



Life and work in the 1980s

by John Marcotte

When I see what level of life working people are being pushed down to, it hurts so bad. I saw a TV report on homelessness in Los Angeles, and there was this young woman with three kids who were homeless because she wouldn't be a battered wife anymore. Her clerical job's pay of \$250 a week made her too "rich" for public assistance but too poor to pay rent! She was describing how living in one apartment with 11 adults and 12 children was affecting her kids. The look on her face said it all when she was asked if she thought anyone cared about her situation, and she said, "No. Not society."

I could write about the conditions at this tannery for the fur trade in Brooklyn, where a friend got hired two months ago. They have one six-by-four-foot bathroom for 50 workers on a floor, with one of the two toilets always out of order. They eat lunch among the rotting skins and tanks of poisonous and foul-smelling chemicals.

EVERYTHING IS GOING BACKWARDS

I could write about how the white workers there do all the skilled work, have their separate union local and keep strictly to themselves. How the heavy, wet, stinking work is all done by Blacks and Latinos. How all the time it's work, work, work with threats and abuse from the bosses and you have to work ten and 12 hours a day and Saturday and Sunday too.

I could write about how my brother-in-law got fired from his job as a cutter so now he's pushing a broom in a printing shop for \$5 an hour, where the skilled printers are so jealous of their knowledge of the machine they make sure he can't watch when they set up.

I could write about how the company and the union bosses have gotten workers against each other in those shops. Everywhere around you everything is going backwards and there seems to be no hope of it getting better, certainly not from the union
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Black World

20 years after the death of King



by Lou Turner

[Hegel's] contention that "truth is the whole" led me to a philosophical method of rational coherence. His analysis of the dialectical process, in spite of its shortcomings, helped me to see that growth comes through struggle.

—Martin Luther King, Jr.
Stride Toward Freedom

A three-month-long Black commercial boycott in Natchez, Mississippi over segregated education, growing Black protests in Cleveland, Texas over the police killing of a Black man while in custody, and a Black student takeover of a campus building at the Univ. of Massachusetts in response to racial incidents, may all appear more like the twilight of the Civil Rights Movement than intimations of a new dawn. However, on the 20th anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., they magnify the racial impasse American civilization has reached in this Reagan era.

Indeed, what we have witnessed on the eve of the 20th anniversary of King's death, is Reagan's recent veto of the Civil Rights Restoration Act. His veto got the nervous support of each of the Republican presidential candidates. At the same time, the Moral Majority—which is neither—launched an all-out lobbying campaign in support of Reagan's veto which became so vociferous and threatening in its racism, sexism and homophobia that it even repulsed Republican senators into voting to override Reagan's veto.

SECOND LOOK AT RETROGRESSION

And this is at a time when the situation of this country's homeless and "underclass" has become so desperate that we cannot do otherwise than find in the historic mirror its reflection in the Poor People's Campaign that Dr. King was preparing when he was shot down in Memphis, Tennessee, while leading a march in support of striking sanitation workers. The historic parallel goes farther. For Martin Luther King was assassinated dur-
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South African bannings impose choke-hold on mass movement



South African youths in Johannesburg protesting crackdown against 17 anti-apartheid organizations

by Peter Wermuth

The South African government's banning, on Feb. 24, of 17 anti-apartheid organizations from engaging in "any activity whatsoever" and its placing of restrictions upon the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) from engaging in any "political" acts, have moved that totalitarian regime one step closer to total barbarism.

Though an international outcry has, for now, forced Botha's government to stay the execution of the Sharpeville 6—a group of youths falsely accused of killing a government official in 1984—Botha's determination to cast an ever-deafening wall of silence over the freedom struggles is more threatening than ever. As one member of the now-banned Detainees Parents Support Committee (which helped spread word of the plight of the Sharpeville 6) put it, "the lights are finally going out on the last vestiges of freedom to criticize or resist in any way the suffocating tentacles of apartheid."

The response of Reagan and his administration to this was to join Thatcher's Britain in vetoing a United Nations Security Council resolution, on March 8, that would have imposed an oil embargo upon South Africa. Reagan instead demurred that there was "nothing we could do" about the events in South Africa because "they are a tribal affair."

That the banning was imposed but a month prior to the 28th anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre and the third anniversary of the Uitenhage massacre is hardly accidental, for one of its provisions is to make illegal any commemoration of significant dates in the anti-apartheid calendar. And yet that didn't stop more than a million Black workers from going on general strike, on March 21, in open defiance of the crackdown. In the areas of Port Elizabeth and Johannesburg more than 90% of Black workers stayed off their jobs in protest. And yet as important as such creative mass response has been, we cannot overlook how serious, powerful and constraining this latest crackdown is.

UDF HIT HARD

Hit especially hard is the United Democratic Front (UDF), the million-member federation of community, women's and youth organizations that mushroomed in size following its birth in 1983. Most of its leading members were in detention when the crackdown came; now, the few who were not, such as Albertina Sisulu, are banned as well. They join the 30,000 who have been detained in South Africa over the past two years—10,000 of whom are children; 95% have been tortured.

No less ominous is the crackdown on COSATU, now banned from any "political" activities. It strikes at the very heart and soul of the labor movement. For from its birth in December, 1985, COSATU made it clear that its economic struggles could not be held apart from the political struggle for freedom.

Not unconnected to this is Botha's effort to pass an amendment to the nation's Labour Relations Act. This new Labour Relations Bill, soon to be voted upon by Parliament, places severe limitations on the right to strike; bans sympathy strikes and boycotts; allows un-

ions to be sued for damages arising from wildcat strikes; and gives employers free reign to fire any worker who engages in a strike. Failure to adhere to these regulations by the unions would be treated as a criminal offense.

This draconian labor legislation is intended to return South African labor to the period before 1979, when significant changes in the labor laws were followed by the rapid rise and consolidation of the Black trade unions. COSATU had planned a nationwide campaign to fight the measure, but the ban on "political" activity now makes such opposition illegal. There is little doubt that one reason for the bannings was to clear the way for this new labor law.

This crackdown comes on the heels of one of the most intense periods of labor unrest in South African history. In 1987 alone, ten million working days were "lost" to wildcat strikes—five times the number in 1986! In 1987 numerous major and militant strikes erupted, from retail workers to rail-
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Editorial

All U.S. troops out of Central America now!

As we go to press, the news of a cease-fire agreement signed March 23 between the "contra" forces armed and directed by the Reagan administration, and the Sandinista government of Nicaragua, has evidently surprised many, both in Washington, D.C. and in Central America. So rapidly have events in the region developed that the cease-fire follows by only one week Reagan's dispatch of an additional 3,200 soldiers—including elite 82nd Airborne paratroopers—to Honduras, where they were to participate in a "readiness exercise" following an alleged Nicaraguan "invasion" of Honduran border space.

In the U.S., that one week saw a daily outpouring of passionate demonstrations nation-wide against Reagan's wars in Central America. Indeed, Reagan's "free hand" there was limited somewhat only because of the overwhelming opposition at home, an opposition which has never been erased since the Vietnam era. The fact that news of the cease-fire was greeted with great relief by both Nicaraguans and solidarity activists in the U.S. underlines the deep desire for an end to a brutal war. BUT, we cannot afford to have any illusions about the meaning of the cease-fire accord.

The Reagan administration has every intention of attempting to twist the cease-fire agreement to its own purposes during the 60 days in which negotiations may continue. White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater, who was quick to denounce the agreement as a "Sandinista ploy," called on the U.S. Congress to be prepared to "resume military aid" to the contras "in the event the accord fails." One only has to recall the fate of the plan proposed by Costa Rican Pres. Arias and signed by all Central American governments last August, a plan which called for cease-fires in each of the countries, an end to guerrilla bases in neighboring countries, an end to military aid from outside Central America, and a return of refugees. So effectively did U.S. imperialism sabotage the Arias plan, and so quickly was Arias himself (despite his Nobel Peace Prize) brought to heel by Washington, that the Arias Peace Plan very nearly became the Reagan Plan.

A DECADE OF REVOLUTION/COUNTER-REVOLUTION

The determination which has preoccupied the administration ever since Reagan took office in 1981 has been the drive to roll back and crush all the developing Central American revolutionary movements. That is true whether the assaults are carried out by Nicaraguan contras or by El Salvadoran death squads, by the CIA or by regular U.S. troops, by economic/political pressure, or by disruption through "disinformation" campaigns. The contras are only one of U.S. imperialism's tools. All options remain open for Reagan in his last nine months in office. That sobering fact demands that we view the latest headlines from the vantage point of the whole decade since the Nicaraguan masses rose up to overthrow the brutal, U.S.-installed Somoza dictatorship.

A decade ago—in February 1978—more than
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On the Inside

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Armenia: Mass protests against Gorbachev — p. 12

Essay: On the Marcuse-Dunayevskaya correspondence — p. 8

International Women's Day: fight for freedom deepened

U.S.A.

DeKalb, Ill.—On March 8, International Women's Day (IWD), the John Lennon Society organized "The Women's Empowerment Tour of DeKalb." In cold rain, 18 men and women traveled to various areas of DeKalb which represent the oppression of women.

The first two stops were at Residence Halls of Northern Illinois University (NIU) and Greek Row, where the tour guides accented the problems of sexual assault where men and women are encouraged to take traditional roles. Last semester, approximately 20 sexual assaults were reported in those two areas alone.

The third stop was the Liberal Arts and Sciences faculty offices. There the tour guide spoke about inequities in hiring, salaries and promotions for women in all areas at NIU, where women can expect to earn approximately \$10,000 less per year than a man.

Another stop was the school newspaper, *The Northern Star*, which engages in sexist reporting and which recently printed personal attacks on a feminist student through columns and cartoons. Their photo of the demonstration printed the next day purposely included only one of the women demonstrators but all the men.

The last stop was downtown DeKalb at the local pornography shop. There demonstrators were handed popcorn as two students engaged in a mock attempted sexual assault. The tour guide gave historical examples of how pornography has led to sexual assault.

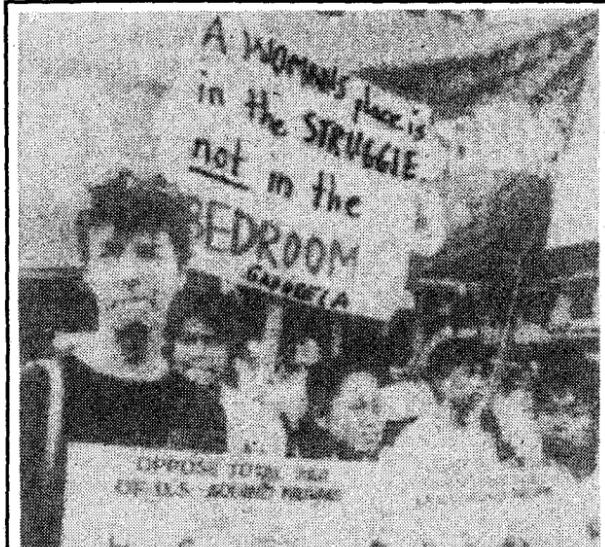
During the four-hour tour, students carried signs saying "Women's Empowerment," "Men Can Stop Rape," "NIU Administration, Quiet Sexists," and "Woman as Revolutionary Force and Reason," plus a banner which read, "If She Says No, It's Rape." —Participant

New York, N.Y.—IWD was celebrated at Medgar Evers College (MEC) in Brooklyn all through March, turning it into Black Women's History Month, and included a series of lectures on Black women's history and a Black women's writers conference.

One event was the IWD celebration of "MEC women in the arts." The other was a talk by Vickie Garvin on

"Black Women and Radical Visions/Radical Politics." She described her many years of participation in the Black and labor movements in New York, and the audience felt we were reclaiming our own history. At our News and Letters lit tables, neighborhood women discussed the resurgence of racism, the miseducation of children and the need for a totally new way of thinking.

The Philippines



More than 1,000 women in Manila, the Philippines, observed International Women's Day by marching near the Presidential Palace.

Colombia

Household workers representing organizations in Latin American and Caribbean countries held an eight-day conference in Bogota, Colombia, in March. These women workers are fighting for "the right to

our own union in every country," and to "create a network of Latin American organizations to help us emerge with strength and dignity from the anonymity we household workers have suffered for centuries."

—Information from Housecleaners News

Chile

In Chile on IWD several thousand demonstrators, mainly women and youth, faced down and then battled the totalitarian military regime's dreaded police. This went on for several hours right in the center of Santiago, the capital, as well as in Valparaiso. Violent battles continued in scattered locations into the night. All of this occurred in the teeth of severe repression: the Pinochet regime had branded any celebration of IWD as a "Marxist commemoration" and "therefore" illegal.

Meanwhile, the more established opposition is banking on defeating Pinochet in a plebiscite he is expected to call in the fall. But the women's liberation and youth demonstrators on March 8 seem to have a different concept of how to get rid of Pinochet. That is causing some second thoughts, even among "experienced" older opposition leaders.

West Bank

Hundreds of Palestinian women marched in several cities on IWD. Israeli soldiers fired tear gas and rubber bullets into a group of 300 Palestinian women marching through Ramallah in the West Bank.

El Salvador

The committee of Mothers of the Murdered and Disappeared in El Salvador joined with students and workers to celebrate IWD in a march of 1,000 past the San Salvador Military Hospital. They called for an end to forced military service, and urged soldiers to desert rather than follow U.S. orders and kill their own people.

'Ideological pollution' in our movement

by Terry Moon

In celebration of International Women's Day (IWD) and Women's History Month the Chicago Local of News and Letters Committees held a panel discussion that included a woman from South Korea, a young U.S. women's liberationist, a South African woman student and myself. Their talks will appear in future issues of N&L. Below are excerpts from mine:

So far this year we have heard of IWD demonstrations in El Salvador, the Philippines, the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Arab East Jerusalem. Each demonstration was both brave and reasoned. (See article above.)

Given the level of Women's Liberation Movement (WLM) activity internationally, what was striking was how little was going on in the U.S. I don't think the question is, is the Third World more advanced than us or vice versa; rather I think we need to figure out what is happening to the WLM in the U.S. so that the Third World won't end up at the same impasse we are facing.

To begin to discuss this, I want to quote from the new syllabus for the classes that News and Letters is beginning (see ad, page 10). The quote is from the founder of Marxist-Humanism, Raya Dunayevskaya:

"The abysmal lower depths that the Reagan retrogression has sunk the world into throughout the seven years of this decade, has polluted the ideological air, not only of the ruling class, but has penetrated the Left itself. Such a deep retrogression urgently demands that, along with the economic and political tasks facing us, we look for philosophic new beginnings."

TAWANA BRAWLEY: 2 HATE CRIMES

One example of the ideological pollution that has even permeated the WLM is pointed out in an article in *Ms. Magazine* by Marcia Ann Gillespie, a Black woman writer who wants to know why the outcry over Tawana Brawley has been incomplete. Brawley, 16 years old, was raped and abused by a gang of white men and found semiconscious, covered with excrement, with racist epithets written on her body.

"No doubt," Gillespie writes, "racism was involved in this case. But unlike Howard Beach... the assailants' primary weapons of choice were their penises... Yet somehow the fact that two hate crimes were committed is being ignored. But then in this country, rape... is neither understood nor considered a hate crime as heinous in motivation and intent as a racist attack."

"No matter how justified the outrage being expressed on Tawana Brawley's behalf, the fact that public ire may never have been ignited had she not had those racist words scrawled on her body enrages me."

To me what Gillespie raises here is not alone a question of "two hate crimes" or even of the "abysmal lower depths that the Reagan retrogression has sunk the world into" and the fact that the movement has not responded, revealing its ideological pollution. It as well reveals how deep the uprooting of this society has to be for each of us to be free.

But I think we have to ask: Why wasn't what happened to Brawley part of the IWD demonstrations that did take place in the U.S.? What I think 20 years of the

WLM has shown us is that without those "philosophic new beginnings" that Dunayevskaya spoke of, we will not be able to meet those economic and political tasks.

PHILOSOPHIC NEW BEGINNINGS

One thing that can help us work out those philosophic new beginnings is to see how Raya looked at Karl Marx's 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*. Raya saw in Marx's Essays not only the discussion of what it means to be human, but as well what she called Marx's concept of the man/woman relationship.

She incorporated Marx's vision into her philosophy, and deepened and broadened the very Idea of what freedom is/can become as she grounded her philosophy in Marxism and tested it against the movements for freedom—including the WLM.

It is not an abstraction that philosophy gives action a direction when you see what philosophy showed was important about our movement. Raya summed up both the beginnings of the WLM and its high point when she wrote in 1970 of our refusal to subordinate the WLM to another movement, and that it is indeed a "revolutionary force towards total liberation of all" and that Women's Liberationists were opposed to the old society and "for a totally new society on truly human foundations."

If we saw that as our contribution and that we had a responsibility to develop the Idea of freedom within a philosophy of freedom, then I don't think we would be at an impasse today, or allow what happened to Tawana Brawley to be fragmented and to thus help fragment her.

To help the Idea of freedom experience self-development is not an easy task. Raya Dunayevskaya not only did this her whole life, but tried to make explicit what she did so that it would not die with her. The four classes that we are going to start at the end of this month, not only speak to the WLM... but are where we can begin to "look for philosophic new beginnings."

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Alice Dunbar-Nelson diary

Give Us Each Day: The Diary of Alice Dunbar-Nelson, edited and introduced by Gloria T. Hull (W.W. Norton & Company, New York, London 1984).

At the age of 46, Alice Ruth Moore Dunbar-Nelson set pen to paper to create a diary in 1921 (the "Dunbar" came from her marriage to Paul Laurence Dunbar, the great Black poet). The diary ends that year and resumes throughout 1926-31, covering approximately six years of her very active life. Gloria T. Hull's beautifully edited version of the diary is sensitive and thoughtful, giving brief introductions throughout with several descriptions of people, places and events. Ms. Hull writes: "this diary...is only the second one by a Black woman that we have had the good fortune to see... One wonders how many other publishable diaries by Black women have been written, but have not come to light."

The diary is a rare find. Yet the real discovery begins with the reader discerning how it is only the tip of the iceberg, involving some 40 years of prolific writing, publishing, and lecturing by this creative Black woman.

Dunbar-Nelson's activities were as varied as her writing as she attended and spoke at major women's, Black, labor and some socialist conferences of the time as well as having an extensive lecturing schedule to the point of utter exhaustion. She wrote for newspapers such as the *Messenger* and the *Chicago Defender*; wrote a column, "From a Woman's Point of View," in the *Pittsburgh Courier* in 1926 and co-edited and published the *Wilmington, Del., Advocate* with her third husband, journalist Robert J. Nelson.

Her activities ranged from participating in anti-lynching campaigns and attending annual NAACP meetings, to speaking at pan-Africanist conferences and the American Negro Labor Congress, to teaching and counseling young women at the Industrial School for Colored Girls in Delaware—including counseling on abortion. She had a "circle" of friends that included Jessie Fauset, Mary McLeod Bethune, W.E.B. Dubois, Carter G. Woodson and Langston Hughes.

While the diary is an important document, the reader needs familiarity with Dunbar-Nelson's work and with the history of the Harlem Renaissance and the Depression. What the diary does accomplish is to introduce the reader to the author herself. Dunbar-Nelson was a woman with intellect, energy and wit.

What I appreciate most about Dunbar-Nelson's work is reading her researched essays. An example is an essay, "People of Color in Louisiana," published in the *Journal of Negro History* in 1916-1917. She begins by writing: "The title of a possible discussion of the Negro in Louisiana presents difficulties, for there is no such word as Negro permissible in speaking of this State. The history of the State is filled with attempts to define, sometimes at the point of the sword...the meaning of the word Negro... [It] came to mean in Louisiana, prior to 1865, slave, and after the war, those whose complexions were noticeably dark."

This quote reminds me of what Karl Marx said in his day, to not equate the word Negro with the word slave. Dunbar-Nelson seems to explain this concept in concrete terms for Louisiana. Her diary points a way for closer examinations of all her work. —Diane Lee

Farm crisis: everyone's battle

Mt. Carroll, Ill.—I think the farm crisis is getting worse by the minute. It's not getting better like they say in the newspapers, which is what they want you to believe. Many people here are now losing the farms they had previously hung on to.

I lost my farm which I had owned and operated for 33 years, and which had been paid for at one time. It's rather a shock to realize that the judicial system will not work, that judges won't do anything against the banks. I even found out that my lawyer worked for the bank while he was supposed to be representing me in the foreclosure proceedings.

When I went to court, the judge ruled against me and I appealed it and lost. Then I won in the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals, but the first judge wouldn't honor the decision. He just sat on it. The way it ended up, the farm went to the bank and the lawyers got my money.

A lot of farmers have been bankrupted like me. One man borrowed money in 1982 and listed his assets. Since then, the value of land has dropped, so the judge put him in jail for 2½ years for falsifying his assets to the bank. The judges here run the county, and the lawyers get rich off us.

FARMERS SUPPORT GROUP

We now have a farmers' support group and we try to help each other in any way we can. A number of us have been in jail, maybe for as much as three months. No jury put us there—the judge put us there. Like when the bank was repossessing one farmer's assets, a tractor was missing. The judge said he thought a friendly farmer was hiding it, and put the man in jail for contempt of court. We marched around the courthouse and it made the news media, so they did release the farmer. And the tractor still hasn't been found.

At our support group meetings, we break into small groups of 6-8 so that each can tell stories of what's been happening to them. The main thing is for people not to think it's their fault. The system has failed—not the individual.

There have been suicides right here, and the media covers them up. One man I know was killed in a single vehicle accident after he received a bill for attorney fees of \$100,000. Another farmer was milking 120 cows. When he went to court he was never allowed to say a word in his own behalf. He lost everything. Then he took a truck driver job, and he too was killed in a single car accident.

NO LAWYERS OR BANKERS WELCOME

Farmers are fiercely independent, but this will have to change. And when people find out they're not alone, it is very important. Often farmers won't admit they're in trouble—sometimes up to the end. Sometimes people are afraid the bank will find out if they come to our support group meetings. We invite our neighbors to come. We meet once each week and we are open to listening, but we don't welcome bankers or attorneys.

One young man said he shouldn't have come to our meeting, that he's a good farmer and makes money every year. He wanted to buy his brother's share of the farm, so we went over it with him. It turned out he

owed \$3,000 an acre when you figured in depreciation of his equipment. And he didn't even know he was in trouble!

This isn't just the farmer's problem. It's everybody's battle—whether you work on a railroad, or in a packinghouse, or on a computer. Every man, woman, and child owes \$9 a day just in interest on the national debt. It has to change. We're now behind the labor unions. We can see we were in error believing they were responsible for the economic problems. Everybody in America has to work together to make the change.

—Illinois farmer

Worker unrest in Dominican Republic



Dominicans harvesting sugar cane.

Eighteen months into President Balaguer's administration, the Dominican Republic has been rocked by ceaseless demonstrations, strikes, barricades and street battles between protesters, police and army troops, which as of mid-March had left five dead, scores wounded and many hundreds arrested. From the countryside to countless cities and towns, there have been protests and sacking of public buildings centering on demands for lowering the impossibly-high cost of living.

In February, a peasant strike spread to the whole community in the province of Maria Trinidad Sanchez, with riots and the cutting of high-power lines blacking out eight cities and large trees blockading the roads. The strike there opposed pollution created by the state gold mining corporation.

P.O. changes for the worse

Editor's note: Reagan's 1989 budget projects drastic reductions for spending on the U.S. Postal Service. Following are comments from a postal worker.

Los Angeles, Cal.—All the workers are aware of the changes proposed for the Postal Service. The nature of the Postal Service is that it doesn't have to follow the rules that other enterprises do. Now they are just going to be looking for excuses to let workers go. That's what the bottom line is. We do not expect much help from the union.

I started out a steady worker who did my job well. The supervisors try to sabotage workers they don't like with their "help." I told a supervisor I didn't need his "help"; it was only to slow me down and make me look bad. I did not speak out before but now I do. I am willing to complain about the conditions here.

The sexual harassment of women happens all the time. "Attractive" women are given easier jobs, but they pay for that favoritism. They are sexually harassed out loud, in front of everyone. Then there is an older woman who was put on a job of hauling 50-70 pounds at a time. I guess she's not considered attractive.

Here at the Post Office we know what the reality is. Some people outside say, "Well, you get a good wage and good benefits." But the conditions here could drive you mad if you let them. And now it's going to get worse.

—Woman postal worker

Seniority: what does it mean today?

Chicago, Ill.—I appreciated Felix Martin's column, "GM/UAW Attack Seniority" (*News & Letters*, March 1988), for showing how capitalism and the labor bureaucracy pit worker against worker, specifically at the General Motors plant in Van Nuys, Cal., where workers voted on alternative lay-off proposals. I could hear the anguish in the voice of the worker who said: "We have to choose between our family and the brother or sister who stand next to us on the line. This is pitting us against each other. We're putting a razor to each other's throats."

At the same time, I disagree with the emphasis on preserving seniority rights. While seniority may be a right "...that workers have won over the many years through long, hard struggles on the picket lines," it has also been a tool used to exclude Blacks and women, to oppose affirmative action and to maintain discriminatory employment practices. I wonder about the lower-seniority workers at GM-Van Nuys. Who are they? Are most of the Black, Latino and women workers in that group?

Neither is seniority any protection against plant closings. When the meat packing plant where I was working closed in 1983, throwing 600 people out of their jobs, a significant number of those workers were Black men in

Serfs & lords at Eckrich

Chicago, Ill.—When the contract at Eckrich came up last time, the first thing that came out of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 100-A secretary-treasurer Walter Piotrowski's mouth was that Eckrich had to stay competitive with other meatpackers. What he was saying was that if we didn't let them have what they wanted, they would shut down this plant.

We did get raises in the last contract, but we also have a three-year training period. That doesn't make any sense. It's not like we're going to be doctors or something. Then the company does things like putting the "trainees" on the machines because they don't have enough operators. The new people don't get paid the rate for the job, but they have all that aggravation.

They always say, "You don't have to do it. You don't have to work here; there's the door." But say you want to buy a house or something, which is almost impossible. You have to get a mortgage, a 30-year mortgage. If you don't pay a month or two on that mortgage, it's gone. You have to stay at work if you don't want to lose everything.

You're a slave. Even if you don't like a job, you have to do it. If you're not fortunate enough to get a better education or something, you're stuck. To me it's like in the Middle Ages when they had the serfs and the lords. The serfs didn't have anything at all. We have cars and TVs, but it's still the same to me. You're still tied. You still have to eat.

I think the people in the company know that. But why should we let the company run all over us? They wouldn't be in business if it wasn't for the worker. We can't think that if we go on strike, that they're just going to shut down and move out. If we think that way, then they're going to always get their way.

—Eckrich worker

Ford's sham profit sharing

Editor's note: The following letter was printed in the March 12, 1988, Detroit Free Press.

I have worked at the Ford Michigan Truck Plant for 17 years. On Feb. 19, it was announced that I would receive a \$3,700 profit-sharing check. This has been a record profit year for Ford. My plant has worked 10-hour days for the entire year. With lunch, preparation and driving, it is a 12 and sometimes 13-hour day. The money, \$3,700, symbolizes how auto workers have traded their lives for dollars.

Rather than getting caught up in the dollar figures and the smiling faces of my co-workers, responsible reporting should note the following:

* While Ford made record profits, there are now 43 percent fewer Ford workers than there were 10 years ago.

* In 1980, at the Michigan Truck Plant, there were 2,800 hourly employees working two shifts. Today there are less than 1,200 workers on one shift.

A rule of law under our economic system is when there is increased profit, there is increased poverty. Today's corporate profits and auto workers' profit-sharing come at the expense of tens of thousands of our neighbors, friends and family members.

Competition that once destroyed unknown people in faraway places now condemns our children to an insecure future. Rather than cheering the profits of Ford and its ability to compete, why don't we face the truth? Competition is dangerous to our health and security. In the early 1980s, GM workers ignored the layoffs at Ford and Chrysler. Today, Ford workers laugh at GM workers who are not getting profit-sharing checks. Chrysler's Jefferson Avenue assembly workers silently smile when Lee Iacocca announces the closing of the Kenosha plant. With the rhetoric of "my quality is better than your quality," we have destroyed all union solidarity and our human capacity to care for one another.

Everyone wants to report optimistic moments and encouraging economic news. Anyone can report about smiling faces and \$3,700 checks. A serious news analysis and editorial comment should reflect the human concerns and the substance behind the shallow, short-term thinking of corporate rhetoric.

—Ford worker

Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

leaders. When it seems to be everybody for themselves until yet another strike breaks out, and there's solidarity where yesterday you didn't see it.

I look around and see how hard it has become to live. Two sisters, a brother, their spouses and their four kids share a three bedroom apartment. Because that's what you can get for even a "bargain" rent in working-class (poor?) Corona and Elmhurst, New York. Everyone knows Mayor Koch has kept 100,000 city-owned apartments off the market, while he only talks of building a few more shelters instead of fixing up the apartments. Homelessness is no accident, and neither are high rents.

TOLL ON WORKERS IS TOO MUCH

But I do not want to write anymore about how bad it is. The toll on working people is too much. Nerves are broken, hearts are broken, lives are broken. Somehow economics doesn't seem to have to deal with broken hearts. That's what's wrong with economics right there, it pretends people aren't people. That's where only humanism will do to deal with all this; the humanism, the human being at the center, that Marx started and Dunayevskaya developed.

I am ready for a revolt right now. I want to see the new forms of organization working people will invent. I want to see a way out start to be worked out in life. I know it will take a long, hard journey of many. Many now are organizing their thoughts, as in meatpacking, where the workers are trying to establish worker-to-worker communication so this organization of thought can go on. Then will come the organization of action as well.

The point is not to let despair or impatience get the better of you. But at the same time, if our history since World War II shows anything, it's that it will take a mighty organization of thought to get somewhere really new. This is not only organization of thought as in working people thinking their own thoughts and working out where to go next, but also joined up with the organization of thought of that humanism of Marx, worked out for today's struggles. Only with principles of that humanism and yes, an organizational place where it gets developed by live human beings involved in the struggles, can I imagine how we can get to a new way of working and living together.

their 50s and 60s, who had labored for that company for 25 or 30 years and knew no skill other than boning meat. Where would they find another job? Who would hire them?

And what of the younger workers? In the three years that followed, I found two jobs and lost them both, one due to automation and the other to another plant closing. Do workers of my generation (I'm 35) and younger have, in this economy, even the possibility of working at one job for 20 or 30 years?

Marx wrote in the Communist Manifesto: "The essential condition for the existence, and for the sway of the bourgeois class, is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage-labor. Wage-labor rests exclusively on competition between the laborers." Felix Martin's column pointed out that that competition is for our very survival—the ability to feed, clothe and house ourselves and our families. Yet it is precisely that competition—whether between older and younger workers in one plant like GM-Van Nuys, between employed and unemployed, between workers at different plants within the same company or industry, or between workers in the U.S. and those in other countries—that preserves this capitalist system and, therefore, threatens our survival.

—R.A. Lastelle

From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya
Marxist-Humanist Archives

Israel moves further back to Begin's reactionary beginnings

by Raya Dunayevskaya
Founder of Marxist-Humanism

Editor's note: Because of the current revolt and crisis in Israel/Palestine, we are printing excerpts of Raya's Jan. 5, 1982 Political-Philosophic Letter originally titled "Begin's Israel Moves Further and Further Backward to His Reactionary Terrorist Beginnings"; it had the overline heading "Another Arab-Israeli Conflict, or Shift in Politics Between the Two Nuclear Superpowers?" The full text of the letter is available from N&L and is in the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, microfilm, #7392-7401.

January 5, 1982

I. BEGIN REWRITES HISTORY

No sooner was the world preoccupied with the counter-revolution in Poland on Dec. 13, as the Polish rulers unleashed martial law against the Polish masses, focused on Solidarity, than Menachem Begin leaped out of his hospital bed into his wheelchair plus limousine. In six short hours he rammed through the Knesset (the Israeli Parliament) the approval to annex the Israeli-occupied Syrian territory—the Golan Heights, and battered down what had been agreed to by all, including Israel—the UN Resolution 242.

This is not the first time that Israel has taken advantage of the world's preoccupation with an immediate counter-revolution to carry out its counter-revolution in the Middle East. In 1956, when Russian tanks had driven into Hungary to destroy that revolution, the Israeli Army—with the connivance of British and French imperialisms—invaded Suez. The haste with which Begin, in 1981, embarked on his headlong aim to "legitimize" the Israeli booty from the 1967 war skipped the six days that had intervened in 1956 between Russian tanks rolling into Hungary and Israel's invasion of the Suez.

Begin's violent dash against time in 1981 was not a mere difference between six hours and six days. No, it was an undermining of any attempt by anyone, including its benefactor—U.S. imperialism—to pressure Israel to give up any of its war booty, come April when the return of Egypt's Sinai is completed and serious talks on "self-rule" on the West Bank and Gaza Strip are to begin. The fact is that this did indeed throw everyone off balance. Thereupon the amateurish Reagan not only voted for the UN resolution which condemned Israel's unilateral action, declaring the annexation "null and void," but suspended the "historic" Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. and Israel for Strategic Cooperation...

Begin's vitriolic statement against Reagan makes it altogether too tempting to dismiss it, as if it were something off the top of his head due to extreme "provocation" at Reagan's suspension of the Memorandum of Understanding. Nothing, however, could be further from the truth. The fevered rhetoric, like the helter-skelter appearance of the rush to annex the Golan Heights, was not "provoked." Nor did it suddenly issue off the top of Begin's head. It was a calculated, premeditated, and long-ago planned act. How long ago? More importantly, how far backward does Begin intend taking Israel to its pre-Israel founding?

At that time—in the 1940s—Begin worked, not so much against British, much less U.S. imperialism he has since followed, as against the Jewish masses, whether they were fighting for a socialist republic of Arabs and Jews, or Zionists, who were anxious to establish a homeland for the Jews in a part of Palestine. Begin's reactionary, fanatic ideology for "Eretz Israel" (Land of Israel), as biblically interpreted by him, continued to terrorize those Jews. Because that is the issue, we must probe deeper into that Dec. 20 statement read to U.S. Ambassador Samuel W. Lewis...

Begin rolls history back 3,700 years, to situate his act, in general, at the beginning of Jewish history. He then creates still another amalgam, raising his imperialist annexation of the Golan Heights to the stratospheric level of "not rescinding faith" during the Inquisition, while likening any opposition to his policies to the anti-Semitism prevalent then...

Higher still is his specific ideology of the 1940s. There the rewriting of history was clearly not so much against U.S. or British imperialism, as against the Jewish people who escaped the Holocaust. The diversity of the views of those masses, ranging from wanting a secular state to a socialist republic, and including the various tendencies within the Zionists, so that a leader like Ben Gurion did want and did establish a theocratic state, were focused at the time on one thing, and one thing only—the UN Resolution that would recognize a part of Palestine as the State of Israel.

When the UN was debating the right for the establishment of Israel, all the Jews in Palestine were for the acceptance of a part of Palestine as the State of Israel. Whereupon that reactionary underground terrorist, Menachem Begin, as head of the Irgun, together with the Stern Gang, bombed the King David Hotel without any regard as to which Jews would be killed, and with but one aim, and that was to undermine this move. Ben Gurion and the other leaders of the movement worked hard to not only disassociate themselves from these gangs but finally to convince the UN that indeed a majority of Jews would accept the UN recognition of the territory they would assign to Israel.

[I was in Paris and London in 1947 when I met quite a few German Jews who had escaped the Holocaust, were happy to reach Palestine, only to find conditions there—both the hostility of Arabs and of religious Zionists—unbearable. The stories they told were not only

about the bombing of the King David Hotel, but Irgun terrorist acts against individual Jews who were struggling to found a socialist republic, as well as pressures exerted also against moderate Zionists—and the young left Polazionists—for attempting to work also with the Arabs, pressures which were unbelievable. It isn't that either the Arabs accepted those Jews who were trying to establish a secular state for Jews and Arabs, or that the religious Jews accepted them. Walking around with a Bible in their hands, the religious Zionists were speaking of "Eretz Israel," not as the reality showed Palestine to be, a land where Arabs lived. Instead, they spoke of it as if it were "assigned to the Jews by God." Since the comrades found it impossible to work for a socialist republic, or even for a secular state, they were driven to become exiles again, this time from Israel.]

Here, however, is how Begin is rewriting history: "In 1946 an English general named Barker lived in this house. Now I live here. When we fought him, you called that terrorism." It wasn't Reagan who called the Irgun



Israelis protest occupation of Gaza and West Bank

and Stern Gang terrorists. The Jews of Palestine called them that. It is they who suffered from those terrorist acts.

Lies never bothered Begin, and he certainly isn't letting them stand in his way when he is attempting, at one and the same time, to create a new myth of his past and to transform that reactionary ideology into present state policy of the State of Israel...

Even now it must be stressed that Begin does not represent the majority of the Israelis. His party is a minority, and the unholy alliance with the religious groups, which gives it a majority in the Parliament, does not make it a majority. Quite the contrary. Not only are there a great diversity of Jewish views in Israel, and a mass peace movement, but even Zionists are emigrating from Israel as they find the religious fanaticism unbearable...

II. FOCUS: COUNTER-REVOLUTION/ REVOLUTION

No doubt what Begin saw in the AWACs sale was so great a tilt towards Saudi Arabia that it assumed the form of a global shift in U.S. policy. That that had an element of truth in it was clear from the fact that U.S. imperialism had indeed other interests in the Middle East than defense of Israel "in and for itself." What is pivotal for U.S. imperialism is, first, the struggle with Russia for single monopoly control of the world and, above that, opposition to revolution...

No doubt, there will be some modification of Begin's statement [of Dec. 20 to Ambassador Lewis] and a much greater retreat on the part of Reagan so that once again some deal or double cross can be worked out as to Israel's predominance in the Middle East. But that is hardly the question for Marxist-Humanists. What is the issue is that, on one side, with the 1979 revolution in Iran, the whole Middle Eastern question turned from one totally immersed in the Arab-Israeli conflict and, of course, Oil, to that of revolution. With the current counter-revolutionary turn in Iran, however, what we saw arising everywhere is national fanaticism instead of national liberation, and that so-called "fundamentalism" was further tainted with religious bigotry. Whether it's Khomeini's Shi'ite religion, or Begin's unholy alliance with the Rabbinate (not to mention his praise of Falwell and by Falwell); whether it's Reagan leaning on Falwell's Moral Majority, or the Catholic Church in Poland—all of these manifestations of the sudden "rebirth" of religion are signs of the degeneracy of the capitalist imperialist nuclear stage of world development. It is putting a question mark over the very survival of civilization as we have known it.

Take the question of the Iranian Revolution at its present counter-revolutionary turn. The 1979 Revolution which first appeared as the breath of fresh air was so not only because it threw out the exploitative, corrupt Shah without separating U.S. imperialism from his totalitarian rule. It also meant, and that above all, that a totally new phenomenon was born in the Middle East. Where it had heretofore been first, Oil, and then Arab-Israeli conflict, and once again, Oil, it was now revolution, and not only for Iran but the whole of the Middle East.

In 1979 the revolution was the determinant (and Women's Liberation was integral to it). The imperialists were totally shaken up in the Arab kingdoms as well, especially when the Mosque in Mecca was occupied. Clearly, because the Shi'ites were the underprivileged, the poor, the masses, religion itself was mistakenly

disregarded by the Left, as if it were simply a subordinate matter that would soon be overcome by the revolutionary drive itself.

Instead, it was religion in its most retrogressive, fundamentalist form, with the Imam, the Ayatollah Khomeini, at the head, who conquered total power, turned to destroying the revolution, and, far from becoming a beacon light for the whole Middle East, has become one more prop in the U.S.-Russia rivalry for single world domination.

Ever since Egypt's nationalization of the Suez Canal, we have focused on the contradictions in nationalisms. Thus, though in 1948 we were for the establishment of Israel and have continued to be for its right to exist, we most sharply opposed Israel's invasion of the Suez. As *News & Letters* expressed it in its lead article, Jan. 8, 1957, "Preparation for War?" we stressed that the struggle now must be not only against the major imperialists, but that "not much more can be said for the Israeli government. Internally, despite all the publicized democratic institutions, the prominence of union leaders in the government, the social reforms and the overpublicized social experiments in collectives, Israel is a sick society. It is sick not primarily because of outside factors, but its basic economy is established on the capitalist principle of growth: demanding ever more sweat and production from its workers in return for less..."

Indubitably, the greatest enemy is at home, always at home. That is why the class struggle is so decisive. Extended, that is what revolution is. Because that is hardly the goal of world imperialism, beginning and ending with the two nuclear titans—the U.S. and Russia—it is trying to make the unthinkable—nuclear war—thinkable. There can be no resolution to any of these conflicts other than by a total social revolution.

Palestine's ongoing revolt



Los Angeles, Cal.—The Palestinian uprising has now been ongoing for 100 days. It has established more in 100 days than we have accomplished in the 21 years since Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza strip in 1967. But 100 people have died in these 100 days. That is the official figure. We believe that more than 350 people have been killed.

At the start of the uprising, we didn't think it would last. But every day, it keeps going up and up. In March 200 Arab policemen resigned. Now there is more and more pressure being put on the occupying forces.

The uprising has changed everything. The Palestinian people are more full of hope than ever before. It is a real revolution: the whole population is involved, workers and students, Christians and Muslims together. Palestinian women are playing a great part, not just behind the lines but out in front. On International Women's Day it was the women and girls who protested and not the men and boys. I think this is new for the Arab world.

The uprising will not stop until we get a Palestinian state. The Palestinian youth have a slogan: "We're all behind the PLO. If Arafat says 'Go on,' we'll go on. If Arafat says 'Stop,' we'll throw him in the mud." The people know what they want. They won't let anyone betray them or make a bargain behind their backs out of their great uprising.

Some Israelis themselves are starting to see that the occupation cannot last forever. One hundred thousand demonstrated in Israel against it. On March 20, I attended a rally here in Los Angeles. There were about 900 people. The Palestinian and Israeli flags were both together on the platform. This was the first time in my life I ever saw this, or ever believed we could live together in two states side by side, or in one state together.

I never thought like this before. When you grow up in a Palestinian refugee camp, you are filled with anger and hate. I cannot describe how horrible the conditions are; a description is not the same as living that hungry, desperate reality. But for the Palestinians and the Jews to both have a state—that is the only solution that can end the bloodshed in the Middle East. Otherwise it will go on for ever and ever.

—Palestinian youth

Protests against U.S. troops in Honduras

Bay Area: mass arrests

San Francisco, Cal.—Almost immediately as the news spread of Reagan's sending troops to the Nicaragua border on March 17, nearly 1,000 people gathered at the Federal Building, stopped traffic and knocked over police barricades. Many in traffic honked their approval, reflecting the intense feeling of the demonstrators that there is no business as usual when it comes to war. Nearly every day since, people returned to skirmish nonviolently with police. By Monday, March 22, 465 people were arrested.

The demonstrations triggered actions by other groups. On the following Tuesday evening, 2,000 in a coalition led by gays and lesbians marched through the city chanting, "We're dykes and faggots and we're here to say, 'Down with the Contras and the CIA.'" At the airport, wives of soldiers being sent to Honduras chanted, "Don't fight Nicaraguans! They are our friends!" The authorities were on the defensive all week, not because they weren't brutal in beating and attacking demonstrators but because the anger and the focus was on a question a lot bigger than the local police.

On Wednesday a rally of 400 students on Berkeley campus marched on the ROTC building, reading an eviction notice like the one local officials used to remove a group of homeless squatting in a vacant building. Police attacked egg-throwing students with billy clubs. The march then poured into Sproul Hall for a sit-in. Twenty-three were forcibly removed by the police as hundreds regrouped on the outside steps to march through Berkeley streets. —Demonstrator

Chicago: clash of ideas

Chicago, Ill.—I was one of 50 people who were arrested March 18 in the demonstration of over 500 protesting the Honduran air strike on Nicaragua and Reagan's sending of 3,500 U.S. troops to Honduras. The Pledge of Resistance organized the demonstration but many of the other groups who work in solidarity with the people of Central America also participated. The demonstration was successful since it expressed massive outrage at U.S. foreign policy in Central America. However the demonstration was also a failure, since we didn't get to disrupt the workings of the city for any extensive period of time.

In jail we had considerable time to ponder the reasons for this failure. First, the Pledge underestimated the number of potential demonstrators. But the police did not, for they came out in full force. I believe their preparation shows how the bourgeoisie understands the objective conditions better than some leftists. Although we still outnumbered the police five to one, they managed to keep us from disrupting traffic. But the day before, demonstrators in Minneapolis had tied up traffic for more than four hours.

Second, many of us were surprised that the cops were so hostile. Some suggested that the police force has worsened since Harold Washington's death. Others felt that the police wanted to exercise their authority. Still others felt that the cops simply side with Reagan's policies in Central America. I believe that irrespective of who is the mayor or the cops' beliefs, we must remember that they are paid to maintain "order," to maintain the domestic policies of the U.S.—they are always the enemy.

Last, many of us were unsure why Reagan sent the troops and why he maneuvered the air strike. All agreed that U.S. imperialism in Central America has escalated—but we were unclear about the full meaning of the escalation. I've decided that Reagan wants to convince Congress that they had better support contra aid or we'll have to send American boys down there to "stop the commies."

After I was released from jail, 18 hours later, one



Chicago protest against U.S. troops in Honduras

scene from the demonstration kept replaying in my mind. In response to the cops' hostility many began to shout "the whole world is watching" in reference to the cops' infamous brutalities on demonstrators outside the Democratic National Convention in 1968. The sixties had come full circle in that moment. However, I've asked myself, will the "Movement" of 1988 suffer the failures of the sixties? Remember that many groups supported the Arias Peace Plan and failed to realize that it put more burdens on the Sandinistas and that it gave the contras a political space within Nicaragua. Remember that several groups supported the Democrats' contra aid package, believing that some form of contra aid would be passed eventually, and that this package was a lesser evil. Not only is this in direct contradiction with the goal of our movement but it also is a betrayal of our Central American brothers and sisters.

I appeal to my companeros: We must not look for shortcuts to peace in Central America. We must have a better understanding of the objective conditions. We must have better organization. —Jeffery Wright

New York City rally

New York, N. Y.—Two thousand angry New Yorkers protested Reagan's sending troops to Honduras to threaten the Nicaraguan Revolution, at a demonstration March 18. We rallied at the Times Square Army recruiting station and marched across 42nd Street toward the U.N. just as the Times Square news sign

flashed, "Scores arrested as thousands protest across country."

The liveliest people in the crowd were high school students from SOS Racism. One group's sign read, "Stop the Ideology of Violence," while others called for the money spent on war to be spent instead to fight AIDS or build housing.

The rally at Times Square was marred by a speaker who wanted us to rally in support of General Noriega of Panama. Fights broke out with the police when they tried to prevent the march from reaching the U.N.

—New York Marxist-Humanists

Twilight of capitalism

by Peter Mallory

The government's \$1 billion bailout of First Republicbank of Texas shows what a crisis the U.S. economy is in. First Republicbank is not alone: it is a rare event to discover a company these days that has not changed its name, been taken over or amalgamated with another. Behind these financial manipulations lie the concealed failures of hundreds of small companies. The banks alone that have failed number into the hundreds, covered up by the FDIC, with the government bailing out these bankruptcies.

The national budget for the next year has been set at \$1.1 trillion; the Reagan years have squandered more money than all other administrations before it combined. Yet Reagan is but the symbol of a capitalist system that is out of control and headed to bankruptcy. The U.S. debt is now greater than all of the combined Latin American countries.

Every week the U.S. government borrows billions of dollars, largely from Japan. We pay over \$70 billion per year just in interest on the debt, and every month the trade deficit increases at a rate of \$8-10 billion. Japanese bashing or protective trade bills do nothing, since most imports are from American companies who moved their plants to foreign soil to undercut American labor.

The very statistical basis on which we judge the health of the economy has become altered and distorted. The Dow Jones Industrial Average which we once looked at to gauge the strength of the industrial system now includes McDonald's hamburgers. The Gross National Product figures which formerly were an indication of how much consumer goods were being produced now includes everything the military buys—guns, planes, tanks and battleships—and indicates nothing.

When the hoopla and voting is over after the 1988 elections, the U.S. will have a new President, but nothing fundamental in the American economy will have changed. It will be a relief to get rid of Reagan and his rotten gang, but there is little hope that the new gang will be any better.

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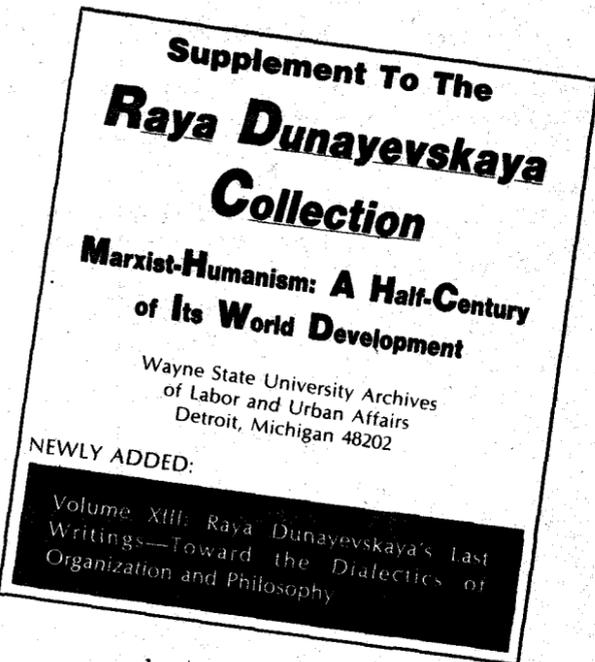
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CRISIS IN BLACK REALITY/BLACK THOUGHT

The "Crisis in Black Reality/Black Thought" (March N&L) is an urgent problem here. A number of things have combined to create a sense of life in Detroit as the "gradual crumbling to pieces" Hegel described. There is an eerie feeling of unreality more and more in the neighborhoods where the "tottering to fall" and "crumbling to pieces" is literal. Despite Mayor Young's much touted war on "crack," it is pretty much business as usual—crack houses go back into business or new ones spring up in vacant homes. In this context two neighbors on a block openly admitted burning down a house. They collected \$10-\$15 from block club members to purchase gasoline. They face \$20,000 fines and prison terms, but everyone I talked to applauds their action.

The economic opportunities here are limited to fast food jobs or selling your foodstamps. And yet, there is the militancy of the Northwest Airlines flight attendants and the Chrysler workers...

Distressed
Detroit

The Black Dimension is not an "enclave" about which only Blacks need be concerned. It is the problem of the unfinished American revolution. The pollution of ideas in the decade of Reaganism is within Black America also. Lou Turner's analysis of Harold Cruse (March N&L) shows the material base of Cruse's ideology. Cruse's point, stripped of its pretensions, is that Blacks need to start out as small shopkeepers. Marxist-Humanism established the notion of "Black masses as vanguard"—the masses, not the self-appointed elite. Most Black intellectuals don't want anything to do with that idea.

Black writer
Berkeley, Cal.

Over seven years Reaganism has really changed the ground rules, changing even the way the Left thinks. The Democratic primary has a lot of action now, people out for Jackson. I went to a "Run, Jesse, Run" video, but I felt it was still a continuation of Reaganism because Jackson is out to attract middle-class whites by saying he's for "keeping America strong," and he didn't really touch on militarism.

Hospital worker
Oakland, Cal.

The Black struggle was here in this country's struggle to be a country, then counter-revolution rode in and let the slave masters rule us, helped by the intellectual bootlickers. Marx discovered the roots of the struggle. Only after Black slaves won freedom was white labor able to struggle for the 8-hour day. To me, Black History Month means the whole history of this country.

White worker
Downey, Cal.

Lou Turner says that "what the exhilaration of having elected Chicago's first Black mayor relegated to the background is the deep structural crisis in the Black community, a crisis that Black political reform did more to obscure than to change." If you change the name of the politician to Jesse Jackson, isn't that what the excitement about his campaign is doing — obscuring the real crisis in the Black community?

Black student
Michigan

I read through all of Lou Turner's "Essay Article" in the March N&L, but now that I sit and think about his ideas again, I wonder why the hell I bothered to go past the first few paragraphs. Because it's there in the third paragraph that he says, "Two facts of Black life...illuminate its utter degradation today—the rates of Black imprisonment and Black infant mortality." One fact of Black life that I am aware of is that every Black person alive (regardless of age) has already been told the statistics, just as every single one of us, Black, white, brown or yellow, has been told that Blacks suffer through a degraded, suppressed, lower-class existence.

Why would one continue to read the next 25 paragraphs of this huge article when it is so clear from the start that Mr. Turner writes like all the rest of the Left who try to inspire the masses to revolutionary action by telling them

how pathetic their lives are as a class compared to other classes?

Mitch F.
Los Angeles

Lou Turner, the N&L "Black World" columnist, came to speak for "S.O.S. Racism" and the Black Alliance Club coalition meeting at LaGuardia High School. Feb. 24. It was very important, not only because of what he had to say, but because the two groups had their first meeting together, which hopefully will grow to be a helpful and productive friendship between two groups who have the same goal, and could get together and think.

Lou was received very well. His clear and easily understood way of explaining complex ideas put everyone at ease. Lou's stressing the importance of history and international consciousness has put S.O.S. into a new stage. We have now planned historical discussions for meetings and we think it will help us understand what to do about what's happening around us.

LaGuardia H.S. activist
Manhattan, NY



LABOR
STRUGGLES:
IN THE
U.S....

My hat's off to Bob McGuire! His article, "Workers battle Reaganism, companies, union bureaucrats" (March N&L), gave me a much needed breath of fresh air. Bob's story is what we at P-9 have been shouting about for three years now. It all becomes worthwhile with an article like this. It is the truth, produced in a good paper, read by people who understand. Thanks, N&L.

Original P-9 Hormel striker
Austin, Minn.

When my dad passed away his funeral was a circus. Everyone was worried about what material things he had left and to whom. What I felt he left me was a lot of memories of physical struggles, financial struggles—and pride that he braved them all. He was a coal miner and later a steel worker and he helped a lot of people get what they have today. But I feel it may be in vain because workers today can't seem to get it together. We need to let all the unions get the message that they are supposed to represent us, not the corporations. Or we should form new unions. Companies like GM can have plants anywhere they please but all the workers should belong to and contribute to the union. That way the companies can't use people's bodies and replace them so easily.

Working woman
Oklahoma

Bob McGuire's article in the March N&L discussed the strike at International Paper Co., and the fact that workers in different locals of the United Paperworkers International Union (UPIU) assessed themselves \$10/month to help the strikers. I am a member of the UPIU, and at my plant I regret to say that we voted against assessing ourselves \$10/month for the strikers.

We do support the strikers' effort morally—but financially, we haven't had a raise in over four years, while the union leadership increases our dues without any increase in representation for the membership. Even job classifications have deteriorated, as in one worker doing the work of two with no more pay.

We need a new form of workers' organization, one that crosses national and international boundaries, that unites workers as human beings with ideas, not machines of profit for the company or the union bureaucrats.

Black worker
California

One of the many things I like about N&L is that the paper allows me to read what issues are being raised and what struggles are going on worldwide. But I am also concerned about why things happen and where things are headed.

Take Felix Martin's article, "GM/UAW Attack Seniority," (March N&L) which I liked. As I read the arti-

cle, I thought: Why has the UAW leadership degenerated to the point of betraying the rank-and-file? What are unions (as we have known them so far) changing into? What kind of organization can better reflect the will and needs of working people?

Economics teacher
Detroit

... IN BRITAIN

The Tory cuts in the National Health Service are starting to have horrific effects which have grabbed the public's eye. There are stories of children waiting months for emergency surgery, of hospitals serving vast areas with only a few intensive care beds, of patients having to travel from the Midlands to London to get heart surgery. The class nature of the cuts is obvious now. Thatcher has had to back down from some of her proposals.

But the strike actions of the nurses you reported have met with silence or condemnation from their union leadership, some of whom have been promoting a "new realism" policy (with "no strike" pledges) since the defeat of the miners strike in 1985.

British observer
in the U.S.

... AND IN RUSSIA

Conditions in Russia are worse than nine years ago. I just got back from a trip to Leningrad and there is nothing to eat except potatoes and herring. Milk products are only available in the morning, so working people can't buy them. My friends are angry and depressed. I asked: Why? You have "perestroika". They said, only you Americans think that's something good.

Russian exile
Chicago

HAITI-PROGRES

Haiti-Progres is read throughout that country's diaspora and in the remotest corners of the countryside. It provides a forum for progressive and radical critics of the Duvalierist military junta that still holds power, despite the recently installed civilian facade. The recent political crises in Haiti have brought on economic crises now threatening us. Our correspondents have been arrested and harassed, some of our offices in Haiti sacked and our paper distribution there sabotaged. All this has put us in dire financial straits. We appeal to the readership of News & Letters for help with donations of any size to Haiti-Progres, 1398 Flatbush Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11210.

Georges Honorat for
Haiti-Progres
Brooklyn, N.Y.

SOLIDARITY MOVEMENTS NEEDED WORLD-WIDE

The day after Reagan sent the troops into Honduras, we were demonstrating in protest on a busy corner in Beverly Hills (Asst. Sec. of State for Inter-American Affairs Elliott Abrams was speaking at a hotel there). The support we got from passing cars was tremendous!

I think the resistance to what Reagan is doing in Central America is strong. I saw on TV where one of the wives of a soldier sent to Honduras said, "We don't want another Vietnam." We are going into this period of history not so brainwashed as people were at the start of the Vietnam War, 25 years ago.

Protester
Los Angeles

I heard Noam Chomsky speak at Northwestern University, where 1,000 people showed up. Chomsky had an eloquent phrase in his speech, describing U.S. press coverage of Central America as "voluntary totalitarianism." But I was surprised to see how far to the right Chomsky has moved. He asked everyone to work for the Democratic Party, and called the vote in Congress against contra aid, the "historic turning point" of the movement.

Solidarity activist
Chicago

There were several demonstrations nationwide in response to Reagan's sending 3,500 more troops to Honduras,

Reader

and his maneuvering to have the Honduran air force bomb Nicaragua. However, there were no major demonstrations in the U.S. when South Africa banned all opposition groups two weeks before. This silence suggests to me that the Left in this country has too narrow a focus, is too "topical." We must maintain an internationalist perspective and fight imperialism wherever it is.

Black student
Chicago

In March, the first issue of a radical student paper, *Mush!*, has appeared, published at Northern Illinois Univ. by the John Lennon Society. The first issue was published on the 20th anniversary of the founding of another alternative paper on the campus, in 1968. *Mush!* #1 contains articles on South Africa support work, the Sexual Assault Task Force, organizing efforts against racism on campus, and a discussion of Nicaragua and Afghanistan around the theme "Oppose both U.S. and Soviet Aggression." *Mush!* can be contacted at 519 Leonard Ave., DeKalb, IL 60115.

NIU student
DeKalb, Ill.

I wanted to comment on the Detroit reader who wrote on the film, "Shaka Zulu" (March N&L). Whatever is said about Shaka, the first King and creator of the Zulu nation, it must be realized that the history of Shaka was written by missionaries, some of whom deliberately created a barbaric figure for their British audiences.

Historians are divided over their interpretation of Shaka, yet what can't be disputed is that the British suffered massive military defeats at the hands of the Zulus. Even after the incorporation of many Zulu chiefs into the colonial system and a bloody civil war between collaborators and non-collaborators, Zulus resisted new taxes imposed by the British in 1906. And only after 3,000 Zulus were killed was the guerrilla campaign of Bambata destroyed.

Fred Shelley
New York



'WE ARE
SPARKS'

The article on the Women's Liberation conference in India hit me hard, especially the first line: "We Indian women are not flowers, we are sparks. Whoever clashes against us will be broken into pieces." That's a very powerful, very serious line. It says to me what a real woman is about.

Black man
California

VIEWS OF OUR READERS

I was interested to find out more about you when I heard the term "Marxist-Humanists." I have been interested in Marx for a long time—what he wrote on labor—but within the American Indian movement there is dispute whether Marx had anything to say to our situation. I was never satisfied with the manifestations of Communism and Marxism I saw in the world, but have continued to search for a philosophical understanding of politics and economics in America, for Indians, and for all human beings. I have read some of the N&L Memorial issue to Raya Dunayevskaya; I am impressed by her view of people, history, and revolution.

American Indian reader
California

I appreciate N&L, because it's really nice to see something not so mainstream, and not geared down to a fourth-grade level. In N&L I read about some things that never make it into the daily paper at all.

Subscriber
Newbury Park, Cal.

Many thanks for all your efforts in keeping humanism alive in the world. Please accept my enclosed check which is given with sincere appreciation and respect.

Subscriber
San Francisco, Cal.

Views

REMEMBERING RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA AND HER VISION OF A NEW SOCIETY

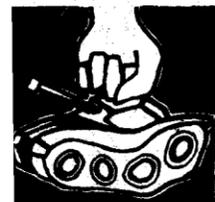
STATE-CAPITALIST LIFE

I recently read some school textbooks from the Soviet Union, for ninth and tenth graders. They're like the opposite side of the coin of our textbooks, Soviet propaganda instead of the U.S. From what I've read of Marx, I see little correlation between what Marx wrote and what's in Russia today, though the Russians glorify Marx for propaganda purposes. Socialism is so attractive to any underdeveloped country that the Russians want to capitalize on that to claim socialism and Marx as their own.

Student
California

In Yugoslavia, when the Communists came in, we were promised everything; there would be no more rich, no more poor. But it is nothing like that. Fifty percent of the young people leave at some time, because there are no jobs, no opportunity. I waited three years for a job, then got only temporary work, and decided I had to leave.

Worker
New York City



PEACE NOW! IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Following the 100,000-strong Peace Now protest in Israel itself on March 12, 400 "Friends of Peace Now" rallied in Los Angeles March 13. The most passionate speaker was feminist Betty Friedan. She said that what had given her both passion and sensitivity for the oppression of women was her experiences of anti-Semitism, growing up as a Jewish child. She said, "That is what leads me here today, to speak against the occupation. I am speaking out as a woman, as a Jew, and as a fighter for justice."

A large crowd of counter-demonstrators, including Orthodox Jews and the right-wing Jewish Defense League (JDL) marched into the rally area, and began a disruptive shouting and heckling of the speakers. The JDL presence was a harsh reminder of how fascism can wear Jewish clothes.

Michelle Landau
Los Angeles

The commemorative meeting here in Los Angeles was well organized and fairly well attended. What impressed me particularly about the participants was that for the most part they were what you would call worker-intellectuals. In a sense it was an underlying fact of the meeting reflected also in the personnel of News and Letters and the organization generally. I know it was important to Raya to realize on her own home territory in microcosm what has always been the dream of the Marxist movement, a society where there is no longer the separation between brain and brawn.

As we know, the intellectual leaders of the working class beginning with Marx himself envisioned such a future society. At the same time they worked to help develop the worker-intellectual types in the working class movement through encouragement of study, self-confidence, and teaching.

This was a theme that was expressed by the participants in one manner or another at the commemorative meeting. It is natural that this should be so for a movement that demands and encourages us to be philosophers.

Mark Sharron
Santa Monica, Cal.

Raya's writings in every issue have been the most important part of that issue, but in the March N&L, her voice sings! And she is singing, not alone because we hear her speaking, but because the rest of the issue measures up so grandly. Bob McGuire's article on labor searched for what could portend new beginnings, and shows it beautifully along with a sense of past history, as well as the present state of labor, and the bureaucracy. The forces and reason of revolution are so present both in their own voices and in what is happening to them...

Angela Terrano
New York City

N&L should be commended for publishing Raya Dunayevskaya's 1986 letter to George Armstrong Kelly on her "new perceptions of Lenin and Hegel" (March N&L). It is certainly not an easy letter to read. But I can't think of any other paper in the Marxist movement that would publish a study on Lenin's Philosophic Notebooks, and on the differences between Hegel's Science of Logic and his Encyclopedia Logic. At the most, they would publish it in a

separate "theoretical journal," never to be seen and discussed by the rank-and-file, by workers.

New reader
Illinois

Today I stopped by the newstand on 42nd Street that sells our newspaper and other literature. The man who has worked at the newstand for as long as I can remember said he was very happy to be able to talk to someone from the organization, because he had been thinking about Raya and about us.

He told me, "I knew Raya for many years, and I know it must be very difficult for all of you. I have all the papers of all the groups here. None of them write on the serious, important questions the way Raya did. None of those newspapers features a thinker with the stature of Raya, and I mean revolutionary stature, not establishment stature. I'm very glad the paper is still coming out—that you're not falling apart, and that you're going to go on with her ideas."

Rachel Stevens
New York City

The Feb. 25 Commemorative meeting in Los Angeles for Raya Dunayevskaya demonstrated the development of Marxist-Humanism and the importance of the challenge to work out the dialectics of organization and philosophy. The displays at the meeting—whether the Archives display, the "Talking to Myself" documents from Raya's last, unfinished writings, or the News & Letters literature table—allowed us to visualize the foundation and development of these ideas.

The speakers who came forward also held that challenge to be their main focus. Current events, from Reagan's regression in the U.S., to the Palestinian uprising, to failed revolutions in such diverse places as Grenada and Burkina Faso, point to the undeniable need to expand our consciousness of the Idea.

New reader
San Diego, Cal.

Raya's death is a severe blow. We are all just passing through life, but only a select few leave so much behind. The organization she and others began will continue to grow and expand. The caliber of those drawn to Marxist-Humanist thought will ensure such progress. When I think of Raya it is to recall a

vibrant, living personality, an incisive intellect, a warm and caring friend I will miss. It would be greatly appreciated if you would send me the bulletins covering the national meeting in January and put me back on your mailing list...

Dave H.
Kingston, Ontario

One thing that strikes me about the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism is how American it is. I don't mean this as American nationalism, but the deep historic roots on American soil. Marxism itself was very much developed by Marx out of his view of the American Civil War. Raya Dunayevskaya's *Marxism and Freedom* shows how he re-organized Capital on the basis of Abolitionism and the fight for the 8-hour day.

But Marxist-Humanism in the 20th century is also American, and is especially rooted in the Black Dimension and its struggles here.

Long-time politico
Detroit

I first heard of Raya Dunayevskaya through reading a copy of her book, *Marxism and Freedom*. Her theory on the USSR seemed a lot better than that of the British SWP. I would be interested in reading any other articles she wrote on this subject. I also read the article by Raya on the play by Mikhail Shatrov (N&L, May 22, 1987); it was very good. Please send me anything you have on state capitalism and workers' struggles against it...An issue very close to us is the case of Vladimir Klebanov, the Ukrainian miner who set up a free trade union. He remains imprisoned in a psychiatric hospital. Would you be interested in publishing anything about him?

Patrick Kane
London, England

Editor's Note: For an important article by Patrick Kane on "Armenians challenge Russian control," see page 12.

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Essay Article

Dunayevskaya-Marcuse dialogue on the dialectic

by Kevin A. Barry

A real treasure in dialectical philosophy which is in fact a living legacy to future generations—the lengthy correspondence which occurred during the years 1954 to 1979 between Raya Dunayevskaya and another great and original Marxist philosopher, Herbert Marcuse—is contained in Vol. XII of the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection (1986), the last volume of her papers which Raya personally prepared for the Wayne State University Labor Archives, in the year just preceding her sudden death on June 9, 1987.

These letters, which total almost 100 pages of single-spaced text (RD Collection, pp. 9889-9975), combined with the two thinkers' public debates on each others' work during the same period, may constitute the most serious and extended dialogue between two Marxist philosophers in the post-World War II period. One central theme in the correspondence is Dunayevskaya's early development of her dialectical concept, Hegel's Absolutes as New Beginnings.

In 1954, at the beginning of the correspondence, Marcuse was a well-known Marxist philosopher, author of the first important discussion anywhere of Marx's 1844 Humanist Essays in 1932, the year they appeared in German, an article which stands to this day as one of the most original.¹ Douglas Kellner, Marcuse's most serious intellectual biographer, demonstrates in detail "how the (1844) Manuscripts 'liberated' him from Heidegger and turned him closer to Marx."² After Marcuse fled Hitler's Germany, he authored Reason and Revolution (1941) in English, a study of Hegel's major works which linked Hegel's concept of dialectical Reason to Marx's 1844 Essays.

When their correspondence began in 1954, Raya was known to Marcuse mainly as Trotsky's Russian Secretary and as author of ground-breaking studies of Russia as a state-capitalist society. Where Marcuse's Reason and Revolution moved from philosophy to "social theory" (Marx) and then to modern sociology, Raya's theoretical work was going in the opposite direction: from "economic" studies of Russian totalitarianism—which from the beginning took up not only Capital but also in preliminary form the 1844 Essays—toward a full vision of Hegel's Absolutes as the pathway to the dialectics of liberation for our age. Thus, by 1953, she had penned her provocative "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes." (RD Collection, pp. 1797-1812)

I. THE EARLY YEARS, 1954-57

From the beginning Raya had posed the question of Hegel's Absolutes, writing to Marcuse in 1955: "We have reached the age of absolutes that are not in heaven but concretely in life when the question" [can man be free?] "that bothers philosophers is the same that the ordinary worker asks." With that letter, Raya also sends him her 1953 letters on Hegel's Absolutes.

Marcuse responds: "I have now read the notes on Hegel which you lent me. This is fascinating, and I admire your way of concretizing the most abstract philosophical notions. However, I still cannot get along with the direct translation of idealist philosophy into politics: I think you somehow minimize the 'negation' which the application of the Hegelian dialectic to political phenomena presupposes." (HM to RD, April 4, 1955) Dunayevskaya does not let this go.

She responds, trying to convince Marcuse both on the proletariat—inviting him to Detroit to meet her worker colleagues such as Charles Denby—and on Hegel and Schelling: "Now that the school season is drawing to a close perhaps you will take that trip to Detroit, and thus see that it is not a question of 'my' direct translation of idealistic philosophy into politics, but the dialectical development of proletarian politics itself as it struggles to rid itself of its specifically class character in its movement to a classless society. That is why I 'translated' Absolute Mind as the new society. You seem to think that I thus minimize the 'negation' which the application of the Hegelian dialectic to political phenomena presupposes. But surely Hegel's Absolute Idea has nothing in common with Schelling's conception of the Absolute as the synthesis or identity in which all differences are absorbed by the 'One.'" (RD to HM, May 5, 1955)

Marcuse responds (June 22, 1955): "Your answer to my brief remarks on Hegel does not satisfy me." He gives a few more objections, and concludes: "But this is not supposed to be an argument—just to show you that I am really thinking about these problems."

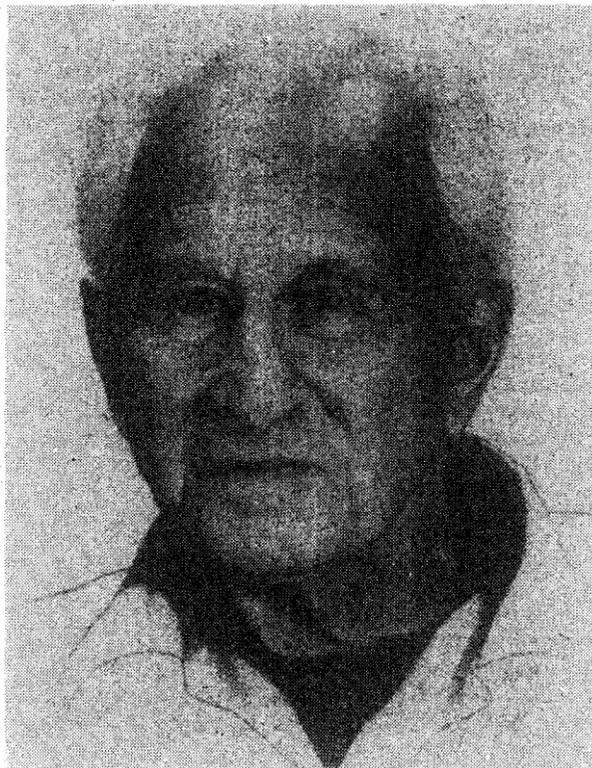
Six months later, after reading Raya's draft of Marxism and Freedom, he writes that despite areas of disagreement, "Your ideas are a real oasis in the desert of Marxist thought." (HM to RD, Dec. 2, 1955) In the period 1956-57, Marcuse (1) reads and critiques the draft of Marxism and Freedom, including calling for expansion of the discussion on the Second International; (2) helps her to find a publisher; (3) writes the Preface.

1. Herbert Marcuse, "Foundations of Historical Materialism," in his Studies in Critical Philosophy. See also Raya Dunayevskaya's critique of this essay's silence on women's liberation in her Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution, pp. 80-81.

2. Douglas Kellner, Herbert Marcuse and the Crisis of Marxism, p. 77. It is a particular merit of Kellner's book that he makes Marcuse as Marxist philosopher its central theme, as against other recent treatments which stress either aesthetics or "pure" philosophy, mummifying the revolutionary philosopher for academia. See also the early Marxist-Humanist analysis, "A Critical Re-Examination of Herbert Marcuse's Works" by Richard Greeman, New Politics, Vol. 6:4, 1968 (also in RD Collection, pp. 4010-28), centering around a critique of Marcuse's concept of the modern working class as "one-dimensional."

II. NEW DIFFERENCES OVER HEGEL

As early as July, 1958, once Marxism and Freedom is published and her first lecture tour on the book is completed, Dunayevskaya is back writing several long letters to Marcuse on the Absolutes. One of them makes clear that Marxism and Freedom did not exhaust the Marxist-Humanist dialectic as first elucidated in 1953: "You once told me that what I wrote in the first letters in 1953 on the Absolute Idea and what appeared in Marxism and Freedom were miles apart and, in a sense, it is. No public work, popular or unpopular, can contain the intricacies of thought as they develop in their abstract form before they become filled with more concrete content. And no doubt also part reason of leaving it in its undeveloped state was finding none but 'dumb workers' agreeing while the theoreticians were shying away. But I do mean to follow up the book with further development..." (RD to HM, July 15, 1958)



Herbert Marcuse

The correspondence now breaks off for two years while Raya goes to Europe, but in August, 1960, Marcuse reopens the dialogue around what was to become in 1964 his book One-Dimensional Man. Dunayevskaya answers in detail on the wretched state of the sociology of labor in the U.S., giving a lengthy critical summary of current sociological works. Marcuse also critiques Denby's Workers Battle Automation as soon as it appears in the August-September, 1960 special issue of News & Letters.

Marcuse had in March, 1960 penned his essay "A Note on the Dialectic" as the Preface to a new edition of Reason and Revolution. In this 1960 essay, Marcuse repudiated the working class as revolutionary subject, trying to substitute for it what he saw as a "Great Refusal" of bourgeois society in avant-garde culture and poetry.

On the other hand, in the original 1941 text of Reason and Revolution, Marcuse had in the section on Marx written as follows, brimming with a view of the future in the present even amid the horrors of Nazism and Stalinism: "The revolution requires the maturity of many forces, but the greatest among them is the subjective force, namely the revolutionary class itself. The realization of freedom requires the free rationality of those who achieve it." (p. 319)

By 1960 he breaks with the magnificent vision of dialectical Reason he had presented in 1941, going so far as to revise it in his new Preface: "I believe that it is the idea of Reason itself which is the undialectical element in Hegel's philosophy." (p. xiii) Years later, in her 1969 essay "The Newness of Our Philosophic-Historical Contribution" (RD Collection, pp. 4407-16), Dunayevskaya singled out this passage repudiating dialectical Reason as a key one in Marcuse's path toward one-dimensional thought. Thus, by 1960, Marcuse was not only abandoning the proletariat, but also and even more fundamentally, moving away from Hegel's concept of dialectical Reason.

While Douglas Kellner certainly is aware of Mar-

cuse's abandonment of the proletariat, he seems to miss this key revision by Marcuse of his concept of dialectical philosophy, arguing that "Marcuse's 1960 preface, 'A Note on the Dialectic,' shows how his own emphasis on the 'power of negative thinking' and the 'great refusal' is rooted in the Hegelian-Marxian concept of dialectics." (p. 141) It is Kellner's own affinity to Marcuse in the 1960s—and his apparent non-affinity to Marcuse's earlier humanist and Hegelian Marxism—that may have allowed him to miss this shift.

A close study of the Dunayevskaya-Marcuse documents makes Marcuse's revision of his own dialectic quite apparent. Marcuse was moving away from Hegel at the very time when Dunayevskaya was deepening her journey toward her 1970s concept of "Hegel's Absolutes as New Beginning," first worked out in Philosophy and Revolution (1973).

III. CULMINATION AND BREAK-UP OF THE DIALOGUE, 1960-61

Raya continues to write Marcuse on Hegel's Absolutes: On Oct. 16, 1960 she writes on the Absolute Idea and the Hungarian and African Revolutions, and also on the limits of Lenin on Hegel, where he skipped over the last paragraph of Hegel's Science of Logic in his Philosophical Notebooks:

"But the materialist in Lenin so overwhelmed him at this point of historic revelation that, you will recall, he wanted to stop where Hegel stretched his hand to materialism as he 'ended' with Nature. Since that was so in the Smaller Logic, but there was another very important paragraph to go in the Science of Logic, the dividing point for our epoch is precisely on this free, individual, total liberation who show, both in thought and struggles, what they are aiming [at] and thus compelling me in any case to read and reread that Absolute Knowledge, Absolute Idea, Absolute Mind as each developing struggle on the world scene deepens." The letter ends with the statement that she is "dying to go to Africa," where Dunayevskaya does actually go in 1962.

Still failing to get a serious response from Marcuse on the Absolutes, on Dec. 12, 1960 Raya completes her comprehensive "Notes on Hegel's Phenomenology." These include critiques of Castro at the very time when Dunayevskaya's "Two Worlds" column had hit out at Castro's turn toward Russia (December, 1960 News & Letters).

So important were these 1960 Notes to her that she published them in News & Letters on May 8, 1987, writing a substantial new introduction and entitling the whole: "Why Hegel's Phenomenology? Why Now?" Sometime in late 1960 she sends Marcuse an excerpt (RD Collection, pp. 4317-26) of an early draft of material for Philosophy and Revolution.

Marcuse does write once more on Hegel's Absolutes, responding both to her letters and to the draft material, on which he writes a handwritten critique. His letter states:

"To me, the most important passages are those in which you stress the need for a reformulation of the relation between theory and practice, and the notion of the new Subject. This is indeed the key, and I fully agree with your statement that the solution lies in the link between the first and second negation. Perhaps I would say: in the self-transcendence of materialism, or in the technological Aufhebung of the reified technical apparatus."

Marcuse continues: "But again, although I am trying hard, I cannot see why you need the Absolute Idea in order to demonstrate the Marxian content of self-determination of the Subject, etc. (The very concept of the Absolute Idea is altogether tied to and justifies the separation of material and intellectual productivity at the pre-technological state.) Certainly you can 'translate' also this part of Hegel—but why translate if you can speak the original language." (HM to RD, Dec. 22, 1960) This is really the end of Marcuse's grappling with the Marxist-Humanist concept of Hegel's Absolutes.

Dunayevskaya answers him at great length in a letter dated Jan. 12, 1961, in the midst of her own notes on Hegel: "If I must further justify myself, I would say that, frankly during the 1940s, when I first became enamored with the Absolute Idea, it was just out of loyalty to Marx and Lenin; Hegel was still hardly more than gibberish, although by now the music of his language got to me even if I couldn't read the notes. But once the new technological period of Automation got to the miners and they started asking questions about the kind of labor, the return to the early Marx also meant the late Hegel. As I said, I do not agree with you that the Absolute Idea relates to a pre-technological stage (So long as classes still exist, the dialectic will, and Absolute Idea will forever show new facets.) What I do agree with is that once on the world scale, we have reached the ultimate in technological development, the responses of the masses in the pre-technological underdeveloped economies are the spur to seeing something new in the Absolute Idea. Be it backward Ireland in 1916 or backward Russia in 1917, or backward Africa in 1960, somehow that absolute negativity of Hegel comes into play."

Marcuse does not answer her on this level. Instead he picks a fight over how Dunayevskaya had called Isaac Deutscher a Stalinist. Marcuse actually slanders her somehow in league with the capitalist system for her sharp attacks on Deutscher, Castro, etc. (HM to RD March 6, 1961) Here is where the correspondence

(continued on page 10)

Philosophy gives action its direction

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Freedom for Moses Mayekiso!

Chicago, Ill.—For the second time this year rallies protest the brutal imprisonment and repression of black trade unionists in South Africa have been held with mass participation from a renewed anti-apartheid movement. The first rally held at the beginning of February was sponsored by the Chicago Coalition to Free Moses Mayekiso, the jailed trade union militant whose treason trial has called forth an international movement in support of him and all imprisoned workers, in the last year.



The second rally and march, called by the Illinois Labor Network Against Apartheid, drew some 300 supporters on March 18. The rally, which gathered at the Federal Building Plaza in downtown Chicago, heard local trade union leaders and politicians—most of whom never mentioned Mayekiso's case—before marching several blocks to the South African Consulate, to demand its closing. Once there, several of the leaders were quietly arrested.

In sharp contrast to the brutal arrests of marchers protesting Reagan's invasion of Honduras only hours before on the same spot as the anti-apartheid rally, the

march to the South African consulate which was led by prominent trade union and political leader such as Congressman Charles Hayes, received a police escort.

The call issued by the Coalition to Free Moses Mayekiso to those at the rally interested in combining a discussion of the ideas of a socialist South Africa that Mayekiso and others stand for with practical support activities elicited a new level of dialogue at the rally and after. Though just the barest of beginnings, such a deepening of support activities through ongoing discussion of what workers are fighting for in South Africa may signal a new stage of the anti-apartheid movement in the U.S. The freedom idea that Mayekiso and others represent demands no less of us.

Black/Red View

by John Alan

Andrew Hacker's two lengthy essay/review articles—"American Apartheid" and "Black Crime and White Racism"—published respectively in the December, 1987 and March, 1988 issues of the *New York Review of Books*, have shown, if anything, that the Black family and Black youth crime is now a subject for a growing school of sociological research.

Hacker discusses 14 books and reports written by Black and white sociologists, political scientists and a Black judge on the disorganization of the Black family and Black youth crime. From this material, he culls an impressive amount of statistics to show that there is a decided connection between the "malfunctioning" of the Black family and Black youth crime in the streets.

"The statistics by themselves are dismaying," Hacker writes, "more than 60 percent of Black infants are born outside of wedlock..." From then on he unreels a statistical picture of the American Black family in the throes of a universal crisis when measured against the accepted norm of white family stability. We are all too familiar with that picture, the way it focuses on the high ratio of Black households headed by women and the ensuing chronic poverty, family overcrowding and school dropouts. This was the same picture Daniel Moynihan's politically-motivated study, *The Negro Family*, projected onto the national white consciousness in 1965.

Andrew Hacker has re-run this picture, but with an

Discussion article on Canada

Berkeley, Cal.—One of the most serious events going on in Quebec right now is the trial of Allen Gosset, the Montreal killer-cop who gunned down Anthony Griffin, a 19-year-old Black youth last November. His trial for Involuntary Homicide ("Manslaughter") began on Feb. 15. The government reduced the charge despite the blatant circumstances of the killing. Also, Gosset is suing radio CKAC and CJMS and the TVA cable network for \$1½ million because they correctly labeled him a racist. These proceedings are being followed closely all over Quebec. That the Parti Quebecois is silent on this shows its own isolation from the masses.

Those masses can't be facily written off. Statements such as that by the Canadian Institute on Minority Rights that "Montreal is 25-30 years behind every other major Canadian city in the area of race relations" (see *N&L*, Dec. 1987) are a very serious matter and have to be answered very firmly. It confuses the whole question of what a "fact" is, especially where the politics of racism have as much to do with language as with color.

Racial relations are not measured by the number of token legal concessions which have been won, but by what people actually say and do. Attacking the French Canadians is like attacking the Jews, something which has also been a problem of narrow third-worldism; they are the nearest convenient scapegoat. If there are any "mini-Johannesburgs," then they are Toronto and Vancouver, especially Toronto.

The facts are that all three broadcasting stations being sued by Gosset are French-language. The English-language media have covered the story poorly. We must remember that while most of the pressure to prosecute Gosset, though it has not been enough, has come from the French-speaking community.

Canadian civilization, like the American, is on trial, and the rotten thread running through its history is the deep and deadly racism against French Canadians, and also native peoples. No serious discussion of Canada can ignore this. The French-Canadian movement has deep roots and inspiration in the Black movement in America, and the two movements need to be united again, as they once were briefly in the sixties, in a permanently revolutionary way.

—M.C.

Social science of racism

added class/race bias. He opposes seeing the objective connection that the "breakdown" of the Black family, since 1950, has with the reality in which the Black family has to exist today—a world of continuing racism, worsened by permanent and high unemployment among Black youth, a condition created by hi-tech capitalism. He chooses to "find" the statistical roots of this "breakdown" in the supposed universal "breakdown" of the Black family, extending into the Black middle class. These "findings," he writes, "would suggest that even with the class factor constant, race has a role of its own" (my emphasis).

The "role of race" is not defined. And it is clear that Hacker finds the cause of the "crisis" in the Black family not in the crisis created by capitalism, but in the lack of opportunity that Black teenagers have in meeting whites and adopting white mores. He cites a finding that shows Black teenagers avoided early sex when they went to integrated schools. This, he believes, is supported by William J. Wilson's book *The Truly Disadvantaged*, wherein Wilson centers the crisis in the Black family upon the isolation of Blacks in ghettos.

Hacker's statistical plunge into the crisis of the Black family is only the first act, the preliminary introduction, so to speak, to *Black Crime and White Racism*, the main thrust of his reviews. Out of his family "crisis" emerges the young criminal. But this young criminal is not just an ordinary "punk"; he is a major creator of this new wave of racial tension between Blacks and whites. It is the Black youth robber, Hacker contends, that arouses the racism of most white Americans causing what he calls, the "symbolic skirmish in the ongoing racial war," such as the Bernard Goetz case and the Howard Beach "incident," which saw the outright murder of a Black man by a white mob.

This sociological apology for racism is what's new and startling in Hacker's final essay. At the same time this apology reveals the limit of social research, its inability to go beyond existing racial and political ideology to get at the essence of racial relations in this country. It is a "science" that starts from an abstract norm, in this case the white middle class family, and measures the degree to which all others conform. Not once in Hacker's essay does the human potential to transform society appear.

Brooklyn protest against killer cops

Brooklyn N.Y.—On Saturday, Feb. 20 about 500 people massed at Bushwick Park in the predominantly Latino neighborhood surrounding Knickerbocker Ave. to protest the beating death of a Dominican man, Juan Rodriguez, by four police in his home while he was handcuffed. Speakers from the Latino coalition for Racial Justice who organized the march were joined by others from the Latino and Black communities who represented protest groups that have formed since the Howard Beach racial murder.

As we marched six abreast through the streets of the community, we were joined by hundreds of outraged neighbors of Juan Rodriguez who viewed the demonstrations from their windows or from the streets. The deep roots of support for the march were evident as we chanted "Basta Ya!" and "Sin Justicia, No Hay Paz!" We marched silently with upraised fists as we passed Mr. Rodriguez's home and then marched past the 83rd Precinct where the police were prepared for a confrontation in force. When the march turned down Knickerbocker Ave. again, it was 1,000 strong and buoyed by the overflow of the community's solidarity.

The discussions following the march were an education on life in Bushwick and began to explain the many reasons why this community is outraged over Rodriguez's murder. One Puerto Rican worker, a

Black World

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ing the warmongering of one President—Johnson—and the 20th anniversary of his death occurs at a time when another President—Reagan—is engaged in an imperialist war in Central America. What better reason to recall the words of Raya Dunayevskaya, whose May, 1968 *News & Letters* Editorial in response to King's assassination, entitled, "These Uncivilized United States: Murder of Rev. King, Vietnam War" noted: "Everyone took a second look at this racist land where acts of conspiracy to commit murder 'and get away with it' are spawned out of an atmosphere emanating from a White House conducting a barbaric war abroad."

The current retrogressive atmosphere emanating out of the Reagan White House has consequences for the way we view that most pivotal year of the sixties—1968. For in the present context, the meaning of King's death assumes as much significance as his life in the Civil Rights Movement because more perished than the corporeal presence of Martin Luther King. A Black philosophic dimension was lost that none in the leadership has continued.

That is seen when, even with the hindsight of two decades, such contemporary "social critics" as Harold Cruse still hold the fantastic position that King "unwisely compromised his established civil rights legitimacy by taking a public stand against the Vietnam War"! As against King, who, after more than a decade of intensive mass struggles, came to the Marxian conclusion that "We are engaged in the class struggle," Cruse's "critical estimation" is that "King became trapped in the momentum of a social logic of his own making and was destroyed."* What are we to make of a Black intellectual of Prof. Cruse's "cumulative depth...and experience," who argues that King's brutal, racist murder was "of his own making," except to follow the advice of the Ghost of Hamlet's father and "leave (him) to Heaven."

More retrogressive still, because he actually rationalizes the surveillance-gathering instruments of state repression, is the historian C. Vann Woodward, who finds nothing wrong in "using such ill-gotten information" from J. Edgar Hoover's insidious FBI surveillance of King and the movement to write their history. In Woodward's opinion, it is "a source of evidence without precedent (for historians), recorded with electronic fidelity," i.e. an "electronic archives."**

But even an Hegelian scholar such as Warren Steinkraus, who correctly observed in 1973 that King was "probably the only professionally trained philosopher of this century who has had a worldwide impact on large numbers of ordinary citizens," nevertheless, subsumes the philosophic dimension brought to the movement under his principle of non-violence.

The truth is that King's principle of non-violence was no philosophic *raison d'être* for the movement. Rather, in the nearly 40 years of what Raya Dunayevskaya has characterized as movements from practice that are themselves forms of theory, the leadership of Martin Luther King represented the maturity of the post-World War II era at its historic turning point with the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-56.

However, no matter how strong the subjective will of the leader—and King's steadfast adherence to non-violence was precisely that—the objective pull of the mass movement is stronger. In other words, the dialectics of history were such that the spontaneity and self-organization of the masses predominated over the organizational objectives of King and civil rights groupings like his Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). It was only when the axis of King's thought shifted to that of the mass movement that the conclusion Dunayevskaya drew in her May 1968 *N&L* Editorial can be comprehended, namely that, "His greatness lay in recognizing the objective movement of history and aligning himself with it."

* See Harold Cruse's *Plural but Equal* (1987), pp. 260-67; also see my critique in the March 1987 *N&L*.

** C. Vann Woodward, "The Dreams of Martin Luther King," *New York Review of Books*, Jan. 15, 1987.

presser, told us that the solution to the drug problem begins in the factories not the schools. Employers may pay \$56 a day or less, but with \$600 a month rents and other high prices there isn't much left over to buy your children what they need and want. The only way to make good money is to sell drugs, and some people will choose that.

One young Puerto Rican worker, earning \$4.25 an hour, talked about how crack was being supplanted with the cheaper and stronger drug "bazooka" on the streets. He talked about how Puerto Ricans suffer discrimination in getting jobs but sometimes employers will purposely hire Puerto Ricans when an INS inspection is coming because they're "legal" and then fire them a week later after the inspection.

The people we spoke to said that many of the police are from Staten Island and Long Island and do not understand the Hispanic people. That is one reason why they use excessive force, especially the young cops. No one thought that transferring or even firing these cops would be enough. They have to be charged with murder and put in jail or there will be more demonstrations. There have been incidents like this before in Bushwick, but this demonstration was significant because it brought Bushwick together for the first time, in a surprisingly large outpouring, to talk about and fight against its conditions of life and labor.

—Ted Hill

Botha's banning hits at mass movement

(continued from page 1)

way and transport workers, and from three different postal strikes to the 21-day strike of mine-workers in August. This strike wave was met with brutal repression, as dozens of workers across the country were attacked, and in many cases killed, for their activities.

One major force involved in this thuggery has been Chief Buthelezi, leader of Inkatha, which claims leadership over the Zulus. In late January, four miners were killed and 67 wounded in an attack by Buthelezi's "union," the United Workers Union of South Africa (UWUSA) at the Randfontein Gold Mines. This occurred after UWUSA members were hired to take the place of National Union of Miners (NUM) workers fired during last August's strike, whereupon UWUSA members were put in charge of "mine security" by the bosses.

This is hardly the only such incident. In 1986, Inkatha intervened in a labor dispute at a British-owned plant in Howick, 20 miles from Pietermaritzburg, where they tortured and killed seven COSATU members for trying to organize workers there. That event in part helped spark the bloody street battles between Inkatha on one side and the UDF and COSATU on the other in Pietermaritzburg, that have left over 400 dead.

Despite the brutality of Buthelezi's attacks, however, by early 1988 it became clear that the Left was making major inroads against him right in his home base of Natal and KwaZulu, as thousands of Zulus joined the UDF and COSATU in open defiance of him; his opponents now outnumber his supporters in Zulu urban areas. But the Feb. 24 bannings—which prevent the UDF from carrying out further activities in Natal—are intended to stifle that development. As one UDF activist put it, "the banning simply gives Buthelezi a free hand to control the whole of Natal."

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY ATTACKED

No less onerous are the proposals announced after Feb. 24 to prohibit any organization from receiving funding or support from abroad, and which render illegal any effort to solidarize with political prisoners. COSATU, which receives 80% of its funds from outside South Africa, will be particularly affected. So will the dozens of political prisoners facing possible execution, from the Sharpeville 6 to Moses Mayekiso to many others. The impact of these restrictions was also seen on March 22, when Botha closed down the *New Nation*, the country's largest independently-owned Black newspaper.

Indeed, the crackdown as a whole is aimed at severing the bonds of solidarity that connect freedom activists overseas with the Idea of freedom that has continuously upsurged from within South Africa. That has been the drive behind all of Botha's crackdowns and Reagan and Thatcher's complicity with them, from the June, 1986 declaration of the State of Emergency, to the December, 1986 banning of TV and press coverage of Black South Africa, to today's actions which aim to further choke off the lines of communication between freedom activists worldwide and the development of the Idea of freedom.

The power of that Idea of freedom can be seen from the discussions and debates going on within the movement in South Africa. It is seen in the second congress of COSATU (held July, 1987) when the federation adopted the African National Congress' Freedom Charter at the same time as stating in a resolution that "the struggle against national oppression and the struggle against capitalist exploitation are complementary to each other and are part of an uninterrupted struggle for national liberation," adding that "COSATU...encourages the fullest discussion on socialism and democracy within our structures."

It is seen in the positions taken by other unions within COSATU, such as the National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa (NUMSA) which adopted the Freedom Charter only after appending to it a Workers Charter that, in part, said: "apartheid and capitalism are two inseparable evils that must be smashed...the workers in this country are not only striving for better working conditions in the mines but for a democratic socialist society controlled by the working class."

It is seen in the vigorous debates within the Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union (CCAWUSA) concerning whether the labor movement should adopt the Freedom Charter at all, or instead open a democratic debate over what kind of socialist society the movement aims at.

And it is seen in the discussions on the relation of the anti-apartheid struggle not alone to class but to race consciousness that the Electrical and Allied Workers Union (allied with the National Council of Trade Unions) have been engaged in. One of their statements reads, "one of the things that caused a breakdown in the national unity of the workers was the issue of anti-racism and non-racism...Are the two concepts (ideas) opposites and in conflict with one another? Anti-racism is a response to racism in order to establish non-racism. Anti-racism is a stage in the development towards a non-racial society...therefore, non-racist thought is born out of the anti-racist struggle against racism (apartheid)."

HITLER'S VISAGE RE-EMERGES

It is this dynamism, not just of action and militancy, but of ideas, that Botha is determined to stop. As Raya Dunayevskaya wrote in her Afterword to the 1986 edition of *Frantz Fanon, Soweto and American Black Thought*, "the solidarity of the world masses with the African Freedom Fighters is not alone with their brav-

ery, but with the goals, the philosophy, of their revolution. The ramifications of that type of solidarity led to the 'shock of recognition' that the visage of Hitler is by no means limited to South Africa's Botha regime."

The continued re-emergence of Hitler's visage, continues to be met by new opposition: it was seen in early February when thousands of youths marched for the first time in two years in Soweto, to protest the murder of 18-year-old Sicelo Dhlomo by the apartheid police. And it was seen within a



Students at Witwatersrand University in South Africa protesting the crackdown

week after the banning, when for the first time in South African history a National Union of Farmworkers was formed at a congress of 1,200, where the new union declared itself "opposed to capitalism and imperialism" and spoke for a Workers Charter. That event came as an outgrowth of a year of deep unrest in the rural areas, especially in the Bantustan "homelands," where youth fleeing repression in the townships have joined up with farmers, migrant laborers, women and youth to oppose the apartheid regime anew.

But as significant as these developments are, we cannot close our eyes to the severity of this new stage of repression which seeks to crush the human embodiment of the Idea of freedom. As we wrote in *N&L* in March, 1986 following the banning of TV and press coverage of the townships, that Idea of freedom "does not arise or persist automatically; it takes hard labor to maintain and develop it in face of the latest efforts of the rulers to thwart it."

That urgently demands action by all of us to protest this latest deadly stage of repression. In no way can we allow the current crisis in Central America, as crucial as it is, to get all the attention of the Left, while South Africa is left bleeding. But the necessity to engage in action now to protest the latest crackdown does not mean we place upon the shoulders of the Black South African masses the entire burden of developing the Idea of freedom in the face of the latest challenges.

In no way can we afford to separate the needed protests from responsibility for developing the Idea of freedom anew on the basis of the highest practical and theoretical stage yet reached. The latest horrors of Botha-Reagan are once again challenging the Left to assume the practical and philosophic responsibilities that today's changed world demands.

Dunayevskaya - Marcuse dialogue on the dialectic

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breaks off, as Dunayevskaya answers him very sharply. In the June-July, 1961 *News & Letters*, Dunayevskaya publishes her critique of Marcuse's *Soviet Marxism*, entitled "Intellectuals in the Age of State Capitalism."

IV. AFTERMATH AND DIVERGENCE, 1961-79

Meanwhile, Raya has (1) continued her comprehensive notes on Hegel to include both Hegel's *Larger and Smaller Logic*, in January and February, 1961 and (2) begun her series of *Political Letters* in response to the Bay of Pigs invasion by Kennedy. Thus the break with Marcuse was over (1) Hegel's *Absolutes*, (2) Raya's critique of de-Stalinized Stalinists, and (3) differing concepts of the proletariat.

Raya continues her Hegel studies as she develops the book *Philosophy and Revolution*. The debates between the two thinkers now become more public, as in Dunayevskaya's critique of Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man*, an article she entitled "Reason and Revolution versus Conformism and Technology," published in the Fall 1964 issue of the student journal, *The Activist* (RD Collection, pp. 1070-72) Marcuse writes her: "I have read your review of my book which is probably the most intelligent one so far—as I expected it would be." (HM to RD, Jan. 12, 1965)

Years later, as she began to work out her book, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982), Raya wrote in 1978 to the Scottish worker-revolutionary Harry McShane on the differences between her concept of dialectic and that of Marcuse's, even at the stage of his *Reason and Revolution*. In 1978 she stressed that their early affinity hid the fact that for Marcuse, unlike Dunayevskaya, "Marx went to 'sociology'—Marxist, it is true, and not bourgeois, but 'sociology' nonetheless." While she was from the start aware of her political differences with Marcuse, Raya now wrote that it took much longer for her to grasp that "much as I learned from Marcuse, we were not only on different planets 'politically,' but philosophically." (RD Collection, p. 6434)

The dialogue continued intermittently until Marcuse's death in 1979, when Raya penned her moving tribute "Herbert Marcuse, Marxist Philosopher" for the August-September, 1979 *News & Letters* (reprinted in the *Newsletter of the International Society for the Sociology of Knowledge*, Vol. 5:2, 1979). There she wrote "The death of Herbert Marcuse on July 29 marks a sad day on the historic calendar of young revolutionaries as well as old Marxists."

Referring to the publication of *Reason and Revolution* during World War II, Raya continued: "In the seminal work, Marcuse established the Humanism of Marxism, and re-established the revolutionary dialectic of Hegel-Marx, for the first time for the American public. It is impossible to forget the indebtedness we feel for Marcuse when that breath of fresh air and vision of a truly classless society was published—and we were actively opposing that imperialist war." This is what makes the Dunayevskaya-Marcuse correspondence a living dialogue on the dialectic for serious revolutionary thinkers and activists the world over, not as history, but as a reaching toward the future.

Join our four-part class series on

Raya Dunayevskaya's Marxist-Humanism in the Changed World of the 1980s

"The abysmal lower depths that the Reagan retrogression has sunk the world into throughout the seven years of this decade, has polluted the ideological air not only of the ruling class, but has penetrated the Left itself. Such a deep retrogression demands that, along with the economic and political tasks facing us, we look for philosophic new beginnings."

—Raya Dunayevskaya, June 5, 1987

News and Letters Committees invites you to take a journey through the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism as part of the effort to reach for "philosophic new beginnings" in the face of today's changed world. In these classes we seek to explore the crucial importance of Raya Dunayevskaya's writings of the 1980s for grappling with her whole Marxist-Humanist philosophy of liberation.

Class 1: The Changed World and the Dialectic Method

Class 2: Marxist-Humanism's Philosophic Challenge to, and Participation with, all Forces of Revolution: the Black Dimension and Women's Liberation

Class 3: Dunayevskaya's Challenge to Post-Marx Marxism: New Perceptions of Lenin's Philosophic Ambivalence

Class 4: Toward a Dialectic of Organization and Philosophy

Classes are being held in

Chicago, Detroit, New York, San Francisco-Bay Area in April and May 1988

Contact the News and Letters Committee local nearest you (see directory, page 5) for location and dates of meetings, as well as to receive a Syllabus of the class readings.

Youth

Confronting campus racism

by Sheila Fuller

In the past month, there have been new protests against racist attacks on campuses around the country:

● At the University of Massachusetts students held a five day sit-in at the New Africa House, following racist attacks on Black and minority students. They ended the sit-in with a two day moratorium on classes in order to hold workshops on racism. And their sit-in inspired a sit-in against racism at Hampshire College the following week.

● At Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, students have been protesting the search and racial harassment of Black students at the university bookstore, and the appearance of white supremacist graffiti and KKK newspapers on the campus.

● At Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, students forced the suspension of Young Republican vigilantes who had last year attacked the students' anti-apartheid shanty-town with sledgehammers, and were now harassing an Afro-American music professor.

As one U. of Mass. participant in the recent sit-in told me: "Since the sit-in has ended, the racial attacks on this campus have actually increased, at all times of night and in broad daylight. The minority Resident Assistants have been harassed, and today a Black man was attacked in a stairwell by two white men." (See in-person report from U. of Mass. in March N&L).

This is what a teacher at the U. of Michigan said of the declining Black enrollment in the nation's universities: "Last year there were only 120 Black students in the entire graduate school at the U. of Mich. There is also a decline in the number of low income students no matter what their race. Schools like the U. of Mich. are returning to be a preserve for the elite. More and more, we are seeing two sets of colleges: one set for the elite and the other, community and vocational type colleges, for Blacks and the poor."

To me, both of these statements point in one direction. We are facing a racism so deeply rooted in American civilization, and a class-ridden system so bent on making education a privilege for the elite, that the problem is by no means a campus question alone.

1988 marks the twentieth anniversary of the ghetto uprisings around the country, which followed the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King. It also marks the twentieth anniversary of the Kerner commission report which admitted that "Our nation is moving toward two

societies, one Black, one white—separate and unequal."

A decade ago, on the tenth anniversary of this report, Raya Dunayevskaya wrote of how conditions of life and labor among Blacks had not only not improved but worsened. She continued: "What the proliferation of statistics failed to show, however, is that the dissatisfaction with the government and the Blacks' erstwhile leaders...does not mean that the Black masses are just despairing. Contrary to the reports in the white press, Black America's actual rejection of white capitalistic-imperialistic exploitation, with or without Black lackeys, is at one and the same time a time bomb that is sure to explode and a time for thinking and readying for action." (See Frantz Fanon, *Soweto and American Black Thought*, p.11)

Ten years later, this statement is even more true. We are facing a virulent racism brought to a new height by eight years of Reagan retrogressionism. Black youth are facing vicious racist attacks such as the murder of Michael Griffith in Howard Beach and the gang rape of Tawana Brawley in New York. And they continue to face massive unemployment and poverty jobs. That time bomb is sure to explode.

In 1968, when Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination touched off a whole series of ghetto uprisings across the country, a gap remained between those uprisings and the campus protests. In 1988, we need to deepen our grasp of how Black struggles have put American civilization on trial, and what a vision is needed to broaden our links with Black youth off campus and totally uproot this racist, sexist, class-ridden society. Combating the racism on the campuses is important, but we cannot be under the illusion that it is only a campus question.



Hundreds of students shut down Gallaudet University, the only U.S. college for the deaf, March 6-13 to protest the selection of yet another hearing president. By the end of the week, students—supported by most of the faculty, alumni and deaf rights groups nationwide—had won the first deaf president in Gallaudet's 124 years, the naming of a deaf person in place of the previous paternalistic chairperson of the board, amnesty for all students and faculty involved in the protests and a promise for the board's restructuring to include a majority of deaf members.

Nevada anti-nuke action

Nevada Test Site, Nev.—Several thousand anti-nuclear protesters came together here on Saturday, March 12, for the largest demonstration ever held at this nuclear weapons test site. A record 1,200 people committed civil disobedience and were arrested.

At the demonstration people were energetic and spirited. There were Grandmothers for Peace and Dykes for Peace, Librarians Against Nuclear War, Physicians for Social Responsibility, and many people who had come on their own without any group.

A Shoshone Indian spoke. (The test site is on Shoshone land.) He spoke first in Shoshone, then in English, of the Indian view that we are caretakers of this earth. A Japanese nuclear physicist spoke, very movingly telling the story of his cousin who had been in Hiroshima when the bomb was dropped.

There was just one problem I saw with the demonstration: it was almost too peaceful. The authorities dealt with it all as boring and routine. I'm not saying it should have been violent, but could there be a way to have such a large demonstration that would be more dramatic?

When people committed the civil disobedience, trespassing on the test site, the authorities came and put plastic handcuffs on them, and took them to a cage. Only one man I saw passively resisted arrest; he had to be dragged away. If even one quarter of the 1,200 people had done that, the authorities couldn't have treated the whole thing as "routine," like they did.

We can afford to be sneered at and spit at, but we cannot afford to be ignored. The whole point of the action is that people notice and think about what we're doing. We have to move on to something more.

—Peace activist

Youth in Revolt

Thousands of students at Seoul National University in South Korea marched out of the official graduation ceremony to commemorate Park Chong Jol, a classmate tortured to death by police last year. Two weeks later, on March 6, 1,000 students rallied at Yonsei University, demanding that President Roh keep a campaign promise to release all 1,100 political prisoners still in jail.

Hundreds of students rallied in Warsaw and Krakow, Poland, in February marking the anniversary of the 1981 founding of the now-banned Independent Students Association. They demanded legalization of the Association, better living conditions and higher benefits to compensate for recent large price increases.

Chanting "No more cutbacks," over 500 students demonstrated in Toronto, Canada, calling for education budget increases and solutions to a student-housing shortage and overcrowded classrooms.

Fairfax High sit-in wins

Los Angeles, Cal.—On March 9, about 200 Black students held a protest at Fairfax High. We marched to the principal's office first thing in the morning, partly because the administration was giving us the runaround on our demands for a Black History Chorus and Talent Show. They gave us that "We will see" line, but never moved on our demands. So we had a sit-in.

The talent show was not just for Black students, but the Administration didn't want to allow the show because it would be "too ethnically oriented." The protest at the principal's office got our demands across. When they saw we were serious, we got approval.

There are many restrictions on campus. Black and Hispanic students seem to be watched closer. If two or three of us are standing around in a group, the security seem to be watching us as if we are up to something.

Another reason for the protest was the lax attitude that the administration has toward Black and Hispanic students. We are not pushed as hard to take college prep courses as other students are.

We need more demonstrations here at Fairfax. We need to demonstrate against apartheid, and for the Sharpeville Six. As high school students, we don't have freedom of speech.

—Members, Black Student Union, Fairfax High

'Reform' or repression?

Chicago, IL.—Teachers, parents and school administrators have been screaming about how terrible the school systems are these days. The dropout rate is too high, too many students are cutting class and supposedly drug abuse has gone up. To remedy this the school board and administration started a "reform" program.

Under these new reforms there are many new repressive rules placed on students all over the country. There has been a huge movement to close campuses. Some schools in Texas require the students to take urine tests in order for them to join clubs. Identification must be worn in plain view at all times. More overbearing and repressive principals and police have been placed in schools. Last but definitely not least, the new Supreme Court decided that principals have the right to censor school newspapers.

Their reasoning behind this repression of students' rights is unfounded. They say they want to protect the students from drugs. I could find no person to give a reason for extra police and stronger censorship. This is probably because there is none except to stop students from speaking out against their repression.

Students don't drop out, cut class, or abuse drugs because they are bad people or even because of peer pressure. Often it's caused by the feeling that you're just a number. Other times they feel as if the teachers don't care if you learn just as long as you're in school so that the administration gets its money.

We think that all students should speak out against these repressive acts. Students' rights will only come about when the curriculum is what the student is interested in, when schools become more comfortable and positive and less like prisons, when students are treated like human beings and not like computers to be fed data and forced to spew it.

—Whitney Young high school students

Marxist-Humanism's founder commemorated in L.A.

Los Angeles, Cal.—On Feb. 25, students as well as workers, long-time Marxist-Humanists as well as those newly introduced to that philosophy, North Americans as well as Iranians and South Africans participated in a commemoration of the life and work of Raya Dunayevskaya at California State University, Los Angeles. The theme of the meeting was how a commemoration of the ideas of the founder of Marxist-Humanism can become a pathway towards developing that philosophy of revolution for our time.

The meeting was preceded by a thought-provoking archives display which covered the full span of Dunayevskaya's life and work. That was true of the ten speakers as well, who ranged from John Alan—who spoke of his first meeting Raya during her activities with the Black movement of the 1930s—to Gary Clark, a youth activist who discussed how he first encountered Marxist-Humanism in the 1980s after reading Dunayevskaya's *Philosophy and Revolution*. Felix Martin, Labor Editor of *News & Letters*, spoke on the development of Raya's ideas from out of the 1949-50 Miners' General Strike, and the importance of the unity of worker and intellectual in her thought. Other speakers ranged from Neil Garston, a Professor of Economics at Cal State, to Duke M., an exiled South African revolutionary.

The keynote speech was given by Peter Hudis, who began by asking "what enables one thinker to speak to such an array of different voices? It's the power of an Idea—the Idea of freedom." Hudis traced through the development of that Idea of freedom, beginning with when "it was still very much in embryo," the 1920s and 1930s, focusing especially upon Dunayevskaya's response to events such as the Spanish Revolution. He showed that Dunayevskaya faced the emergence of state-capitalism as a global phenomenon and counter-revolutions emerging from within revolutions by "emerging as a new kind of radical—one who unites fervent opposition to what is with responsibility for re-stating what Marx's Marxism means for today."

In focusing on the 1950s, he asserted that "the full philosophic birth of Dunayevskaya came in May 1953, in a series of philosophic letters written by her on Hegel's *Absolutes*." The basis of this 1953 philosophic

breakthrough, he said, was her refusal to consider Hegel's *Absolutes* as something abstract or tucked away up in heaven; instead, she saw them as an expression of the live movements for freedom of our age and the necessity for revolutionaries to meet them not only with theory but with a philosophy of revolution.

He traced out how Dunayevskaya's 1953 philosophic moment both anticipated all the "new passions and new forces" of our era—Labor, Youth, Women's Liberation, the Black Dimension—and enabled her to single out their unfinished contributions. For "the 1953 Letters on Hegel's *Absolutes* singled out not only a movement from practice that is itself a form of theory, but as well a movement from theory which is reaching for philosophy. The Philosophic Point is that only from the unity of the two can there arise the kind of revolutionary movement, and the kind of revolution, that can help bring forth a truly new, human society."

In discussing the further development of Dunayevskaya's work in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, Hudis focused especially on the 1980s, when she confronted the global retrogression embodied in Reaganism with a call for "new philosophic beginnings." "That Raya would call for 'philosophic new beginnings' in the midst of such global retrogression was characteristic of her," he said. "But what is truly remarkable and totally new is that in the 1980s Raya searched for new philosophic beginnings through a philosophic summation of her own body of ideas."

He concluded, "Just as Dunayevskaya confronted the need for new human beginnings in face of today's changed world by digging deeply into her own body of ideas, so to find our way to the dawn of a new day from out of the darkness of this era of Reaganism demands an inwardization and projection of the philosophy of revolution she left us."

The informal discussion that followed with the audience representing multidimensional forces of revolt, indicated that pathways were opened to meeting this challenge. It was perhaps best expressed by Duke M., a South African exile, who said in his remarks, "when I return to South Africa, I intend to take Raya's Archives with me, because this is what we can all learn so much from."

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

Editor's note: As we go to press, strikes by Armenian workers have shut down silk, shoe and electrical products factories in Stepanakert, capital of Nagorno-Karabakh. In solidarity, ethnic Azeri workers have refused to enter struck factories.

In 1987-88 popular discontent in Armenia has focused upon two issues: the disastrous state of the environment in the republic and the return of the Nagorno-Karabakh region from neighboring Azerbaijan. An open letter to Gorbachev, signed by 350 leading Armenians in March, 1986, widely circulated in Armenia but largely unnoticed in the West, claimed that of the seven most polluted cities in the USSR, five are located in Armenia, while a growing number of illnesses have resulted from pollution caused by chemical plants. Over the past ten years nuclear power stations in Armenia have registered more than 150 serious accidents.

The first reports of the current unrest in Armenia came via dissident channels in Moscow on Feb. 19; it was only two days later that it became clear that ecology was not the only issue. Already before the first Soviet announcement in *Izvestiya* on Feb. 23, Armenia had sent delegations to Moscow with petitions signed by tens of thousands of people over their territorial claims on Azerbaijan. A week earlier leaflets had been distributed in Nagorno-Karabakh calling for reunification with Armenia, which were followed by school boycotts and other protests.

On Feb. 20, after prolonged public pressure, the Na-

gorno-Karabakh regional Soviet passed a resolution by 110 to 17 calling for reunification with Armenia. The inclusion of this region with Azerbaijan was blamed upon Stalin, a charge since repeated by Radio Erevan. Ten thousand copies of a telegramme calling for reunification were reportedly distributed to the swelling ranks of the demonstrators.

The negative response from Moscow was described by one Armenian from Nagorno-Karabakh as "not only anti-Armenian but anti-democratic." Referring to both the ecological and national problems that the demonstrators had raised, he also stated that "we are on the brink of national catastrophe and are forced to start a struggle. We cannot stop, as this will mean death."

On Feb. 26 at a demonstration, Afghan veterans in Erevan threatened to throw away their medals and party cards if the nationalist demands were not met. The local authorities, visibly worried about the unreliability of their own militia, brought in units from outside the republic. Dissidents in Moscow reported that Armenian militiamen had been disarmed and sportsmen had been asked to surrender pistols.

Mass support for the demonstrators was evidenced by widescale collections of money and food. Shops were closed, workers were absent from work and students boycotted classes. Reminiscent of the riots in Alma Ata, busloads of workers came from outside the capital to join the protests, reflecting the depth of feeling about the issues involved. The demonstrators not only managed to control the protests but organized a committee representing various regions and enterprises in Erevan.

Nationalist demonstrations are nothing new in the

USSR, although the frequency and size of recent demonstrations have multiplied under Gorbachev. The nationality question has proved to be the Achilles heel of *glasnost* and at the first sign of trouble Soviet authorities reacted in their customary manner of removing any vestiges of *glasnost*.

If, as is likely, Gorbachev refuses Armenian requests for the return of this territory he is likely to turn initially anti-Azerbaijani feeling into potentially more dangerous anti-Russian discontent. If Gorbachev decides to accept the *anschluss* of Nagorno-Karabakh with Armenia, the Azerbaijanis, as fellow Shiite Muslims, are likely to be driven into the arms of Iran's mullahs.

—Patrick Kan
writer for Ukrainian Peace News

Upsurge in Hungary

More than 10,000 Hungarians marched on March 1 in the largest independent demonstration since the 1956 Revolution against state-capitalist totalitarianism calling itself Communism. They turned out to mark the anniversary of the March 15, 1848 Revolution, which was led by the martyred poet, Sandor Petofi. Referring both to 1848 and to the 1918 Marxist Revolution as well as to 1956, the dissident philosopher Gaspar Miklos addressed the crowd: "In 1848, 1918 and 1956, we tried to achieve the aims of freedom, equality, independence and a place in the community of civilized nations. We are still far from these aims."

The huge turnout in 1988 appeared to shock even the dissident leaders, such as Miklos Haraszti, editor of the leading underground journal, *Beszelo*. Haraszti has written a critique of all Gorbachev-type reforms last year stressing correctly how they changed nothing fundamental. This year Haraszti, as well as other leading intellectual and worker dissidents such as Sandor Rac, worker leader of the 1956 Workers' Councils during the Revolution, were arrested only hours before the demonstration. This did not deter the demonstrators, who turned out in far greater numbers than in 1987.

Even moderate government leaders such as Imre Pozsgay have suggested that Hungary is in danger of having a Solidarnosc-type movement of workers and intellectuals, as the working class is feeling the bite of a very severe economic crisis.

Portuguese protests

1988 has seen the greatest labor unrest in years. Workers are particularly incensed by Prime Minister Costa Silva's move to scrap laws protecting all workers from arbitrary firings by their bosses.

Not surprisingly, given their revolutionary history, workers have conducted strikes and plant occupations to protest his proposed law on lay-offs and other anti-labor measures, such as a 6% ceiling on raises. Subway railroad, bus and ferry operators have gone out, while workers have also briefly occupied some factories, one case holding some of the bosses hostage. Tens of thousands have demonstrated in the streets of all of the large cities.

Iran-Iraq 'war of cities'

Iraq's poison gas bombing of the Kurdish village of Halabja is the most barbaric phase yet of the Iran-Iraq war. Over 5,000 men, women and children were killed by this attack in mid-March. Many bodies were found still clutching infants, or with expressions of horror frozen on their faces. Others who lived were burned severely and have trouble breathing. This village was gassed by Iraq the day after it was captured by the Iranian army. Last year the people of Halabja revolted against the Iraqi government, and half the population had been forced to flee to the hills to escape Iraqi air attacks. Now the whole village has been decimated.

On Feb. 28, Iraq initiated missile attacks on Tehran and other large Iranian cities. Hundreds of long range missiles have been fired, followed by massive aerial bombardments. Hundreds upon hundreds have been killed.

In December a tentative agreement was reached between the two superpowers to impose an arms embargo on Khomeini. Since then Gorbachev has backed away from that agreement with Reagan in order to have leverage on Iran for its support of Islamic forces in the Afghan resistance movement.

The imperialist powers, whether U.S. in the Gulf, or Russia in Afghanistan (as well as the Gulf rulers) are all vying to harness Khomeini, while having no intention of allowing the masses (Iranian, Iraqi...) to gain their freedom. The rulers all have a stake in Khomeini's survival and continued stranglehold over the entire population.

So deep is the crisis inside Iran, so intense the internal fighting between the rulers, that Khomeini has abolished the Islamic Republican Party under the illusion that it will end the factional fighting. During the last year Khomeini has reorganized the governing "Supreme Council of Guardians," and has openly put the president on notice that the "absolute authority of state" means he is answerable to none but "god."

In response to the bombings the large Iranian community across the U.S. and Europe have staged numerous protests, that have brought together the Left under the slogan of "end the war, arms embargo."

—Cyrus Nowe

Armenians challenge Russian control

Editorial

U.S. troops out of Central America!

(continued from page 1)

100,000 Nicaraguans took part in a two-week-long, Sandinista-led general strike against Somoza, despite widespread arrests, torture and murder. Eighteen months of mass mobilization followed. Workers, women, peasants, and especially the youth rose up over and over again until, in July, 1979, Somoza fled. In the years 1978-80 the many dimensions of the idea of freedom were evident not only in Nicaragua, but in El Salvador and in Guatemala as well.

Just as these mass revolutionary upheavals of the late 1970s continued the new stage reached when the 1952 Bolivian Revolution created new forms of struggle and brought forth Indian miners, peasants and women, so U.S. imperialism's determination to crush these revolutionary beginnings has been unending ever since.

As Raya Dunayevskaya put it in April, 1981 (see her article in *Latin America's Revolutions*, available from N&L): "The counter-revolution—U.S. imperialism—saw the threat of Bolivia clearly. Because they did, they immediately embarked on counter-revolutions, and not only in Bolivia. 'Never again' for U.S. imperialism meant Guatemala as well, and thus the counter-revolution of 1954. And for our age—and herein is the urgency for El Salvador—it meant that when they saw the revolution succeed in Nicaragua, their 'Never Again' meant they would not even take any chances with any type of ever so mild reforms as the civilian junta had originally proposed. So the counter-revolution in El Salvador is assuming outright genocide."

REAGAN'S GENOCIDAL WARS

Reagan's genocidal wars have taken their toll: 65,000 killed or disappeared in El Salvador, 40,000 killed or disappeared in Guatemala, in addition to the slaughter of 50,000 in Nicaragua. People in whole regions have been killed off or driven into refugee camps. The harsh reality of a decade of Reagan retrogressionism compels us to recognize that 1988 is not 1979. That was the year

in which revolutions in Iran, in Nicaragua, in Grenada, offered new paths for revolution in the Third World. The fate of the revolutions in Iran and Grenada, their usurpation by counter-revolution from within the revolution, even as they had to contend with imperialism from without, challenges revolutionaries everywhere to think anew about the relationship of forms of organization to a philosophy of liberation. Such re-thinking includes, for Central America solidarity activists, the realization that even the Nicaraguan Revolution, which Reagan has been unable to overthrow thus far, has nevertheless been blunted during seven years of unrelenting attacks.

In 1988 all eyes cannot only be fixed on the cease fire in Nicaragua, when at the same time death-squad leader Roberto d'Aubuisson's Arena party is restored to a large and ominous share of power in El Salvador's widely-boycotted elections. D'Aubuisson's "mandate" from the El Salvadoran oligarchy is to crush the wide resurgence of activity seen in 1987-88 by workers, university students, mothers of the disappeared and returning refugees.

Nor can we take our eyes off Panama, where over 10,000 of the 16,700 U.S. troops now based in Central America are located. Reaganism's ongoing pressure against Panama is directed at far more than the ouster of its former friend, Gen. Noriega. Rather, it serves both as an example to all Latin America of the havoc U.S. economic sabotage can wreak, and as a warning to Panama that the U.S. may not be willing to cede control of the Canal to Panama in the year 2000 as agreed in the 1977 treaty.

The future of the whole region is at stake when, on the one side, Reagan aims to institutionalize his counter-revolutionary wars throughout Central America into the 21st century, and, on the other, new revolutionary forces never stop arising, demanding freedom, and calling out for dialogue with those in the U.S. who share their vision.

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

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.