



# Can Women's Liberation begin anew?

Editor's note: Below we print excerpts from a talk on an essay by Olga Domanski printed in the April, 1990 News & Letters.

by Laurie Cashdan

"A look at 20 years: Women's Liberation and the search for new beginnings" \* is not only a challenge to thinkers like Sheila Rowbotham, Catherine MacKinnon and others; it is as much a challenge to all who are searching for a way to make Marx's Humanism the basis for new beginnings today....

What needs to be recreated isn't Friedrich Engels' unilinear, deterministic concept of human development, which too many Marxist-feminists have based themselves on, even if they disagree with Engels' conclusion that women suffered a "world-historic defeat" during the transition to capitalism.

These Marxist-feminists do write about working women's struggles in history, and Rowbotham is among the best. But Rowbotham's preference for politics and history over philosophy, which led her in *Beyond the Fragments* to reduce Women's Liberation to an "organizing idea" for socialism, is a descendant of Engels, not Marx.

The post-structuralist feminists reject the Engelian determinism of these Marxist-feminists, but attribute it to Marx. They then go on to substitute an analysis of all "Western discourse" as a conscious or unconscious perpetuation of oppressive relations—and they include Marx and women's struggles throughout history in that discourse!...

Nor are we taken much further by those advocating a "politics of diversity"—the latest buzz word at women's conferences lately. As Hazel Carby, an African-American studies professor at Yale, pointed out in a recent speech, precisely the feminists who talk so much about diversity can wind up contributing to the problem because they abstract theory from real life problems and struggles. She asks, "Where is the collective emancipatory project?"

## WOMEN SEARCH FOR WAY OUT

There is no question that women, both in women's studies and out, are searching for a way out of the stagnation that the Women's Liberation Movement is experiencing—even with the new activism around abortion rights. "How to begin anew?" (which is the title for this year's Draft for Marxist-Humanist Perspectives) is what Raya Dunayevskaya pointed out characterized Marx's whole development of his philosophy of "revolution in permanence." How to begin anew? is what Raya returned to at all points of her life as well.

Marx's concept of revolution in permanence is what is at stake when Raya relates Women's Liberation to Marx's multilinearism: "A deep gulf existed between Marx's multilinear view of all human development and Engels' unilinear view. Which is why this single subject—Women's Liberation, whether viewed as it relates to philosophy or to form of organization—is inseparable from the dialectics of revolution."

We most often think of Raya's discussion of Marx's multilinearism in relation to his last writings, including his *Ethnological Notebooks*, where he looked at the contradictory relations of men and women within pre-capitalist societies, and singled out the ferment of women as one pathway to revolution. But that multilinearism is there in embryo in Marx's 1844 *Humanist Essays*. Isn't Marx's ability to work out diverse pathways to revolution inseparable from his "clinging" to Hegel's absolute negativity?

## HOW DOES MARX CLING TO HEGEL?

What startled me was to see that Lenin, in his *Philosophic Notebooks*, also talked about Marx's clinging to Hegel just before the view of the creativity of cognition, which Raya said he didn't develop within the Absolute. Lenin writes, "Marx... clings to Hegel, introducing criteria of practice into the theory of knowledge." This is important, but very different from Raya Dunayevskaya's view of Marx clinging to Hegel, as new beginning—absolute negativity as new beginning, after the birth of Marx's new continent of thought and revolution.

We surely are seeing the ramifications of self-imposed limitations in the dialectic of freedom, whether in the thinking of a MacKinnon or Rowbotham, or the reality

\* To receive a copy of Olga Domanski's essay, send 70 cents to News & Letters.

of East Europe, where women are now being asked to redesign their ideas of freedom in the lethal context of free market capitalism; or here where the pro-choice movement is quickly fragmenting and even the break over racism within the National Women's Studies Association \*\* does not guarantee new ground.

Working out new beginnings rooted in Marx's Marxism and Raya Dunayevskaya's Marxist-Humanism is the opposite to the kind of dead end that so many of today's feminists have met. For that, it is especially important to continue, and deepen, the battle of ideas about what is needed to begin anew in Women's Liberation today.

\*\* See "Racism splinters women's conference" in the July, 1990 News & Letters, available for 70 cents.

## In the South

### Black women unionize

Editor's note: Following are excerpts from talks by two Black women labor activists, affiliated with the North Carolina-based Black Workers for Justice, who were on a tour of the Midwest to inform trade unionists and community activists of the ongoing struggle in the South to organize a labor movement. Their address is: P.O. Box 1339, Rocky Mount, NC 87802.

Black Workers for Justice (BWFJ) started in 1981 with a group of Black women K-Mart workers who had gotten fired on trumped-up charges. The store had all white management and a Black women workforce. The white managers fired three Black women for allegedly stealing 60¢ out of the cash register. Up until then, what happened in the workplace stayed inside. We brought it out of K-Mart and brought it to the community.

We started a picket line and a newsletter. The women spoke in churches and to community groups. The sisters never got their jobs back, but the white managers were transferred and Black managers were hired. We considered it a small victory.

We also sponsor a Workers' School about once a year to help workers see the significance of their struggles. We are trying to create a climate that will allow union organizing drives to be successful in the South.

North Carolina is ranked at the top for workers in manufacturing and ranked 50th in wages and conditions of life. We know that since 1974 corporations have moved into the South as they run away from the North. Because the South isn't organized, it is only a way-station for corporations to go to Third World countries. In the South, a corporation will run miles of water pipes, right past poor communities where there is no running water. The South remains underdeveloped.

We also have a women's committee focusing on issues of women workers, because in North Carolina the majority of Black parents are single women. This is also related to health and safety issues in the plant. What workers bring home is more than wages; it's all the problems in the plant.

I am from a small town which is 80% Black, and most of us work for Perdue Poultry Farms. I worked in a department where the line ran 91 birds per minute. My hands, like those of so many of the other women, are bad from having to use unsharp utensils. At Perdue 95% of the workers are women, and most of us are Black.

Supervisors don't care about people. For instance, one woman's feet got so bad, because we have to stand in a lot of water, that the doctor told her she would lose her feet if she continued. But they wouldn't let her change jobs. Most of our workers learn on their own, not because they are trained. That's one reason why there are so many injuries. One woman got all the tendons in her hand cut when she got it caught in a machine.

On our own, we ran a screening clinic for workers with carpal tunnel syndrome. When we passed out leaflets about the clinic, in front of the plant, the company ordered people not to take the information. The company also threatened to come to the clinic to see who came, and to fire those who did. This will give you an idea of why it is so hard to organize in the South, and why we have to.



Women-  
Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

The state of women's health and health care is deteriorating alarmingly worldwide—especially among Black and poor women.

● At least three million women and children will die of AIDS in the 1990s—six times the number as in the 1980s, according to the World Health Organization. The Federal Centers for Disease Control report that AIDS is already the leading killer of Black women between the ages of 14 and 44 in New York and New Jersey.

● Most pregnant women prosecuted for using drugs are poor and minority even though drug use during pregnancy is equally prevalent among white, middle-class women. Such prosecutions are unfair, says the American Civil Liberties Union, because most drug treatment programs refuse to accept pregnant women and the very real threat of arrest drives women away from much-needed pre-natal care.

● The New York Health Department has been denounced for "outrageous insensitivity" and "betrayal of public trust" for allowing at least 3,000 PAP smears of poor women to go unread for up to a year! While these women were told if they were not contacted within six weeks they could assume the results were normal, at least 11 were found to have cervical cancer and up to 600 have abnormal cells present.

The Muvman Liberasyon Fam (MLF) in Mauritius, a small island in the Indian Ocean east of Madagascar, has been fighting for 15 years to change oppressive marriage codes. They had finally succeeded in getting the Supreme Court of Mauritius to judge as legal the revocation of the Muslim Personal Law under which women cannot inherit, are not protected from bigamy,



Aims: To fight for full rights for all women, for true equality between all women and men in all fields, and total liberation of women.

marriages are arranged, wife beating is allowed and a "wife may be subjected to physical torture..." Just as they were celebrating this victory, the politicians of the Government and the Opposition immediately put in motion proceedings to re-introduce Muslim Personal Law all over again. MLF asks supporters to send letters or telegrams to the following two political leaders responsible for the threat to women's rights: The Prime Minister, Sir Aneerood Jugnauth, Government House, Port Louis, Mauritius; Leader of the Opposition, Dr. Prem Nababsing, 3 Hennessy Lane, Quatre Bornes, Mauritius.

Palestinian women's committees on the West Bank have issued a leaflet demanding that fundamentalist men stop violence against women. This action halted public threats that acid would be thrown on Muslim and Christian women who dressed "immodestly."

Women workers in South Korea have won their long fight to get compensation from Sumida Electric Company of Japan for illegal closure of their factory in South Korea. Five women representatives of the workers protested for four months at the company's national headquarters in Japan, including picketing, two hunger strikes and a meeting of 800 Japanese supporters. The company agreed to apologize to the workers and pay: 1) wages lost from the plant closing to the negotiated settlement; 2) two months vacation pay; 3) \$10,000 each for those who picketed since the plant closed, and 4) \$11,000 for the five workers' expenditures while in Japan.

—Information from Asia Link

## The relationship of a philosophy of freedom to Women's Liberation

### The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection



Dunayevskaya with Natalia Trotsky in Mexico, 1938

In the 1950s Raya Dunayevskaya interviewed miners' wives in West Virginia on their role in strikes and Black domestic workers in New York on their views of Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*. With the rise of the Women's Liberation Movement in the 1960s she spoke at countless movement meetings, and corresponded with activists about her concept of women as not only force, but as "Revolutionary Reason." Discussions included in her Archives extended to meetings with refugees from Mao's China on conditions for women there.

In the 1970s and 1980s Dunayevskaya followed with intense interest the experiences of women revolutionaries and the attitude of the

Left toward their participation. Included are writings on women in Iran, Portugal, Latin America and Southern Africa. She corresponded with Women's Liberation theoreticians like Sheila Rowbotham, and with literary figures like Maria Barreno, Adrienne Rich, and Meridel LeSueur. Further insight can be obtained from a study of her voluminous research files, which include critical appraisals of nearly all major writers on the Women's Liberation Movement today.

Write to News & Letters to find out where the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection is in your area and send for the Guides to the Collection—\$5.75 includes postage.

## Striking L.A. janitors win contract

Los Angeles, Cal.—Seven hundred striking janitors in the Century City office towers here won a major victory on June 25, when they forced International Service Systems, a large international commercial cleaning company, to sign a union contract.

The 10-15% pay raise the janitors won still leaves their wages at about \$5 an hour. But the manner in which they won their pay raise and other benefits such as health insurance, vacation pay, and sick leave, is a major victory for the Latino workers in Los Angeles.

The strike began on May 29, when hundreds of janitors walked out of 13 buildings in Century City. The glitzy office towers, which include the headquarters of Ronald Reagan's offices, were transformed for a month into a battleground between police and strikers, and a scene of daily protests for janitors and many other current strikers in Los Angeles.

On June 15, the police disrupted a peaceful march by 120 striking janitors and as many supporters, viciously beating half of the workers so severely that one woman suffered a miscarriage and 19 others received major injuries that included fractured skulls, jaws, arms and legs.

On June 21, a silent vigil march for the injured wound single-file around many of the towering bank buildings. Then a rally included another period of silence for the beaten, followed by much singing and condemnation of the police brutality. Many of the workers spoke out, and their voices proved to be stronger yet than even the thunderous chanting of "They will not make us budge!"

One Guatemalan woman said: "For 14 years I've worked here in the same building. I've raised six kids by myself on what we're paid. Before 1984 we used to make \$7.30 with benefits, but ever since then, while prices for everything have gone up, we've been stuck at \$4.25 with no raises, no medical



care for our children, no contract."

Strikers passed out hundreds of leaflets to office workers encouraging them to support the strike, to organize themselves. Other striking workers in the area participated in the rallies, such as the Kaiser workers, showing a solidarity that has impressed the janitors and contributed to their discussions.

As one woman said: "We are all Latino, and we come from many countries throughout Latin America. Some people say this divides us, especially when we find ourselves working in these huge buildings, often by ourselves. But the truth is we are like brothers and sisters now, especially after the police beat us up."

— Mitch Weerth

## Workers Autonomous Federation in China

*Editor's note: We print here brief excerpts from "Revolutionary Worker Han Dongfang" from Echoes from Tiananmen, No. 3, March 1990, published by Friends of Chinese Minzhu, 57 Peking Road, 3rd Floor, Kowloon, Hong Kong. Han Dongfang is a Beijing railway worker and a founder of the Workers Autonomous Federation.*

Han Dongfang remembered that on April 17 he was passing by Tiananmen Square and saw a big crowd gathering under the People's Monument. As he got off the bus to find out what was going on, he heard many speeches about the current problems, democracy and freedom. He said: "I felt deeply touched and excited, so

with the help of some students, they began to plan for the formation of a Workers Autonomous Federation (WAF) towards the end of May, 1989.

Since there were concerns that workers might be under pressure to not participate and there might not be enough representatives for each profession, the WAF was to be represented by regions. With optimism, he [Han] thought that regardless of the size of the factories, if ten workers from each joined their federation, the factory managers would not dare move against them.

His opinion could not be tested, because the supposedly proletarian-led communist regime has one greatest fear—the working class. The WAF was officially formed on the night of May 30. By midnight, arrests were made. The WAF was suppressed before it could begin operation. Plans for a joint federation of students and workers were also disrupted.

Before the bloody crackdown, Han predicted that if the government crushed the student movement, the national economy would fall apart because workers would passively slow down production. There would be long term damage to production and the outcome would be much worse than a general strike. Besides, China's reputation in the international community would suffer irreparable damage. China's position would be influenced and would be despised.

Unfortunately, his prediction has come true.

## Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

ion out in a minute. But what good would that have done my friend who was fired? She was wronged by both the union and the company. Isn't there another "vision of the future" different from either the company's or the union bureaucrats'?

I think back to two incidents that occurred at a meat-packing plant where I worked in the early 1980s. One time a young Black woman was fired for halting production to search for a thermometer she had lost in some ground meat. There was so much verbal protest by other workers in the plant that the plant manager overruled her supervisor and brought her back to work.

Another time at the same plant two Mexican boners were suspended for not making rate on a new cut. When the other boners returned from break, they put on their equipment, but just stood by the line, refusing to work until the suspensions were lifted and the two boners were given two more weeks to learn the cut.

Both of these incidents are "small," but they are instances when workers relied on themselves, rather than courting the good will of the company or depending on the bureaucratic maneuvering of the union, to right an injustice. Those workers saw their own thoughts and actions as the alternative, the opposite of both the company and the union. Didn't they thereby pose a "vision of the future" far different from that of the rulers?

Capitalism can acquire a mighty weapon against working people if it can take a part of our minds and convince us that we are powerless to change things—that the "exploitative, racist, sexist, class-ridden conditions we live under now" are "our permanent future." Working out our own vision of the future requires getting back our own minds and not accepting that there is nothing we can do. Doesn't working out that vision begin right at the point of production?

## Oscar Mayer: injuries, speed up and sexism

Chicago, Ill.—The injuries at Oscar Mayer are more severe than several years ago. Before you didn't work with rates you worked at your own pace. Now you are working at the machine's pace, you have to keep up. But human beings weren't made to keep up with machines, sometimes you are going to fall down.

But the company is making workers with injuries show up for work rather than be laid-off on disability. The company has its own doctor at Grant Hospital who continually tells injured workers they should go back to the line. In fact, if you get seen by a different doctor who says you should have time off, the company doesn't accept it. They insist you see "their" doctor.

So now we have women who have to come to work with swollen wrists and arms. They work a little, have to stop and take pain pills, and then try and work. It is particularly rough in slice pack, where, when they come back after an injury, they are thrown right back on the line, threatened if they can't work, given Motrin and wrist bands. Supervisor Randy Murse is driving the workers.

The union claims there is nothing they can do since it is workers' compensation. But if they are messing over us, then why isn't the union doing something?

The company has been hiring a lot of new workers, especially for the "lunchables line." They hire a lot, but they get rid of two or three people a day. They are threatening them all day. Instead of our relations getting better, they are getting worse. Many of the workers have not received any education about their rights as union members. The company is beating them down something awful, taking away the workers' self-esteem—especially the women.

You can get very angry at the way Oscar Mayer is messing with the women workers: the way the male supervisors treat the women. It isn't that they treat the men great, but their attitude to the women is like there is this body and if I beat it down, I can get another body. Again, the union doesn't do anything.

It isn't just our local. The UFCW (United Food and Commercial Workers Union) is watching as Oscar Mayer is closing a big plant in Los Angeles, and opening another close by. The new one is non-union and isn't interested in hiring any of the union workers from the L.A. plant. What is the union doing?

The union officials seem to be far away from the workers. There needs to be a rule where the union officials could not earn any more money than the highest paid union worker in the plant. Maybe then they would understand what we are going through. I know that at local 100A it would mean some pay cuts for our union officials.

—Woman worker, Oscar Mayer

## Driving pay down, work up

New York, N.Y.—Recently I took a truck driving job. Before, I was worried about joining the "aristocracy of labor." Well—aristocracy of labor, my eye! My pay on a Teamster job is \$5.50 an hour plus some commission. When I get in the union it goes up—to \$5.90!

This is one of the worst proletarian jobs I've had. Be their payment high or low, the lot of the worker only worsens. My payment is higher, but my lot is worse.

These first four weeks I was just working, eating and sleeping—and not enough. I literally lost five pounds my first two weeks of work. I still can't get enough sleep. But it's better. I am used to it now, and I am averaging between 11 and 12 hours a day—not 13 or 14 like before. My first two weeks I worked quite a few 16-hour and even 17-hour days.

Talking to other drivers at other companies, I find that 10-12 hour days and often longer is standard for trucking. I guess the logic is: dead labor is in the form of hundreds of thousands of dollars in a truck, and though it can't be automated to speed you up, your working day is extended to extract more surplus labor.

They can't have two shifts, receiving is closed at night. But they can extend your day and keep that dead labor working you. I don't hope to do better than 10-12 hours a day in any trucking short of a major new movement in labor.

—John Marcotte

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## News & Letters

Vol. 35 — No. 7

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER, 1990

News & Letters (ISSN 0028-8969) is published 10 times a year, monthly, except bi-monthly January-February and August-September for \$2.50 a year (bulk order of five or more — 15¢) by News & Letters, 59 East Van Buren, Rm. 707, Chicago, IL 60605. Telephone (312) 663-0839. Second Class postage paid at Chicago, Illinois. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to News & Letters, 59 East Van Buren, Rm. 707, Chicago, IL 60605.

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News & Letters  
is printed in  
a union shop.

*From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya*  
**Marxist-Humanist Archives**

by Raya Dunayevskaya  
 Founder of Marxist-Humanism

*Editor's note: The following letter of Aug. 13, 1983 (The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, microfilm #7803), was addressed to the Youth of News and Letters Committees and entitled "Challenge to the Youth on the Needed Total Uprooting of the Old and the Creation of New Human Relations." In 1982-83, the year following completion of Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution, Raya Dunayevskaya began to develop a series of new paragraphs to her work after it went to press. She also prepared for an extensive national/international speaking tour in the centenary year of Marx's death, 1983. During the tour on Marx's Philosophy of Revolution, she addressed dozens of youth audiences on campus, often sharing and further developing the new additions to the book. The letter printed here is one of a series she wrote after the tour which spoke of the experience of the tour and of her new additions to the book.*

*"Human concepts are subjective in their abstractness, separateness, but objective as a whole, in the process, in the sum-total, in the tendency, in the source."*

—Lenin, Abstract of Hegel's Science of Logic (Collected Works, Vol. 38, p. 208)

*"I love all men who dive. Any fish can swim near the surface, but it takes a great whale to go downstairs five miles or more; and if he don't attain the bottom, why all the lead in Galena won't fashion the plummet that will. I'm not talking about Mr. Emerson now—but that whole corps of thought-divers that have been diving and coming up again with blood-shot eyes since the world began."*

—Melville, letter of March 3, 1849

August 13, 1983

Dear Youth:

Because of my deep confidence in the youth striving to be "thought-divers" (whether or not they are superb swimmers just by being young and strong), I'd like to appeal to you to dive into the battle of challenging post-Marx Marxism. That battle will reveal the much greater maturity of this historic period as against that of the generation of the 1960s. It is true that they were so massively active in that decade that 1968 had reached the threshold of a revolution. The fact, however, that it remained an unfinished act made it clear to the following generation that they had better probe deeply into how the lack of serious theory vitiated activism's goals. The idea that activity, activity, activity would absolve them from the hard labor of recreating Marx's theory of "revolution in permanence" for their age and that theory picked up "en route" would solve the totality of the economic-political-social crises, as well as end U.S. imperialism's war in Vietnam, ended in total failure.

Nevertheless, one of the most famous debates in that period was that between Sartre and Levi-Strauss (not exactly youth themselves, but accepted as gurus by the youth movement), as the 1960s generation continued to follow new philosophies like Existentialism and Structuralism, instead of trying to find the historic link of continuity with "old" Marxism. While Levi-Strauss critiqued Sartre's adherence to dialectics, holding that Structuralism required the analytic, empiric, scientific method, Sartre—since he, himself, was enamoured with Structuralism and had as ahistorical an outlook as Levi-Strauss—could hardly win the argument for meaning as against Levi-Strauss' emphasis on non-meaning. Here is how Levi-Strauss put it:

*"In my perspective, meaning is never the primary phenomenon; meaning is always reducible. In other words, behind all meaning there is a non-meaning, while the reverse is not the case. As far as I'm concerned, significance is always phenomenal."*

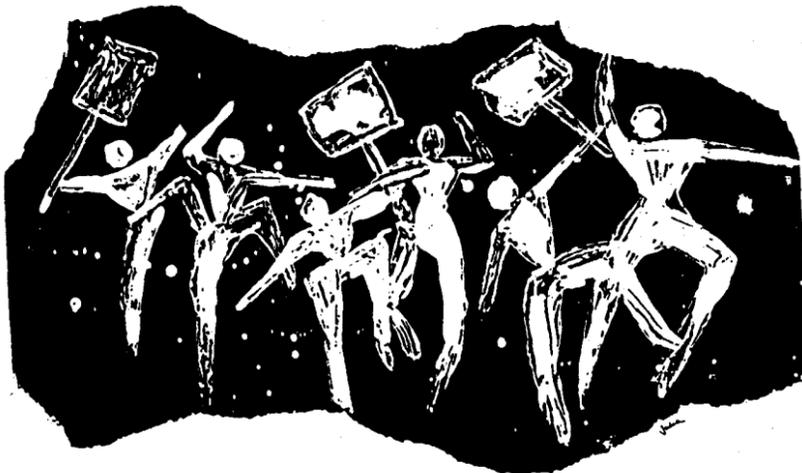
A profound critique of Levi-Strauss' Structuralism came, not from Existentialism, but from an independent Marxist anthropologist-dialectician, Stanley Diamond:

*"The ethnologist is actually saying that he is not interested in meaning (significance), which he regards as merely (and always) phenomenal. For him, the primary phenomenon is not meaning, but the non-meaning which lies behind meaning and to which, he believes meaning is reducible."*

**THE POINT IS THAT** the life-blood of the Hegelian dialectic—when it is not diluted by Existentialism but seen in its essence as a ceaseless movement of becoming, disclosing the meaning of history—is exactly what saved Hegel from the Kantian, impenetrable "Thing-in-itself" and its absolute idealism. Though Hegel may have wanted to confine history to history of thought, the single dialectic which characterizes both objectivity and subjectivity moved Hegel to objective idealism. That single dialectic became the ground for Marx's dialectic of revolution.

It was this, just this, which led proletarians to accept dialectical development, not alone for its "dynamism" but for its meaning in historic confrontation. Contrast the non-Marxist, intellectualistic, abstract approach to

1. See "Anthropology in Question" in Section 6, "The Root is Man: Critical Traditions" of *Reinventing Anthropology* (Vintage Books, Random House, 1974).



Marxist-Humanist proletarian attitude—and consider that it was precisely on the question of phenomenology. That does not mean phenomenal but the science of phenomena, of experience. I am referring to Charles Denby, the Editor of *News & Letters*, and his favorite quotation from Hegel:

*"...Enlightenment upsets the household arrangements, which spirit carries out in the house of faith, by bringing in the goods and furnishings belonging to the world of the Here and Now."—Phenomenology of Mind, p. 411.*

The whole point of Denby's interest in the Hegelian quotation was this: What does philosophy have to say on the relationship between reality and revolution? It was because he saw Hegel introducing reality into the critique of the Enlightenment that Denby's attraction to Hegelian dialectics deepened. He could then see that dialectical development signified the transformation of reality.

It is true that revolutionaries like Mao also tried to escape confrontation with actual social revolutions aimed against his state-capitalist regime which he called Communist. But the Chinese youth saw how empty was the word "Proletarian" before "Cultural Revolution." At the very height of the Cultural Revolution, the dissident, revolutionary youth in Sheng Wu-lien hit out against their rulers by calling them "the Red capitalist class." They concretized the kind of commune they aimed to have as against what existed in China by calling for one like the Paris Commune of Marx's day: "Let the new bureaucratic bourgeoisie tremble before the true socialist revolution that shakes the world," declared their Manifesto. "What the proletarian can lose in this revolution is only their chains, what they gain will be the whole world!"

Here was Mao, who had declared himself to be a Marxist-Communist and in 1949 led a great national revolution. If he was aware of how deep the uprooting of the old had to be as he openly declared the revolution to be bourgeois-democratic and the society itself to be state-capitalist, he revealed none of it to the masses. He assured them they had nothing to fear from the "Chinese who stood up," a regime that was headed by the Communist Party. By 1966, when he launched the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution," he not only declared his land to be "socialist" but designated it the "storm center of world revolution." The Chinese youth failed to be impressed as they felt his rule to be that of any capitalist (private or state) totalitarian ruler-exploiter.

**THE REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH** of the Sheng Wu-lien themselves caught the historic link to Marx's Marxism and the Paris Commune of Marx's day as the decentralized political form to work out the economic-political-social emancipation which would keep the power in the hands of the masses.

The Sheng Wu-lien statement I quoted here can be found in Chapter 5 of *Philosophy and Revolution*. Please remember, dear Youth, as I appeal to you to engage in this battle of ideas that it is not only the post-Marx Marxists we challenge but all Alternatives to Marx's Marxism. *Philosophy and Revolution* critiqued not only revolutionaries like Mao and Trotsky, but also Jean-Paul Sartre, the "Outsider Looking In." It is true that I deal with him there as Existentialist and I deal with the structuralist Communist intellectual guru, Althusser, all too briefly, very nearly dismissing him in a few footnotes. I do not mention Levi-Strauss at all. Nevertheless, they represent the very same subject—Alternatives—that I began this letter with, and later I will contrast that to a true recreation of Marxism for one's age. For us that began in 1953 with the breakthrough on the Absolute Idea. It will be easier, I believe, to dig deep into that if we look first at what we are familiar with—the Youth Revolt in this country, the FSM (Free Speech Movement) burdened by American pragmatism.<sup>2</sup> Revolutionaries though they were, they certainly resisted philosophy of revolution. Though

2. See our pamphlet on the FSM and the Negro Revolution. Philosophically, the Black dimension, especially Frantz Fanon, far from being pragmatic, worked out its critique of Hegel's concept of reciprocity in a revolutionary-dialectical manner. See his *Black Skin, White Masks* and my Letter to the Resident Editorial Board-National Editorial Board of Aug. 1, 1983.

Becoming a thought-diver

**Practicing the challenge to all alternatives to Marx's Marxism**

they had asked me to address them on Marx's Humanism, the interest was more on the subject of Alienation than on philosophy of revolution.

It was all most exciting when Mario Savio was released from jail at midnight and arrived at 2 AM in a spot several miles outside of Berkeley to hear me speak on Marx's Humanism. Though they were very interested in Humanism, and, indeed, related it to their own new life styles, Mario was the next day also going to meet [Herbert] Aptheker, because he had promised Bettina [Aptheker], who was also part of the FSM, and he was open to "all ideas" and was not the least bit interested in any Party or organization. In a word, the supposedly non-partyist, non-elitist, non-organizational person who was only for activism, activism, activism, did not see the contradiction in organizational form that lacked a philosophy of freedom and that form that was inseparable from a struggle for freedom, for revolution.

Permit me here to go back to 1953 to re-examine the process of working out, or seeing the emergence of, a new philosophic dimension. It is the year I first broke through on the Absolute Idea, removing its abstract, mystical veil and seeing it as not only a unity of theory and practice, but a totally new relationship of the two because a new historic beginning had been reached with this live movement from practice. This was the period we completely rejected both the designation of the youth as "the beat generation" and the pragmatic view of the epoch itself as "an end of ideology."

The breakthrough on the Absolute Idea helped us to perceive a new generation of revolutionaries in that so-called "beat generation" who were rejecting a world they never made; and to see in the revolts in Latin America and Africa the emergence of a Third World. Indeed, toward the end of the 1950s, retrogression and McCarthyism in the U.S. notwithstanding, we declared it to be a totally new epoch: in production (with *Workers Battle Automation*); in political freedom battles, whether that be the new Black dimension in the Montgomery Bus Boycott or the East European Freedom Fighters against Russian state-capitalism calling itself Communism; a new stage of cognition as the Hungarian Revolution highlighted it by bringing Marx's Humanist Essays onto the historic stage. The breakthrough on the Absolute Idea was not only on the movements from practice and from theory but also on ORGANIZATION, as we held that its dialectic would illuminate also the dialectic of the Party, as we had long since rejected "the party to lead" concept. We were here driven to go also to Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*, and there, as we approached the three final syllogisms in Absolute Mind and trod on ground none had ever walked before, we felt that in place of a "dialectic of the party" we were, with Hegel's Self-Thinking Idea, with the masses' Self-Bringing Forth of Liberty, face to face with a new society. After all, Marx had unchained the dialectic as he had recreated the Absolute Method as a "revolution in permanence."

**WHAT HAS MADE THIS APPEAL** to the youth appear so urgent to me is that, at one and the same time, we confront not only the objective situation of a nuclear world filled with economic recession and political retrogression as well as altogether too many

(continued on page 11)

**Brochure on The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection**



*"From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya, Marxist-Humanist Archives" is drawn from the 15,000-page Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, which is available on microfilm. Dunayevskaya entitled her papers, Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development. A descriptive brochure of the Collection is available from News & Letters for 45¢ postage.*

# Bush drives for permanent retrogression on Supreme Court

The shock of Supreme Court Justice William J. Brennan Jr.'s retirement on July 20, that is allowing Bush to continue to carry out Ronald Reagan's agenda, was followed with its devastating after-shock—President George Bush's nomination for his replacement, Judge David H. Souter. Since then the people of the U.S. have been subjected to an avalanche of disgusting lies, the most blatant being that Bush doesn't know Souter's views on abortion and that it would be "inappropriate" for the U.S. Senate to even ask.

Where Bush did tell one truth was at his press conference when he said: "You might think the whole nomination had something to do with abortion. And it's far broader than that." Indeed, Bush's aim, like Ronald Reagan's, is to transform the Supreme Court into a rubber stamp for the right wing. He wants to roll back not only women's partially won right to control our own bodies, but the rights of African-Americans, workers, individuals' rights against the state—in short, all rights and liberties that movements for freedom have been able to gain since the Civil Rights Movement erupted in the 1950s and 1960s. (See Black/Red View, p. 8.)

Souter is buddies with anti-abortion fanatic John Sununu, Bush's White House Chief of Staff. So it is not that Souter's views on the issues—abortion, civil rights, civil liberties—aren't known to Bush. What Bush hopes is that Souter's views can be kept from the rest of us until it is too late and we are saddled with another right-wing zealot for decades to come.

## SOUTER'S OMINOUS VIEWS

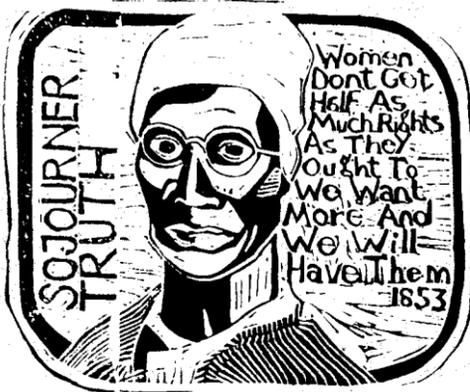
Though Bush tried hard to pick a nominee with no "paper trail," it isn't that hard to find Souter's ominous views:

- In a 1976 speech Souter called federal affirmative action rules "affirmative discrimination."
- Also in 1976-77 he urged that anti-nuclear protesters be given jail terms.
- In 1987 in a case in which Souter participated, the New Hampshire Supreme Court ruled that Gays and Lesbians may be barred from becoming adoptive or foster parents.
- Souter ruled in 1988 to deny unemployment benefits to two men aged 76 and 79 because they were not "ready, able and willing" to work full time.
- Also in 1988 Souter wrote an opinion overturning a rape conviction, ruling the trial judge had wrongly excluded evidence about the victim's behavior in the moments before the rape, stating that a state law, intended to bar testimony about a rape victim's personal life, could not be used.

What Bush did admit to knowing about Souter—and in fact repeated three times at his press conference—was that Souter is "a person who will interpret the Constitution, and in my view, not legislate from the Federal bench." This is nothing but code for saying that Souter's interpretation of the Constitution will be based on the time it was written, 1787—when most Blacks in the U.S. were slaves and women could not vote. Bush's "vision" of the future, is to turn the clock back on human freedom.

## MARSHALL SKEWERS BUSH

The only Black on the Supreme Court, Justice Thurgood Marshall, told the real truth of what Bush's appointment of Souter means when he said, "Well, I consider him (Bush) dead... This last appointment is the epitome of what he's been doing...." This skewering of Bush brings to mind Marshall's profound critique, made in 1987 during the bicentennial celebration of the U.S.



Constitution, of interpreting the Constitution as the Framers of it had intended:

"I do not find the wisdom, foresight and sense of justice exhibited by the Framers particularly profound. To the contrary, the government they devised was defective from the start, requiring several amendments, a civil war and momentous social transformation to attain the system of constitutional government... They could not have imagined, nor would they have accepted, that the document they were drafting would one day be construed by a Supreme Court to which had been appointed a woman and the descendant of an African slave. 'We the People' no longer enslave, but the credit does not belong to the Framers. It belongs to those who refused to acquiesce in outdated notions of 'liberty,' 'justice,' and 'equality,' and who strived to better them."

What the shocks of Brennan's resignation and Souter's appointment reveal is how weak is the foundation on which all our rights rest. One final shove and it all can come crashing down. Over 140 years ago Karl Marx, in his essay on the Jewish question, faced the limitations of fighting only for civil rights. As important as that fight is, if it is not extended to the fullness of "human emancipation," Marx wrote, a "revolution in permanence," it would be completely insufficient.

Our struggle has never been one for civil rights alone. It has been a fight for full freedom, for the right of women to control our bodies and minds, for new human relations between Blacks and whites, workers and intellectuals, women and men and children; in short, a new society built on new human foundations. That is our vision of the future as we fight this latest manifestation of these retrogressive, counter-revolutionary times.

—Terry Moon

# Revolt in the Ukraine

London, England—In the Ukraine it can definitely be said that a pre-revolutionary situation is in existence, although uneven in its development. After the recent elections the Popular Movement RUKH gained many seats despite the efforts of the regime to hinder it. In west Ukraine, in many government buildings, the flag of the independent Ukraine has been raised. In the east Ukraine, where there are many Russian workers, an historic turning point has been reached. The miners' strike committee made an alliance with the national democratic movement in the elections, thus halting any attempt to split the masses. There have been many efforts to launch a Russian chauvinist movement, and they have repeatedly floundered. Instead, the danger for Ukraine's democratic revolution comes from another quarter.

I was recently reading Raya Dunayevskaya's writings in the pamphlet *The Afro-Asian Revolutions* where she explained the role of a new fetter on the masses—the "radical" intellectuals as a parallel process to the labour aristocracy in advanced capitalist countries. This is the process underway in the Ukraine today. First there are many sections of the old "communist" party ranks; then we have the literary intelligentsia and the rightward movement of former dissidents. Almost a rerun of the Polish tragedy.

One fine example of the emerging conflict was when the RUKH called on the Lvov workers to strike against state repression. The workers launched a general strike, setting up factory committees. These councils are embryonic "soviets" and the leaders saw the danger. When the strike was over, the workers were told to disband. The response from the workers to those who called on their support was to keep their strike committees intact.

Now we have a new retreat. The RUKH declared after the elections that it would become a political party as a direct challenge to the Communist Party. There are mistakes in this, but they didn't even see this through, and called it off at the crunch moment.

The Ukrainian workers have been building up a new movement with great speed since the miners' strike wave of last summer. It is here that the only hope for the democratic revolution lies.

If you look at the reaction of western governments to the Lithuania crisis, then you can see how even more unwilling they are to give support to the Ukraine. It is clear as day that the capitalist class favour their Russian state-capitalist counterparts keeping the one and indivisible Russia together.

—Patrick Kane

Study how Raya Dunayevskaya's analysis of the Third World revolutions speaks to the realities of today:

• **Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions (1959)**

• **Chapter 7 of Philosophy and Revolution "The African Revolutions and the World Economy" (1973)**

to order, see ad. p. 7

# Bush's imperial foray into Gulf threatens prolonged war

(continued from page 1)

Arabia. Secretary of State James Baker took advantage of being in Russia at the time of the invasion of Kuwait to issue a joint declaration with Russia condemning Iraq, and Russia has since joined in the economic blockade of Iraq. Gorbachev's Russia is in need of Western economic aid which would be jeopardized by any economic downturn resulting from a rise in oil prices.

Russia's collusion with the U.S. has not only given Bush the green light to go into Saudi Arabia, it has also enabled him to bring to new heights the military adventurism that has become an ever-more threatening part of U.S. policy since Reagan's foray against Libya in the Gulf of Sidra in 1986. The "changed world" which that attack revealed actually had its roots in the U.S. imperialist invasion of Grenada in 1983. It is this which Reagan brought to new heights with his bombing of Tripoli, and which Bush extended with his invasion of Panama.

Far from bringing us any "new era of peace," the superpower collusion has helped pave the way to a U.S. intervention in the Middle East which can prove far more bloody than even the interventions of the 1980s. Iraq has a battle-tested army of one million men replete with chemical weapons and ballistic missiles. Pentagon analysts are already raising the possibility that an Iraqi attack on U.S. troops with chemical weapons could result in the use of nuclear weapons by the U.S.!

## COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY "ANTI-IMPERIALISM"

Hussein's weapons are not only military, however. He is also trying to make use of a powerful ideological weapon: anti-imperialism, albeit wrapped in his counter-revolutionary politics. There is fertile ground for Hussein's "anti-imperialist" rhetoric given the disdain rightly felt among the Arab masses, not only for the U.S., but for the reactionary Gulf sheikhdoms which have en-

riched themselves on oil revenues while doing little or nothing to enhance the lives of the Arab masses, whose living conditions have plummeted in the past decade. What Hussein is doing is adopting Khomeini's stance: counter-revolutionary anti-imperialism. Though Hussein was Khomeini's arch-enemy, who fought him relentlessly in an eight-year bloody war, he shares the same ideological attitude, in trying to gather support for his counter-revolutionary rule through anti-imperialist posturing.

Whatever his rhetoric, the truth is that Saddam Hussein has been a counter-revolutionary since the very start of his bloody political career. At age 22 he participated in a failed assassination attempt against Abdul-ul-Karim Qasim, leader of the July 1958 Revolution which attempted a new kind of revolution in the Middle East. That Revolution hit out against the native rulers while trying to be independent, not only of East and West, but also of Nasser's Egypt and feudal Saudi Arabia. In 1963 Hussein participated in the CIA-supported coup which brought the Ba'ath Party to power. Since gaining effective control of the Ba'ath Party in 1968, and ruling as Iraq's President since 1979, Hussein has been ruthless in attacking all opposition to his rule, be it by Kurds, Assyrians, students, striking workers or women, whom he recently saddled with a new law allowing a man to murder any woman in his family for adultery.

Bush's military intervention in the Persian Gulf is aimed not against this counter-revolutionary legacy, but rather at the resistance to oppression that has characterized masses of people, not only inside Iraq, but in the Middle East as a whole. He is determined to "stabilize" the antiquated feudal sheikhdoms, presenting this as integral to U.S. national security. He is determined to intervene anywhere in the world to defend what he calls "U.S. vital interests." He is determined, like rulers everywhere, to deflect attention from the internal caus-

es of the ever-worsening state of the U.S. economy.

There is no way to now know what double-crosses the rulers have in store for each other, whether concerning the alliances in the Arab world or the rulers' commitment to the restoration of Kuwait's independence, which Hussein has already annexed. What we do know is that the machinations of all of the rulers are an integral part of the current retrogression. That is true, not only of the U.S., Russia, West Europe and the Arab nations, but also of Israel, whose anti-Palestinian stranglehold over Gaza and the West Bank is suddenly out of the spotlight thanks to the latest events. Nor is any genuine alternative found in Arafat, who is currently scurrying around on a "peace" mission in a private jet loaned to him by Saddam Hussein, whom he recently embraced for threatening to destroy half of Israel with chemical weapons.

The opposite to this retrogression is to be found only in the struggles for freedom of masses of people, of workers, women, youth and national minorities, not only in the Middle East, but right here at home. Neither Hussein's barbaric invasion of Kuwait, nor the support Bush is receiving from Left and Right alike for his flag-waving, militarist intervention can impede the necessity for a full opposition to Bush, especially here in the U.S. It is by deepening the freedom struggles here at home, unseparated from articulating the philosophy of revolution of our time, which can project a vision of the future totally different from the one Bush or Hussein has in store for us.

So serious is the Bush-Hussein military confrontation in the Persian Gulf, and so ominous are the long-term implications of a prolonged U.S. armed presence stay in Saudi Arabia, that it becomes necessary to work out a whole new stage of anti-war activities, that do not separate what we oppose, from what we are for.

As we oppose Bush's imperial foray into the Persian Gulf, and demand the total and immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops, we must under no circumstances tail-end any state power.

## HOW TO BEGIN ANEW?

As the Draft for Marxist-Humanist Perspectives says (see July 1990 N&L) "Only six months ago, it looked as if the masses of East Europe would make Revolution the determinant in the heart of Europe. By today, however, it is the rulers who are taking the initiative in trying to re-shape the map of Europe." Never were more true words spoken. What could cause a formerly honest radical, such as Vaclav Havel, who had for more than 20 years critiqued his Communist bosses and the West, to now call for Czechoslovakia to take the "Polish Road" of marketization and austerity measures? What vision of the future did he work out? None, save human rights divorced from any kind of Humanism.

Stu Quinn  
California

This year's Marxist-Humanist Draft Perspectives related the swiftness with which the Idea of freedom moved throughout East Europe to "how much earlier the contradictions within the movements emerge today, and how fast the rulers move to exploit them before the revolution has even had the chance to complete its first act." This was confirmed by an East European correspondent who noted that the movement had lost its "primeval force."

It seems to me, that this is where the Draft Perspectives thesis makes a very profound contribution, for by its form it discloses that the real ground of self-limiting revolution is found in the "economic reality and ideology in the age of state-capitalism." In other words, it cannot be explained merely by the external threat of Russian intervention. The concept of self-limiting revolution is much too objective a development in world politics today. As the Draft Perspectives showed, Jacek Kuron's departure from Marxism with self-limiting revolution was equally a departure from Marx's philosophy of human creativity, which is the only pathway out of Poland's present economic crisis.

Lou Turner  
Chicago

The way ideology is discussed in the Perspectives is concrete for Latin America. Since Violeta Chomorro's victory in Nicaragua, I have heard discussions of whether revolution is even viable in the Third World, especially since Russia is no longer going to help. Marx's discussion of the historical context in which revolutions occur is interpreted to mean that the Latin American Revolutions were bound to fail, because they have no past history of participatory democracy! And a leader of the FMLN recently declared that anti-imperialist revolutions are a thing of the past. This has everything to do with what Dunayevskaya called Reaganism's ideological pollution on the Left itself, which the Perspectives develops as the pull of "self-limiting revolution."

Latin American solidarity activist  
Los Angeles

The battle going on today, the Perspectives makes clear, is the one between the self-limiting revolution and the creativity of cognition.

Librarian  
Detroit

The quote from Dunayevskaya's 1974 talk to the Hegel Society of America in the Draft thesis on thought "breaking through the barriers of the given," shows what her thought illuminated in Hegel. Seeing the future inherent in the present is seeing how the whole process of struggle reveals the vision and goal. Radicals bound by the ideology of the "self-limiting revolution" think they know what the result will be, and thereby cut off the process of development of revolution.

Karl Armstrong  
Los Angeles

The Draft of Perspectives indicates influences trying to co-opt the mass struggles in East Europe. It's as if the state in each case still approves or disapproves of the direction the struggles have taken. That seems to be the strategy with Ilescu whom the U.S. shakes a finger at while the state proceeds with the "free market" economy.

Student  
Berkeley

With all the talk about how corrupt individuals are to blame for the Savings & Loans crisis, as if getting rid of them will solve the crisis of capital, I think of Hegel's discussion of the corruption of the church (from *The Philosophy of History*): "That corruption was not an accidental phenomenon, it is not the mere abuse of power and domination. A corrupt state of things is very frequently represented as an 'abuse,' it is taken for granted that the foundation was good—the system, the institution faultless—but that the passion, the subjective interest, in short, the arbitrary volition of men has made use of that which in itself was good to further its own selfish ends, and that all that is required to be done is to remove these adventitious elements...[but] The corruption of the Church was a native growth."

And so it is with capitalism; not only the S&L crisis, but the HUD scandal, the long running corruption of the politicians, the police, military procurement, the Iran-contra affair, and the union bureaucrats. The corruption is a native growth.

Tom Parsons  
De Kalb, Ill.

To "begin anew" means you really have to go back and study the history of struggles for freedom, because the youth especially fall into the trap of thinking something is new when really it is stale. Nobody can tell me that people are dying in the streets for capitalism! There is something new in our age when "self-limiting revolution" comes in so soon, and I think it has to do with what Dunayevskaya called our age of Absolutes. The way out is with Marx's philosophy of "revolution in permanence." We have to break philosophy out of the schools where it is dying.

Student  
New York

## 45 YEARS AFTER HIROSHIMA



We are in the midst of a great turning point in history. The superpowers of the USSR and the USA praise it as "the end of the cold war," but definitely it is not. It is nothing but a tragedy and humiliation to the workers and people in the world. The USSR and East European countries are being overrun by the commodity and capital export markets of the capitalist bourgeoisie, while the people face a fierce storm of unemployment and inflation. The capitalists, taking this as "the end of communism," are so puffed up that—contrary to their cry for "arms reduction" they are pushing forward to high-technological arms expansion, while U.S. capitalism appears as "the military police of the world" with the acquiescence of Gorbachev, and Japanese capitalism steps forward to the reconstruction of "Dai-Toa-Kyo-Ei-Ken" Plan accompanied by Roh Tae Woo of Korea. In the beautiful name of "peace" we see nothing but the reconstruction of the world dominion by imperialism.

This is why we held the 28th International Anti-War Assemblies in Japan on August 5, 45 years after atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We call on all comrades all over the world to unite to break through the crisis of the present world.

Zen-gaku-ren,  
Kaku-maru-ha  
Tokyo, Japan

## YOUTH AS REVOLUTIONARY

I've noticed at several rallies, there were many, many children there, ready to fight these battles alongside their parents. When I was 8 years old, I didn't know what a rally was and if anyone suggested that I leave the television set on Saturday to do anything else other than eat, I'd have a fit! What has these children out here on these front lines, fighting these heavy political issues? I spoke to two boys, aged 7 and 8, and asked them what they thought of

# Readers' Views

Reagan and Bush. One said they both tell lies and don't care about poor people. The other said, "I don't like Bush because he's prejudiced."

I am a youth myself (23 years old), and I get an emotional high from the rallies knowing that I am at least trying to make things better. I have read about Raya Dunayevskaya's philosophy of Marxist-Humanism, and know that she made a category of not only youth but even young children as revolutionary. What does this tell us about what is happening in America today?

Gloria Radlez  
Los Angeles

## BATTLE OF IDEAS IN FEMINISM



Readers of News & Letters may like to know of a proposed conference: "I Am Your Sister: Forging Global Connections Across Differences"—a conference celebrating Audre Lorde and her work. It is to be held Oct. 5-8 in Boston. What is so exciting about it—especially after all the racism that divided the National Women's Studies Association Conference in June that you wrote about in the July issue of N&L—is their commitment to having 50% of conference participants be women who are Black, of color or impoverished.

They need money to put on such an important conference. To help, make checks out to: I Am Your Sister and send them to: P.O. Box 269, Astor Station, Boston, MA 02123.

Women's Liberationist  
Chicago

The crucial point Terry Moon raises in "Racism splinters women's conference" (July 1990 N&L) was posed as a question: "Has the NWSA administration accepted the ground of this alienating, racist, sexist society, rather than taking on the challenge to transform it?" As I see it, the NWSA is reflecting the self-limiting concept of feminism which is permeating the women's liberating movement today. This was demonstrated at the only workshop on "socialist feminism" offered at the conference, where the discussion centered on academia and "accessible language" rather than new human relations.

I finally challenged the participants to take up Marx's concept of Man/Woman. I felt a strong pull in that room to ignore anything said by a man. But afterward, two Colombian women came up to me asking to hear more about Marx and feminism. They said that not only does the NWSA leadership remind them of their government, but they have had a hard time finding truly revolutionary feminists in the U.S. to talk with.

Julia Jones  
Illinois

NOW wants to start a new political party to win abortion rights. If we have to think about these kinds of organization before the revolution, then it will be a long time before getting to revolution. If we have a party for labor and a party for women and another for women of color and so on, it will be long time before having the revolution we all need.

Black feminist  
Oakland

## RACISM'S GLOBAL REACH

While visiting Prague, I was riding on a subway car in the middle of the day near the city center when three or four young Czech toughs surrounded a young Vietnamese man, pushing, grabbing and threatening him. When some Czech people noticed and began to talk, the racists came over and threatened us too. One of them told my Czech friend, "I hate the African people." He may have been so ignorant that he thought Vietnamese were African.

When the train came to its last stop, the racists grabbed the Vietnamese by

the arm as if to take him away somewhere, at which point a crowd gathered around, arguing with the racists, who finally stalked away angrily. It was chilling to witness such an incident, one of an increasing number of racist attacks throughout Europe today.

K. A.  
Chicago

In Florence this summer I was pleased to see signs of a lively anti-racist movement. The wall of my hotel was decorated with "No al razzismo" (No to racism), in spray paint. A union (Federation of Workers in Trade, Tourism and Services) was having a drive to inform immigrant workers of their rights. There were posters for a public meeting titled (in Italian, of course), "Florence isn't Pretoria—for an open and multicolored city." African street traders were to be seen everywhere on the tourist beat, and whatever their difficulties still have their dignity.

Richard Bunting  
Oxford

Many travel from Mexico to the U.S. expecting to find something better. Then they find people sleeping in the streets and begging for food here, too. But there's a new problem here—racism. In Mexico we don't make a distinction between Black and Brown, and I didn't understand the racism when I came here. I think now that it is promoted by the system that exists here. The term we most commonly associate with the U.S. is "decadent capitalism." It is imperialism in its final stage.

Teacher  
visiting from Mexico

## OUR READERS RESPOND

Because I'm a prisoner and "unemployed" at the moment I can't afford to pay for a sub, but I am very interested in publications dealing with feminism, Marxism, anarchism and political struggle in general, and would gladly share anything you could send with other interested parties.

Prisoner  
Washington State

I am interested in getting a copy of your Marxist-Humanist paper because a spirit of fair play seems lacking in our present capitalist system. I am interested in peacefully changing society for the better. There are alternative ways of "running" this country and the best way is through education. I'm starting with myself.

New reader  
Normal, Ill.

I have been receiving N&L for more than a year, and it has helped my studies on Marxism and contemporary philosophy. Dunayevskaya's *Marxism and Freedom and Philosophy and Revolution* have helped me understand the workers' plight and what is happening in the world today, especially the massacre in China last year and the ongoing so-called Gorbachev Revolution. Thank you.

Philosophy student  
Philippines

The more I read Raya Dunayevskaya's *Philosophy and Revolution*, the more I see that genuine Marxism is a philosophy of human self-actualization and self-realization. Marxist-Humanism is definitely the philosophy of the future.

Latin America solidarity activist  
Chicago

I'd like to thank Eugene Walker and Lou Turner for their talks at Northern Illinois Univ. last semester. Their incisive analysis of history and the political climate in the world was a breath of fresh air. The challenge to examine new philosophic ideas in the context of radical political change was most timely. It reminded me of what I had been missing by letting my subscription to N&L lapse. Please renew my subscription and accept my donation to your Appeal.

Humanist  
De Kalb, Ill.

**THE MIDDLE EAST IN CRISIS**

We began an effort in January 1990 to improve the conditions of juvenile political prisoners, the children of the Intifada, in Hasharon Prison, where about 100 minors aged 14 to 18 are kept. They are mostly from the annexed East Jerusalem, and as such are citizens of Israel. We encountered serious cases of violence against minors, insufficient food supply, and denial of elementary rights like medical treatment and exercise time. In addition to the Palestinian minors, there are also juvenile Jewish criminal prisoners whose conditions are better, but who are also subjected to serious abuse.

Pressure from outside Israel is very effective. We are asking readers to send telegrams and letters protesting the harsh conditions in Hasharon Prison. They should be addressed to: Shaul Lavy, Head of Prison Authorities, 4 Hahistadrut St., Jerusalem 94230, Israel. More detailed information is available from us.

**Committee for Juvenile Political Prisoners**  
PO Box 23649  
Tel-Aviv 69177, Israel

A big issue in Israel now is the immigration of Jews from the USSR. There are many problems. They were here all the time, but the new arrivals have brought them into the open. The main one is housing—there are no cheap flats to rent. Both husband and wife have to work—one salary is to live on and the other to pay for a flat. Since new immigrants get money to pay rent for a year in advance, landlords prefer to rent to them. Another problem is unemployment, which will soon grow worse.

But the internal problem is Arab-Israeli relations. Until there is a Palestinian state, there is no hope for peace. Israel must talk to the PLO, not out of love or friendship but because unless we do they will be our enemies for eternity.

**Woman activist**  
Tel-Aviv

The invasion of Kuwait by Iraq reinforces the point you have been making for several years now, that superpower collusion won't lead to a more peaceful

world. History tells us that when the superpowers call a temporary truce in their power struggle in order to put their own houses in order, all sorts of mighty mice among the world's regional power players begin to try to flex their muscles. It was true of the Shah of Iran in the early 1970s, and it is true of Saddam Hussein today. Too bad it takes events like this to awaken some people from their illusions.

**Middle Eastern observer**  
New York

This past month, some friends and I were involved in collecting aid for the victims of the Iranian earthquake. To our shock and dismay, only one month after the earthquake, not only all U.S. relief agencies but even Iranian dissident solidarity committees have stopped sending material aid to the Iranian people. Some Iranian dissident groups in exile are only sending medicine and money to Iran, and some are sending this aid via the murderous Iranian government which has no intention of helping the people! This is unbelievable when you realize that no fewer than 50,000 people have died and 500,000 people have been left homeless after the earthquake. The attitude toward Iranian earthquake victims is inhuman.

**Iranian revolutionary**  
Chicago

**CULTURE,  
RACE,  
AND  
CENSORSHIP**



As one who appreciates different incarnations of "Rap," I was impressed by John Alan's cool-headed thinking about the contradictions in the rap scene. From Gil Scott Heron's jazz rap to the Reggae DJs, to the Venezuelan storyteller-poets, to the go-go sound in Washington, DC, to today's HIP-HOP and message-rap—all have shown a fluid connection to African oral and musical traditions. But there have been twists and turns along the way.

African tribal traditions had and have

internal checks on behavior in order to maintain certain levels of inter-personal respect. Let's all use our creativity, not just to reflect society's abuses, but to challenge them!

**Feminist music-lover**  
Los Angeles

In the way the counter-culture reacts against the dominant culture it becomes a part of it, a product of it. John Alan did a wonderful job exposing both the racism and sexism that characterizes it and the market mentality that is not limited to music but seen in movies and many other forms.

**Old Politico**  
Detroit

N&L doesn't include enough on pop music and poetry, which has a long tradition related to expressing and recording the experiences of the working class. At times N&L seems dull and irrelevant to the lives of the workers it seeks to reach. Yet it gives a unique American view of the world and counters the dominant ideology. Its theoretical articles and news deserve to reach many more readers.

**Longtime reader**  
England

**MARX'S 1841 NEW BEGINNING**

I noticed your article on Marx in 1841 in the July Issue. It's always good to read Marx. I read him when in high school. But the Communist Party in Costa Rica doesn't want anyone to read Marx, because they don't want people to think for themselves. It's good to see Marx discussed so openly.

**Young Black woman**  
Costa Rica

It was important to have Raya Dunayevskaya's 1981 letter on Marx's 1841 Doctoral Thesis in the July issue. I was wrong when I used to relate the importance of what Marx was doing in that thesis merely to his youth; he was 23 years old. What happened to the other young Hegelians? Why did there turn out to be only one "Marx" among them?

Now I think what Raya was saying was something she wrote a little later: "What I am driving at is the creative

nature of Marx's mind." That is key not only for studying the Marx of 1841 but for us to grapple with "How to Begin Anew?" now. For me it is both hearing Marx think and hearing Raya think that is important to us today.

**Franklin Dmitryev**  
Chicago

**VOICES OF LABOR**

As a maintenance worker, I know that machines are treated more humanly than workers. The use of machines is shifted to preserve the life of the machine, but workers are used up and tossed on the scrap heap. That is "Business as usual." Under capitalist labor relations, the rulers attempt to take away our ability to think.

**Black worker**  
California

Everyone, especially all the politicians, are hot now on "non-violence." They blame the workers—and the Blacks in South Africa—for "violence," while they run the most violent operations of all. Since we've been on strike against Greyhound, they've accused our union of racketeering and they're even blaming the company's bankruptcy on "our" violence. Meanwhile that scab driver who killed a striker—nothing has happened to him. And now we have NLRB rules to follow—only two pickets at an entrance. Sure, we have the "right to strike," but it means nothing because they can legally dilute our force as strikers, while they hire permanent replacements.

**Greyhound striker**  
Los Angeles

I thought you'd be interested in what has happened at Ketema since the Black worker in anodizing had his face burned by acid, due to a foreman's order in April. The company fired the worker! And still the union did nothing! Instead, anodizing and foundry workers had to sit through a lecture on why not to mix acids and bases. As one foundry worker put it, "What they should tell us is how to avoid mixing stupidity and a foreman."

**S.Q.**  
Glendale

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## Black World

## Ethiopia-Eritrea

(continued from page 1)

The recent Bush-Gorbachev communique issued at the Washington summit in May, calling for a regional security conference for the Horn of Africa, was only the latest in a long history of imperialist interventions. This time it has taken the form of superpower collusion, which would bolster such despotic leaders on the verge of collapse, as Siad Barre of Somalia, General Bashir of Sudan, President Moi of Kenya and Mengistu himself.

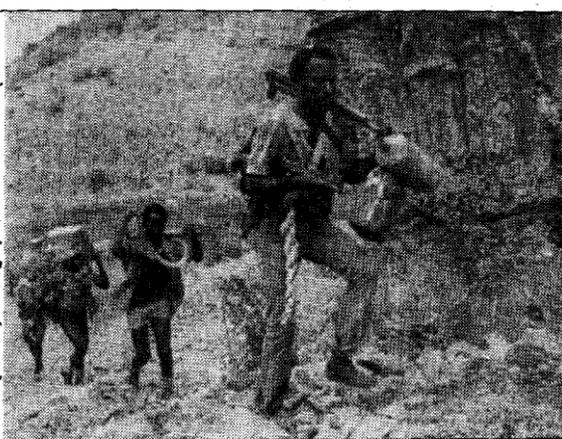
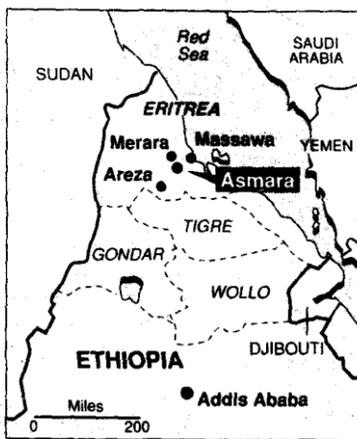
Moreover, Ethiopia's resumption of relations with Israel, following recent reductions in Russian military aid, came at the same time the U.S. established relations with the EPLF through Bush's Black representative James Cheek, former president of Howard University and Reagan appointee as charges d'affaires in Addis. Cheek continues to carry out U.S. policy in the Ethiopian conflict from his post as U.S. ambassador to neighboring Sudan.

### AFRICA'S CONTRADICTIONARY EMERGENCE

The distinctive nature of the Eritrean National Question has its roots in the contradictory emergence of Africa from colonialism. Haile Selassie, the Imperial Emperor of Ethiopia, sponsored the formation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1962-63, the same period in which the United Nations illegally ceded control of Eritrea to him. With his insertion of the clause on "non-interference in the internal affairs of member states" into the OAU charter, the Eritrean question was effectively abandoned by the radical Casa-blanca bloc of the OAU led by Ghana's Nkrumah.

Haile Selassie's overthrow in September 1974 also signaled the expulsion of his American and Israeli allies. These were replaced by Russian, East European and Cuban forces and military advisers in 1977, as the Derg resumed the emperor's genocidal war against Eritrean self-determination. Both Russia and Cuba had supported the Eritrean struggle, until new geo-political opportunities intervened for Russia's global reach. Eritrea is situated along the Middle East oil lanes.

Mengistu's "anti-imperialism" won him the ideological support of most of the international Left, as well as



Eritrean guerrillas carrying equipment toward the front for a battle with Ethiopian troops.

Russia and Cuba. Whereas Eritrean self-determination against the imperialist regime of Haile Selassie had been supported by Russia, Cuba and the Left invoking the principle of self-determination of nations, after 1974, these same supporters turned against Eritrea with the Stalinist epithet that it was "objectively reactionary." This substitution of Russian imperialism for American imperialism demonstrates the violent contradictions that had become ingrained in post-Marx Marxist thinking on the National Question.

### PEASANT REVOLTS, NEW BEGINNINGS

Mengistu's abandonment of "Marxist-Leninism" for capitalism in March led to peasant revolts against his forced collectivization program in Shoa province revealing the revolutionary class dimension within the national consciousness of the Ethiopian masses. Peasant revolts and land seizures have spread through Shoa, catching both the government and the TPLF by surprise. Indeed, the situation this year has approached the 1974-75 crisis following the fall of Haile Selassie, when peasants seized land from feudal landlords.

For its part, the EPLF has begun the arduous work of reconstruction right within the process of carrying out its 30 year war of national liberation. Whole hospitals have been dug out of the sides of mountains, modern pharmaceutical plants operate in liberated areas, workshops nestled in ravines manufacture everything, from sandals to textbooks to pasta, using power generated from converted automobile engines and captured Russian tanks.

By its practice the liberation movement has shown that the struggle is as much to overcome the social contradictions in traditional African society, where women are treated as chattel and where illiteracy and disease predominate, as it is a struggle against Ethiopian imperialism. Indeed, one of the principal achievements of the Eritrean struggle, its focus on the self-emancipation of the African woman, illustrates that there can be no division in the dialectics of liberation between means and ends, between the self-determination of the subject of revolution and the self-determination of nations. That and the establishment of revolutionary democracy in post-independent Eritrea will surely disclose new contradictions that not only the experience but the needed philosophy of liberation must overcome.

## Prelude to Duvalier's return?

*Editor's note: The following report from our Haitian correspondent was dispatched before the recent return to Haiti of Roger Lafontant, the former head of the Tontons Macoute, and Williams Regala, a top army officer under Duvalier. Their return, along with that of other prominent Duvalierists, has fueled rumors that the Pascale-Trouillot government is allowing the ground to be set for the counter-revolutionary return of Duvalier himself.*

**Port-au-Prince, Haiti**—Since the resignation of General Prosper Avril on March 10, Ertha Pascale-Trouillot has been head of state. What then is the balance sheet of this government after 120 days in office?

In the area of insecurity, the situation remains unchanged. Death squads continue to terrorize the civilian population. They rape, steal and kill. On June 5, death squads burglarized a shop in Mariani and stole \$5000. On June 13, armed bandits got more than \$3000, stolen from a grocery store.

In the area of human rights, there has been a totally negative record, because section heads continue to sow fear among the peasants. In Port-De-Paix, rural section heads supported by soldiers arrested and savagely beat up peasants who were protesting against the high cost of living. Around 15 of these peasants were also imprisoned.

In the Artibonite region, an altercation between peasants on the one hand, and a section chief and soldiers on the other, resulted in eight deaths and a dozen injuries.

Many observers continually criticize the Minister of the Interior, Maitre Joseph Maxi, former president of the League for Human Rights. Today, he is in complicity with the death squads which terrorize the population. In the government, corruption also continues to run rampant.

—Renan Hédouville  
Correspondent

## Indignant Heart

for Denby

I traveled perhaps a little  
A dusty journey along your footpaths  
The echoing voices of the South  
Running deep into your veins, your muscular veins  
That ran the hammer into freedom songs  
The masters' whips have left its scars  
In your 'indignant heart'  
Your labour sweats on the bosom of automation  
Alas! Oasis on the desert of labour floors  
Allow me to quench my thirsty heart  
For I dare to journey your long distant footpaths  
Even without your gallant hammer  
Snatched by your valiant comrades  
'Indignant heart'  
You took refuge in struggle  
And bear witness to the 'civilization on trial'  
But when the court sits again  
I will scramble for your seat  
And raise high the banner of humanism.

—Ba Karang

## Azanian exile on Mandela

*Editor's note: The day after Nelson Mandela's appearance at a rally of 80,000 in Los Angeles, a small gathering called by Black student activists was held in a park to discuss the needed direction. Here are excerpts from the talk by an exiled Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) trade union organizer.*

**Los Angeles, Cal.**—The conditions of liberation in South Africa center on land, on the total dismantling of apartheid and on internationalism against all imperialisms. We condemn any notion that this struggle must be put on the back burner while the ANC (African National Congress) is negotiating with the South African government. Bush and Gorbachev are obviously wooing the ANC.

Mandela's praise of President de Klerk for his alleged "integrity" is an insult to us. It is also an insult to see Mandela honoring John F. Kennedy, the enemy of African self-determination. Remember Lumumba? Remember the Bay of Pigs? Not to mention the arrest of Mandela himself? We welcome Mandela's release, but do so not in isolation. All political prisoners must be released. But even this would not mean the liberation of the people of Azania. Mandela has come back to a bigger prison.

In Los Angeles, State Representative Maxine Waters refused to let our representatives speak at any Mandela events. Mayor Bradley, who gave the key to the city to the South African consulate, now turns around and makes a duplicate of that key and gives it to Mandela.

Black Consciousness does not mean racial exclusivity. It means rising up and attaining self-determination, taking a self-assertive position against white rule. Black politicians fall too easily into the liberal notion of fearing Black unity as "racist."

In my experience as a BCM trade union organizer, I heard over and over from people I met that what they want is the land; not reform, not only the end of apartheid, but the power to determine their own future. This question is raised all over the world, throughout the Middle East, Latin America, and Soviet Union's republics.

Mandela is making a mistake when he says he doesn't want to interfere in the "internal affairs" of other countries. Racism and oppression are not a local issue. Self-determination for Africans is a world issue. Americans have embraced me and my struggle, and we can't divorce our struggles as Africans from struggles everywhere. Blacks in Azania have a close relationship to American Black struggles which have been a major inspiration for us.

When we ask for help we don't make demands that people here "pay for our liberation." We say, join us and be part of the struggle for freedom. That is not an "internal affair."  
—Exiled Azanian trade unionist

## Black/Red View

## Civil rights under siege

by John Alan

Just prior to President Bush's rush to nominate the little-known Federal judge, David H. Souter, to replace the retired liberal Justice William Brennan on the U.S. Supreme Court, (see editorial, p. 5), the hottest political contest between the Democrats and Republicans in the Senate was over the 1990 Civil Rights Bill that would counter what the Reagan Supreme Court had done to reduce the effectiveness of affirmative action.

President Bush and Republican Senator Robert Dole were quick to denounce the 1990 Civil Rights Bill as a "quota bill." By placing the stamp of "quota" on this bill, Bush and Dole have established their ground for its veto. At the same time, they have sent a coded but clear racist/sexist message to those reactionary forces that are planning or are now engaged in legal contests against affirmative action, that the White House is on their side.

### EROSION OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Some of these contested affirmative action agreements are in their second decade. Others have taken almost a decade of negotiation and legal maneuvering before an agreement could be arrived at, such as the recent agreement with the San Francisco Fire Department that was immediately challenged by the all-white firefighters union. Affirmative action agreements are now in jeopardy because the present Reagan Supreme Court has opened a loophole allowing anyone later employed and not a party of the original agreement, to contest any affirmative action settlement.

The purpose of the 1990 Civil Rights Act is to protect affirmative action programs from this type of legal erosion. In this sense the bill is not an historic act. It brings forth no new concrete movement toward new human relations in light of the grim realities of the economic crisis within the American Black world.

However, legal rights, for which masses of Black and white people have fought and died, cannot be ejected

from the process of our long struggle for equality in this country. Neither can specific legal rights for Black Americans be separated from the meaning and practice of civil rights in the country. In his book *Fettered Freedom*, Russel B. Nye pointed out that the merging of the anti-slavery movement with civil liberties concretized such American freedoms as the freedom of the press, the freedom of speech and the right to protest.

### BLACK CIVIL RIGHTS NEVER SECURED

Civil rights has been a long, historic and continuing struggle for Black Americans, lasting more than 200 years. But in spite of the achievements of the Civil Rights Movement these rights have never been secure.

During the last decade the Reagan and Bush administration have made the curtailment of Black rights a political goal. Though they have not been totally successful, they were able to put these rights under a state of siege, showing the vulnerability of civil rights in this class/racist society. At the center of this conflict are the American Black masses striving to concretize their human rights while the American state and society seeks to change them into abstractions.

Thus, the real living principle of Black Revolution, starts from the limits of bourgeois rights, in order to oppose them. The consequences of these limits manifest themselves not just in constitutional retrogressionism, but in the reality of Black life, in Chicago, Detroit, and East Oakland, just to mention a few places. The problem is not just preserving our political rights, but how to go beyond them.

Writing directly on this point, Raya Dunayevskaya in her "A 1980s View of the Two-Way Road Between the U.S. and Africa" (Fourth edition of *American Civilization on Trial*, 1983) stated that Reagan's retrogressionism makes it impossible to leave history "at the factual stage." We can no longer afford to separate a philosophy of liberation from the struggle for freedom. "The absolute challenge to our age is the concretization of Marx's concept of 'revolution in permanence.'"

## Book Review: Science and humanism in Marx

*Marx's Theory of Scientific Knowledge* by Patrick Murray (Humanities Press International, Atlantic Highlands, NJ, 1988).

On the surface this work has some themes compelling to a Marxist-Humanist: 1) there is no separation between the young and mature Marx, from his 1841 Dissertation to *Capital*, and 2) what characterized all of Marx's development is the integrality of his view of science and his humanism. In a closely argued way Murray unfolds his perspective on this continuity. He brings in Marx's insistence in his Dissertation, against those who picked at Hegel's accommodation, that to go beyond a total philosophy like Hegel's one must reveal the accommodation's "innermost root in an inadequacy or inadequate fashioning of his principle itself" (p. 20).

In other words, Murray says Marx achieves an "immanent critique of Hegel's system" (p. 7) in his *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (1843) and his "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic" of 1844. Murray focuses on the integral connection between these early works and Marx's greatest theoretical work, *Capital*. But it is just there, in discussing Marx's connection to Hegel and how that connection is revealed in *Capital*, that we see this work's most serious shortcomings.

### EPISTEMOLOGY VS. MARX'S HUMANISM

The first problem is that Murray views Marx's *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* as Marx's critical philosophic point of departure (*Experimentum Crucis*). Murray skips the very focus of the whole 1844 Critique—Hegel's negation of the negation as the principle Marx embraces and "refashions" and which he called "the only true positive" that, when recognized in unity with actual history, can become "positive Humanism, beginning from itself." Murray never gets to Marx's beginning with "the greatness of Hegel's *Phenomenology*, and...its final result" where negation of the negation is spelled out as the "self-production of man as a process...as externalization, and as transcendence of this externalization...."

Murray is oblivious to Marx's "refashioning" and preservation of Hegel's wholly immanent "moving and creating principle." He calls Marx an empiricist who was returning to the "epistemological position of Kantian philosophy" (p. 117). He claims Marx was reintroducing the Kantian barrier between "the way things are in themselves and the way things are for us" (p. 118), i.e., accepting what "Hegel denounced as a subjectivistic denial of the power of thought to grasp the true or ab-

solute" (p. 117).

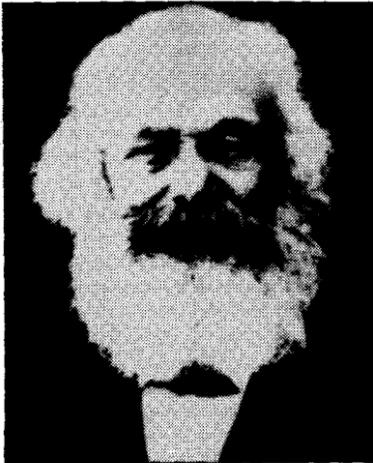
Nothing could be further from the truth. Marx criticizes Hegel for not seeing the human being as "directly a natural being." It is Hegel who must create an empty otherness, a thingness beyond, thus revealing an "extant Empiricism." For Marx, "it is not the act of positing which is the subject. It is the subjectivity of objective essential capacities, whose action must, therefore, also be objective." When Marx writes that the human "objective essence is Nature," he "means that in the act of positing, it does not depart from its 'pure activity' in order to create the object, its objective product confirms merely its objective activity...." While Murray sees evidence everywhere of Marx's "return to epistemology" where there is none, he misses Marx's new concept of objectivity.

When he comes to *Capital*, Murray sticks totally to Hegel's "theory of essence": "Marx criticized Hegel largely by reapplying the critique of *Verstand* [understanding] to Hegel's own thought, at the level of the logic of his total system" (p. 99). From Marx's "theory of value," Murray goes, not where Marx does—to a separate discussion of the commodity form in his philosophy of the fetishism of commodities—but to Marx's "theory of money."

### MARX'S FETISHISM OF COMMODITIES

Marx returns again to discuss the commodity, but this time as fetish, in order to reveal how capitalist reality is subjectively reproduced and to break altogether with the posture of essence as a basis for going beyond capitalism. Marx's view, that under commodity production "social relations...appear as what they are...material relations between persons and social relations between things," exposes the limits of philosophic postures where "men try to...get behind the secret of their own social product." For Marx, only a new "principle of freedom" (Hegel's description of the Notion) will do: "the veil is not removed from the countenance of the social life-process...until it becomes production by freely associated men."

One cannot possibly skip over Marx on the fetishism of commodities and comprehend his concept of science. Marx changed this section substantially for the French edition (of *Capital*), adding this simple formulation on the commodity form as the root of all capitalist reality: "Whence, then, arises the enigmatic character of the product of labour, as soon as it assumes the form of a commodity? Clearly, it arises from this form itself." Marx told even German readers to consult the French



edition because it "possesses a scientific value independent of the original."

In isolating the simple form after the Paris Commune, Marx's scientific knowledge makes clear its own limits. That limit is that knowledge is sacrificed in the subject's passage to freedom, i.e. it makes clear that there is no independent actuality, including knowledge, confronting the subject in the passing to freedom. It is the "power of abstraction," as Marx puts it in the Preface to *Capital*, which overcomes the 2000-year struggle that the mind has had with the commodity. Far from rejecting the Hegelian "power of thought" as Murray claims, Marx revolutionized and never stopped developing that power.

—Ron Brokmeyer

## Protest rallies in Kenya

The corrupt, authoritarian regime of Daniel arap Moi in Kenya is on the ropes. Even its longtime backer, American imperialism, is publicly edging away, although Bush did manage to release \$10 million in military aid on July 5. Since then Congress has frozen the rest of Moi's aid allocation in response to massive human rights violations.

On July 4, Moi arrested two former Cabinet ministers, Kenneth Mabilia and Charles Rubia, both of them also established conservative leaders of the most numerous ethnic group, the Gikuyu. They had been demanding a return to a multi-party system. A few days later, a rally of thousands protesting their detention turned into an anti-government riot. The protesters included not only students, but also many working people from Nairobi's wretched slums. Moi's police killed 20 people.

This newest crisis actually began in February when anti-government rioting broke out after the mysterious assassination of Robert Ouko, a prominent establishment politician from the second largest ethnic group, the Luo. But at this point the riots were confined to the smaller Luo group, which had also seen one of its other key leaders, Tom Mboya, killed by unknown people. The 79-year-old veteran Luo leader Oginga Odinga has also begun to speak out. He once posed a Left alternative to Jomo Kenyatta, in the early days of independence. Today, his son Raila Odinga is under arrest.

Where Kenyatta offered patronage to the Gikuyu, his own ethnic group, while excluding the Luo from power, his anointed successor Moi has in recent years frozen out the Gikuyu as well, while favoring his own tiny ethnic group, the Karenjin.

Today Moi is facing broad opposition which includes, in addition to bourgeois politicians with ties to America, underground leftist student-worker groups such as Mwakenya. Far from having died out during the repression of the last few years, Mwakenya suddenly reappeared in May with leaflets calling for the ouster of Moi and his ruling party, KANU. The internationally known Gikuyu Marxist playwright Ngugi wa Thiong'o has publicly identified himself for the first time as a Mwakenya member, thus becoming its official spokesperson.

## Canadian Mohawks defend their land and culture

*Kanesatake, Quebec, Canada*—At 6:00 A.M., July 11, 1990, the Municipality of Oka, situated near Montreal, Quebec, along with the Quebec Provincial Police, attacked the Mohawk Men, Women and Children of the Native/Mohawk Community of Kanesatake. Kanesatake is one of the seven communities which are part of the Mohawk Nation, which is in turn part of the Iroquois Confederacy known as the Haudenosaunee. The attack consisted of the firing of flares and tear gas into the Mohawk Territory against the resisters of an EXPANSION OF THE OKA GOLF COURSE.

The resistance of the Mohawk Community of Kanesatake is based on the refusal of the Native/Mohawk People to surrender to the pleasure of the French municipality of Oka. To uproot, relocate and desecrate a burial ground of the Native/Mohawk People, cut and destroy Pine trees which are located on the proposed expansion site of the OKA GOLF COURSE is considered a hypocritical attitude of Canada, and the Province of Quebec which has stated its own uniqueness of culture, within its language and its way of life.

The Canadian government and the Province of Quebec has continually failed to respect the culture, government and basic fundamental rights of the Native/Mohawks to their territorial homelands and have consciously and intentionally pursued a policy of extermination of the Native People—Mohawk People of Kanesatake. The expansion of the OKA GOLF COURSE, with its proposed sacrilegious acts against the Native/Mohawk traditional beliefs, had forced the Native People/Mohawk People to erect barricades as the only way to protect their ancestral burial grounds and their Pine trees situated on land stolen from them by the Province of Quebec.

With the lack of a Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs, whose responsibility is to protect the Mohawk People from invasions by foreign governments, it is the responsibility of all Mohawks to appeal to any and all People who value Human Life and rights to intercept this deadly attack immediately.

—Mohawk Warriors Society of Akwesasne

In support of our people in Kanesatake, the traditional people of Kahnawake have blocked off routes 132 and 138 as well as the Mercier bridge. The governments of Quebec and Canada must come to understand that none of our Mohawk People stand alone in their struggles for jurisdiction and sovereignty over our lands. This is the third attack by the Canadian and American governments on our territories. This cannot be solved by police action but needs nation-to-nation dialogue. Meanwhile we stand in defense of our lands.

—Mohawk Nation at Kahnawake

## From behind the wall — American civilization on trial

Philosophy is really what I'm in search of, because I have already been revolutionized. I like the way Raya Dunayevskaya described herself as "born a revolutionary...that is, you don't know that you're a revolutionary, but you're opposed to everything." I opposed a lot as a child, so in that sense I was born a revolutionary. But like I said, it's the philosophy that's missing.



I read a lot of the pamphlet *Frantz Fanon, Soweto and American Black Thought* a few years ago. I objected to a certain part of it on the Civil Rights Movement, and where it referred to Reaganism "turning the clock back on what was gained through the turbulent 1960s on civil rights."

First, anything we think we got can be gone with the stroke of a pen. And let Ronald Reagan serve as an indicator of what is to become of the David Dukes of this country.

My other objection is—what do I care about civil rights when there's no respect for my rights as a human being? This was an era when public officials led the way in violent, fatal attacks against human beings. Our Brothers and Sisters, and I should say, the John Browns of this country, were petitioning the same immoral serpents which classified 100% human beings as 3/5 human in their Constitution. Why deal with the likes of them?

American civilization was put on trial. It should have been found guilty and the execution should have been the task of making revolutionary change. Some people saw the need for that change, and even prophesied today's conditions if radical changes weren't made.

This relates to South Africa's struggle, which must be for total liberation. I think Mandela became the strength of the South African people when he was imprisoned. He went to prison because of his convictions of humanity. So, if apartheid has to go, and we know it does, why is there a need for negotiations. That means de Klerk wants to keep some parts of apartheid and Mandela is willing.

Apartheid has to go and there's no room for flexibility. I heard Winnie Mandela in a speech say, "I know

you will be our comrades in arms." I would be the first to be on the front line, but for total liberation, or not at all. I have seen what negotiations have done for oppressed people in this country.

The will of the people of South Africa is stronger than some religious crap which is the base of white supremacy. Apartheid is like looking in a photo album of the 1960s. And if there's a compromise in the fight for total liberation, then it will be like looking in a mirror. That's what, in my opinion, makes our struggles one.

—Black inmate for total liberation

Many point to the success of the various government counter-intelligence program operations as the reason why we are in a situation of leadership by default. With so many politically developed people murdered, imprisoned or exiled in operations like Chaos, Newkill, Zorro, Garden Plot, etc., I too feel that the profound political leadership crisis we are in now can be traced to the dozens of assassinations that began in earnest with Malcolm. With all that said and generally agreed upon, what next?

The political vacuum left by Malcolm nationally and Fred Hampton locally left a void that was filled by Jesse Jackson, the Al Sharptons of this world, Farrakhan, and those fools in Chicago's city council. That same phenomenon took place behind the wall.

Our approach has always been to view our struggles behind the wall, not in isolation from the broader international struggle between socialism and imperialism. Of course, we have had to combat the tendency of some brothers who act as if the work we do here and our occasional victories were all important.

Our newsletters have been very effective over the years, inside and out. However, the ebb and flow nature of our situation, like any long struggle, has left us quite alone and isolated during some periods. In here, that leadership void was and is quickly filled by the most reactionary elements of the various gangs.

Our approach at the present is to dig deeper. It is a continuation of my commitment of the past 19 years that I continue to write, struggle in here, and grow politically. What Raya Dunayevskaya said in relation to George's (Jackson) political development really let me know that you realize the possibilities behind the wall.

—Inmate behind the wall

# German reunification: the contradictions unfold

(continued from page 1)

speak of the new situation with feminist, labor, student and other Left activists—those who are part of this so-called "social instability."

## WOMEN OPPOSE UNIFICATION FROM ABOVE

The most debated contradiction is East Germany's stronger laws in the area of women's rights, which will now probably be replaced by West German law. Most of the debate has been over the infamous Paragraph 218 of the West German Constitution, which has been interpreted by the courts as severely limiting the right to abortion, requiring a woman to get both a doctor and a social worker to attest that having the baby would endanger her health.

The largest recent demonstration against Paragraph 218, which was held in Bonn on June 16, drew 15,000 people, mainly West German, but including as a speaker Christina Shenk of the East German Independent Women's Association. Referring to the East German law which provides a woman's right to choose and state-funded abortions up to the 12th week of pregnancy, Shenk stated: "We demand at the very least the enactment of this law for a united Germany." (*Arbeiterkampf*, June 25, 1990).

The Independent Women's Association certainly does not hold up East German laws as any general model, however. Their 1990 election platform pointed out that East German women earn only 75% of the wages of men, that at home women do 80% of the housework, while also demanding "that structurally important sectors of the economy be transformed from state property into genuinely collectively owned property and that they be protected against privatization." (*East European Reporter*, Spring/Summer, 1990)

The women have also had to face elitism from Left groups. As Peter Marcuse wrote recently from East Germany: "In the East, an electoral coalition between the Greens and the very progressive and competent Independent Women's Association broke down when, as a result of a quirk in the electoral arrangements, all of the coalition's 8 seats went to Greens, none to Independent Women, and the Greens refused to surrender even one of their seats to adhere to the spirit of the coalition agreement." (*Monthly Review*, July-August, 1990) They have also had to resist efforts by West German women's groups to take over their movement.

By July, over 100,000 East Germans had written to their government demanding that the current abortion laws be kept. In a dramatic demonstration against conservative East German Prime Minister Lothar de Maiziere, women held up a sign which read: "If the rubber has a tear in it, Dear Lotha, what then?" Despite these mass protests, West German feminist Marlis Kruger told me that for the near term, "the Federal Republic is buying East Germany, so then the East Germans will most likely get a more restrictive abortion law."

## LABOR AND STUDENT UNREST

While certainly stronger than the sick East German economy, the West German economy is not exactly the rich utopia for all portrayed in our media either. In my several visits to Germany over the past decade, I could easily see the growing effects of 15 years of high unem-



Teachers in East Germany demand job protection as unemployment rises.

ployment, ever since the 1974 oil crisis. Before 1974, unemployment averaged less than 1%, but since then it has increased steadily, averaging over 6% for the entire decade 1980-89. This, combined with the conservative Kohl government's austerity policies, has led to homelessness, drug addiction, and higher crime rates. Simply walking around the train stations in Berlin or Frankfurt and seeing the homeless, the panhandlers, etc., quickly belies any notion of West Germany as a prosperous country so different from the rest.

In the East, working people face the prospect of eviction from their already cramped apartments due to claims from former "owners" now living in the West whose property was nationalized by the Communists. They also face skyrocketing rents, due to capitalist real estate speculators and the "market." On the job, many workers will face new Western or retooled Communist bosses who will attempt either to lay them off or to slash their already miserable wages and benefits. There have been many strikes and demonstrations by working people recently.

Those in July involved 30,000 metal workers who went on wildcat strikes to demand a hefty wage increase in Western currency, reduced hours and, most importantly, no layoffs. They got a promise of no layoffs before July, 1991, a wage increase, and will finally get a 40-hour week by Oct. 1. In West Germany, metal workers have a 37-hour week, which according to their new contract is supposed to go down to 35 hours by 1995. But capitalists will surely be looking longingly at East Germany as a source of cheaper labor in the months to come.

East German students have also been on the move. On June 7, 10,000 of them demonstrated and sat in outside the Parliament with signs such as "Bread and Books" and "Strung Along Again?" They were protesting against their low financial aid allotments at a time of raging inflation. They demanded that pension money for the secret police be redirected to scholarships and that military institutions be shut down and converted into housing to alleviate the severe shortage.

The lack of a fundamental difference between the

The lack of a fundamental difference between the state-capitalist East and the "private" capitalist West is seen especially in how easily the old Communist bureaucrats, managers, and ideologues are "adjusting" to the changeover. About the situation at Leipzig University, one student stated: "All the professors are trying to prove how able they are to teach things as the Christian Democrats see them, just as they formerly taught what the Communist Party saw fit. Accommodation and assimilation is the word."

## DEBATES OVER STATE-CAPITALISM AND MARXIST-HUMANISM

During my trip, most of the activists were scathingly critical of both the U.S.-West German system and of the Russian-East German one. Most were also critical of the Left in East and West Germany for having been unable to project themselves as a point of attraction for the millions who took to the streets in 1989 to overturn the East German Communist regime. But the self-critique did not stop there—it also meant discussion of the very nature of capitalism and of Marxism as a philosophy of liberation.

During my visit, I was invited to speak on "Critical Theory and Marxist Humanism: The Raya Dunayevskaya-Herbert Marcuse Dialogue," before small but enthusiastic audiences at the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research and at the Rosa Luxemburg Educational Workshop for Democracy and Ecology in Berlin. Dunayevskaya's notion of state-capitalism as a category to describe Stalin's Russia and its progeny, a totalitarian society where social contradictions were even more explosive than under the old capitalism, generated much discussion, especially in contrast to even an independent Hegelian Marxist like Marcuse, whose book *Soviet Marxism*, which lacked a concept of state-capitalism, was surprisingly uncritical, holding as well that the masses were incapable of fundamental opposition to the system.

Another topic of discussion was Dunayevskaya's concept, based on Marx's 1844 *Essays*, that alienated labor rather than private property is the hallmark of capitalism. Since most, especially those from East Germany, seemed to agree that alienated labor existed under statist Communism as well as capitalism, this led to further debates over whether East Europe and Russia were and are state-capitalist.

A third point of discussion at these talks was the 1989 revolt in East Germany itself. When someone espoused the vanguardist notion that the movement failed because groups like New Forum lacked "organization," another participant quoted Rosa Luxemburg on the element of spontaneity in all great revolutions, and on workers councils.

In fact, there has been interest in Dunayevskaya's *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, as seen in the three discussions by feminists of that work published in the West Berlin Left journal *Das Argument* in the 1980s. This element was seen as well in the substantial introduction given before my talk in Berlin by the Marxist feminist Danga Vileisis.

Because of the depth of the recent changes in Germany, because of the variety and importance of the radical and labor movements there, and because of the theoretical discussions which I encountered, Germany was indeed an exciting place for a Marxist-Humanist to visit in 1990. Even though, as elsewhere, the Movement struggles under the whip of the worldwide Reaganite retrogression, it still has enough life in 1990 to have allowed me to come away with a better understanding of just why the world rulers are so worried about "instability" in Germany.

## Poland: "Our belts have no more notches"

*Editor's note: The following is excerpted from the article "Wail of the wretched" by Elzbieta Isakiewicz which appeared in the Polish journal, Tygodnik Solidarnosc.*

Around 2,000 old, sick, disabled people came to the Regional Office in Bialystok, where for two weeks the poor have been on strike.

The strikers were asking: "Are you preparing coffins for us and opening crematoria? How can we survive the coming months?" In a statement to the government they wrote: "For 45 years the Communists, using the method of carrot and stick, forced the nation to beg for bread. We owe them this catastrophe! However, in correcting the economy one cannot use the same method. The method of tightening the belt is hardest on those who have no more notches."

In order to not hurt the government, Bialystok's Solidarnosc did not join the action supporting the protest. But among the masses going to the Regional Offices to meet with the government's representatives were members of Solidarnosc. They acknowledged the fact which cannot be hidden: the existence of the hopelessly

wretched, people who until recently were "only" poor and who suddenly become paupers.

The tone of the meeting was set in the first few minutes by those crowding around the microphone, shouting and crying. The hall buzzed and applauded:

● Helena Majewska, a sick woman with two disabled children, has enough money for potatoes with salt, but not enough for shoes or clothes for the children, so she can't even take them to [Labor Minister] Kuron's soup kitchen.

● Stanislaw Korolczuk, 67-years-old, 40 of which he worked for PRL and now has a retirement of 170,000 zlotych per month, cried: "My co-workers, who faithfully served the Party, have 700,000 zlotych per month. They were secret police, rogues, crooks! Where is justice?"

● An ex-prisoner from a concentration camp, 65 years old, who appealed to the minister to understand that the laws, as they exist, are unjust.

● A woman on crutches, an ex-prisoner, asking why those who get millions in retirement benefits get the same raises as the poor. Why is family allowance the same for all, regardless of income?

"We don't want soup!" they shouted, "Let Kuron eat his soup!" Their understanding of the situation is simple: a new regime came in, and with it worse poverty.

The minister, Helena Goralska, asked that people do not hold the current situation against this government, do not take their grievances to it. She assured them the government really does not act against the society.

"Then to whom should we take our grievances," asked the people in the hall, "since there will be no accounting for the past? To Rakowski, to Bierut in the other world, or maybe Jaruzelski, whom Solidarnosc made president?"

The buzzing did not stop when she explained there is work on a new system for retirement benefits which will take effect only next year because 16 different laws have to be changed and that's a tremendous amount of work.

"We don't want laws. We want to live like human beings! How many of us will live to see next year?!"

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# Thoughts on student and working youth

by Jim Guthrie

*Ketchikan, Alaska*—My experiences both on the campus and at the point of production have made it very clear to me that the category of youth as a revolutionary subject is a multi-dimensional category. Both working youth and student youth are engaged in a struggle against the same existing adult society whether they fully realize that or not. But it seems to me that right now these two groups are almost completely unaware of each other. One of the uniquenesses of the N&L youth page is that it is a forum for these two groups to have a dialogue. The importance of this should not be underestimated.

I am not aware exactly what it is that is troubling me about this division between working youth and student youth, besides the fact that since the summer of 1987, soon after discovering Marxist-Humanism, I found myself at the point of production in a salmon cannery, while still being a college student. Since then I've had a foot in both camps.

I had a conversation with another unemployed cannery worker who had come up from Kent, Ohio. I was telling him about how in the factory I was looked on as an outsider because I was college educated, and at the university I was looked on as an outsider because of my proletarian outlook that I picked up in the factory. He responded, "Tell me about it. I know exactly what you're talking about." He said the students at Kent thought he was "a redneck" because he had worked in a plastics factory. He agreed with me when I said this showed how crippling the division between mental and manual labor that our society imposes upon us.

## STUDENT WORKERS CAN HAVE ELITIST ATTITUDES

Yet this type of insight among the college students who come up here to work in the cannery is kind of rare. The petty contradiction between the student cannery workers and the working-class cannery workers often results in two antagonistic groups that the experienced cannery bosses can play off on each other. The degrading experience of living in the sub-human conditions, and becoming appendages to an automated cannery line, has led a number of middle-class college educated people I've spoken to, to have an even lower opinion of the working-class than they had before they left home. This group can become quite hostile if you point out their elitist prejudices because they usually have a liberal veneer that they don't like to get scratched.

Workers can often quickly pick up on these reactionary attitudes just below the surface of so many middle-class youth, so the workers' suspicions of college students who come up to Alaska looking for nothing but a high paying summer job are often well founded.

By observing these antagonisms among working youth and student youth it is easy to see how a youth movement that doesn't ground itself in philosophy could easily regress into the "giddy whirl of a perpetually self-creating disorder," as Raya Dunayevskaya described the cultural revolution in China. And it also becomes clear why so many intellectual youth of today, like their predecessors in the '60s, revert to "cultural radicalism" rather than confront the actual class divisions in society in which they play a part. So they have an immediate desire to "de-construct" Karl Marx's humanism rather than to internalize it.

Yet among those of us who recognize the workers "and are with them" there is yet another trap for us to fall into: as Raya says in her critique of Rosa Luxemburg:

## Protests at Nixon library

*Los Angeles, Cal.*—On the evening of July 19, several hundred demonstrators expressed their outrage and disgust in front of the Century Plaza Hotel where the four living Republican presidents and some of their prime cronies had reunited to hold a benefit for the new Richard Nixon Library. Many of the demonstrators came from miles away after spending hours protesting the library dedication itself.

They represented exciting, new, renewed and long-standing dimensions of the freedom movement. The L.A. Student Coalition and the Cal. State Northridge MECHA were there, with other student and Chicano groups, anti-nuclear groups, Central American, African and Korean activists, anti-malathion activists (expressing special concern for the homeless), pro-choice activists and disabled individuals. Most visible and creative were gay and lesbian activists from ACT-UP L.A. and an artists' coalition.

ACT-UP staged a "die-in": They lay down to illustrate how even living AIDS sufferers are casualties of capitalism's disregard for human life, and were arrested along with homeless activist Ted Hayes. The artists were protesting the proposed anti-pornography bill, which was inspired by the National Endowment for the Arts controversy regarding the surreal, erotic and racially provocative images of gay photographer Robert Mapplethorpe, who had died of AIDS. They wore hand-painted jail garb, some with portraits of gay or otherwise sexually "challenging" artists such as Luis Bunuel, Oscar Wilde, Alan Ginsberg, Collette, Walt Whitman, etc.

The demonstrators ranged from angry teenagers to dedicated veteran activists, and covered the gamut of ethnicity and sexuality. Their "playful" creativity conveyed an unmistakably serious challenge by vital human beings to the censors of human lives.

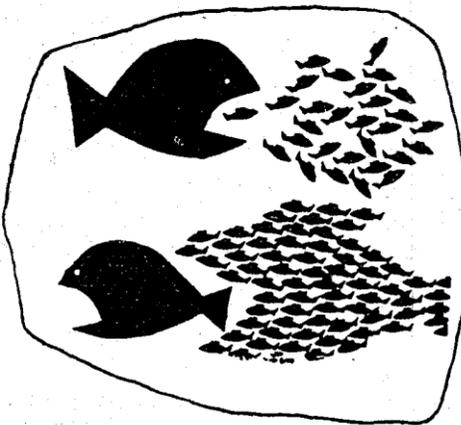
—Anna Maillon

burg: "The question of class consciousness does not exhaust the question of cognition, of Marx's philosophy of revolution." (*Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution, (RLWLKM)*, p. 60). This is one of the limitations in my own thought that I'm struggling to overcome. When I first proletarianized I was struck by how the workers understood Marxian categories because of their objective experience at the point of production. But don't we need to go farther in helping to work out Absolute Negativity as New Beginning?

## COGNITION AND A PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN LIBERATION

To answer that question I realize I'll have to have a serious dialogue directly with Raya's most philosophical works. I brought *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism and RLWLKM* with me in my back-pack, and I've read parts I and II of RLWLKM since I left home. I'm looking forward to exploring Raya's discussion of the young Marx and his Promethean Vision in Part III. I think this is relevant to the question I'm raising because Raya shows how Karl Marx's digging into philosophy led him to completely break with bourgeois society.

What I've discovered is that the biggest challenge is discussing philosophy with both workers and intellectuals. It makes you appreciate the courage and profundity of Raya singling out Karl Marx's philosophy as what is indispensable for our age.



## The challenge to all alternatives to Marx's Marxism

(continued from page 4)

aborted, unfinished revolutions turned into their very opposite, but also the fact that Marx's all-encompassing revolution-in-permanence, which desires to become ground also of organization, has, until Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, been left at the implicit stage.

Let's briefly, very briefly, trace and parallel the last 30-year movement from practice and from theory with our own philosophic development through the same period. What we call a trilogy of revolution—*Marxism and Freedom, Philosophy and Revolution, and Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*—has, in each period, singled out what was most urgent as measured by the objective crisis for that period. Though the dialectics of liberation, the philosophy of revolution, permeates them all, the particular, concrete need in each period is what determines the focus.

Thus, our first comprehensive theoretic work, *Marxism and Freedom*, which, of course, was structured around our first original historic contribution—the movement from practice to theory—had its focus not only on Marx's American and Humanist roots, but also on Lenin's break with his philosophic past so that the fact that he had not extended it to re-examination of his vanguardist party concept meant it was left unfinished. Here what is important is to watch the method and style of presentation as an indication of what should be further developed. Take the sharp break in style on philosophy and on organization. In the case of organization, I dismiss the whole period of so-called classical Marxism—the Second International, 1889-1914—as a mere Interlude, an *Organizational Interlude* that doesn't deserve classification as a Part; while in the case of the concept of a new relationship of worker and intellectual at a turning point in history, 1848-1861, that is made a whole Part though it occupies but a single chapter. Did anyone ask why? Well, the Iranian youth did single out that chapter to translate along with the Humanist Essays as necessary to their participation in that revolution.

But the new generation of revolutionaries in the U.S. were so preoccupied with decentralization that the fatal contradiction between that and their failure to pay attention to the state-capitalist class nature of the Communist elitist party meant that very nearly everything was subordinated to activism. It wasn't until the 1970s, when the Women's Liberation Movement also kept stressing decentralization and, at the same time, refused to disregard the male chauvinism in the Left, that it became clear that the new form of organization could not be kept in a separate compartment from that of philosophy. It was then that we turned to *Philosophy and Revolution*, beginning with "Why Hegel? Why Now?"—a Part which, at one and the same time, considered the Hegelian dialectic "in and for itself" not separate from both Marx's philosophy of revolution and Lenin's philosophic ambivalence. The youth, Women's

## Youth in Revolt

by Franklin Dmitryev

A Reaganized U.S. Court of Appeals in June dismissed the landmark 1970 lawsuit that forced the federal government to monitor the desegregation of public colleges in 18 states. While most of the states never did meet their professed goals for student and faculty desegregation, the decision removes even the semblance of a means of forcing the federal government to enforce the Title VI civil rights law.

Tens of thousands of youth joined workers, women and other South Koreans July 21 to demonstrate in Seoul against Roh Tae Woo's government and call for the dissolution of the National Assembly, which is dominated by a new party formed by the merger of Roh's party and two former opposition parties. Riot police tear-gassed a group of 20,000 students marching toward downtown, who threw concrete chunks at the police.

"They want quiet, not justice," read the signs of 150 people marching on July 22 in Teaneck, N.J. They were protesting the killing of Phillip Pannell, a Black 16-year-old, by a white policeman. At a vigil for Pannell in April, the authorities had put their energy into suppressing youths who expressed their fury by overturning some police cars and looting stores.

For weeks, youths and supporters have rallied in Romania demanding the release of student activists arrested when police broke up a 53-day demonstration in Bucharest's University Square in June. In Timisoara, where the December revolution began, a July 19 rally brought together students and workers to denounce the ruling party's hijacking of the revolution.

Shock swept Japan in the wake of the death of 15-year-old Ryoko Ishida July 6, after she slipped coming into school and a teacher slammed a heavy metal gate into her head. The teacher, who closed the gate to lock out tardy students, was fired, and the principal resigned after calling it the kind of thing that can happen to tardy students. But nothing has changed in the systematic physical and emotional brutality that youth are subjected to.

Liberationists, as well as the Black dimension, however, appreciated Chapter 9, "New Passions and New Forces" rather than Chapter 1, "Absolute Negativity as New Beginning," which did get down to those three final syllogisms in depth.<sup>3</sup>

In the mid-1970s we finally got to know Marx's *Ethnological Notebooks* which let us hear him think. By not being a work finished for the press, it compels us to work out, to labor at what Marx has only in notes. This is what we must all work at for our age. Here is why we so urgently need a new type of member and need to see ourselves as a new type of member to continue the development of what the new book, in completing the trilogy of revolution, has begun. In the process, let us not forget what that great revolutionary, Rosa Luxemburg, did for us, not only in letting us discover her unknown feminist dimension, but in posing the question of the relationship of spontaneity to organization so insightfully that, though she had not worked out the answers, she helped create an atmosphere that makes it impossible any longer to ignore all the ramifications of spontaneity.

Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, when read with the totality of Marx's Marxism—where we found the "new moments" Marx experienced on what we now call the Third World and the new forces of revolution as Reason, be it (Women's Liberation, Black or youth—demanded a re-examination of all the great revolutionaries, especially Lenin and Luxemburg, who seemed to be so deeply divided on the question of organization. It was that re-examination in this year of the Marx centenary, in this nuclear world, in the imperative nature of the challenge to post-Marx Marxists, which would not let revolutionaries off scot-free of the organizational question.

The youth need also to dig into the first chapter of Part III to grapple with the Promethean vision of the young Marx before he was a Marxist, when he was still a Prometheus Bound, when he was still a young Hegelian (1839-41) just filling in some minor gaps in Hegel's monumental *History of Philosophy*—and asking himself that imperative question: "where to begin?" When we talk about "thought-divers" we can see that Marx was the greatest of all.

That's what I'm really appealing to the youth to do. Becoming a thought-diver and an activist in this period demands nothing short of practicing the challenge to all post-Marx Marxists, and thereby creating such new ground for organization, such concretization of Marx's revolution in permanence, as to find a new way to let the actual revolution be.

Yours, RAYA

3. Peter, in his discussion article on "Organizational Growth and the Dialectics of 'Revolution in Permanence'" (The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, microfilm #7832), has made a truly original contribution in seeing more than any of us before had seen in the actual text of the 1953 Letters on the Absolute Idea.

## Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

On the anniversary of last year's July general strike in the coalfields, miners across the Soviet Union bitterly criticized President Mikhail Gorbachev's policies. They called for the resignation of the government; removal of Communist Party control from the mines and other industries, from the secret police, the military and militias, and from the schools; and that Party property be nationalized.

Miners from the Ukraine, Siberia, and Vorkuta held a 24-hour strike, July 11. It came one day after Gorbachev's re-election as head of the Communist Party at the Party congress, and in defiance of his criticism of the strike action.

The miners from the major coalfields were joined by miners in Kazakhstan who struck for two hours, and those in far-distant Sakhalin Island who struck for the first time. Workers at a number of factories held strikes and rallies in solidarity with the miners.

The miners are fed up that after a year of promises,

there has been no fundamental change whatsoever in their conditions. A Donetsk miner gave expression to the strikers' outlook when he said, "Our personal lives are worse than they were a year ago, especially housing and food." At one rally, a banner proclaimed: "Children in cellars, Communist Party in palaces—let's swap!"

The strike was preceded by a congress in June which representatives from every major coalfield attended. The miners passed a resolution which stated in part, "We do not consider the Communist Party of the Soviet Union our party" and called for a "mass exit" of Party members. The miners' congress also called on workers in other industries "to sever their connections to the government."

The rise of open political activity in the coalfields is a direct response by the miners to the worsening stagnation in their lives. One of the demands of last year's strike was for miners to have more say in production decisions, and to be able to control the surplus coal produced. They planned to use coal profits from this

surplus for improving housing, education and health care.

However, the experience reported from one Siberian pit where the workers leased the mine, set up production and supposedly had their own profits to dispose of, is that this changed nothing. One miner reported that wages have remained the same and that "the administrators remain the master."

Furthermore, the coal profits the miners planned to use for their own betterment come from production that exceeds the quotas set by the state, and the miners say that the state continues to set quotas that exploit and aim to control the miners.

A movement has been growing among some miners to establish an independent union along the lines of Solidarity when it arose in Poland. The strike committees formed last summer continue to function and in some mining areas they are more powerful than either the government or the Party.

## Liberia crisis deepens with U.S. intervention

A heavily armed contingent of 225 U.S. Marines landed in the war-torn Liberian capital of Monrovia on Aug. 5. The U.S. intervention came less than a day after Prince Johnson, the Americo-Liberian leader of one of the rival factions attempting to topple the despotic regime of Samuel Doe, announced his intentions to begin rounding up foreign nationals, to provoke American intervention.

Clearly, the mere threat of holding Americans hostage, rather than the actual atrocities of Doe's army against native Liberians, impelled Bush upon this latest U.S. incursion into the Third World.

The heinous murder of 600 Liberian civilians, seeking refuge in a Lutheran church, at the hands of Doe's ruthless army was not atrocious enough for Bush to suspend his support of Doe. To date, some 3,000 civilians have lost their lives in the tribal warfare that has erupted in the fighting between Doe's forces and those loyal to Charles Taylor, the former Doe official who initiated the drive to overthrow Doe back in December. Fighting has since broken out between the two rebel factions.

The U.S. intervention is part of a much larger force deployed off-shore on four U.S. ships. The current Middle East crisis underscores the strategic

importance of Liberia as a major staging point for the deployment of U.S. forces to the Middle East.

Bush's intervention preempts moves underway by five states of the Economic Community of West Africa to raise an all-African peace-keeping force to intervene in the conflict, which Taylor vows to fight because of the support Doe has enjoyed from his West African counterparts. What the end of the Doe regime will mean for the indigenous Liberian masses seems already foreshadowed by the tribal strife unleashed by the coup, and by outside intervention begun with the U.S. incursion.

## Collusion over Cambodia



Secretary of State James Baker—immediately following a meeting with his Russian counterpart, Eduard Shevardnadze—announced that the Bush administration was ending an 11-year U.S. policy of giving diplomatic support to the Cambodia guerrilla coalition which includes the Khmer Rouge.

This change in U.S. policy has nothing to do with abhorrence at the possibility of the genocidal Pol Pot-Khmer Rouge regime taking power again, as much as it represents another area of superpower collusion, this time in "regional" affairs.

The Cambodia guerrilla coalition opposes the present Hun Sen government installed by Vietnam after its 1978 Russian-backed invasion overthrew Pol Pot. U.S.-CIA overt and covert funding for the Sihanouk and Son Sann "non-Communist" factions in the coalition reached

## French nuclear missiles

France has decided to go ahead with plans to produce a new nuclear missile called Hadés, an MX-type device to be mounted on a flatbed truck or railroad car. At one point, "socialist" President Francois Mitterrand had even contemplated using neutron bombs on the Hadés, but has now decided that he will use "classical" nuclear warheads instead.

Mitterrand has used a curious rationale for building a new, more destructive missile at this time: Russia is withdrawing from East Europe, and therefore French missiles will now have to reach further than before to be effective—all the way to Russia itself!

During this year, France has also continued to dispatch troops to West Africa to shore up French "interests," most recently to save Gabon's President Omar Bongo from anti-government rioters. Since 1960, France has intervened militarily to put down unrest in Africa 18 times. In recent months, some French intellectuals and politicians have begun to criticize these fundamentally neo-colonialist policies.

## 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.

## Unrest rocks Albania

In July, after repression in Albania had eased slightly over a period of several months in this hermetically sealed Communist state, thousands of people rushed the foreign embassies seeking asylum. During those same feverish days, 10,000 people demonstrated against the government in the capital, Tirana, and were dispersed by club-wielding police. Other cities also experienced riots which resulted in some deaths. Earlier this year a brief strike took place at a large textile mill in Berat.

After a week of tense negotiations, 2,000 asylum-seekers were allowed to leave Albania. Other Albanians have fled across the border to Greece, a border which is still ringed with electrified barbed wire, land mines, and machine-gun toting guards. On the way, they have passed not only colleagues shot to death, but even skeletons! Government policy has been immediate execution of people caught while escaping and long terms in concentration camps for those caught planning to escape.

The government of Ramiz Alia, which says it wants to make some Gorbachev-type reforms, is locked in conflict with a still more reactionary faction which wants to continue the policy of total repression.

## Coup attempt in Trinidad

The five-day coup attempt (July 27-August 1) in Trinidad against the IMF-dominated government of Prime Minister A.N.R. Robinson by a Black Muslim faction, sparked widespread popular rebellion in the capital city of Port-of-Spain, before it ended with the surrender of coup leader Abu Bakr and more than 100 members of his organization, Jamaat al-Muslimeen (Society of Muslims).

At one point, Robinson and members of his cabinet were tied to explosives by the fundamentalist rebels and threatened with death if Robinson refused to resign, call elections and suspend his government's IMF (International Monetary Fund) austerity policies, which had precipitated a mass general strike last year. The military's rejection of the agreement makes it uncertain which political party is in control of the army.

With 60% of the commercial district of Port-of-Spain looted and burned, and the popular unrest spread beyond the capital, the U.S. naval presence off-shore raised the spectre of imperialist intervention. The spectre of the 1983 Grenada invasion was also manifested at the summit of the Caribbean Economic Community, where Jamaica and Barbados put their military forces at the disposal of the Robinson government to "restore law and order."

The sympathies of Trinidadians living in New York reflected those of the island's inhabitants. As one emigre living in Brooklyn noted, "People have mixed feelings about what has happened. This is not good for the country, but the removal of the Prime Minister is excellent."

Most of the estimated 60 people killed and more than 300 wounded were at the hands of the police firing on looters. With 22% unemployment, a 25% increase in food prices over last year and a critical food shortage following the unrest, Trinidad's political crisis has laid the ground for ongoing social upheaval. It has also instilled a new fear in Caribbean rulers that they too will face the re-enactment of Trinidad's political drama, thus giving way to a new period of political repression.