign elements" with orchestrating the rioting, and banned three main Left parties, plus all Tamil political groups.

Since Sri Lanka's independence from Britain in 1948, the Tamil minority has seen its rights whittled away. Today Sinhalese is the official language and the Buddhist religion of the majority is the official religion. (A recent issue of *National Geographic* extols Sinhalese Buddhist concern for life based on their religion — but speaks only of their preservation of elephants, not people!) Smaller massacres of the mainly Hindu Tamils took place in 1977 and 1981, but none reached the level of horror of 1983.

Historically, the Left-sounding Bandaranaike government of 1970-77 also contributed to fanning racism toward the Tamils. Even revolutionary groups have helped create this situation. The Trotskyists were expelled from the Fourth International for joining an earlier Bandaranaike government, while the New Left's Peoples' Liberation Front (JVP), prominent in the 1971 near-revolution, has today lapsed into conciliating with the Sinhalese. In fact, it was appeals to racism, plus aid from everyone from Russia to China, to Britain and the USA and India, which helped Bandaranaike to defeat the major upheaval in 1971.

In the late 1970s Tamils began determined organization to resist this persecution. One party sought a separate Tamil state by legal means, while another launched a guerrilla campaign. The August, 1983 rioting was sparked when, to avenge abuses by Sinhalese soldiers including gang rapes, Tamil guerrillas ambushed and killed 13 of their peoples' tormentors. After the August rioting, Tamil resolve for a separate state has been stronger than ever, as shown in a successful general protest strike in Jaffna. Sri Lanka as a whole suffers 25% unemployment, staggering poverty, as well as a reactionary anti-people regime.

"The press is the ruthless language and manifest image of the historical spirit of the people . . ."

— Karl Marx

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