

# Theory/ Practice NEWS & LETTERS

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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25¢

## Bureaucrats, scabs and strikers



by Felix Martin, Labor Editor

The truth of what the AFL-CIO bureaucracy represents today was shown very clearly at its convention in October, down in Bal Harbor, Florida, where the bureaucrats like to go to sunbathe.

What made the headlines was that the AFL-CIO leadership welcomed Jackie Presser and the Teamsters Union back into the bureaucratic fold they call the "House of Labor." The Teamsters were kicked out, 30 years ago, for being corrupt. The AFL-CIO wants the Teamsters back now, because that means 1.6 million more members paying dues. Even with these new members, it means only about 14 million workers in organized labor—down from 18 million just a few years ago!

The Teamsters are still corrupt, but to me, all the labor bureaucrats are corrupt parasites living like kings off the sweat and misery of the rank-and-file workers. Teamsters President Jackie Presser earned \$588,000 this year. United Food and Commercial Workers Union President William Wynn earned \$200,000 in 1986, the same year he ordered meat-packing workers to scab against the striking P-9 workers at the Hormel plant in Austin, Minn.

Some of those striking Hormel workers were there at Bal Harbor, to confront the bureaucrats. Where Jackie Presser got embraced, Jim Guyette, president of striking Local P-9, got punched in the face. To me, that just about says it all, right there.

### UNION DUES—LIKE PAYING TAXES

The labor bureaucracy has become a bad word to workers over the last 30 years. I was talking to a young worker I know, John, who recently moved to Texas which is a "right-to-work" state. John left California because he was totally disgusted with the job he had. Not only did management at the plant make life hell but the union leadership was working together with management, against the workers.

John told me that he hates the right-to-work law like sin. This law gives him the right to belong to the union  
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### Black World

## Black Chicago in the Reagan social agenda



by Lou Turner

The Black community has paid heavily for the "social agenda" of the Reagan years. There can be no doubt of that: Black unemployment three times that of white; civil rights in every area, from voting to the death penalty, eroded; education and housing in deep crisis, to name only a few. And from the cumulative effect of these facts social scientists have derived the concept of a Black "underclass." Because of the scope and intensity that the problem assumes here in Chicago, it has often been considered a "laboratory" for the sociological study of the Black community, and for the articulation of social policy.

An all-day conference held at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) on Nov. 16, entitled "UIC and the Black Community: Developing an Agenda for the 1990s and Beyond," was the latest in a series of conferences convened in Chicago this past year to discuss various aspects of the social crisis besetting the Black community. Sponsored by UIC, the conference held workshops on economics, health, the community, the family, education, and was attended by some 200 academic and administrative participants.

### 'NEW CONCEPTS AND METHODS'

However, as I listened at the end of the day to the list of recommendations reported from each workshop session, including the one in which I spoke on the Black community, the issues confronting the Black community as defined by the intellectuals and administrators—most of whom were Black—and the problems as I have heard them defined by residents and activists in the Black community over the last year seemed quite remote from each other.

Not surprisingly, it was two of the very few community activists attending the conference who expressed the relationship between Black thought and reality. One West Side activist said, "The division of working class, underclass and now this  
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## Reagan's Central American wars persist despite Arias peace plan



Sandinista soldiers defending their country in the Matagalpa mountains.

by Eugene Walker

The "public relations war" waged over the Arias peace plan between the Sandinista government headed by Daniel Ortega and the Reagan administration has behind it the very real, flesh and blood war being waged against Nicaragua. Some 50,000 Nicaraguans have already become direct casualties as Ronald Reagan has warred upon a people for seven years through his creation, equipping, arming and directing of *contra* forces, as well as direct Central Intelligence Agency actions.

At stake is the small opening that the Nicaraguan revolution created for the Latin American continent when it overthrew the U.S.-backed Somoza regime in 1979. For Central America especially, that revolution was a break from the United States' domination that has spanned the entire 20th century; a break from the virtual peonage in which the oligarchies and the military have held the majority of Central American people for decades. Will that revolution in a country of under four million be allowed to breathe; to outlast this Reagan administration's determination to destroy it; to see if it can help to contribute to an independent pathway out of the ever-increasing militarization and impoverishment of Latin America?

### THE NEW OF THE ARIAS PEACE PLAN...

What is newest about the Arias peace plan is that it could come to be at all. The previous attempt to initiate a peace plan by the Contadora group of Latin American nations faced continuous sabotage by the Reagan administration. While the governments of Central America—Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua—were working to establish their plan, Reagan quickly issued his own "peace" proposal



U.S. "advisers" in El Salvador where many arms flights to Nicaraguan *contras* originate.

with demands impossible to implement.

Once he could not stop the Arias plan outright, Reagan did everything he could to derail it. One day he called it "fatally flawed"; another day he said he would press for aid to the *contras*. When these tactics didn't work, he attacked each step the Sandinistas took to implement the plan, and proceeded to call for so-called "humanitarian aid" to the *contras*. Then he announced he would request aid for full military funding of the *contras* in 1988.

If one needed any reminding of the fact that the Reagan administration remains determined to keep the *contras* in business, the newly released report of the joint Congressional committee on the Iran/*contra* scandal, though it still whitewashes Reagan on direct knowledge of Iran-*contra* arms funding, does document some of the long sordid history of Reagan's determination to fund the *contras* from any source he could: Iranian arms money, CIA diverted funds, "private donations"

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### On the Inside

- From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya: *Revolutions and Philosophies* ..... page 4
- Editorial: *Rural poverty in America* ..... page 10
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### Direct from South Africa Freedom Journal

Editor's note: World attention focused on the brutal mass detention of Black Children in South Africa with the convening of the conference on "Children, Repression, and the Law in Apartheid South Africa" in Harare, Zimbabwe at the end of September. The following report from the ongoing struggle in South Africa reveals the revolutionary dimension of the young Black detainees that the Botha regime is still unable to suppress or censor.

Johannesburg, South Africa—Warders at the Johannesburg Prison staged a bizarre propaganda "soccer tournament" for "juvenile detainees" to counter the publicity around the Harare conference on "Children, Repression and the Law in South Africa." The tournament was held the day after the conference, and the prisons service has confirmed that it was filmed by the state-run SA Broadcasting Corporation (SABC).

The winners of the junior tournament were apparently promised seven small bars of chocolate. But it is not clear who participated, as detainees approached by prison staff claim to have staged a boycott. The detainees add that the players who eventually took part were unknown to them and were "not part of the broad detainee population at Johannesburg Prison." Detainees in the F-section of the prison, who refused to take part in the tournament, allege that they were subsequently denied meals and the opportunity to exercise. Baton-wielding warders were then called into their section.

Their claims were made in a letter smuggled out by detainees being held under the State of Emergency in Johannesburg Prison, also known as "Sun City." The letter stated: "We were worried about their motives. We felt the sudden interest in juveniles was linked to the Harare conference on children in detention. We suspected it was linked to some propaganda campaign to counter the conference." The conference they referred to presented chilling testimony by former detainees of

## Children used as pawns



the conditions in South African prisons, and led to stinging condemnation of the detention of children.

While the world was debating the evils of child detention, and Pretoria was doing its best to counter the debate, a frail, 101-year-old man was sitting in detention. Siyabuswa coal merchant, Simon Gotsiwe Mnguni, was detained by kwanDebele police, Aug. 21 according to his family along with several other businessmen. The Detainees' Parents Support committee condemned the detention, saying: "This is an outrage against humanity—as bad as the detention of children."

## Mexican women garment workers speak

Los Angeles, Cal.—Several hundred people—mainly Latino workers, women, men, whole families—filled the ILGWU hall on Nov. 7 to welcome two women from the 19th of September Garment Workers Union in Mexico City. Below are brief excerpts from remarks by the two visiting women, at the Nov. 7 gathering, and in an interview with *News & Letters* the day before:

**Octavia Lara:** I feel great pride to be among you workers here. We need friends; in Mexico our union has only survived thanks to the support from students and community groups, as well as other workers.

"In the factory we work under terrible conditions. Where I worked before the earthquake, the ventilation was very poor. Because of the fabric dust, some women had constant respiratory problems. The plumbing never worked and bathroom accommodations were always filthy. Women came down with extremely bad infections because of this.

"The majority of the garment workers are single mothers. If they're married, it means they have to deal with one boss at work, and then go home and deal with their husband. Sexism and machismo are strong in Mexico. Even the male comrades in the independent union movement—they want to implement democracy on the union level, but don't see the need for greater democracy in the home."

**Rafaela Dominguez:** "Our union was born out of the ruins of the earthquake. Many of our comrades had to die under the rubble. The bosses' attitude that their machinery was more important than living human beings became perfectly clear. I think I was asleep before then—I used to look down on people who organized to complain about their working conditions—but after Sept. 19 I woke up! The earthquake lit a spark, which exploded.

"We have experienced repression from the factory owners, from the government, and from the govern-



—*News & Letters* photo

Octavia Lara, Rafaela Dominguez being introduced

ment-aligned unions that don't want to see independent unions like ours survive. We are a union that defends the rights of workers.

"In time I hope that people can come together and destroy the international borders that are obstacles to our unity. The solidarity of workers across the borders means everything. We need to hold hands across the borders and destroy the forces that repress us, so we can finally live like human beings."

At the meeting in Los Angeles, the hall was decorated with colorful banners from the union, and photographs of their ongoing struggle. One quote from the workers movingly summed up the union's birth: "We hope it wasn't only the ground that shook, but also our mind and consciousness, and that the earthquake will force us to unite in the struggle for our rights."

## Impact of 'technology' on clerical work

Changes in telecommunications and microelectronic technology have transformed the world of clerical workers—an occupation that is overwhelmingly female. The Panel on Technology and Women's Employment was created by the National Research Council to look at the impact of this new technology on the quantity and quality of clerical jobs in the United States historically, currently and in the future. "Computer Chips and Paper Clips: Technology and Women's Employment" is the panel's report.

This report contains a wealth of information charting women's participation in the labor force in general, and clerical work in particular. It looks at the historical development of technology and its impact on the number of women's jobs such as telephone operators, nurses, secretaries, bank tellers, and retail and insurance clerks.

### COMPUTERS' IMPACT ON JOBS

We see for example that while the invention of the telephone initially opened up a whole new occupation for women as telephone operators, the advent of the computer has redefined the job in such a way that thousands of operators have been replaced by electronic voices, and those who remain are monitored and timed by the computer.

As the report also points out, it is Black and Third World women who are the most severely impacted by technological change. Black women are the most recent recruits into the service industry; they hold the jobs most frequently automated and/or eliminated.

Despite the wealth of information available in this report however, it is severely flawed by its viewpoint. Even though it explores the adverse effects of technol-

ogy on women's jobs, it still argues that for society as a whole technology is good in that it brings increased productivity, goods, services, and even wages in the long run.

### WHAT FUTURE FOR WORKERS?

All of the report's recommendations are aimed at creating greater worker "flexibility" through education, training, retraining, opening up non-traditional jobs for women, and greater worker involvement in on-the-job decisions. While this sounds good on paper, it isn't how capitalism works. The report never looks to the experience of workers in manufacturing for an example of the development and impact of automation on workers' lives.

We already know that this society has been unwilling to confront the effects of automation in industry. There has been no increased education or retraining, but there has been an increase in the number of the permanently unemployed. The gap between skilled and unskilled workers is growing as we move toward a two-tiered society.

The question coal miners raised as they confronted the introduction of automation in the early '50s—"what kind of labor should people do?"—is still the question that this society must answer. It can't be answered with retraining programs for clerical workers. The panel says that technology holds the power to eliminate the discrepancies between men's and women's jobs. But it isn't technology that holds that power, it is ourselves as human beings who have the power to create a new society that is based on the concept of becoming more fully developed human beings—as men and women.

—Deborah Morris

## Responses to review of 'Rosa Luxemburg'

I liked so much Michelle Landau's review of the movie, "Rosa Luxemburg." Landau's footnote on Elzbieta Ettinger's book on Luxemburg made me think of what it means that a book like hers—and it is really psychobabel that reduced Luxemburg's passion for revolution and freedom to insecurities—can get such a big write-up in the bourgeois press. It really shows, I think, that very few want to see women—especially women revolutionaries—as whole people, thinkers, activists, fighters and lovers, as people who have chosen to fight for a new world. It is that kind of sexism that we are still fighting to overcome.

Women's Liberationist  
Chicago

Michelle Landau's review of "Rosa Luxemburg" (Oct. N&L) describes how the film captures the beauty of Rosa's life and the tragedy of her era. But when I saw it at Barnard College, some of the packed audience couldn't follow the history, and they were given horrendously false explanations by Elzbieta Ettinger. She claimed the 1905 revolution, which transformed the very idea of revolution in this century and caused Rosa to write "The Mass Strike," was not made up of workers and was only nationalistic in Poland. She called Rosa a "hysterical bitch"; and she rudely tried to shut me up when I disagreed with her and mentioned Dunayevskaya's *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*. The audience thought she was so bad that they flocked

to our literature table outside!

Anne Jaclard  
New York

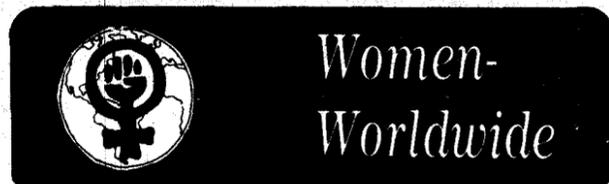
I couldn't say I loved the film, but it did catch the relationship of women's liberation to revolution. What made Luxemburg an original character was 1905, which the film does portray. It does show that it was her independent relation to revolution that led to the break with Kautsky, etc. The inseparability of women and revolution was a good thing in the movie, but I felt that was not followed through in the review.

Urszula Wislanka  
Oakland

I am afraid I didn't like the movie as much as others did. I am convinced that we flesh out what we see in the movie with what we know from Raya Dunayevskaya. I think the review does that too, but I am glad that Landau left open the question of critique. Not only is the Russian Revolution of 1917 not given its due, but you would never know these people considered themselves Marxist.

What is done beautifully by Von Trotta and the actress who plays her is the relationship with the women in Luxemburg's life, including a secretary, whom she very naturally invites to join them when they are about to sit around to talk. To me, this was the greatest thing about the movie.

Angela Terrano  
New York



Family planning advocates estimate that the Reagan Administration's policy to end U.S. aid to any program that performs, advocates, provides referrals or counsels about abortion will cause the death of more than 200,000 Third World Women in the next year if funds are not reinstated. Four million people, mostly women, will be denied help from the 134 international programs run by Planned Parenthood, who are suing to overturn the cutoff to keep women from being forced into dangerous back-street and self-induced abortions.

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With chants such as "Without the participation of women there can be no revolution," more than 1,200 women met in Taxco, Mexico, Oct. 19-24, for the fourth and largest Latin America and Caribbean Feminist Conference. Participants, including peasant women and trade unionists from all over Latin America, including Chile, Nicaragua and Cuba, as well as *pobladoras* from shantytowns, discussed the role of women in struggle for national liberation against repression.

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More than 200 students, workers and community residents rallied in Ann Arbor, MI, Oct. 29, in support of University of Michigan maintenance worker and AFSCME union steward, Mary Clark. Initiated mostly by women, the protest denounced racism at U of M, and demanded the firing of two white supervisors for trying to drive Clark from her job through racial and sexual harassment. In addition to having her cleaning load raised from 24 to 63 rooms, Clark has been subjected to racist and sexist graffiti and deliberate vandalism in her work area, where she is the only Black woman employee.

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Mikhail Gorbachev, in his book recently published in the U.S., finds in part, that working women are to blame for Russia's social and economic problems. After the work day, "women no longer have enough time to perform their everyday duties at home—housework, the upbringing of children and the creation of a good family atmosphere." This has resulted in bad behavior by children and teenagers and problems in morals, culture and production caused by this "weakening of family ties and slack attitude to family responsibilities."

But Gorbachev reassures his readers that in the course of *perestroika* (restructuring), the Russian people are debating at all levels the "question of what we should do to make it possible for women to return to their purely womanly mission!" His views sound very similar to the retrogressive "homilies of the family" so prevalent under Reagan.

## Women's Struggles in South Korea

Los Angeles, Cal.—Women workers and women students are in the front of the movement for change in South Korea today.

In May 1986, the case of In Sook Kwon, who had dropped out of college to work in a factory and organize women workers, became an important part of the growing movement. She had used a false name because "over-qualification" for a job is a crime. (This law was introduced to prevent students organizing with factory workers). She was discovered and arrested, and during the police interrogation she was raped. This was, and is, a common practice, but In Sook Kwon was the first to speak out openly about this.

Before, some women had killed themselves after the terrible experience of police interrogation and rape. Those interrogators have learned a lot from the American CIA. They take you to the basement of the police station, and strip you naked. They rape the women, and say: "Why don't you get married instead of being a Communist?" When In Sook Kwon spoke out, other women began to speak out also.

In the 1970s, it was women workers who started the labor movement, staging hunger strikes, sit-ins, and demonstrations. Many women workers came from the rural areas, from farming households grown poor through the government's export policies. The daughters go to work in the factories to support their families.

Women are employed in textiles and electronics, averaging 59 hours work in the factory per week; the longest wage labor work week in the world. They earn less than half the wages paid to men.

In the strike struggles, women workers have been beaten viciously by police and gangs of men, as in the strike at Central Data Corporation in 1982 and the Wuonpoong Textile Co. that same year, when 100 women were hospitalized after thugs broke up the sit-in hunger strike of 600 women.

Women students and workers are reading and studying. When I was in Korea, the women students were talking a lot about Rosa Luxemburg.

Gorky's book *Mother* is banned in South Korea. The government fears this novel of a mother in the Russian Revolution because in the 1930s it was popular among Korean women, mothers, organizing against the Japanese occupation. Today the mothers of the political prisoners have formed the Association of Families of the Imprisoned. They are some of the fiercest fighters in all parts of the movement.

—Young Korean Woman

## Havoc from new immigration law

by John Marcotte

The new immigration law is causing havoc for American workers. I say American workers, because if you live and work in America, I don't know what else you should be called, I don't care where you came from. We all came from somewhere.

In the Southwest especially, Sept. 1 was a terrible day, when the new law went into effect and bosses started firing thousands of workers, for fear of getting fined by the Immigration and Naturalization Service for having undocumented workers. There are reports of thousands of workers, and their families, living in cars, parks, shelters, begging for food, who've lost jobs they had held, some of them for a long time, even many years.

### WORKERS LEFT STRANDED

So this has created a labor shortage, the garment bosses claim. Many Los Angeles garment shops claim they've "lost" (fired?) half their workers since Sept. 1, and are desperate for workers. Look what happened to the apple pickers in Washington State in October. It

## Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

and pay dues, or be a scab, getting the same benefits but paying no dues. But he said to me: "I have been a rank-and-file union man since the first day I went to work, but with the way I feel towards the International leadership, after my recent experience, I haven't made up my mind whether or not to join the union. Paying union dues seems like paying taxes to the enemy you have to get rid of."

I know what he is talking about, even though I can't imagine myself ever working in a non-union shop. A union means the organized workers themselves, together. But what has happened is that the leadership has been working to pry that togetherness apart. That's why I'm so bitter against them. I know what the labor bureaucrats stand for today, and it is not the working class. They are with management, with the capitalists.

### NEW WORKER CONSCIOUSNESS

I recently had the chance to meet with two women workers who have been trying to organize the garment industry in Mexico. (See story, p. 2.) These two women affected me more than anyone I have met in a long time. What they described—their jobs and anxieties in organizing, dealing with the everyday moments in trying to organize a shop—this all flowed right into me, because it is what I have suffered and gone through myself.

What was new to me is how clearly they saw that their own fight is against the union bureaucrats as well as against management, and that they saw that the enemy also comes from right within, the sexism of the men. It shows how the Women's Liberation Movement, since the 1950s, has become embedded in the consciousness of people.

The consciousness of workers here in the U.S., as workers, is more difficult. Every rank-and-file worker I have talked to, except the pork choppers and the hangers-on, has broken with the labor bureaucracy. The International is a dead horse; it just hasn't been buried yet. Workers are thinking through what to do. It is a not-so-easy struggle that is taking place in the consciousness of each worker. A hell of a struggle lies ahead before labor has it all worked out.

sounds like the Joad family in Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, about the Dustbowl and the Depression in the 1930s. Here the farmers were afraid of a shortage of workers because of the new immigration law—or rather, a shortage of workers with the proper documents.

So they directed radio advertisements to Mexico and Southern California for migrant workers. Thousands and thousands of workers showed up, so many that the farms and state employment agencies were turning away maybe 2,000 a day. Thousands of workers and their families got stranded with no work and no shelter, and no fare home. They filled tent cities, cars, and shelters.

There are actually, according to the United Farm Workers Union, many more farm workers in the U.S. than there are jobs. But that doesn't stop greedy speculators from springing up to fill this perceived "labor shortage." Suddenly there are all these employment agencies that will recruit garment workers from the Philippines, Korea, Mexico and other countries, and charge 25% of the worker's annual wage, supposedly to the boss. These sharks have been so quick to take advantage of the new law's opening up the infamous H-2A "guest worker" provisions.

### FAKE 'LABOR SHORTAGE'

Look at the attitude of the newly formed Chinese Agricultural Manpower Center, a New York company that claims to have a contract with the Chinese government to recruit Chinese peasants as temporary farm workers for the U.S. "We are not exploiting them," claims the manager. "We are just meeting the needs of the market, like importing chemicals or slippers. It happens that the need of the market now is for labor."

There's the whole problem in a nutshell. Workers—live human beings, creative persons—are not chemicals or slippers. Marx correctly saw what is at the heart of all our social relations: the worker under capitalism being reduced to a commodity among commodities, and the worker fighting against that dehumanization every day. That's at the heart of all this craziness, of thousands of jobs declared to be empty at four dollars an hour, while thousands of workers are fired for not having the right papers, and then these agencies contracting in temporary labor with no rights, while workers walk homeless and hungry because they are denied the jobs they once had. Unlike chemicals and slippers, workers also think, and think about solidarity, and freedom, and revolt. The capitalists have never been able to do away with that.

## The current economic crisis—an exchange

The News & Letters editorial of November 1987, "Stock market crisis rooted in production crisis," misses a crucial point. It is true that the root of the crisis lies in the compulsion of capital to replace living workers with machines. But a critical ramification of that is the long term falling rate of profit.

The rate of profit decline is the consequence of using less labor in capitalist production. That decline not only hurts the capitalists, it impoverishes the entire society. That plus the fact that the new technologies continue to throw people onto the unemployment rolls and into minimum wage jobs impoverishes the working class. Poverty is not the direct consequence of either the size of the debt or the machinations of the stock market as the editorial implies.

Falling rates of profit have also sent capitalists scurrying about in the market place in search of a means to

## Overworked-R-U's

Newark, N.J.—The dream used to be the eight-hour day. Now people have to work an 18-hour day. They have to hold two service sector jobs. At the Toys-R-Us where I work, that's what people I know have to do. They come in off a loading dock type of job and work till 1 a.m. and turn around to be back in by 7 a.m. at the other job.

The key word, which I borrow from the assembly line, is speed-up. The new managers they're hiring are bent on speed-up. You're just about treading water to keep up with the volume coming in the store for the Christmas season. It's two trucks a day now, soon it'll be three, and we're running out of room on the store-room floor.

The number of employees jumps now before Christmas, from 50 to 150 to 175. The boss doesn't even call you by the right name, which is very little to ask. The new manager was sweating us, with double-time work, and he was calling this worker by a different name. Yet he got mad at the worker for not answering! The worker said enough is enough, and as a result ends up unemployed.

Everyone is saying on the job that the tension is so bad you can cut it with a knife. Like one worker said to me, she has a feeling of paranoia about being on the job. She has to work these hours to keep up the family income. She barely sees her children, her husband has a totally opposite shift from her. They say the family is the backbone of this society, yet this society seems to tear apart any illusions of family life.

Now they even want to pay us to rat. On our paychecks now appears: "We now offer loss prevention awards between \$200 and \$1000 in addition to our silent witness program," along with an 800 phone number!

Retail workers already sense their struggle. It would take very little to convince retail or service sector employees that their life is needing some kind of organization to stand up against the boss. We don't need college professors or union bureaucrats telling us. The question is when or if these professors and bureaucrats will see we've already come to that conclusion, and that it's a question of now.

Unions have become a bad word, a joke. People I know from work who have two jobs, the other one in a unionized retail establishment, tell us of the hypocrisy. The union turns a blind eye to anything just to exist, to keep the pension plan going. We already know we need something. I don't say it's a union as they are now. I mean a union as in uniting.

—David Anderson

enrich themselves and to produce value out of thin air. They have created fantastic "commodities" that are not commodities—that have neither use value nor value. The stock indexes are fictions—smoke and mirrors that rob the economy of whatever value there is while casting the illusion that it is possible to create wealth without human beings.

Without enough value to meet the needs of the population, everyone borrows against future value creation to make ends meet. When the realities rear their ugly heads, the holders of these worthless financial instruments get nervous and try to unload.

It is problematic to attribute poverty to the debt. That is what Republicans, Democrats and the New York Times all seem to agree on. But the balancing of the budget is just one more means of "managing the economy" and if it happens it will be working class people who will be forced to bear the burden.

—Dave Park  
Chicago

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Dave Park has rightly redressed the November editorial's failure to explicitly relate the stock market crisis to the falling profit rate—both as the first appearance of the crisis in capitalist production and as the impetus behind the current "competitiveness." As he notes, however, the substitution of machines for workers is the root of the crisis, which shows itself, through the falling profit rate, even to capitalists. Though other new manifestations of crisis are linked to production less immediately than the profit rate is, they are linked.

In the midst of a deep, worldwide slump, the economy is not "manageable." Taxation and deficit spending policies haven't succeeded for the past 15-20 years. The astronomical budget and trade deficits result from the inability of the U.S. economy to grow. Tax revenues decline and more is imported than is produced for the foreign market.

Moreover, the budget deficit is part and parcel of Reagan's "solution" to the "high" unit labor costs of the 1970s (themselves the consequence of productivity slowing down). As Raya Dunayevskaya noted in the 1985-86 Marxist-Humanist Draft Perspectives (*News & Letters*, August-September 1985), Reagan's deficits were created in order to slash U.S. workers' standard of living, dismantle social programs and restore "labor discipline."

Capital will always try to force working people to bear the burden of austerity, whether through budget cuts and new taxes or through huge interest payments on the federal debt, which go right out of paychecks and into the pockets of U.S. and foreign capitalists. The absolute opposite of all this, and the only true solution, is the reorganization of production by and for the working people themselves.

—A. Anielewicz  
Salt Lake City, Utah

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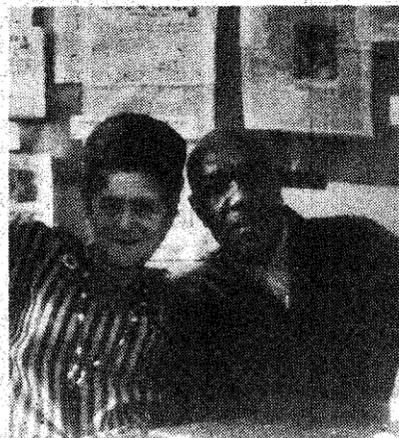
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by Raya Dunayevskaya  
Founder of Marxist-Humanism

*Editor's Note: This column has been established by the Resident Editorial Board so that the voice of the founder of Marxist-Humanism will be heard in every issue of News & Letters. "Revolutions and Philosophies" was written just after Raya completed her Marx Centenary Tour in 1983. In this letter to her colleagues at News and Letters she presented a philosophic retrospective of the new established by her "trilogy of revolution"—Marxism and Freedom, Philosophy and Revolution and Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution—as ground for the work she would begin on the dialectics of organization and philosophy. We view study of this work as preparation for our national gathering to be held in January. The full text of the letter is in The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection (microfilm #7819).*

...Let's begin at the beginning with Marxism and Freedom (M&F). Since however this means covering a whole age of revolutions—political-economic-intellectual—that followed the birth of the industrial age, let us first ground ourselves in Marx's discovery of a whole new continent of thought and of revolution which Marx hoped would put an end to utopianism, sectarianism, clique-ism, not to mention the conspiratorial, self-styled, organizational leaders who had so little belief in the reason of the masses that they practiced their elitist concepts within a small group who alone would know "the real plan of revolution."

As against such pre-Marxian conceptions of paths to social revolution, Marx named his philosophy "a new Humanism" and the proletarian revolution, a human revolution.

### I. HOW TO EMBARK ON THE PATH OF REVOLUTION IN YOUR EPOCH

The historic, epochal, revolutionary, global concept of Marx's Marxism had, first, however, to engage in the battle of ideas not only against the ideologues of the existing state Marx aimed to overthrow, but with a great variety of tendencies who emerged to claim adherence to that philosophy of mass revolution but wished to amend its "tactics" and "one-man rule." The "how" to embark on the path of revolution was left, at best to the strategy as if that strategy could be worked out irrespective of the philosophy. That this was not just a "tactical" question, much less a "collective" versus a

## Brazil's contradictions

The people who suffered horrible deaths from radiation contamination in Brazil are now being buried like so much nuclear waste in lead and cement encased coffins. The tragedy began in September, when a Goiania scrap dealer broke open an abandoned hospital radiotherapy unit. Over 250 people received dosages of radiation from deadly cesium 137 in the machine.

Investigations have brought out reports that only 12 hospital bed units exist for nuclear accident victims. Clean-up crews, dispatched without protective clothing, became contaminated themselves. Goiania has refocused attention on the problem-ridden Angra I nuclear power plant, in operation since 1985 with no system for evacuating the nearby town of 100,000 people. And it has brought out concern over the military's role in nuclear development, as millions are spent on constructing a nuclear submarine and obtaining nuclear weapons technology.

In "advanced" Third World Brazil, the gulf is widening between conditions of life and a science tied to the development of capitalism. In the aftermath of the Goiania events, some critics questioned whether Brazil is capable of "handling" nuclear technology, which is hardly the point since the Chernobyl and Three Mile Island nuclear disasters. The fundamental question is what technology is for, and unrest over the nature of development has rippled to the edges of Brazil's capitalist frontiers.

Two months ago, thousands of workers at the Itaipu hydroelectric project, largest in the world, decided to strike for an increase in their wages, which are barely over the national minimum of \$50 a month. The government responded by sending in soldiers to break the strike. And near Amarante, Guajajara Indians took as hostages a number of officials from the government's Indian agency and commercial woodcutters who were logging on the Guajajara reservation. The officials had come to tell the Guajajara they were no longer allowed to cut trees on their own reservation, claiming the Indians were selling the logs to sawmills at "ridiculously low prices."

In the industrially developed corridor of southern Brazil, a record 40,000 workers were laid off this summer. Hunger among the poor and unemployed has erupted in expropriations of food from stores and fights over scavenger rights in garbage dumps. Workers are struggling to keep up with inflation and the soaring price of food and the basics for life.

In the two years since direct military rule ended in Brazil, the so-called "democratic" government of President Jose Sarney has increasingly moved to the right. Sarney, no enemy of the military dictatorship when they were in power, has moved to stalemate electoral reforms and to entrench his rule in alliance with the military, capitalists, and large landowners. While maneuvering with the IMF to postpone loan payments, he has dumped Brazil's staggering \$113 billion debt onto the workers and the poor. The unrest is sure to grow.

—Mary Holmes

"one-man rule" question was tragically enough proven once World War I broke out and the German Social Democracy betrayed and voted war credits to the Kaiser. It took a very long, hard thirty-nine year struggle [1875-1914] before it became crystal clear that one couldn't be both for Marx and for Lassalle and that disregarding the 1875 Critique of the Gotha Program meant being on the opposite side of the barricades. Too late then to dig into philosophy? Not for Lenin, but then he was the only one who felt that objective compulsion, inseparable from the subjective necessity to return to Marx's deep rootedness in the Hegelian dialectic...

It becomes necessary to look at ourselves who first singled out the movement from practice that was itself a form of theory as the concrete new of our epoch which was so universal that it actually was true of history in general. It allowed us to have the first chapter of M&F entitled the age of revolutions, though it referred to a period before Marx and moreover referred not only to the American and French revolutions but to the intellectual ones both in Classical Political Economy (Smith, Ricardo) and philosophic (Hegel). No post-Marx Marxists, no matter how "orthodox" or deviant takes issue so long as Hegel is mentioned along with political economists and especially if Hegel is just one among other philosophers. The claim was that Kant too lived in the epoch of the French revolution. That 1914 generation much preferred Kant. Some also liked to refer to the fact that long before either Kant or Hegel there was Spinoza whom Marx himself quoted, and praised especially highly the dialectical profundity of Spinoza's declaration—"Every determination is a negation". What they all forgot is that what was the determinant for Marx was neither Kant nor Spinoza, but Hegel. The Hegelian dialectic, recreated as dialectics of revolution, was Marx's "Absolute Method."

HEGEL, IN PRAISING KANT for re-establishing the dialectic for the "modern world", critiqued him sharply however—and both Marx and Lenin fully accepted that critique—for having "stopped dead" before ever reaching the "negation of the negation", i.e., before the positive in that negative had achieved a new unification of reason and reality. What Marx criticized Hegel for was "dehumanizing" the idea as if consciousness developed by itself instead of people thinking. Marx not only transcended idealism but he broke also with materialism, including that of Feuerbach.

As against Engels who had much overpraised Feuerbach, Marx's very first of the eleven "Theses on Feuerbach" credits the idealist dialectic for having developed "the active side, in contradistinction to materialism." Marx's break with Feuerbach was over that little phrase "negation of the negation", for failing to see its creative, revolutionary nature.

In a word, it is not philosophers and philosophies but the Hegelian dialectic and only that which Marx judged to be the "source of all dialectic". It is not "materialism" but only Marxian materialism that never separated from Hegelian dialectics. Engels was not Marx. What Marx did in recreating the Hegelian dialectic and in his revolutionary demystification of Hegel was to show that what was missing was that Hegel's philosophy appreciated subjectivity only when it was without subject. Marx, in specifying the proletariat as the subject showed that the *Enrages* of France had only been an embryonic proletariat and there Hegel met his historic limit.

As against that historic limit for bourgeois thought, Marx's break with capitalism in following the development of the proletarian masses led his Promethean vision to single out at once also the Man/Woman relationship and new forces of revolution. Nor could Marx be stopped by defeat of those revolutions. Thus, the defeat of the 1848 Revolutions only led Marx to transform the 1843 phrase, "revolution in permanence", into a whole theory which he delivered in 1850 to the Communist League. Marx's next return to Hegel, in 1857-58, as he worked out the *Grundrisse*, led to both a new appreciation of Hegelian dialectics as he worked it out in his study of economics, and, at the same time, studied the pre-capitalist societies in so totally a new way that he concluded that there had been a new epochal stage of human development he named "Asiatic Mode of Production". It was this indeed which was the actual beginning of what, after completing Volume I of *Capital*, Marx studied so assiduously in his last years, both for Vol. III of *Capital* and what we know as the *Ethnological Notebooks* in which we have found the trail to the 1980s.

### II. A NEW AGE OF REVOLUTIONS: DIFFERENT HISTORIC PERIODS AND THE BLACK PHILOSOPHIC DIMENSION

In Lenin's day, when he was confronted with the Second International's betrayal, his return to Hegel led him to single out the abstract principle of each unit containing the opposite within itself. As a revolutionary he wasn't interested only in showing what life itself showed clearly enough—the betrayal—but how to

transform that opposite into a revolutionary stage. Everyone knows the slogan to "turn the imperialist war into a civil war." Some know the national revolutions as "bacillus" for proletarian revolution. None, and that includes Trotsky, knew how to work out "if not through Berlin, then perhaps through Peking"; in a word, how to extend revolution to the Third World. A new age had arrived when the first workers' state had been transformed into its opposite, a state-capitalist society and, with it, a new form of workers' revolt. The need was to find a link to Marx's Marxism. This is what M&F achieved in establishing both the American and Humanist roots of Marxism. It doesn't mean that either Marx or Lenin solved the problems of our age. No one can solve the problems of one's age except those who live in it. It does mean that without ground and method, the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic method, that is to say the unchained dialectic method, we could not have seen that great movement from practice as a form of theory. In singling that out for our age, we could see, in the workers battling automation, in the East European workers' new forms of revolt, and in the Montgomery Bus Boycott, new stages of revolution long before they were so recognized by all others.

What, philosophically, that Black Dimension signified is first fully developed in *Philosophy and Revolution*, to which I will get to in a moment. What I wish to do here, i.e., as we first embark on the path to revolution is to stress what Frantz Fanon had achieved with his *Black Skin/White Masks*. This wasn't available in English until the 1960s but it was actually written in 1952. . . . Just as it was a great leap forward when Marx re-interpreted the Master/Servant relationship as the class struggle, so it was a breakthrough for Frantz Fanon to show that Hegel had created a vicious circle by not seeing—being literally sightless before Black consciousness. The "Invisible Man" here rises to say, "At the foundation of Hegelian dialectic there is an absolute reciprocity which must be emphasized. It is in the degree to which I go beyond my own immediate being that I apprehend the existence of the other . . ." (p. 217)

"For Hegel there is reciprocity; here the Master laughs at the consciousness of the slave. What he wants from the slave is not recognition but work." (p. 220) . . .

That new world for which Fanon was battling in the early 1950s was fully worked out both philosophically in *Wretched of the Earth* and concretely as he renounced French citizenship and fully aligned with actual revolutions, the ongoing African revolutions, and by naming his philosophy, as Marx's "a new Humanism," as a world revolutionary. . .

LET US CONSIDER THE DIFFERENT historic periods after Marx, and why the post-Marx Marxists had to return to Hegel even as Marx himself, long after he had transcended Hegel philosophically as well as politically, i.e., as a revolutionary, as the revolutionary masses in motion were creating ever-new historic turning points. Take a deeper look at Marx's Promethean vision when he first broke from capitalist society. His new continent of thought and of revolution did not stop at naming the proletariat as Subject. Just as he had singled out the Man/Woman relationship as a most fundamental human relationship, so his philosophy, "a new Humanism", was by no means confined to fighting for civil rights (the specific case then was civil rights for Jews). On the contrary, in explaining why gaining political civil rights in a capitalist society is but a minor victory, what was needed for a new human society was "revolution in permanence." This didn't mean that because he already had that concept as his aim, as was the question of world revolution, that he wouldn't fight in the concrete for both civil rights and for national liberation. In his time Marx was both for Poland against Tsarist Russia, and for Ireland against British imperialism, even as Lenin, in his day, recognized the Easter Rebellion as the dialectic of revolution in-and-for-itself, as well as "bacillus" for proletarian revolution, as against Rosa Luxemburg's "half-way dialectic" which did not recognize the revolutionary struggle of national liberation.

Secondly, let's hold on tightly to the fact that it wasn't only the "vanguard party" concept that had Lenin recognize in Marx's Critique of the Gotha Program the need to destroy the bourgeois state, and not the new type of party which would be grounded in philosophy of revolution in permanence. After all, despite the vanguardism, Lenin was great enough to see the Soviets, to call for "All power for the Soviets" and indeed go all the way to workers' control in the hands of the masses "to every man, woman and child." In a word, if he was willing enough to forget vanguardism as not even to mention it in *State and Revolution*, and certainly was for no separation between theory and practice, then why did he run short in philosophy and so give up that half paragraph in *Absolute Idea* in Hegel's *Science of Logic* as never to go into Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*? As I said when I first broke through on the Absolute (continued on page 10)



# Reagan's Central American wars persist despite Arias peace plan

(continued from page 1)

and millions from other governments. Can anyone believe that Reagan does not have the fullest intention of continuing *contra* support in anyway he can, or that the White House basement does not still have an operating crew?

The Central American governments set down a series of steps to implement the Arias plan. These include: negotiating cease-fires to end wars, giving amnesty to political prisoners, forbidding guerrilla groups the use of other nations' territories for wars against neighboring governments, cutting off aid to outside rebel groups, taking steps to increase political freedom and democracy, encouraging the return of refugees and political exiles.

Nicaragua in particular has faced great pressure to implement the plan. Its economy has been decimated due to the destruction wreaked by the *contras*, by CIA operations, combined with the trade embargo imposed by the U.S., which has also pressured nations not to trade with Nicaragua. Inflation is running rampant and shortages are widespread.

Russia has made it clear that it will not support Nicaragua to the level it has supported Cuba. Nicaragua faces a shortage of 50,000 metric tons of oil this year.

Nicaragua has responded to the plan by allowing *La Prensa* to resume publishing, has begun negotiations with those Miskito Indians on the Atlantic coast who were in opposition, and has now proposed indirect negotiations with the *contras* on a cease-fire and amnesty. No doubt Nicaragua is hoping to last through the last months of the Reagan administration with the hope that something better will be in store.

In El Salvador—which in the 1980s has seen a full-scale guerrilla war and terrible governmental repression through military sweeps, saturation bombings of rural areas and right-wing death squads—the U.S. propped-up

Duarte government met with guerrilla groups but offered no concessions. The attitude of those with real power in the country—the military and their private death squads—was shown in the Oct. 26 murder of the president of the Non-Governmental Human Rights Commission, Herbert Ernesto Anaya.

In Guatemala, the negotiations with rebel groups hit a quick dead-end. An amnesty and release of political prisoners would mean little since the army has made a practice of killing any guerrillas it has captured over the last several years. In Honduras, which has been the base for most of the *contra* forces operating against Nicaragua, the government, under U.S. pressure, has resisted any change in its support for these *contra* camps.

## ...AND THE OLD OF REAGAN'S CENTRAL AMERICAN WARS

The barrier to any possibility of peace in Central America is Reagan's policy of Central American wars. These wars were initiated the day Reagan took office.

First and foremost it has meant his seven-year war against Nicaragua. Closely related to Reagan's actions against Nicaragua has been his turning of Honduras into a virtual battleship full of U.S. troops, U.S. armaments and *contras*. In the last six years the U.S. has given Honduras \$1 billion in military and economic aid. Yet the country remains one of the poorest in the hemisphere. The U.S. has held continuous military exercises in Honduras since 1983, constructed at least nine combat airstrips, built camps for the *contras*, and has recently supplied \$75 million worth of F-5 jet fighters to the Honduras military.

Perhaps the most devastating of Reagan's wars in Central America has been the one being waged in El Salvador. There, the military and its private death squads which the U.S. has supplied, trained and supported, have murdered thousands upon thousands. The peasantry in many parts of the country has been

forced into internal exile or have had to flee the country due to the army's policy of saturation bombing in rural areas in which guerrillas are active.

In Guatemala, the Reagan administration cannot take direct "credit" for the army's massacre of thousands upon thousands of its own citizens, primarily Indian peasants, during the 1980s. He quickly proclaimed Guatemala "a democracy" after its 1985 narrowly-based elections.

If the Arias peace plan can help hold back Reagan's bent-for-hell wars of destruction in Central America, if it slows down Reagan's arming of the *contras*, it will have performed a great service. But the peace plan cannot solve the central crises that have been afflicting Central America for generations, and have reached their sharpest manifestations in this last decade. Those crises certainly have the century-long U.S. domination at its core, but they are also crises of land and labor, of two worlds within Central America itself.

## CENTRAL AMERICA'S CRISIS OF LAND AND LABOR

The 1980s have been years of devastation and deepening poverty for most of Central America. There have been six straight years of recession and devaluation. This decade has been characterized by: 1) a forcing of more and more of the peasantry off the land as there has been a growing reliance on agro-export crops; 2) a steady decline of the working conditions in urban areas as industrial production has stagnated; 3) a growing militarization of the entire region as any worker and peasant unrest is met with military force.

The "old" Central America of a landed oligarchy and a peasantry either landless or with insufficient land to support a family, is as well the Central America of the 1980s. As coffee beans, sugar cane, cotton, bananas and cattle have become the central commodities for this oligarchy and its primarily American-based multi-nationals, more and more workers have been forced off the land. The number of landless campesinos in the region has tripled since 1960. Some 85% of the best farmland is used to grow crops for export, leaving less and less land for subsistence farmers to grow beans and corn to feed their family. Cattle raising is not for meat consumption at home—few peasants can afford it—but for consumption in the U.S.

Each Central American country has two worlds within it—on the one hand a landowning and business oligarchy, on the other hand an increasingly landless peasantry and impoverished working class, who suffer widespread malnutrition and hunger.

Eighty percent of the farmers of Central America have such small plots of land that they cannot feed their families, while the top 10% of landowners own 80% of the farmland. Agriculture employs nearly half the work force in Central America, bringing in two-thirds of export earnings. The export orientation in Central America has meant an increased U.S. dependency.

As more and more peasants have been forced to abandon the countryside because of a shortage of land and because of increased violence in the rural areas of Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua, it has meant impoverished working and living conditions for millions in the city. Unemployment and underemployment rates in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador are in the neighborhood of 50%, while in Costa Rica and Nicaragua they are close to 25%.

Most laborers in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala earn little more than one dollar a day. Child labor is common, with many workers beginning their first full-time job between the ages of 12 and 14. Outside of Nicaragua, the percentage of unionized workers ranges from 8 to 15%. To try and form a union often means immediate dismissal of all the workers and replacement by those without jobs.

## NEW PATHWAYS FORWARD,

It is against these conditions of life and labor that the Central American masses have continually sought out new forms of opposition, new pathways forward.

It is true that after seven years of Reagan, the revolutionary movements are not so vibrant. But today, in 1987, those movements continue. In Honduras landless peasants have invaded more than 300 farms in the last six months. In El Salvador, that thousands poured out to pay respect to the slain Human Rights Commissioner, Herbert Ernesto Anaya, is a testimony to the continuing power of that movement. From outside El Salvador, thousands upon thousands of peasants are demanding the right to return to their country. Even in Guatemala, where in the early 1980s an Indian-based guerrilla movement challenged the military-run state, the movement still remains alive.

Most crucial there is Nicaragua, which as small as it is, as impoverished as it is, had a revolution, only a beginning, but a revolution that threw out that old oligarchy and U. S. domination. It is revolution that remains the beacon for Central America.

If even the Arias peace plan becomes a partial success, the conditions of two worlds within each country, of oppressor and oppressed, and of the iron heel of the U.S. will still remain in Central America. The peace plan is no pathway out of these worlds.

What can be part of a pathway out is the beacon of revolution. That light of revolution in Nicaragua, as incomplete and partial as it is, must not be allowed to be snuffed out by Reagan and company. Opposition in the United States is crucial. People here do not want another Vietnam in Central America. Only a revolution's actuality together with the vision of a revolutionary philosophy can provide a way out for Central America's crisis of land and labor, of hunger and unfreedom.

## Testimony of life in El Salvador

Editor's note: Mireya Lucero is currently on a U.S. speaking tour. The following are excerpts from her Chicago speech.

Chicago, Ill.—I am the daughter of peasants from Chalatenango province. Since I was a child, I remember my father being persecuted by the national guards for being a social activist. When I was 13, the government built a huge dam near our house and we were forced to move. That's how I first came into contact with the struggles of peasants for land. At age 16, I started visiting other villages to help the peasants who did not have anything.

It was by working with peasants that I also witnessed some of the first government massacres, especially in May of 1980 at Rio Sanpul in Chalatenango when peasants had taken over land from a huge estate and demanded higher pay, and 600 peasants were killed. It was in 1980 when I began to work with families who had been victims of death squads and helped families escape to other areas. I was in the countryside when the war and government bombings began.

### PEASANTS REBUILD DESTROYED AREAS

I came to the U.S. to represent Arcatao, one of the repopulated communities of El Salvador. This was the first community that was repopulated by peasants after seven years of war carried out by the Duarte government and army with military actions and bombing throughout rural areas. Throughout this time when there have been entire population centers destroyed, the people who have become refugees have had to live in the hills or other cities. These people who are mostly women and children and old people, have been facing starvation and have lost their loved ones.

So why do we want to go back and rebuild the de-



stroyed places? Seven hundred thousand people have been displaced from their places of origin. They have no work and no place to live. Instead of watching our children die, we prefer to go back to our places of origin. El Barrio, which had a population of 11,000, has now been repopulated with 600 people.

But the army has been trying to get us out by intensive bombing. In San Jose Las Flores, the army has been forced to stop the bombing because that city is a sister city of Cambridge, Mass. But the government has now been blockading repopulated areas so the Red Cross can't come in, and we can't get our sick people out. They have been abducting people, destroying our medicine and food, and they constantly circle our area with helicopters threatening to drop bombs and then they drop propaganda leaflets.

### BOMBING, THREATS, TORTURE

Duarte and Reagan claim that human rights abuses in El Salvador have gone down, but in fact they are arresting people daily. They hold you for 48 hours, torture you, then they arrest you the next month again. And because you were held for 48 hours, you no longer appear in the statistics.

What has Duarte done for "peace and democracy?" He just passed an "amnesty law" that exonerates all those assassins who committed crimes between the years 1977 and 1987, and clears them of 70,000 deaths. It clears the national guardsmen who raped and killed three American nuns and a teacher. They are laughing in the faces of all those who lost their children, brothers and sisters.

The return of the Salvadoran refugees has been through our own effort, because we want a peace that would solve the social problems that were the origins of this war. The resistance of the people to the military is truly remarkable. When the army murdered Herbert Anaya, a human rights activist, thousands came out to protest in front of the presidential palace and the U.S. embassy, and there was a general strike in the factories and in schools. It is because we want to achieve a social transformation that we need your solidarity.

—Mireya Lucero

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**CONFRONTING TODAY'S CHANGED WORLD**

I cannot understand this talk of a Reagan-Gorbachev "peace" summit. They are claiming that these arms talks will bring "peace" to the world. But how can Reagan talk of "peace" when he never recognizes the Central American peace plan? How can Reagan talk about "peace" when he wants Congress to give him more money for the *contras*? In *News & Letters* you can read about what kind of "peace" Reagan-Gorbachev really want.

**Immigrant worker  
New York**

At first I thought it was good that there were two editorials in the Nov. *N&L*, and that prominence was given to the most ominous attack by Reagan in the Persian Gulf, both because it is shocking and also that the bourgeois press very quickly made it a side issue to the Wall Street crash. However, after some thought I wondered why it had been decided that these events be separated, as they are so related to each other. The *New York Times*, which is so caught up in Reagan's thinking, advised him to cut social programs to keep the deficit down, while the military remains sacrosanct. I keep being reminded of how war and capitalist crisis are inextricably connected, and the editorial on the Persian Gulf was absolutely right to call for action to stop "Reagan's adventures in the Persian Gulf."

**Activist  
New York**

Most of my recent activity has been in solidarity with the South African revolutionaries. But I would like to be involved in protests against Reagan's attacks on the Persian Gulf too, so long as they are against Khomeini also.

**Anti-War Youth  
Chicago**

No one is talking about what kind of effect the collapse of prices on the stock market is going to have on ordinary people. The first thing I thought of was my dad, who like so many workers has his pension tied up into stocks. You think of how they are tied into those computers that just sell automatically—it has no connection to what people want and need.

**Teacher  
Illinois**

Dow Jones used to mean Dow Jones Industrial Average. Now they include figures for McDonalds where they used to talk of industrial production. They include what the military spends on planes and ships. It's all a fake. They want to work with the "money supply." All that means is what the treasury prints. A \$200 billion debt is supported by bond auctions. If Japan stops buying those bonds we are in big trouble. Only production creates wealth.

**Peter Mallory  
Chicago**

Raya Dunayevskaya demonstrated in a whole series of articles on Reagan and Gorbachev in the past year that they are "two of a kind." I remember her writing about how many times Russia came to a U.S. president's aid by helping him when he was on the hot seat. Gorbachev is helping Reagan now. The Russians want time to develop their own Star Wars and plan for global domination. Sakharov was invited back into the fold by Gorbachev precisely on the question of their SDI. The nature of the "democracy" Gorbachev is advocating is aimed at winning the minds of the scientists. Everything is part of his "despotic plan of capital."

**Observer  
Bay Area**

The "Arias peace plan" was meant for all of Central America. But all the Reagan Administration talks about is the compliance or non-compliance by Nicaragua, and the U.S. media doesn't tell you much more. What is happening in El Salvador or Guatemala? Why don't we hear more about that?

**Latino student  
Los Angeles**

The issues of human rights, and the need for a nuclear-free world, as important as it is for the survival of the world itself, is not what will move Reagan or Gorbachev. They use these

issues for maneuvering. They play with our very lives.

**Working woman  
New York City**

I have been sick and tired of Ronald Reagan's nonsense ever since 1979. But what some anti-Reagan people don't seem to realize is how much Reagan's rhetoric has changed the whole way issues and politics are debated. It's like the whole football field has changed since Reagan has been in office. We have to recognize that, or we accept some of what he has done.

**College student  
California**

What brings Gorbachev and Reagan together is militarization together with fear of revolutions.

**Iranian exile  
California**



**COUP  
IN  
BURKINA  
FASO**

The situation in Burkina Faso is still further evidence that power can never be taken from above, and that the best struggle is a protracted struggle. For us here, we have learned great lessons from the event, comparing it with what happened in Grenada. Revolution is a science—it does not come out of the skies. We have no doubt as to the commitment and dedication of Sankara to the liberation of his country and his people, but the fact is that he lacked a total knowledge of how such liberation must come. It needs a real study of the theory and practice.

**Revolutionary  
West Africa**



**THE  
BATTLE  
OF  
IDEAS**

The article by Raya Dunayevskaya on "Emergence of Marx's Humanism in the post-World War II world" (see Nov. *N&L*) can help us work out how to oppose today's crises. Raya's critique of those who thought Stalin's revision of the law of value in 1943 was just a matter of "hair-splitting" was especially important. In opposing Stalin's order that chapter one of *Capital* not be taught, she was able to work out the theory of Russia as a state-capitalist society and single out what Marx considered his unique contribution, his section on the "fetishism of commodities" in *Capital*. To me this shows how important a battle of ideas is for catching what is new in both the objective situation and in revolutionary thought.

**Youth activist  
Chicago**

I have been reading *American Civilization on Trial*. I never went to college. I never graduated, but I know that U.S. history is supposedly a big thing in school. Yet all you're taught is that Lincoln freed the slaves or George Washington threw a half-dollar across the Potomac.

You're never taught about movements of people, about workers' struggles, like in this pamphlet. So we take what's around us for granted, the way things are. There's a sentence in this pamphlet that sticks in my mind, it says that knowing what's happened through history is one way of knowing where you're going today.

**Youth white worker  
Whittier, California**

In the past year-and-a-half I have been following *N&L* again, after a hiatus of ten years or so. I continue to find a great deal of value in your perspective—the anti-vanguardism, the emphasis on cultural heterogeneity within our movement and on the "humanistic" side of Marx, the openness to working people speaking directly in their own voices, the subtle push for readers to educate themselves more (reinforced by

**Readers' Views**

the notion that they can make sense out of what is happening to them, and that they can read Marx, Hegel, and all the rest.) Obviously, I also find enough to disagree with, that I am not applying to become a member, however.

**Labor author  
Minnesota**

I discovered *N&L* by accident while visiting a friend who is a feminist and activist, and began to get it regularly two years ago. In a land of greed, World Bank and IMF world domination and subjugation, there is sanity in the people who speak out and work for a genuine, human, socialist society. I wish I had come across *N&L* a decade ago!

**Theologian  
India**

Your desire to end the division between readers and writers in revolutionary journalism is one I share. My impression of *N&L* is that you all have always sought to break down this division, and I commend you on intensifying the effort. If time allows, I will be able to send you some information from here, in the future. Toward the day of universal freedom...

**Subscriber  
Charleston, West Virginia**

I want to add a few words to my critique of Paul Buhle's book on "Marxism in the US." (See "Paul Buhle buries Marx's American Roots," Nov. 1987 *N&L*). The truth is that Buhle takes absolutely no theoretical responsibility at all and reduces the whole failure of the '60s to that vanguardist notion that there was a "lack of styles of organization appropriate to fall back on when the revolution failed."

Buhle's narrow concept of "culture" fills the whole book and the distortions he metes out to Marx carry on through its pages. He calls the Johnson-Forest Tendency a "mixture of culture and politics," ignoring Raya Dunayevskaya's work of translating and studying Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks* on Hegel. In fact this relationship between a return to the Hegelian dialectic and the tendency's activity in the Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 became the ground for the birth of *News and Letters*, after James split the group. It is not that Buhle doesn't know this, he does and he has chosen to write his own account of events and passes it off as if it was the truth.

**Fred Shelley  
New York**



**THE GLOBAL  
BLACK  
DIMENSION**

I appreciated Lou Turner's lead article on South Africa (see Nov. *N&L*) even more a few days after I read it, because that is when I got the news that Botha had Mbeki released from prison, which was widely seen as initiating a dialogue with Blacks when in fact, as you pointed out, Botha's machinations are more insidious than ever. It reminded me of how Gorbachev has all the ideologues and "commentators" duped with "glasnost."

**Dale Parsons  
Los Angeles**

Solidarity with the freedom movement in Azania/South Africa is gathering strength in Britain in the face of Margaret Thatcher's collusion with the Pretoria regime. The case of Moses Mayekiso and his four comrades from the Alexandra Action Committee, on trial for treason in Johannesburg, has evoked an impressive response from the British labour movement. Collections are being taken in many work places, while hundreds of union branches and scores of stewards' committees and Labour party wards have affiliated to the Friends of Moses Mayekiso. As the chances of the British government imposing effective sanctions are virtually

nil, any break in Britain's economic links with apartheid will have to be made from below, by spreading the consumer boycott against South African exports, and by workers taking industrial action.

**Richard Bunting  
England**

As someone very active in the anti-apartheid struggle, I appreciated Lou Turner's lead article on South Africa (Nov. *N&L*). He shows how in South Africa the revolutionary workers are calling for the opening up of a free debate among workers, on all the ideas and tendencies in the struggle, to choose which path to go down. This contrasts with what we too often experience here, attempts within the anti-apartheid movement to close off debate, with abstract calls for unity.

**Black activist  
Los Angeles**

Lou Turner's point about "national self-determination" and "proletarian struggles" as not necessarily opposites becomes concrete when looking at the case of Moses Mayekiso. Here is someone who does try to connect both dimensions, and whom the Pretoria regime has singled out for attack. The need to confront dialectics to work out the oneness of those two dimensions is very real.

**Anti-Apartheid Activist  
Chicago**

The Black Domestic Workers Association deeply mourns the death of Raya Dunayevskaya. She will always be remembered for her contributions to human nature, and through her writings. Her death leaves a vacuum that cannot be filled by anybody, but her spirit lives with us. We salute her.

**Black Domestic Workers Assoc.  
Johannesburg, South Africa**



**RAYA'S  
MEMORIAL  
ISSUE**

Some time ago I heard about the death on June 9 of Raya Dunayevskaya, whom I knew mainly through her books published in Italian, i.e., *Marxism and Freedom and Philosophy and Revolution*. I'd like to receive a copy of the "In Memoriam" issue of *N&L* devoted to her, as well as a good photograph of Raya in order, possibly, to produce a small pamphlet on this felt loss. I remain yours in comradeship.

**Renato Campana  
Foligno, Italy**

It was interesting to me to read about Raya Dunayevskaya in the Memorial issue. This is all very new to me, and there is a lot I don't understand, but I want to find out more. When I was 14 or 15, growing up in Mexico, I read a little by Carlos Marx. I have so many questions, about the U.S. and what this government is doing all over the world, why it wants to make war in Central America.

I agree with Raya when she writes that both American capitalism and Russian communism oppress the people. My English is not so good, so I would like to read one of her books in Spanish.

**Young Mexican worker  
Los Angeles**

**Editor's Note:** Copies of the special Memorial Issue of *N&L* are available for 40¢, the cost of postage. Her works available in Spanish include *Rosa Luxemburgo, la liberación femenina y la filosofía marxista de la Revolución* and *El Humanismo de Marx en la Actualidad*.

**WHAT KIND OF LABOR?**

When Henry Ford died, they stopped the line for three minutes. Same for Kennedy and Roosevelt. The stock market crashes, but the wars go on—no one jumps out the window, but if they stop that production line, they will.

My uncle worked in a hammer shop—he did it so long he'd go to jumping. It eventually killed him. They still got that hammer. That never changes. When Raya first spoke at my local, she asked "what kind of labor should man do?" and I've been thinking about it ever since.

**Autoworker  
Detroit**

Since March of this year, the International Paper Company has locked out or forced on strike more than 3,400 UPIU members at plants in four states. The company is demanding massive wage benefits and language concessions. Here in DePere, Wis., 370 members of UPIU Local 6288 have been on strike since June 8. International Paper has hired permanent replacements in DePere as well as in Maine and Pennsylvania. This action could set a dangerous precedent for nationwide union busting by the world's largest paper company.

In order to respond to this critical situation, we have called a special one day conference to establish a regional support network for Local 6288, which can publicize the cause of the International paper strikers and raise funds to help their families during this difficult struggle. Your readers can write us for information.

**Gerald Herwald  
Local 6288,  
United Paperworkers of America**

The merger of the retail clerks association in 1979 with the workers of the meatpacking industry surely helped perpetrate the fall of one of the most progressive militant labor forces in past history. The merger of 1979 would eventually force workers back to the folds of "the jungle"—increased productivity, automation and a reduction of living standards. For some reason, the meatpacking industry has become the testing grounds. With the communications network cut off and a division between workers that had been developed through negotiated agreements, it would be only a matter of time before management would strongarm the workers. The most important article in the progressiveness of the workers of today is the re-establishment of communications

they once enjoyed. Fortunately, *News & Letters* has not only seen the need but also acted to correct it. Keep up the good work.

**Denny Mealy  
Hormel striker  
Austin, Minnesota**

It is absurd to refer to the contracts with Ford and GM as providing "job security." The corporate promises to maintain employment levels is completely meaningless with the qualification that layoff will be permitted if market conditions dictate employment reductions. That has always been the case, and reflects how much words have lost their meaning. The labor bureaucrats are now much more engaged in aggressively promoting management's perspectives, and are doing a much more effective job than management could ever do.

**Andy Phillips  
Detroit**

After I was laid off in October, I spent three and one-half hours in the unemployment office filing my claim. Although I arrived early, the line stretched all the way from the front desk to the back of the room and back to the door.

When I first came to Chicago more than ten years ago, the lines outside the unemployment offices in the morning stretched a whole block and around the corner. Now, although they don't start processing people until 8:30, they open the doors at 7:00 or 7:30 and let people stand inside. Most of the reporting is done by mail, and a lot of people have exhausted their benefits and aren't even eligible. The lines on the streets may have disappeared, but unemployment has not.

**Unemployed woman  
Chicago**

There is the poverty everywhere that all of the world can see. But there is another poverty, as well—the poverty of ideas. *N&L* addresses both.

**Committee Member  
California**

**CARIBBEAN DIALOGUE**

When Duvalier flew to exile in France he left behind a very sad legacy and a people full of anger, disease, famine and unstable political groups. Before his departure, all the youth of the coun-

try rallied behind the church in its struggle for freedom. Now that the youth have done the job, politicians want to put them out of the game. Haiti is free of Duvalier but not of misery and oppression. The struggle for freedom and democracy has just begun.

**Haitian student  
New York**

The National Organization for the Defense of Youth (ORNADEJE) is deeply moved by the news of the death of the founder of Marxism-Humanism, Raya Dunayevskaya. ORNADEJE conveys its condolences to all of the Marxist-Humanists. We hope that the struggle for a more humanist society will be pursued in the manner in which Raya had outlined it.

**For ORNADEJE,  
Renan Hedouville  
Port-au-Prince, Haiti**

Technology has taken off and man ends up following it though he's supposed to be the one that created it. I remember in Trinidad, when I was a youth, there would be hundreds cutting and burning sugar cane in a field. When I went back, I saw only a few dozen and a big harvester. What I see coming is the elite will use their technology to control the majority more and more.

**Trinidadian  
New York**

It is with heartfelt regret that we learned of the death of Raya Dunayevskaya, whose work over the years we have admired and given our respect. We share the moments of sympathy in remembering a great revolutionary leader who through her great works, especially writing, devoted her whole life to the liberation of working and oppressed people worldwide. The members and supporters of the Revolutionary Marxist League hereby express our deepest sympathy and hope that Raya's dream of a free human society can be fulfilled by our continued struggle against capitalist oppression and victimization of oppressed people of the world.

**Carl Lee  
Revolutionary Marxist League  
Jamaica**

I would like to take the opportunity to thank *News & Letters* for creating within me a philosophic awareness—an awareness that acknowledges that political actions vitally need philosophic guidance in order to help make a new beginning.

**Jamaican exile  
New York**



**"PEACE" IN  
CENTRAL  
AMERICA?**

Despite the civilian government, human rights conditions in Guatemala have not changed much. "Americas Watch" recently estimated that in the first year of civilian President Vinicio Cerezo there were an average of three disappearances and extrajudicial killings per day. When GAM (Group of Mutual Support) pressed Cerezo for an investigative commission of international figures like the Nobel Peace Prize laureate Adolfo Perez Esquivel, Cerezo said Guatemalans should forget the past and begin with a clean slate—something the relatives of the disappeared cannot accept. Readers who wish to know how they can help can write:

**FINDING  
1020 S. Wabash #401  
Chicago, IL 60608**

**RENE LEVESQUE**

The death of former Premier René Lévesque on Nov. 1, marks the end of an era in Quebec. Though he often forgot the working people who elected him in 1976 and compromised their urgent demands by small-scale reforms at a time when radical changes were needed, there was nonetheless a huge outpouring at his funeral and during the days following it. He certainly was not a Martin Luther King, but anyone who remembers the deplorable discrimination against French-speaking Quebecers before 1976 can understand what he represented to us. We now have to look back at our history and figure out where we go from here. The liberation of Québec, of Canada, of the United States, and the rest of the world has yet to be achieved, and a difficult struggle remains ahead of us.

**Former activists,  
Quebec City**

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# Black/Red View

# Whose 'Cry Freedom'?

by John Alan

"Cry freedom" is the first major anti-apartheid movie produced with the specific purpose for showing in mainstream movie theaters of the United States and England. The movie is based on two books, *Biko* and *Asking For Trouble*, written by Donald Woods, a white South African editor who was a friend and a colleague of Steve Biko.

One cannot come from a viewing of "Cry Freedom" without one's emotions in a high state of tension. You can't help hating, and even fearing, the villainous Nazi-type police—the unambiguous faces of the apartheid state—and identifying with the Black and white victims.

### QUEST FOR UNCOMMITTED

I had the opportunity to attend the premier benefit screening of "Cry Freedom" on the University of California-Berkeley campus. Richard Attenborough, the producer/director of the film, was there specifically to answer the question: why did he emphasize the character of Donald Woods, played by Kevin Kline, at the expense of the character of Steve Biko, played by Denzel Washington, a Black American actor. The Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) spokesman raised this criticism to the point of questioning the authenticity of the film itself. The BCM is not alone in their criticism; many film critics, even those who believe that "Cry Freedom" is a powerful indictment of apartheid, think that Attenborough's disproportionate representation of Biko is a major flaw of the film.

At Berkeley, Attenborough met this criticism head on. He said that he "did not make a film about Biko." And if he had made a movie focusing on the character Biko, "you will have empty cinemas all over the world and only the art houses will show it. To make films for the committed is a bore." Attenborough is a sincere man, and as an activist in the British anti-apartheid movement, he wants to reach out to the uncommitted, i.e. to the white middle class in the U.S and Britain, in an effort to startle them into joining the ranks of those who are opposing apartheid by producing and directing an epic film exposing the obscene, murderous, brutishness of the apartheid regime in South Africa. Attenborough understands their sensibilities: it's one thing to startle them into acting against brutality, but it's a totally different thing to shock them with ideas of revolution that point toward the transformation of South African society.

This is the contradiction in Attenborough's quest for an audience of the "uncommitted." It has determined the structuring of the film, the film's portrayal of the relationship of Biko and Woods, and its failure to show their relationship to South Africa's Black masses. Above all, Biko's revolutionary philosophical dimension of Black Consciousness and its inseparableness from the

ongoing revolution in South Africa must not peek out from behind Woods' white liberal dedication to justice.

### LIBERALISM VS. REVOLUTION

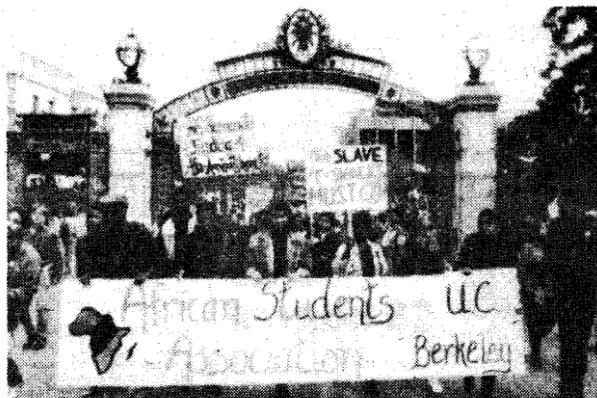
For me the section of "Cry Freedom" that depicts the Biko/Woods relationship is the least rewarding, it is episodic in style, it says nothing about the political and philosophic bond that held them together in a common struggle against apartheid. There is not even a hint about the numerous conversations between Biko, Biko's friends and Woods in the Zamempilo clinic that so profoundly changed Woods' life and ideas. It is that which tore Woods away from his liberal politics of seeing the BCM as "The Ugly Menace of Black Racism," and caused him to later "realize" that Biko "was the greatest man he ever had the privilege to know."

If Attenborough had understood that Woods' encounter with Biko was an aspect of a new stage in Black mass revolutionary consciousness, he would not have concentrated so much of the last half of the movie (after the murder of Biko by the police) upon the personal predicament and anguish of Woods and his family, caught up in the net of South African security forces. This became a separate film within the film and everything that went on before was forgotten. Attenborough realizes that he could not end the film on Woods and his family's escape from South Africa, so he brings us back to Soweto, not to the Soweto Revolt, but to the Soweto Massacre!

Thus, Attenborough begins "Cry Freedom" with the wanton destruction of a Black shanty town, with women and children fleeing from clubs of cops, and he ends it with a river of blood without a glimpse of the Black mass resistance.

\* See Frantz Fanon, *Soweto and American Black Thought*, by Lou Turner and John Alan.

## Black student protest



Berkeley, Cal.—Over 20 years after the Free Speech Movement, Black students on the University of California (U.C.) campus are experiencing racism and the same feeling of alienation as students 20 years ago. They also have similar demands, such as hiring more Black faculty.

On Nov. 6, over 600 Black U.C. students held a rally and march to protest racism on campus. The speeches focused not only on Black cultural heritage, but reconnected to the historic struggle of Blacks for freedom in this country. One speaker called for independent thinking: "When you are taught to think white and feel white in a country where you're not white, it drives you crazy." The concrete demands were for a Third World Cultural Center including an Afro-American library, more tenured Black faculty and a permanent student services building.

The Black U.C. students were joined by Asian and Mexican students as well as representatives from Stanford and San Francisco State campuses. The students marched on Chancellor Heyman's office, who did agree to provide some funds for Black students' publications. The feeling was that this was only a beginning.

## Botha invades Angola

In November, South Africa announced brazenly that its troops had been occupying large chunks of territory of its Black-ruled neighbor Angola, ever since September. This is the white regime's boldest foreign intervention in over a decade, and was sparked by the possibility that the U.S. and South African-backed UNITA rebel movement would be annihilated by a major offensive of the Angolan government, which is aided by Cuba and Russia.

The South African racists, like Reagan, claim to support their version of contras, Jonas Savimbi's UNITA, because they are fighting Communism, stating that their choice was either "accepting the defeat of Dr. Savimbi or halting Russian aggression."

The U.S. media practically ignores this war, which has claimed 60,000 Black lives in the past decade, and that threatens to engulf Angola in famine (see the August 1987 Issue Paper: *Uprooted Angolans*, U.S. Committee for Refugees, 815 Fifteenth St., NW, Washington, DC 20005).

The U.S. media echoes completely the Reagan-Botha line that the 37,000 Cuban troops legally invited by the legitimate Black government of Angola to help them against South Africa are "mercenaries." While Reagan opposes the U.S. Congress' mild sanctions against South Africa, they both have agreed to "balance" this by massive aid to Savimbi, including Stinger missiles.

Next issue:

Black Chicago after Mayor Washington

## South African worker-poet

Editor's note: The following is the translation of a talk delivered in Zulu by Alfred Temba Qabula, South African worker-poet, given at a recent conference of South African writers at Northwestern University, Evanston, IL.

I am coming from the land where all of our land is taken away. The capitalists forced us to leave our homes to work as laborers in Johannesburg. My father worked in the mines and I too had to go to Johannesburg. I joined the resistance to stop the cutting up of our land.

For 22 years, I have been working for the Dunlop Tire Company. Exploited, we are making tires for cars we never owned, for police cars that chase our children in the townships; getting fumes of carbon loaded into our system.

As I worked day and night in this factory, sometimes I would compose poems about the experiences that I and other workers were going through. I wrote a poem that got me into a lot of trouble with the police interrogating me. They were asking me whether I'd been to the university. I said I had experienced factory life, life in the hostels, and life in general. This was my greatest university.

Yes, I created these poems and also encouraged others to write poems and perform them during our union meetings. This we did in order to communicate our feeling of anger and also our desires for a free South Africa and not a South Africa of oppression.

And now we have many performances of poetry in factories at Natal, to communicate our ideas, our anger. So much so, that in every meeting of workers, there is a person who has composed a song. We have now formed an organization of workers to stimulate this cultural awakening. This is a way of communicating with even those who cannot read.

## Montreal's deadly racism

Montreal, Quebec—Anthony Griffin, an unarmed 19-year-old-Black, had his young life ended by a single police bullet to the head on a cold November day in Montreal. Anthony Griffin's "crime" was to have possibly evaded paying a taxi fare and then, according to police, attempting to run away while under arrest in the police station. Even though police admit Griffin stopped when ordered to, a bullet was fired by Constable Allan Gosset from only 15 feet away, killing him instantly.

Gosset, a 15-year veteran of the Montreal police, is not only a murderer but a noted racist who in 1981 brutally beat up another Black man, Daniel Otchere. That case resulted in the city paying \$2,000 damages to Otchere, but no action was taken against Gosset.

Numerous Black and human rights groups have condemned the shooting and the deep racism underlying it. The Canadian Institute on Minority Rights stated that "Montreal is 25-30 years behind every other major Canadian city in the area of race relations." Frantz Voltaire of the Centre on Haitian and Caribbean Information in Montreal said, "It's not just the police who are racist, but also the bus drivers and the officers who police the Montreal subway."

The presence of 120,000 Black people in French-speaking Montreal has added a new and telling contradiction to the already crisis-ridden movement for a free Quebec, whose leaders have remained silent on the racism in their land, even when it results in police murder.

## Enterprise zone opposed

Los Angeles, Cal.—Early in his first term, Ronald Reagan supported the creation of "free enterprise zones": inner-city industrial areas where businesses would be legally exempt from paying minimum wage, supposedly to "create jobs." Now local and state officials are trying to make this plan a reality, but once again are being challenged by determined community organizations.

Black residents especially are refusing to permit this racist, capitalist triple attack: 1) land will be acquired by condemning "blighted areas," forcing people to move with little compensation for homeowners and none for renters; 2) the proposed businesses are just larger garment factories which historically don't hire Blacks, and 3) this plan is coupled with another to seize even more homes for "needed school construction," while families are being driven out!

The Concerned Citizens of South Central L.A., who won the battle against a deadly trash incinerator the city wanted to build, has now also won the support of an anti-gentrification group and an already active anti-enterprise zone committee.

Fresh voices of resistance spoke out at the meeting of Black, Latino and white participants. A white woman said, "There is no way to equate sub-minimum wage, unregulated jobs with the loss of homes, especially of the elderly." Noting the new racial mix at the meeting, a Mexican man said, "We should work together, because Latinos have benefited greatly from the civil rights gains Blacks made!" A Black woman complained about "these decisions being made at the state level without any input from us." She also caught what it will take to change that: "with all these groups coming together, this is becoming a poor people's movement against all forms of exploitation."

Black activist  
Los Angeles

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## Workers protest Iran's militarization

The eight-year-long Iran-Iraq war has led to a vast militarization of the Iranian economy so that Iran now produces nearly half of its ammunition. Factories have been transformed to produce weapons, overtime labor and night-time production have increased, workers are disciplined by members of the government Pasdaran Guards and are often forced to produce, literally, in the heat of the war.

The government has imposed obligatory war quotas in factories; each plant manager has to send a certain percentage of workers to the war zone. Draft dodgers are faced with a loss of work permit, food, and a place of residence, and are subjected to imprisonment. Within the last year, both women and teen-agers have been officially proclaimed "draftable," while the government has had the audacity to rename May Day, "War Day."

Last Spring, over 20,000 bus drivers forced management to cut down the forced enlistment of fellow workers from 2,400 to 40. Workers from Isfahan Refinery, Montaz Textile, Bella Shoes, and Benz Auto, have boycotted all participation in the "military education" classes opened in many plants and often management has had to declare the obligatory draft a "volunteer" one.

Nearly every issue of the opposition paper *Rasaneh* is filled with news of soldiers fleeing the front, and continuous clashes among villagers, particularly in the western regions of Kermanshah, Sanandaj, and Marivan. Men, women, and children chase out the "man-hunters," government military officials who come to collect peasant and worker youths. A recent government-sponsored UN delegates' visit to the war zone in Sardasht to determine the Iraqi use of chemical weapons, was turned, principally by the women of the village, to a forum to oppose both the war and the Islamic Republic.

It is under such conditions that the opposition movement and particularly workers' strikes continue in Iran, with the participants employing the most creative methods to enlist the largest number of supporters. An al-

most continuous wave of protests, sit-ins, and strikes, centered often in revolutionary Kurdistan, are appearing with greater frequency in other regions of the country. A recent example was the regional strike in northwest Iran of several thousand brick-making workers for higher wages which began in Tabriz, in the province of Azerbaijan. Over 360 plants, composed mainly of Azerbaijani and Kurdish workers, participated in this successful ten-day strike. Word of the unanimous decision to strike was spread overnight by small groups of workers who visited every plant. When owners called in the Pasdaran Guards to break the strike, the Guards were greeted with bricks and stones, forcing them to flee. Ultimately, the triumphant workers achieved a more than 20% wage increase as well as a payment for strike days.

The week-old strike of brick-makers in Hamadan (over 200 miles west of Tehran) then followed suit. Kurd and Azerbaijani workers joined in solidarity and their protest was strengthened with the emergence of "Strike Guards," as groups of 10 to 20 radicalized workers visited the striking plants in the region and gave encouraging talks.

—Neda Azad

## Ireland: Terror no answer

On Sunday, Nov. 8, 11 people were killed and 55 were wounded when a bomb exploded in Enniskillen, Northern Ireland. The bomb was planted in a community center along the route for a memorial parade in honor of the dead from the two World Wars. The victims were gathering to watch the parade when the bomb exploded.

The Irish Republican Army (IRA) issued statements that they had planted the bomb, that it was intended for security forces who were to march in the parade, that it had gone off without being triggered, and that they regretted the accidental deaths of the civilians.

News and Letters has always supported the movement for freedom in Northern Ireland, and will continue to do so. This type of senseless and irrational bombing, in areas where large numbers of civilians are present, is a setback to the cause. Such terrorist acts can never substitute for the mass movements of Irish citizens—North and South of the border—for genuine social revolution. It is these movements that the IRA has ignored.

For a Marxist-Humanist analysis, readers should see the pamphlet *Ireland: Revolution and Theory* by Michael Connolly. It can be ordered from N&L for 50¢ plus 50¢ postage.

—Jane Marie Dignan

## U.S. bases out of Spain!

Tens of thousands of protesters marched in Madrid, Nov. 1, demanding the removal of all U.S. bases, installations and personnel from Spanish soil, and Spain's pull-out from NATO.

The Socialist Party government of Felipe Gonzalez is demanding somewhat less from the U.S.—the removal of a wing of 72 fighter planes, five air tankers (used by the U.S. for midair refueling of the bombers which attacked Libya in 1986), and about 5,000 of the over 12,000 U.S. support personnel stationed in Spain. U.S. negotiators have not agreed to this, and the Spanish government has announced the treaty will not be renewed automatically.

Gonzalez came to power in part because he promised the U.S. bases would go and Spain's role in NATO would end. He later changed his mind, but was forced to hold a referendum on NATO last March in the face of growing opposition. The referendum to stay in NATO narrowly passed when Gonzalez promised to reduce the U.S. military presence significantly. It remains to be seen what the U.S., the Spanish government, and the anti-military movement will do from now until next May when the treaty actually expires.

## A remembrance of George Breitman

*A Tribute to George Breitman: writer, organizer, revolutionary.* Edited by Naomi Allen and Sarah Lovell. Published by the Fourth Internationalist Tendency, 1987.

This tribute to George Breitman is a well-deserved reward for loyal services rendered to the cause of Trotskyism over many years. I have known Breitman since we were both founding members of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and I was a member of the first National Committee. In the 1940s Breitman showed great interest in the "Negro Question," which was then not very high on the SWP agenda. Through many discussions with Breitman, he gradually convinced the SWP to pay some attention to the struggles of Black America instead of simply saying that all questions were class questions.

Following World War II, I was not satisfied with the evaluation of post-war prospects for revolution offered by the SWP and put forward a thesis that Stalinist Russia was a state-capitalist country. I tried to make my views known to the SWP membership, with only moderate success. By 1946 I met Raya Dunayevskaya and became familiar with the writing she had done on the theory of state-capitalism since 1941.

The leadership of the SWP, under James P. Cannon, followed the basic error of Trotskyism, and insistence that Russia under Stalin remained a workers' state and should be defended. That basic error promoted the SWP by the 1980s into a completely Castroist-Stalinist-oriented organization. The present SWP leadership cannot tolerate the thought of revolution, not even when expressed as Trotskyism or Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution." It is incompatible with their Castroist perspectives.

## 'Sanctuary: the Spirit of Harriet Tubman'

*Detroit, Mich.*—No play more appropriately titled than "Sanctuary: The Spirit of Harriet Tubman" could have been chosen to kick off a teach-in on Central America. The Underground Railway Theater Company links today's Sanctuary Movement to the Black liberation movement.

The Black freedom struggle has been continuous and significant in Detroit since before Tubman's time and is too often neglected in the perspectives of Central America Solidarity groups. And the play—original, dramatic and beautifully executed—fulfilled the promise of its title to show the dialectic of liberation in the USA.

The first act begins with Harriet Tubman in the 1850s, already free, working in a Philadelphia restaurant, barraged with the interminable foolish demands of the white owner (all we ever see are her hands gesturing from the wings to accent her shrill monologue). Harriet tells her early life story to a young freedman and persuades him to join the movement.

But her story is told with more than words and music. Actors (often shown as powerful silhouettes against the white backdrop) and puppets portray Harriet's first



journey North. Lighting techniques change the blank white backdrops into a puppet stage. The music of those arduous journeys is recreated by a Detroit gospel choir, "Wings of the Morning," singing songs like "Follow the Drinking Gourd."

The set designer used pre-Civil War quilt patterns and Guatemalan weavings because "these folk art forms are part of a tradition of resistance in both countries," in landscapes that are "magic... always moving to another reality." To me this means not magic, but the ways old notions of reality change when people are creating their own freedom.

In Part II, in Chicago, 1986, Joaquin, a young Hispanic man, Mary, a Black woman, and Carol, a white waitress, all work in a restaurant. The women make prejudiced and cruel remarks about "Joe," who has said he is Puerto Rican. But his feelings finally emerge and Mary learns his true history—he is Guatemalan; he fled torture and murder because he belonged to a Bible-study group. Again his story is told with words, silhouettes, drama, puppets, Black American Freedom songs and the music of the Chilean resistance group, "Quilapayun."

In the final scene, once more reality is transformed. Mary (Valerie Stephens, who was also Harriet) with Joaquin beside her, tells the members of her church that she now favors them joining the Sanctuary Movement. As she speaks, we realize that we the audience are also that Black Chicago congregation, and that the entire second act has been performed with a twice life-size sculpture of Harriet Tubman in the background. Mary reminds us "The call is a terrible one—for us, it began when Rosa Parks said 'no...'" The play ends as the face of Harriet Tubman breaks open, revealing underneath the face of a Latin American.

"Sanctuary" shows that the historic relationship must be explicit today in order for the Sanctuary movement to realize its freedom idea. It is itself a magnificent contribution. To contact the Underground Railway Theater, write: 21 Notre Dame Avenue, Cambridge MA. 02140 (617) 497-6136.

—Susan Van Gelder

## Black World

(continued from page 1)

managerial class is a concern for me. When we become intellectuals we become upper crust and separate ourselves from the underclass. It's important to me who does the defining. We can't automatically accept what people define us as. Power determines who does the defining." The other, a youth counselor, added: "We have to develop some new concepts and methods for dealing with our problems ourselves."

A recent article by Ben Joravsky in the *Chicago Reporter* (November 1987, #11) sheds further light on this. Joravsky asks if the new self-help program earlier this year put the declining South Side Leclair Court public housing complex in the hands of tenant self-management hasn't made them "foot soldiers in the Reagan [counter-]Revolution."

He goes on to note that "commentators and planners hailed the residents as the ultimate proponents of 'self-help.' And within days, there was excited, yet unofficial speculation about demolishing or selling to private developers other housing projects—all for the purpose of helping the poor help themselves...the notion that self-help is encouraged by cutting or privatizing anti-poverty programs has shown remarkable resilience since Ronald Reagan was first elected...The idea, promoted by a handful of conservatives, has to a degree swept both political parties...In addition, academics with access to such influential liberal and neo-liberal publications as *The New Republic* and *Atlantic Monthly* have called on the government to promote 'bootstrap-initiatives' that encourage the poor to lift themselves from poverty."

### BLACK HOUSING CRISIS

And yet, the struggle around the deterioration of housing stock in the Black community, the relentless cycle of residential segregation and re-segregation, and the ever-deepening crisis in public housing is rooted in a structural poverty in which the city of Chicago has 84% of the entire Cook County poor, although it has only 50% of its total population; has 50% of its Black children growing up in poverty; and has some 142,000 people packed into the city's public housing "warehouses"—30,000 in Robert Taylor Homes and 12,000 in the 20-story "gun towers" of the Cabrini-Green projects alone.

As one Black woman resident of Cabrini-Green testified before the Illinois Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights in 1981: "Anytime thousands of people are confined to small areas of land stacked and herded on top of each other like animals, that place ceases to be a home but instead becomes and is a concentration camp. The guards and keepers that patrol such camps come in the guise of social workers, politicians, police, medical practitioners and even some of us."

What separates UIC and the Black community is more than the university's "benign neglect." More importantly, though, the recent conference on "UIC and the Black Community: Developing an Agenda for the 1990s and Beyond" has shown that what separates today's Black intellectuals and administrators from the Black community are the "new concepts and methods for dealing with our problems" that are already inherent in the thought and struggle of the Black community. In the final analysis, the power to define ourselves lies there.

## Editorial Rural poverty in America

Last month in N&L, John Marcotte wrote about how "the gap between the official economic news and real life has never seemed so far apart." He traced how the "magic" 5.9% official unemployment rate hides the reality of 40% of American workers having nothing to show for their hard labor except poverty. We thought our readers would be interested in another dimension: the poverty and hunger that is spreading among rural America.

• In East Liverpool, Ohio, a town along the Ohio River, the population has decreased from 25,000 to 10,000 as all manufacturing has ceased and people leave in search of jobs elsewhere. A recent study showed that 55% of the city households have no employed family member; 48% of the households have incomes below \$10,000 per year; and 14 of the 19 city precincts are classified as low income.

A city resident said, "Nothing is new. There still are no jobs. Now all the stores are closing also, so there is no shopping anymore. They say the unemployment rate is going down here, but it is because so many of the young people are leaving. The surplus food distribution program has already missed one time because they ran out of food, and they say next year, they'll only have two distributions. This will hurt a lot of people."

• A food worker in Jackson County, Kentucky said: "All the government programs are going downhill. People on food stamps keep getting cut and they don't know why. And for people who are living day-to-day, getting their stamps two or three weeks late, as is often the case, it is impossible. This county has 12,000 residents and the food demands have really increased in the last year. Our food bank budget has tripled, yet it's not enough and we're trying to get more donations of food."

"There are no jobs here. People leave in search of work, but often return. When they drive 80 or 90 miles to Lexington for a minimum wage job, they have very little left. And then they're put on part-time, they go in the hole, and have to quit. The closest unemployment office is one and one-half hours away, so people have to pay to get there to say they're out of work."

### HUNGER AMONG FARM FAMILIES

• The New York Times has reported that hunger has spread to farm families. A generation ago, farmers produced food to meet their own needs. Now, with modern farming and in order to survive, they have had to switch to production of one or two large crops for market and rely on purchased food for their own tables.

The number of farmers receiving food stamps in Iowa grew from 400 in 1984 to more than 2,000 in 1986. In Nebraska, there are now more than 200 food pantries serving rural families. In Kansas, it is estimated that 40% of the farmers are in serious financial trouble and face the possibility of foreclosure. In the last ten years, the number of people living on farms who are officially classified as poor has grown from 12% to almost 20%.

• The Physician Task Force on Hunger in America released a report in November saying that 20 million Americans do not get enough to eat every day. The task force deduced this statistic by logically reasoning that most of the 32.4 million Americans living below the official poverty level of \$9,069 for a family of four would suffer chronic inadequacy in their diets.

### SURPLUS FOOD PROGRAM CUTS

Did this statistic create any action of compassion in the Reagan administration? Of course not. In fact, a former administration spokesman criticized the study because the figures were not "official" and the authors were physicians, not economists! Presumably, only economist can recognize a hungry person. And since this report, the Reagan administration announced that 50% less surplus food will be available to help the poor in the next year, and perhaps none at all will be distributed between next April and September.

Since the stock market crash on Oct. 19, the economists and politicians worry about whether or not the economy will totally collapse. The truth is, however, for millions of Americans—on the farms, in small towns, and in the inner cities—the depression is already here.

## News & Letters

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is printed in  
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## From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya

(continued from page 4)

Idea, the truth is the objective situation had completely changed and Lenin, even as he was calling for the removal of Stalin, did so only on the question of bureaucracy and "accumulation of too much power in his hands," and Lenin wasn't sure he "knew how to use that."

In a word, unless one sees Stalin, not just as a bureaucrat but representing an alien class, there is no way to see either the existence of state-capitalism or that the only way to oppose that leadership is with a new form of workers' revolt, not just a dilution of leadership. It was only our age where state-capitalism and the new form of workers' revolt developed. And because of that great movement from practice, and not simply our being "smarter," that allowed us to both break with the concept of the "party to lead" and reach a new stage in cognition.

Rosa Luxemburg was not the only one who thought that since internationalism transcended nationalism all who fight "alone" are "backward," even if it was none less than Marx who said otherwise. The Bolshevik Bukharin held a point of view similar to Luxemburg's on the National Question, specifically on the Irish Rebellion. And, just as Trotsky's ultra-leftism on his type of permanent revolution skips over the peasantry in order to have a "pure" proletarian revolution, so none of them could really grasp the dialectics of liberation, though all were, as individuals, revolutionaries. Had Lenin not held on to his position on the creativity of national liberation movements, it isn't only the Russian Revolution that likewise would have remained unfinished, but he never would have had that flash of genius on what we now call the Third World with his declaration, "If not through Berlin, then perhaps through Peking."

With that he surely left us a great revolutionary legacy. But just as surely, it was not on the question of organization and its imperative need for as philosophic a ground as his break with his philosophic past on the question of "transformation into the opposite" applying also to the "aristocracy of labor." For that matter, where the theory of state-capitalism was the theoretic foundation for a total break with Stalinism and Trotskyism, it didn't reach up to philosophy of revolution, as was evident enough in the break-up of the Johnson-Forest Tendency, until we reconnected with Marx's Marxism which Marxism and Freedom achieved in recreating "the new Humanism" for our age.

By the mid-1960s and the emergence of a whole new Third World, and the new stage of cognition when it came to Black—Frantz Fanon—the New Left youth kept calling only for activism and more activism, relegating theory to be picked up "en route" rather than developed to the point of philosophy. What that great movement from practice that was itself a form of theory did achieve was to so illuminate those final 3 syllogisms of Hegel's Philosophy of Mind—paragraphs #575, 576, 577—that it disclosed the unique originality of Marxist-Humanists in breaking through where none before had trod. In a word, the need for and development of Philosophy and Revolution (P&R) was no mere update of M&F. It was new in the philosophic view of new, epochally new, or, to use, Marx's concept of "new moments," stages of development and self-development, objective and subjective self-development.

Put differently, the New Left Youth were wrong not only because they counterposed activism to theory. It was wrong because they couldn't see the new revolutionary forces as Reason. Had they rooted themselves there, as did Fanon, they could have embarked on that new stage of hard "labor, patience and suffering of the negative" which brought us, and us alone, to those final syllogisms in Hegel and their recreation for our age. P&R did both by laying that totally new foundation in

Chapter 1 and carried it through all the chapters, which didn't stop, in Part I just with Hegel, but went through with Marx and Lenin; then to all Alternatives, whether that was Trotsky or Mao, but also includes that "Outsider Looking In," Sartre; and finally to Part III where all new realities of those new forms of revolt, be it in Africa within the world economy; in East Europe within the confines of state-capitalism; and finally the "New Passions and New Forces", whether that meant the Black Dimension, or anti-Vietnam War Youth, or Women's Liberation. Indeed, because P&R was so deep into new paths of philosophy and revolution, it could lay ground for Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution (RLWLKM) so that, finally, we had ground also for philosophy and organization, as we grappled with Marx's Critique of the Gotha Program in toto and recreated it for our age...

LET US TAKE A SECOND look at both the totality and the individual historic-philosophic ground those 3 last syllogisms created not only for P&R, where they are dealt with in detail, but for RLWLKM, where they are not dealt with in any direct way, though they certainly helped in the discovery of Marx's last decade which brought us to the challenge to all post-Marx Marxists.

The first of the Syllogisms (#575) simply lists the 3 major works of Hegel, as fact, Logic-Nature-Mind. But what that fact manifests makes you look twice at the middle since middle, philosophically, is nothing short of Mediation; and here is what Hegel draws from it: "Nature, standing between the Mind and its



essence, sunders them, not indeed to extremes of finite abstraction, nor itself to something away from them and independent...." (P&R p. 40) In a word, now the question is relatedness, and having sundered both Logic and Mind and thus reminded you of what he did as he stood on the threshold of the Absolute Idea in the Science of Logic when he compelled you to think not "merely as objective world without subjectivity of the Notion, but as objective world whose inner ground and actual persistence is the Notion," you are prepared to go from Nature (whether you take it, as Sartre's "exteriority," or, as Lenin, stretching a hand to Practice); you are ready for subjectivity.

Paragraph 576, Nature-Mind-Logic, is Mind itself which is now Mediation: "...philosophy appears as a subjective cognition of which liberty is the aim, and which is itself the way to produce it." (P&R p. 41) Now comes the true shock. He doesn't proceed to follow the sequence of those books as facts which would have led you to where Logic becomes Mediation. No, Logic is altogether replaced! Instead of fact, we now go back to Idea, and it is Self-Thinking Idea which becomes para. 577; and if anything ever sounded more mystical, if not plain insane, then it is the way philosophers look at Marxism that now equates it to the Self-bringing forth of liberty.

Just compare the way Hegel expresses para. 577: "It is the nature of the fact, the notion which causes the movement and development, yet this same movement is equally the act of cognition." (P&R p. 42) And now read Gramsci: "The philosophy of Praxis is consciousness full of contradictions in which the philosopher himself, understood both individually and as an entire social group, not merely grasps the contradictions, but posits himself as an element of the contradiction and elevates this element to a principle of knowledge and therefore of action." ... —August 1, 1983

## Who We Are and What We Stand For

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

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

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today; Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao and Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* spell out the philosophic ground of

Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her recreation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The Development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

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

## Youth No answer in Reagan or glasnost

by Gary Clark

Recently I've been talking with a number of other young people about the growing prospect of war in the Persian Gulf and Nicaragua, and the coming summit of Reagan and Gorbachev. Listen to how some of these youth have expressed themselves:

• "I have become more and more disgusted with Reagan. He really believes he can do anything—bomb oil platforms, sell arms to Iran to aid the *contras*, reject any peace plan for Central America. He's trying to get a war started." —20-year-old student at Cal State-L.A.

• "We need to get rid of Reagan and everything he stands for. All I ever hear about is no money for the homeless and more and more bucks for murdering in Central America." —17-year-old woman

• "The Star Wars program terrifies me: the insanity of it makes you think about everything. Will we be alive tomorrow? If we are, what kind of world will it be?" —16-year-old student at anti-war rally

The first thing you notice at any anti-war rally these days is the growing number of youth, especially high school age youth. The possibility of a whole new anti-war movement is on the agenda. But in our enthusiasm, we need to look at the same time at the problems which face us as youth activists today.

Over the past few months the threat of war has become more severe. Reagan has pushed for \$270 million more in aid to the *contras* and brought more and more ships and personnel into the Persian Gulf. The military has taken the first steps toward the draft. A woman in the Army Reserves told me that in October the Reserves were told to prepare for active duty, and were asked to volunteer.

Yet at the same time, the number of anti-war rallies, and the number of participants in recent rallies, has grown smaller. Rallies of last April in San Francisco and Washington D.C. drew over 140,000 people, and a rally last November in Los Angeles drew over 10,000. But a recent L.A. rally this November, called by the

same coalition as last year, drew only 1,000. Why?

Could it be that some in the movement are under the illusion, much touted in the press, that after the Iran-*contra* revelations Reagan is a lame duck? Are some under the impression that the Arias peace plan has a chance against the might of the U.S.? Is the search for a totally new way of life being channelled into single-issue politics?

One problem I have noticed is the attraction to Gorbachev's call for openness and democracy, his seeming efforts to end the arms race—his appearance as a peacemaker. But Gorbachev is still sending Russian youth to die every day and to kill Afghan youth. He talks about "ending" the war in Afghanistan—but because Nixon "ended" the Vietnam War didn't make him a "peacemaker"!

The youth arm of the Russian Communist Party and state, the Komsomol, has railed against the "impermissibility of uncontrolled activities by youth association, especially of a socio-political nature." A leader of an unofficial environmental group in Lenin-grad was denied entry to a university graduate program after the local Komsomol chapter declared that he had "unstable political views."

The Cal State-L.A. student I quoted earlier said to me: "It's made to look like a choice, either you're a flag-waving patriot or a Communist. But there's nothing for me in Communism. There needs to be something different." This student expressed an interest in studying Marx's Marxism. In fact, the first question out of his mouth at the News and Letters literature table was: "Is this what Marx wrote, or some other version?"

If that type of questioning can become part of today's youth activities, we could begin to work out pathways to deepen the anti-war, anti-militarist movement.

## Anti-war youth convicted

Los Angeles, Cal.—Katya Komisaruk, a youth anti-war activist, was declared guilty, on Nov. 16, of destroying government property. In June she had made her way into a building at Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, and destroyed a computer used for the NAVSTAR missile guidance system.

On hearing the guilty verdict, the audience of Komisaruk supporters at the federal district court got up one by one and shouted out at the judge and the jury about the illegality of the NAVSTAR system and its use for a first strike capability. They were brutally dragged out of the courtroom and handcuffed.

At the beginning of the trial, U.S. District Judge William J. Rea had ruled that Komisaruk's defense could not be based on international law or the Nuremberg principles that outlaw preparations for offensive warfare. Both Komisaruk and her attorney were thus effectively gagged.

In response, a group of activists have formed a "White Rose Action" committee, named after the German youth resisters to Hitler, who were executed for agitating and telling the truth about the horrors being committed by the Nazi regime.

Despite a gag order by Judge Rea, Komisaruk had continued to speak out to several campus and community groups before her trial. "You're a party to mass murder if you don't get out and try to stop it," she said. She now faces a possible ten years in prison.

—Cyrus Noveen

## Student activists meet at Kent State University

Kent State, Ohio—Students and activists from all over the United States met at Kent State on Nov. 14 and 15 for a tense weekend of workshops, caucuses, speeches and a plenary session.

The Progressive Student Network organized the conference which drew more than 150 participants from a wide variety of Left groups and progressive campus organizations. The great diversity of experiences, ideas, and political backgrounds of the people led to many challenging discussions on sexism and violence against women, racism on campuses, and the students' role in the struggle against U.S. imperialism. The conference also gave many progressive students an opportunity to confront the problems within the American Left.

Unfortunately the creative friction of the sharing of ideas often degenerated into plain old friction. Some students complained that conference organizers' insistence on sticking to the planned schedule and that the agenda was too rigid and undemocratic.

In a workshop on "The CIA and Central America," an activist from New York made a statement about the Arias Peace Plan, and he was quickly ruled out of order by the chairwoman because she decided the workshop should only cover the tactics of protesting CIA recruitment on campus. Several students objected that her refusal to listen to others was condescending and counterproductive.

Many of these tensions came to the surface during the plenary session where 25 resolutions were brought to the floor in less than 40 minutes. Most of them were passed with no discussion. A resolution to endorse the Rainbow Coalition received the most dissent from activists who objected to the Democratic Party or electoral politics in general. The resolution passed 53-18. Sixteen people abstained from the vote. Some of the abstainers objected that the wording of the resolution was intentionally misleading and that the PSN leadership unethically pushed it through. —Student activists

## Youth in Revolt

by Franklin Dmitryev

The arrest of five student activists at the University of Nairobi in Kenya, Nov. 14, sparked two days of student demonstrations. Police surrounded the campus, stormed dormitories, beat students and arrested reporters trying to cover the events. The government then closed the university and banned the main student organization.

\* \* \*

On Nov. 7, after two weeks of student/faculty protests, officials of the University of California at Santa Barbara downgraded their appointment of George Chritton, a CIA agent on paid sabbatical, as a political science lecturer. On Nov. 5, a rally of 800 had ended in a sit-in of 150 in the chancellor's office, with 38 arrested. Since Chritton will still be a visiting fellow, eligible to give lectures in classes, the protests have not abated.

\* \* \*

A nationwide student strike has paralyzed Austrian universities since Oct. 19. The students are protesting benefit cuts as well as underfunding and such overcrowding of the schools that there is a 63% dropout rate. At Vienna University some students sleep outside lecture halls to be sure of a place inside the next day. The students are being supported by academic staff, high school students and workers in nationalized industries who held their own demonstration over plant closures and job cutbacks.

## Tests pose moral dilemma

Chicago, Ill.—For the past two days I have been taking the TAP tests. They're the tests that analyze how "smart" high school students are. These tests have six sections: English, Math, Writing (grammar), Using Resources, Social Studies, and Science.

You remember them—"fill in the bubble, must use number two pencils," and my favorite, "skip any problems that you don't know and go on to the next one. You may come back and finish them when you complete the other problems." It's just that they never give you enough time to come back so you have to make an "educated" guess. Educated meaning you close your eyes and hope for the best.

I'll give you a brief reminder of the misery/boredom/moral dilemma they put us through every year. "If a nuclear power plant poured its radioactive products in a river, what would happen? (a) nothing (b) the fish and plants would survive much better than of nothing happened (c) the river bed would start to decay or (d) some fish and plants would die. No mention of all the hundreds of humans and the following years of radioactivity in that area.

Here's another example. "Since the 1930s the stock-market (a) has gotten worse (b) has gotten better (c) has had gains and losses, but not significant enough to account for (d) has stayed the same. Now I know what you're all thinking, but you have to remember this book was published in 1978 and the answer is already on file!

These are just two samples of the moral-dilemma-tug-of-war we must endure for two days where often any socially conscious student is torn between giving the "right" answer or the truth. —Lena

## Draft for Marxist-Humanist Perspectives 1988

by the Resident Editorial Board of News and Letters Committees

### I. OBJECTIVE/SUBJECTIVE CRISES IN A DECADE OF REAGAN RETROGRESSIONISM AND UNFINISHED REVOLUTIONS, THIRD WORLD ESPECIALLY

- 1) *The "contenders for world power" and the "Two Worlds" within each land*
- 2) *World economic crises and the "Second America"*
- 3) *The "Unfinished Revolutions" in life and thought, and the "Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy"*

### II. RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA'S FINAL DIALOGUE WITH US: PRESENTATION WRITTEN FOR THE JUNE 1, 1987 MEETING OF THE RESIDENT EDITORIAL BOARD

- 1) *The Philosophic Point*
- 2) *Dialectics of Organization*
- 3) *Conclusion: Untrodden Paths in Organization—News & Letters and News and Letters Committees*

### III. HOW CAN WE CLOSE THE GAP BETWEEN PHILOSOPHIC BREAKTHROUGH AND ORGANIZATIONAL EXPRESSION? MARXIST-HUMANIST TASKS FOR 1988

"So deep and global have the myriad objective/subjective crises become in the last months of 1987 that it is necessary for revolutionaries to confront the question of what is new in this convulsive year—and what is not..."

"We face a world which, within a single two-week period this fall, saw the sharpest-ever plunge on Wall Street—and a so-called 'rebound'; the U.S. bombing of Iranian oil platforms in the Persian Gulf, hailed as 'moderate and restrained'; a 'celebration' of the 70th anniversary of the Russian Revolution, with a speech by Mikhail Gorbachev that the commentators touted as nothing less than 'the greatest departure since Stalin'; and a Chinese Party Congress meeting in Beijing that was called the 'beginning of a new era' in China." —from part I

"...the imperativeness of both the objective and subjective urgency now manifest that what has been an un-trodden path all these years, by all post-Marx Marxists, including Lenin—who did dig into philosophy, but not the party, and Luxemburg, who did dig into spontaneity, but not philosophy—is organization, the Dialectics of Philosophy and Organization..."

Marx had created the philosophic ground for organization. But we need not only ground but a roof. And we have all these 112 years of void on organization and philosophy. There is no time in a nuclear age to put it off for another day." —from Raya Dunayevskaya's June 1 presentation

## Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry

Mikhail Gorbachev's long-awaited Nov. 2 speech "October and *Perestroika*" (Restructuring) severely disappointed both the liberals and the apologists for the Russian state-capitalist system on the Left who had for months expected it to be a daring reformist manifesto. Instead, Gorbachev actually seemed to take back much of his own mild reformist rhetoric of 1986-87. It was suggested that this was possibly under pressure from his Politburo colleagues.

The speech praised the mass murderer and counter-revolutionary Stalin repeatedly, vilified the genuine revolutionary Trotsky, and very partially "rehabilitated" the theoretician Bukharin, all the while referring to the party, the party, the party: "For 70 years now the Soviet people have been led by their well-tryed vanguard, the Leninist party," he stated near the end of the two-and-one-half-hour speech.

### TROTSKY AND BUKHARIN FALSIFIED

To see the full depth (or rather shallowness) of Gorbachev's apologia for both Stalinism and the totalitarian system it is necessary to consult the unabridged text of his speech (reprinted in *Soviet News*, London, 11/4/87), rather than the excerpts in U.S. papers which reprint only select parts of his speech, highlighting new-appearing passages (*New York Times* 11/2/87).

The greatest distortion of history is toward Lenin, whom Gorbachev repeatedly links to Stalin and to himself. Nowhere is Lenin's demand in his Will to "remove Stalin" mentioned. Nowhere is the fundamental discontinuity between Lenin's 1917 perspectives on proletarian democracy, on national liberation, on a vision of world revolution exemplified by his statement "if not through Berlin then perhaps through Beijing"—and those of Stalin's state-capitalism in the 1930s—mentioned, let alone analyzed. Gorbachev's *perestroika* is presented as a continuity with the 1930s (which it is) and with 1917 (which it most definitely is not).

While as Marxist-Humanists we disagree with Trotsky, another glaring historical falsification in the speech was its repeated slander of Trotsky. Gorbachev referred to "Lenin's opinion of him as an excessively self-assured politician who always vacillated and cheated," without citing any text from Lenin to substantiate this, since none exists. In seven paragraphs devoted to the Red Army during 1917-21, the years of revolution and civil war, Gorbachev is full of praise for this "army of a new type" which he says was "formed by Lenin's decree," yet he deletes from history the fact that Trotsky was that army's commander and organizer.

When he gets to Bukharin, the only positive thing about Bukharin turns out to be the most negative aspect of this great, though seriously flawed, theorist's career: Bukharin played "an important part in the ideological defeat of Trotskyism," a reference to Bukharin's defense of Stalin's reactionary concept of "socialism in one country." When Gorbachev criticizes Bukharin he refers to Lenin's Will which stated that Bukharin never understood the dialectic, implying that he, Gorbachev, does understand the dialectic.

Here Gorbachev unwittingly illustrates what the Yugoslav Marxist humanist Mihailo Markovic notes: "Stalinism did not reject the dialectic as a whole the way it rejected its key principle—the negation of the negation...a formalized and degenerated dialectic was needed to prove that whatever existed in socialism was necessarily such as it was, i.e. that it was rational." (Cited by Raya Dunayevskaya in *Philosophy and Revolution*, pp. 308-309).

For Gorbachev the main hero of post-Lenin Russia remains Stalin. Endless space in the speech is devoted to the 1930s, when the totalitarian system was born amid millions of deaths due to famine, overwork and executions of real and imagined opponents, including the macabre Moscow Trials, which executed the leadership of the 1917 Revolution. Gorbachev refers to this monstrous series of events as the period "when the world's first socialist society had its beginnings," actually maintaining that the forced collectivization of agriculture in which millions perished in the 1930s was part of "socialist changes in the countryside," which he claims were enacted "according to Lenin's beliefs"! Gorbachev then refers to "excesses" under Stalin and states that "thousands [not millions] of people inside and outside the party were subject to wholesale repressive measures," but all of this is presumably a "dialectical" zig-zag in Gorbachev's alienated, state-capitalist appropriation of dialectical language.

### THE HITLER-STALIN PACT

Next, in a section unnoticed by most commentators, Gorbachev devotes no less than 21 paragraphs to a defense of the monstrous 1939-41 Hitler-Stalin Pact which gave the green light to World War II, dismembering Poland into Russian and German occupation zones, something that he does not mention. Is this just for history's sake, or are these 21 paragraphs also a justification of his summitry with the world outlaw Ronald Reagan, including deals to be made in the future?

Where even Khrushchev had referred to Stalin's cowardice during the 1941 German invasion, Gorbachev instead praises Stalin's war leadership profusely. When he does discuss Khrushchev and Brezhnev, their invasions of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968 to suppress freedom movements in those lands are not mentioned. In fact, neither East Europe nor China are mentioned at all. The focus of the international section of

# Mikhail Gorbachev's Russia: the Stalinist rewriting of history continues

the speech is all on the West, and disarmament.

Like Stalin, Gorbachev is after a rapid scientific and technological revolution in order to restructure the economy. Gorbachev wants to be able to compete with U.S. imperialism and its Star Wars from the skies.

### RUSSIA TODAY: STATE-CAPITALISM, SINGLE-PARTY DOMINATION

All therefore need to fall in line behind him. Especially the workers will need to work harder. Their pay and their job security will now be based on the "profits" of their factory, Reagan-Thatcher style. As Gorbachev's top economist Abel Aganbegyan puts it, "If the workers work better, they will earn more money."

National minorities who have demonstrated and rioted in 1986-87 against Great Russian chauvinism are told bluntly in the speech that they have no legitimate grievances since "the national question has been solved in our country." Such are the main reform tenets of a leader groomed for power by the KGB head Yuri Andropov, who himself came to power in 1982 in the wake of Poland's Solidarnosc movement.

Nowhere in the speech are the youth mentioned, but they nevertheless are having their say, far outside the hall where Gorbachev spoke to high officials. They have formed hundreds of grassroots organizations and publications, some of them characterizing themselves as "New Left." Today they are protesting Gorbachev's totally Stalinist dismissal followed by the public "recantation" of reformist Moscow party chief Boris Yeltsin, who had dared to criticize Gorbachev in October for curtailing *glasnost*. Those demonstrating at Moscow State University do not seem ready to recant.

As our founder Raya Dunayevskaya wrote in one of her last Theory/Practice columns entitled "Russia's Latest Play is no Freedom Road" (N&L 5/22/87): "The point is that de-Stalinization, be it in the Khrushchev form or now in Gorbachev's trying to claim that he is restoring Leninism, has not changed anything fundamental. Though we did get rid of the gory Moscow frame-up Murderous Trials of 1936-38, Russia still has the same fundamental class ground—state-capitalism and single party domination."

## What is New and What is not in Gorbachev's Russia?

Find out through a study of developments in Russia and East Europe in the Archives of Raya Dunayevskaya

"Even if we knew the secret, so-called unrecorded "personal" talks between Reagan and Gorbachev, we would not know what motivated them if we were bereft of Marx's dialectical analysis of history-in-the-making...What was pushing at Reagan and Gorbachev to smile was the concrete crisis in each one's country revealed by the dissatisfaction of the masses in their countries and the continuing unrest in all of the Third World, climaxed by...South Africa."

...."from "News & Letters Workshop/Classes on Current Events and the Dialectic Method", Jan. 1986, microfilm #10513.

"The Soviet Union employs almost every device conventionally associated with capitalism. Soviet trusts, cartels, combines, as well as individual enterprises within them are regulated according to strict principles of cost accounting...As the present document explains it, 'the denial of the law of value created insurmountable difficulties in explaining such categories under socialism'...That this elaborate theoretical justification is made is proof that the Russian people are being prepared for the continuance of a social relation which had no place in the conceptions of the founders of the Soviet state."

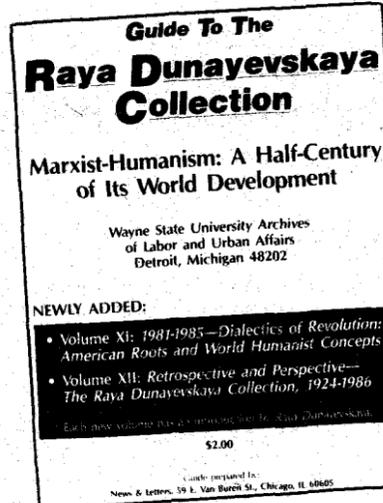
from "A New Revision of Marxian Economics," Sept. 1944, #209

"Philosophy becomes concrete for each age in a new way. I had begun the study of the Russian economy as state-capitalism when the world was suddenly confronted with the Hitler-Stalin Pact. By the time of Stalin's death in 1953, the study became not just an analysis of the monstrosity Russia has become but a search for a philosophy of liberation as well as for the struggles that would be fighting against totalitarian state-capitalism."

from "25 Years of East Europe Revolt and the recreation of Marx's Marxism," March 1982, #7409

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## China's Party Congress: state-capitalism remains

Although Deng Xiaoping gave up all his formal posts in the Chinese Communist Party at the recently concluded Party Congress, this fell considerably short of a "changing of the guard." Deng himself retained leadership of the army—the fact that rules had to be changed to allow Deng to head the army without holding a high Party post only underscores how unprecedented is the military not being formally under Party control.

But there are echoes too of Mao Zedong, who dared theoretically to put the army on the same level as the authority of the Party. In practice, Mao relied on the army during the Cultural Revolution in the late 1960s as the real authority, within factories or on so-called revolutionary committees. There is still a need to pay attention to the opinion of the army.

Hardly a week after the Oct. 19 Wall Street crash, the Party Congress announced plans for workers to buy shares in their factories, as well as for peasants to buy permanent leaseholds for the land they already work. These newly devised plans for financing economic development off the peoples' backs, combined with the ongoing drives to increase productivity and lower the standard of living (while prices far outstrip wages) shows the connection of China's state-capitalist economy to the world capitalist economy. With the ongoing decline in the rate of profit, China shares the difficulty of raising capital for investment purposes.

China's efforts over nearly a decade to use cheap labor and relaxed work rules to attract foreign technology and capital to special economic zones have proved disappointing. For example, officials on the island of Hainan found it easier to import foreign cars and resell them on the mainland than to build new productive facilities.

The official response has been more of the same. Hainan Island will now be turned into a separate province as a giant special economic zone. What other choices do China's rulers have than economic gimmickry as well as intensified labor, when what unites them, regardless of faction, is their fear of the masses? Much has been made of the disappearance from

the Politburo, and even from the central committee for the most part, of the Party official who had begun the 1983 campaign against "Spiritual Pollution," and other attacks on political and cultural expression. They may mean that factory managers can more freely discuss the latest in Western management techniques, but it does not mean a new era of open political expression.

Deng Xiaoping has been the key leader since late 1978, during which he has overseen the stifling of movements from the Beijing Spring of 1979 to the nationwide student and worker demonstrations of a year ago. He has imprisoned dozens of students, writers and workers alike, some non-Marxists but more commonly those who have measured China against the yardstick of Karl Marx and have publicly found it wanting. Memory of those imprisonments is freshened by rumors surfacing that Wei Jingsheng, a prominent writer from the Beijing Spring period, has died in jail.

Two inner-Party documents have just surfaced out of China, timed to contrast to the proceedings at the Party Congress. Misquotations from some of the Party members who have been purged in the last year, from Liu Binyan to Wag Ruoshui, are used first of all to dismiss them all as advocating "bourgeois liberalization" and opposing Marxism.

More importantly, those quotations are interspersed with slogans and speeches from demonstrations as far back as 1979, but concentrating on late 1986, to hold these intellectuals responsible for instigating mass protests. (For the full documents plus discussion, see *China Spring*, #54, special supplement to November, 1987, PO Box 4873, New York NY 10185.)

China's rulers may blame a decade of popular opposition on a handful of intellectual "agitators," but the truth lies elsewhere. Intellectuals and workers will not forget the freedom ideas already raised, from democratization to Marx's humanism, but clearly what Deng and Chairman Zhao Ziyang fear, and what we will be looking to, is what mass protest raises the next time.

—Bob McGuire