

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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Change the way we work for change



by Felix Martin, Labor Editor

If you are fighting a battle and losing, you have to change your method of fighting. The UAW thinks they have the idea and they have the workers to use—like in a chess game. That is why so many strikes are losing today, like the Caterpillar strike. A look at the Cat strike or the Latino carpenters' struggle in Los Angeles reveals that labor cannot work under the old rules any longer. Organized labor is in handcuffs and leg irons. A new kind of labor movement is needed to meet the challenge of the times.

I have been a worker all my life. I grew up in the coal mining hills of Kentucky, and I remember the gun battles that we used to fight against the coal companies and the scabs when we were trying to organize the union in the 1930s. I worked on the assembly line at General Motors for 22 years, until the plant closed in 1982.

The whole idea from the capitalists is always to get workers to compete against each other and to regard the workers of another country as the enemy. But as a worker, I know that the biggest enemy is at home, one's own ruling class. A worker's country is the whole world. Capitalist society fragments mental and manual labor, but we have to come together to create a movement for a society where we can all be full human beings.

1970 was a great year for me as a GM worker. It was the year we closed down GM in a general strike, starting at midnight on Sept. 14. One minute before midnight—GM was the most powerful capitalist monster in the world. One minute after—it was dead. Nothing was moving at all.

The group I belonged to in the plant, the Unity Committee, had been working with some UCLA students, and when we came out of the plant at midnight we were met by a large group of these students, and we began walking the picket line together. Later I went to UCLA

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Black World

L.A. uprising still haunts U.S.



Editor's note: This month I am turning over the "Black World" column to excerpts from a speech made by Gene Ford on the commemoration of the 1992 Los Angeles Rebellion by the LA 4+ Committee in South Central Los Angeles, on April 2, 1995.—LT

by Gene Ford

The self takes its place by opposing itself, Fichte said. Yes and no.

I said...that man is a yes. I will never stop reiterating that.

Yes to life. Yes to love. Yes to generosity.

But man is also a no. No to scorn of man. No to degradation of man. No to exploitation of man. No to the butchery of what is most human in man: freedom.

—Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*

The 1992 Los Angeles Rebellion, the explosion that was heard around the world, has been made invisible by the state in its attempt to erase its memory from our minds. Many want to forget, while we in this room remember—not in the sense of a remembrance of the dead who are asked to "rest in peace."

But the remembrance of the L.A. Rebellion will not rest in peace. It is a remembrance that burns in the consciousness of a people who know that rebellion is not over as long as we as a people are still alive, conscious and kicking up dust in our demand for recognition as human beings.

Black youth were the most overpowering image of what fermented the L.A. Rebellion. I say "fermented" because the rebellion did not just occur on April 29, 1992. It took a long time to simmer. It wasn't only the Rodney King beating by the LAPD, or the murder of Latasha Harlins by a Korean grocer, but the whip of the master we as Black and Brown people have felt on our backs.

That whip is the unjust justice system: the judges, the

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Facing post-Communist E. Europe

by Olga Domanski

June 1955 marks 40 years since the first issue of *News & Letters* appeared as a Marxist-Humanist journal in the midst of new struggles, in thought and in fact, being waged against state-capitalism on both sides of the "Iron Curtain" in the first post-World War II decade. From that very first issue—which commemorated the East German revolt two years earlier, when the workers had ushered in a new era for East Europe by daring to strike against Communist totalitarianism—the East European struggles have been woven into the fabric of Marxist-Humanism. Although the objective-subjective situation in East Europe today seems totally different after the collapse of Communism, that 40 year history is crucial for coming to grips with the deep new contradictions confronting East Europe today.

Those new contradictions were nowhere more evident than at the 50th anniversary celebration of VE day in Moscow, where Presidents Yeltsin and Clinton stood side by side watching the parade that was supposed to mark "50 Years of Victory over Fascism." Their joint appearance was also supposed to signify the "new era of friendship" between the U.S. and Russia after the fall of Communism. How far that is from reality is clearer every day.

The new tensions between Russia and the U.S. do not revolve around Russia's ongoing genocidal war against Chechnya, which is clearly of no major concern to the U.S.—except to the extent that it reflects Russia's increasing drive to re-dominate all the former republics. What is of concern is the notice Russia has served that it has no intention of allowing NATO to expand closer to the very border of Russia by bringing the leading East European countries—Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, as well as Slovakia—directly into its fold. Although Yeltsin has just agreed to be considered a member of what NATO is calling the "Partnership for Peace," he has strongly reaffirmed the warning he issued last year in Budapest, that the Cold War would fast be replaced with a "Cold Peace" if the U.S. went ahead with its plans.

Yeltsin's warning was no idle threat. Despite its decrepit economy, a country that represents one-sixth of



Woman worker in state-run bus factory in Budapest is among those facing Hungarian Prime Minister Gyula Horn's new privatization plans.

the world's land mass cannot be counted out of today's global competition, especially when it includes a nuclear component. Whether or not NATO expansion proceeds "on time"—Clinton insists that it is not a question of "whether, but only when and how"—Yeltsin has no intention of soon ratifying Start II, the 1993 nuclear arms reduction treaty, which was to reduce Russia's strategic nuclear weapons by three-fourths. Meanwhile, the U.S. is moving to beef up the development of its short-range ballistic missiles, which Russia is sure to see as a violation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty of 1972.

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Bosnian tragedy: retreat before fascism

As we go to press, the U.S., the West European powers, and the UN have once again backed down ignominiously in the face of escalating aggression by the Bosnian Serb forces. Far from forcing some sort of decisive action against the Serbs, as it seemed might happen for a few days in early June, the seizure of hundreds of UN peacekeepers as hostages by the fascist duo Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic revealed that they are still the ones calling the shots in Bosnia today.

The unseemly squabbling by politicians in the U.S., between the U.S. and the European governments, and between each of these and the UN bureaucrats, has resulted in no significant action being taken, not even after an American pilot was also shot down. Now, it seems, there will be neither a serious attempt to punish Karadzic nor a move to end the arms embargo against the multiethnic Bosnian regime and to remove the so-called peacekeepers.

In France, the newspapers, quoting bitter French soldiers who have to endure daily humiliations and death threats from Karadzic's fascists, are calling the whole UN operation in Bosnia "un drôle de guerre" [phony war]. Tellingly, this is the same phrase used in 1939-40 to describe the stand-off at the Maginot Line which, as we know now, did nothing to stop Hitler. In the U.S., even after several days of craven isolationist talk from virtually all leading politicians in response to Clinton's very limited threats against the Serbs in his Air Force Academy speech, polls showed that a plurality of the American people supported some type of decisive action in Bosnia. Evidently the American public, supposedly so "ignorant" of foreign affairs, recognizes far more than

the politicians the true meaning of the 50th anniversary of World War II!

The taking of the UN soldiers as hostages came after UN commanders finally agreed to call in NATO air strikes against the intensifying Serbian massacres of civilians at the end of May. In a manner reminiscent of Saddam Hussein or even Hitler, the Serbian fascists gleefully released to the world media footage showing these prisoners chained to bridges and arms depots. Such use of prisoners as hostages is, of course, itself a war crime, and this time not against Bosnian civilians, but against Western Europeans.

Much less covered in the press was the Serbian attack on the so-called UN "safe haven" of Tuzla, the worst single attack in the entire Bosnian war. One rocket armed with shrapnel bombs, with no other purpose than to kill or maim civilians, was fired into Tuzla, killing over 70 people, most of them youth gathered in an outdoor cafe. Hardly even mentioned by the press was the fact that Serbian forces also murdered the Bosnian Foreign Minister, Irfan Ljubijankic.

The Serbian militias no doubt targeted Tuzla to retaliate against the UN-NATO air raids for, along with Sarajevo, its citizens have embodied and maintained the multiethnic dream of Bosnia. With one terrifying stroke, the attack showed that the true hostages in Bosnia are the hundreds of thousands of people who refuse to abandon their aspirations for freedom.

The hollow cease-fire brokered by ex-U.S. president Carter formally expired May 1, but it began to unravel

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Women denounce dehumanizing science

by Terry Moon

Women's lives and science appear to be in totally separate realms—especially when it comes to medicine. So far apart have they become that there is no such thing as informed consent—i.e., consenting to be part of an experiment after being informed of all the ramifications. This is clearly revealed in the testing of an ominous new immunological contraceptive drug that interferes with the human immune system, causing the body to react against sperm, the ova or a natural pregnancy hormone as an infection, marshalling the body's defenses against its own natural process.

Woman as Reason

Despite the fact that some scientists worry about "the immune system's attacking cells or substances other than the intended targets," warning the drug "might also destroy the ovaries themselves"; and despite the fact that the side effects are unknown and there is no antidote, this drug is being tested in Sweden, India and the USA. What woman—and this drug is only being tested on women—would take it if she was truly informed of its consequences?

The idea of informed consent arose only after the brutal nature of Nazi doctors' experiments on concentration camp prisoners came to be known. But it has never been practiced in a full or unprejudiced way, and the U.S. has its own history of experimenting on people without their knowledge or consent. With contraceptives, capitalists' motivation was not women's control of our bodies, but population control, that is controlling women's reproductive lives. With other drugs and experiments, the perversity of capitalism—U.S.-style—prevails.

This year, the Medical University of South Carolina gave police confidential patient records of Black pregnant women who tested positive for drugs when they came for medical care. The university was studying whether the threat of jail would deter drug use by pregnant women. Some of the women—who without their consent became part of this experiment—were threatened with arrest and loss of their children if they refused to sign an agreement for drug treatment. Some gave birth handcuffed to hospital beds or wearing leg shackles.

In another case, the breast cancer studies headed by University of Pittsburgh researcher Bernard Fisher included falsified data in published papers and covered up evidence that tamoxifen—a drug being tested on over 10,000 healthy women—had lethal side effects. Is it only coincidence that the manufacturer of tamoxifen, Zeneca Pharmaceuticals, gave \$600,000 to the University of Pittsburgh to endow a chair for Fisher in 1989?

One of Fisher's co-authors, David Plotkin, runs a cancer research foundation out of his office. In 1984 he raked in over \$800,000, supposedly spent for breast cancer patients whose treatments were already paid for by medical insurance. There's big money in these studies

but they can't happen if women won't sign up for them. That's why Plotkin gives all expense paid trips to doctors who enroll six women a year—and why he doesn't check if the women signed a consent form agreeing to be part of the study.

Getting women to sign "informed consent" forms is why the Food and Drug Administration in 1992 ignored the warnings from its own safety officer about the tamoxifen study: "The tone of the entire consent document conveys that the purpose of this endeavor is treatment of patients, rather than the study of a hypothesis." The form also implied that if women developed uterine cancer while taking tamoxifen it could easily be cured. Tamoxifen increases women's risk of uterine cancer—some in the study have already died of it.

That science ends up as something that must be fought is because women are still the objects of medical research and population control, not subjects. Women from India to the U.S. and from Africa to South America are fighting this dehumanization.

The Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights sees immunological contraceptives as ripe for abuse and calls for an end to research on them. Two U.S. women documented on video the sexism and racism used in pushing Norplant on Native American women. Women from every continent are communicating on the Internet on the dangers of these drugs and how to fight their introduction. And organizations like the National Women's Health Network have made this kind of work a priority for years.

The continuing opposition to this racist/capitalist/medical dehumanization is crucial. This fight will have to get deeper and fiercer as we face not only a medical profession bent on profits, and developers of contraceptives bent on profit and population control, but a new militant right-wing government that wants science to be separate from life and where the very idea that women have the right to control our bodies and lives is under attack.

Sipes workers fight poverty wages and racism

Editors note: Union members at Howe Sipes athletic apparel plant, mostly Black women, have battled Sipes's refusal to bargain in good faith ever since they voted for representation by Local 282, Furniture Workers, in September 1993. Still without a contract, they have fought management attempts to decertify the union and testified in court against Sipes.

Memphis, Tenn.—Two employees, Jessie, who is Black, and Amy, who is white, went to the National Labor Relations Board May 23 with a petition to decertify the union. The Board told them there was nothing they could do with that petition until we heard from the General Council in Washington, D.C. The union can't be voted out as long as we have charges pending at the Labor Board. If we go down, we're going down together.

Jessie and Amy told the Labor Board that management didn't know anything about it. But we saw the plant manager counting time cards today to see if the number who had signed was a majority. It is illegal for management to have anything to do with that decert.

The Friday before, Sipes gave out watches to everybody who's been there 20 years. Then the older people who have been there more than 20 years got a long stemmed red rose for every year they'd been there. One Black woman got 26 roses. But she had not been offered a supervisor's job. He went to a white lady and made her a supervisor. There are no Black supervisors. If we need some sewing material, we have to ask a white person.

Mr. Sipes presented all these things Friday morning. He had this letter that we later received at 2:30 on our paycheck. Why couldn't he tell us about it in the morning? The letter was to all employees, concerning how he had an NLRB election in September 1993 and that gives us the right to be represented. But it says the union did not give the employees the right to choose who they want to be represented by. It said that the union would have had a contract but wouldn't agree because Sipes didn't want to deduct dues.

The first petition these same two employees circulated last fall is up in Washington, D.C., right now. The president of the company had told them that if they did it they would get a raise, from \$5 to \$6 an hour. They don't understand that the union got them that raise.

We went to court this winter with the Labor Board. A lot of us testified about the company not bargaining in good faith, illegally withdrawing recognition, harassment charges and contracting out work. We had court for a whole week. We're waiting for a decision.

They're taking our money now. When we got our profit sharing statements this year, there was a minus sign. We believe they took it to pay their lawyer fees. They took up to \$600 from some people.

After the union was voted in, Sipes started contracting out a lot of work to break the union down, making it so we couldn't get enough work. We were told he sent it to Batesville, Miss. A lot of union supporters quit because they couldn't support their families. After we went to court, he brought the work back in.

People are still having to use food stamps along with their pay. The jobs they go to if they quit are no better. They should have stayed, because together we can beat him. It's the same everywhere you go. One person went to Sealy and others went to other sewing places. They still rely on public assistance. After they left for these places, we got a dollar raise. —Sipes employees

End Illinois factory raids!

Chicago—The idea behind Proposition 187, California's new anti-immigrant law, set foot in Illinois once again when Immigration and Naturalization Service agents descended upon two local factories and carried away employees without documentation of residence.

Sixty workers at Bradrock Plastics and at Lefebvre Intergraphics, both in nearby Des Plaines, were taken from their jobs, families and communities to Broadview Detention Center May 15. In keeping with standard practice, their money was taken, they were dumped across the border into a strange town in Mexico, and their families have no way of contacting them.

An emergency demonstration at the INS regional office in downtown Chicago the same day challenged the raids, recently mandated by Clinton. The recent sweep was the eleventh in the Chicago area since Feb. 1, the beginning of "Operation Jobs," the Justice Department's new effort to seize and deport immigrant workers and even help employers to replace them. So far 445 undocumented workers have been arrested, a high portion of them mothers with small children.

Some 25 protesters sought a meeting with A.D. Moyer, head of the office, to demand the release without bond of the internees and an end to the raids and deportations. The complaint of one young man brought home the issue. He said that his girlfriend had been living, with the knowledge of the INS, for four years in the U.S., when agents detained her at work that morning. An ailing relative depends on her support and attention. The protesters managed to occupy the INS lobby for an hour and, while facing a line of government police, hollered "No one is illegal! We want A.D. Moyer!" The office closed early that day.

Until this anti-immigrant program bows its head, noontime protests continue every Friday at the INS office at 10 W. Jackson.

—Jim Mills

Retirees, like fish, do not have a voice*

Editor's note: The following article by a Polish woman, translated by Urszula Wislanka, is reprinted from the "Letters" to Gazeta Wyborcza, May 25, 1995.

Because for years I have been preserving records of my income and expenses I can make a comparison of the cost of keeping my apartment. Now I know why I live a poor old beggar woman's life and why 30% of people do not pay their rent.

Keeping an apartment costs me 35 times more now than it did in January 1990. My income rose to a level 6.2 times higher during the same time period. Costs of services (heat, water, and so on) skyrocketed.

In 1990 all my apartment costs comprised 11% of my income. In 1990 I had 89% of my income for clothes, food, cleaning supplies, fixing or installing housing appliances, medicines, reading material. Now I have 36%.

For retirees every trouble with an appliance is a major catastrophe. An illness is a catastrophe. Many retirees (and not only) never fill their prescriptions because the medicines are too expensive for them....

Even visiting family is a problem because the railroad tickets are constantly getting more expensive.

A dog is a luxury. Retirees who own dogs buy meat only for their pets, who frequently are their only friends. They themselves wear tatters. They very seldom go to the movies. They cannot afford books or magazines.

We were paying into the retirement system for 35 years...But retirees cannot strike. Retirees, like fish, don't have a voice.

—Maria Czerwinska, Krakow

*There is a Polish saying "Children and fish do not have voice." It is used to discipline children to respect adults' conversations.

Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

Prompted by the mass rapes of women in Bosnia and the protest against it by many women's groups internationally, the U.S. has finally recognized rape, domestic abuse and other forms of violence against women as potential grounds for political asylum. Even with this small victory, the burden of proof is still solely on each woman refugee. At least 200 women have been granted refugee status by Canada—the only other country with such immigration guidelines.

Outraged women, politicians and human rights activists in Israel—where the draft is compulsory for both women and men at 18—are demanding the dismissal of Armored Corps Colonel Gershon Hacohen after he told high school seniors in Jerusalem that "historically men have been warriors and women have been prostitutes." While calling Hacohen's speech "offensive and humiliating," all the army saw fit to do was reprimand him.

More young women 16-25 are homeless in Britain now than eight years ago, revealed a recent study. Today 43% of those in London shelters are young women, compared with 26% in 1987. The majority are homeless due to physical or sexual abuse, or being thrown out by family. "We are seeing the emergence of a new youth homelessness crisis, no homes to return to, no income and very little chance of finding work."

"I am grateful to N&L for offering in-depth, critical and astute reasons and explanation for the worldwide chaos and crisis. It is refreshing and rewarding to be able to have a 'body of knowledge' that can assist me in fathoming popular media reporting."

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Delta Pride aggravations grow

Indianola, Miss.—One Monday morning, I turned to go into my department, the spiral freezer which is located in the back of the plant. As you enter the plant, you come in on the kill line area. I saw it was pretty much blocked off by a new chiller. You have 250 people or more working on the line and there's no way out. A large person couldn't get through. I went to find the assistant plant manager Rick Hood and told him, "You have 250 people working to make production for you. If fire were to break out, how are you going to get them out? If you don't open this thing up, I'm going to call OSHA. Tomorrow isn't promised to these people." They opened it, a little.

The same day, the air conditioner on the kill line was broken. I asked them if they were going to get fans, and they said they are trying to get some but first they said they were trying to get the system to work. I said, "A lot of people are going on a rage and they are going to go home. We aren't in the cotton field any more!" They went and got us some fans. After they fixed the system, they took the fans out, but the employees on the kill line were still complaining about the heat. When you have people working, you have body heat, especially when the air conditioning hasn't been on long.

Then on the trim tables, Plant Superintendent Jerry Hines had the trainees and himself timing the employees, and he was telling them to trim ten and a half fishes a minute. I told him, "It isn't a standard." He said, "As a matter of fact, they're doing it." I said, "Sure, with a clock in your hand. That clock is just like a damn whip!" Anytime those people are working with a clock, they're going to speed up the employees.

The problem is that he didn't bring it to the union's attention. They used to do six to eight fishes a minute. We brought some people from the United Food and Commercial Workers Union from Washington D.C. to do the time standard on the trim line. But they cut out that standard when they brought in new "184" machines. After that people worked at their own pace. But now they weren't telling them to work at their own pace. It's not a standard until people come in from Washington D.C. and it's agreed upon by the local.

The latest thing is they are installing cameras in the break room. They were going to put one in the nursing station, but the nurse cursed them out because people undress in there. What is the purpose of putting the camera in the break room? Are you going to look at someone eating? Are you going to watch them all day? You have to pay someone to watch the camera.

If you really want to find out where the money is going, go out back of the building. Out back is where they put machines that don't work, like when they spent \$2.3 million on a new trim line machine that wouldn't work. If you can go and spend money on machines and cameras that are not necessary, why not spend it on people?

Bill Johnston (1925-1995)

It is with great sadness that we report the news of the passing of Bill Johnston, whose struggle for over five decades for the cause of workers' self-emancipation and Scottish independence was a source of inspiration for freedom activists both young and old. The energy and enthusiasm with which he tackled every political question was evident in his very first letter to us a little over three years ago, in which he said he was anxious to see the formation of a new international of working people in the spirit of Marx's revolutionary vision.

In 1968 he was a convenor, along with the Scottish Marxist-Humanist Harry McShane, of the John MacLean Society, which was dedicated to the ideas of the great Scottish revolutionary whose insistence on the inseparability of genuine socialism and Scottish self-determination so ignited the "Red Clyde" of revolutionary Glasgow. Bill's thinking on the Scottish question was much influenced by James Connolly; he often liked to echo his statement that socialists needed to take the cause of Irish and Scottish nationalism more seriously than the nationalists themselves.

As a youth he joined the Independent Labour Party in Bridgeton and helped to form the Association of Scottish Nationalist Trade Unionists. Upon leaving Scotland to work in the U.S., he joined the Industrial Workers of the World, and remained committed to its principles long after returning to Scotland.

It was a mark of Bill's open-mindedness and dedication to revolutionary transformation that he became involved in a dialogue with us around the importance of a philosophy of revolution for today's freedom movements. What he wrote about Harry McShane in the Preface to my pamphlet *Harry McShane and the Scottish Roots of Marxist-Humanism* (published in 1994 by the John MacLean Society) could as well be said of himself:

"When many people would have retired after a lifetime of struggle Harry found and pursued a new concept—the concept of Marxist Humanism as propagated by Raya Dunayevskaya. This concept appealed to Harry's humanitarian qualities. It also highlights the flexibility of Harry McShane's mind, at an age when most minds are fixed and not subject to change."

We are honored both to have known Bill and that he drew so close to us. His very last article, "Scotland, Socialism and the National Question," appeared in the May issue of *News & Letters*. We look forward to promoting the principles he lived by throughout the years to come.

—Peter Hudis

We're the ones making millions for Delta Pride. With the time study, they are trying to put pressure on people who can't keep up. All these things are happening because in July the contract is up at the Belzoni plant and whatever they get, we negotiate for in December. When Delta Pride comes to the bargaining table, they claim they don't have money. But we are getting ready.

—Steward

Chinatown hunger strike



New York—In the spirit of the students who fought against oppression at Tiananmen square in Beijing six years ago, beginning June 4, Chinese-American students began a week-long hunger strike on Elizabeth St. in Chinatown. "We chose June 4 because the oppression in Chinatown is as brutal as it is in China. We want to demonstrate that kind of brutality, and students' commitment and determination to fight this oppression," one hunger striker told N&L.

"Similar to the Tiananmen Square protesters, the students are challenging the collaboration of established institutions—the 5th Police Precinct in Chinatown, the Chinese American Restaurant Association, Chinatown's tongs, and the media—to maintain the illegal and inhumane working conditions in our community. We, as students, demand the government take immediate action to enforce labor law and to investigate the police and organized crime in Chinatown," read their statement.

"The seven day hunger strike is symbolic of the fact that many workers in Chinatown have to work seven days a week, 12 to 16 hours a day. I am not eating, my body is suffering, but my condition is nothing. It is better than the living conditions, the human rights condition in Chinatown. I will feel it for seven days—those workers feel it for their whole life," another hunger striker told N&L.

The hunger strike is in front of Jing Fong Restaurant, where for almost four months, workers and students have been picketing to protest its flagrant violations of labor law (see N&L March 1995). The hunger strike was kicked off by a spirited rally and march of some 300 workers and supporters.

To find out how to help, call Students for Workers' Rights (212) 619-7979.

Day laborers organize

Pasadena, Cal.—A group of day laborers has arisen as the *Asociacion de Trabajadores de Dia de Pasadena* (ATDP—Association of Day Workers in Pasadena), as a response to the anti-immigrant campaign and to the exploitation and injustices against them. The two year-old group was organized originally by students and teachers of *La Escuela de la Comunidad* in Pasadena. It has between 100 and 150 members.

The goal is to have an Employment Center, a Learning Center and a Center for referrals. Explains Raul, ATDP organizer, "This place should be open to anyone that may need, regardless of race. There will be available information on workers rights, the legality of contracts and how to defend themselves so that they are not cheated like one worker who is owed about \$2,200, part of a half year of work. We do not necessarily want to be a union. We would like to learn about the pros and cons and then make a decision."

Perhaps their early interaction with the union IBEW has something to do with this decision. "When the ATDP found a place next to the IBEW, the IBEW threatened by competition, afraid that the daily laborers will bring bad reputation and devalue their property opposed their moving to their neighborhood," said Jose, another ATDP organizer. Until they settle on this place or find another place, to support them look for them in Pasadena in the Park Villa or at the *Escuela de la Comunidad*.

—Mary

American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard

For information on ordering this Black and labor history pamphlet, see page 7.

Starve labor back to work

New York—The bad news is, capitalist planners are getting serious about reducing unemployment. It is bad news, since they are increasingly looking to the U.S., with its falling wages and smashing of the welfare state, as a model of job creation. Such was the near-consensus view of the central bank officials and prominent economists from around the world who gathered at a symposium on "Reducing Unemployment," sponsored by the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City last year, the "Proceedings" of which have recently been published.

Although the unemployment rate has risen sharply in the U.S. as well as Europe since the 1970s, it is true that its "official" 1993 level of 6.7% looks good by comparison with the 10.6% level in the European Community.

The blame was put on welfare and unemployment benefits—especially the payment of unemployment insurance for two years or longer, as in much of Europe. These benefits enable the unemployed to survive without being forced to take low-wage jobs and, as Edmund Phelps of Columbia University noted, increase workers' "propensities to quit, shirk, be an absentee, and to strike....Employer costs are increased, and jobs have to be curtailed."

Paul Krugman of Stanford University eschewed the euphemisms about increasing the "flexibility of the labor market" and noted quite bluntly: "There is a well-understood way to reduce...unemployment, but it involves creating more jobs at the expense of more extensive and more severe poverty. As Layard and others put it, 'This is a harsh route, in which some people end up on the scrap-heap.'"

The naked hatred and fear of working people displayed by George Shultz, Reagan's Secretary of State, was even more revealing. On the so-called "underclass" Shultz said, "Just because they are not in school doesn't mean they aren't smart. Sometimes they are extremely ingenious. But they are in a different pattern, a different system....It is a threat to society if we don't do something about people in this alternative system."

The symposium underscored the extent to which "jobs, jobs, jobs" has become a right-wing issue. Phelps, Krugman, Shultz, and the others are concerned about unemployment because they want to get more work out of the working class, period. Rather than the unemployed learning how to survive without working for the capitalists, these free market planners want to cause a "change in the direction of their ingenuity"—learning to claw for jobs where we do what we're told for the crumbs they're willing to throw us.

—Andrew Kliman

Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

to speak to a big student rally.

The power of workers and students together rocked GM to its foundations. And it did more than that. It also scared the leadership of our union, the UAW. That coming together of workers and students is so powerful; neither GM, nor the government, nor the UAW bureaucrats wanted to take on that power. It could lead to revolution. The capitalists have to buy off the workers, to stop that kind of movement.

The Unity Committee at my South Gate plant put out our own leaflets and our own demands for the new contract. We won 19 out of our 20 demands, including better coverage in our medical, a dental plan, eyeglasses and better retirement pay for each year worked. It is not that those kinds of demands are all that a worker on the assembly line wants, as some intellectuals say—as if only they have a critique of the whole capitalist system.

We are sick of hearing from Leftists who don't understand that a worker thinks his or her own thoughts. We don't want one more boss telling us what to do.

In my years in the plant I had seen so many people—including good, militant workers—who, once they were "leaders," or even union stewards, become different. They were dealing with the company, and the first thing you know the company's thinking and their thinking became the same.

That 1970 strike helped me find News and Letters Committees, the Marxist-Humanist organization I have been working with ever since. That was the beginning of a new life for me as a new human being, a worker who knew himself for the first time.

I had been looking for something—a philosophy of revolution, even though I never called it by that name. With Marxist-Humanism, I learned about the philosophies of Hegel and Marx, and that dialectics means self-movement and self-development. If it doesn't come from the self, from the workers themselves, then the movement goes backward, or transforms into its opposite.

Marx writes of two types of labor: creative labor, which combines one's muscles with one's mind; and alienated labor, which is forced labor, any kind of labor just to live, doing just what you are told to do until you could do it without thinking, just like a machine.

When I found News and Letters Committees after the 1970 strike, I saw that here was an organization that is about the bringing together of thinking and doing, the self-development of each individual and a new relationship between workers and intellectuals in this struggle to develop, to glimpse the future of freedom.

This is what is so necessary for the labor movement and all movements for freedom to grasp: the continual self-development through the struggle to take back our own minds and working with others, including across the border. There has to be a new way. If you are not moving to take production in hand then you are moving in the wrong direction, against yourself, your labor self.

40 Years of NEWS & LETTERS

Marxist - Humanist Archives
From the writings of
RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYAWorkers, intellectuals and a new kind
of revolutionary journalism

Editor's Note

With this issue of *News & Letters*, Marxist-Humanists in the U.S. celebrate its 40th anniversary of publication. We proudly observe this event by publishing excerpts from two writings by Raya Dunayevskaya that tell the story about the inaugural issue of *News & Letters* which was published on June 24, 1955:

1) The opening section of the 1986 pamphlet, *The Myriad Global Crises of the 1980s and the Nuclear World since World War II* (Raya Dunayevskaya Collection #11450). It originally appeared in the July 1985 issue to begin a series of articles titled "The concrete-Universal: a retrospective/perspective look at thirty years of *News & Letters*" (#10515).

2) A letter written May 7, 1955, accompanying a draft of Dunayevskaya's first "Two Worlds" column to appear in the very first issue (#12049).

WITH the eyes of 1985, the idea of a Marxist-Humanist paper, beginning publication June 1955, when McCarthysm was still raging, seems, strangely enough, very todayish. The idea of a struggle for freedom that would make inseparable theory and practice, and have that relation as the determinant, does indeed remain an imperative...

The three post-World War II decades, 1955-1985, not only tested Marx's philosophy of liberation when one must fight under the whip of counter-revolution, but also saw the emergence of new passions and forces opposing capitalist-imperialism. Thus was signified the dawning of a new epoch.

To examine the first year of our existence, especially the first issue of *News & Letters* (N&L), will reveal, first, what we heard, and second, the meaning we gave to what we heard by declaring it to be "a movement from practice that is itself a form of theory." It is this we held to be the challenge which theoreticians must face in working out the dialectic philosophy of the age.

The uniqueness of the simultaneity of act and of thought in the 1950s—in such events as the 1949-50 Miners' General Strike and the 1953 East German Revolt—was a spur to the publication of *News & Letters*. Thus we set aside a specific section entitled "Coal and Its People" which we explained in an article in the first issue, "A Coal Section because..." That section had been born from the kind of questions posed by that 1949-50 Miners' General Strike against Automation which was then merely known as the struggle against the introduction of a new kind of machine, "the continuous miner," into the coalfields. In battling what the miners called a "man-killer," the miners insisted they were not interested mainly in the question of wages. Rather they asked what kind of labor man should do? Why was there such a big division between thinking and doing?

In 1953, in a very different country, East Germany, there was a rebellion against "work norms" (speed-up). Here the workers coupled their economic demands at the point of production with the political demand for freedom. It was the first-ever general strike from under Communist totalitarianism. Their slogan was "Bread and Freedom." This new battle spread through East Europe. It came to a climax in the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, which brought onto the present historic stage philosophic questions that had been raised in Marx's *Humanist Essays* of 1844.

Issue number one of *News & Letters* demonstrated our international dimension in its very appearance in June 1955 to commemorate the second anniversary of the June 17th East German Revolt. This was discussed in our "World Comment" section of this first issue. Our editorial, "Why We Appear," expressed our relation to our readers as writers here in America. The uniqueness of our paper was manifested in the following:

1. The editors were two workers, Johnny Zupan and Charles Denby. Charles Denby, a Black production worker, was soon to become the sole editor. This was the first time ever that a U.S. Black production worker became the editor of a Marxist paper.

2. Nor was the Black Dimension limited to editorship. The very first issue of N&L reproduced a picture of Njeri, a Kenyan woman who was a central figure in the Mau Mau struggle for freedom from British imperialism. It was to her that the booklet, *People of Kenya Speak for Themselves*, was dedicated.¹

The year 1955 was filled not only with McCarthyism, but with racism of the most barbaric kind—as witness the murder of Emmett Till. Always seeing the new opposition, the absolute opposite of the barbarism, is the only way to know how to fight in a positive way. Thus, our front page article on Oct. 5, 1955 was not just a report of the horrors of Till's murder, but of the Black mass reaction to it. When the Montgomery Bus Boycott broke out later that same year, our editor, Charles Denby, went to

1. I have read innumerable "erudite," "scholarly" studies that speak of Koinange's book as if the date it was finally published commercially was the time when the story of the Mau Mau struggle was revealed. The truth is that we had tried very hard to get an established publisher before we undertook our own publication. Koinange thought he had Nehru's promise to do so. But indeed, other than ourselves, none were willing to undertake publication.

Alabama to meet with the participants in that bus boycott. What we presented in the pages of N&L was a report of the beginnings of the Black Revolution. It became crystal clear that this movement wasn't the act of any single individual but was masses in motion—what we would later call Black masses as vanguard.

3. The category of Women's Liberation as Reason as well as revolutionary force was seen in N&L from the start. It was not alone that a Black woman, Ethel Dunbar, authored a column she called "We Are Somebody,"² but that N&L had no less than two other women columnists—Jerry Kegg on the Labor page and Angela Terrano, who was also a worker, writing a column called "Working for Independence," first on the Youth page and later on the Labor page.

4. The Youth column was then written by Robert Elery who edited the page and called his column "Thinking It Out." He later wrote the front page article which clearly showed that, far from the youth being a "Beat Generation," they were in fact a new force of revolution—"Rebels With A Cause." (Feb. 5, 1957).

5. To be noted as pivotal as well was the section devoted to "Readers' Views" which was created to give priority not merely to letters to the editor, but also to unwritten letters, that is to views of non-members, often only spoken. The purpose of this section was to reveal what people thought and said of the world, and of their own lives, which would not depend on whether or not they were writers. Rather it was a question of our members needing to be alert to what the masses said to each other, what they thought, how they felt, whether at work or just on public transportation. Involved here is the whole concept of oral history.

6. An "M.D." column was written by a doctor. It did not limit itself to medical problems though central to the column would be specific questions about industrial illnesses and about the social nature of illness. The column dealt with such other topics as a review of Herbert Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization* (Feb. 5, 1957); and a series of four articles developed a view of "The Biological Basis of Marxist-Humanism." (April-October 1960).

7. Finally, there was my column, "Two Worlds," which had an overline, "Notes from a Diary," and was, at first, unsigned. My first column dealt with "Letter Writing and the New Passions" that signaled the birth of a new epoch.

IN 1955 our very first conference, which had decided to publish this paper, *News & Letters*, edited by workers, had at the same time assigned me to complete the study of Marxism that I had been working on for a decade. It would be called *Marxism and Freedom* and would articulate both the American roots of Marxism and Marx's world Humanist concepts. It would not be completed until 1957. Before its appearance, however, we did issue our very first pamphlet, which reproduced in mimeographed form my translation of Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks* which had never been available in English before. That same pamphlet contained, as well, my May 1953 Letters on Hegel's Absolute Idea. It is in these letters that I held that inherent in Hegel's Absolute Idea a unity of theory and practice was the presence of a movement from practice.

I felt that in our age, when the workers' movement from practice had manifested itself as a form of theory, it was the task of Marxists to face this new reality in such a way that all relations between workers and intellectuals change. One manifestation of that was that workers became editors. But that did not mean that there would be no work for the intellectuals who were revolutionary and who participated with the workers in all their actions. Here is what I wrote in my "Two Worlds" column of Aug. 5, 1955, about the unique combination of worker and intellectual that N&L was establishing. We insisted that this was:

"the practice of the breakdown of the most monstrous division of all—the division between mental and manual labor....The intellectual must be attuned to hear that movement from practice to theory. This is the nub...Theoreticians cannot be bystanders to a paper that mirrors the workers' thoughts and activities as they happen."

This conception became historically as well as currently alive as the East European revolts reached their first climax in the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. Along with establishing Workers' Councils at the point of production, instead of the state-controlled unions, that revolution, as well, saw the appearance of innumerable newspapers and, as I mentioned above, the 1844 *Humanist Essays* of Marx were brought onto the historic stage as a cogent point of discussion. It was precisely those *Essays* which we had translated in the 1940s, had been unable to find a publisher for, and which we had decided to include as an appendix to *Marxism and Freedom*, which was just then being completed.

Just as my breakthrough on the Absolute Idea, where I had singled out the movement from practice, set the structure for *Marxism and Freedom*, from 1776 Until Today, so the Hungarian Revolution gave a todayness to Marx's *Humanist Essays*, while the Montgomery Bus Boycott made inseparable the Black Revolution and its international dimension. In the Introduction to this

2. How long was it before Jesse Jackson made a category out of "We Are Somebody?" By then Dunbar had changed the title of her column to emphasize its international dimension, calling it "Way of the World."

work I made clear the indispensability of a new type of relationship of practice to theory, a new unity of theory and practice: "No theoretician, today more than ever before, can write out of his own head. Theory requires a constant shaping and reshaping of ideas on the basis of what the workers themselves are doing and thinking." It was this which led me, in dedicating the work to "the auto workers, miners, steelworkers and student youth who have participated so fully in the writing of this book," to declare them to be "its co-authors." *News & Letters* further deepened this new relationship between workers and intellectuals on the basis of what *Marxism and Freedom* had established...

THERE are certain very basic theoretic ideas I want from the very start to be able to express simply but without vulgarization...There is no point to just repeat there is no separation between theory and practice any longer but go about keeping each in a separate compartment.

I know I didn't succeed in putting in, even in rough form, all that I wanted to say, and perhaps it wasn't even necessary for my greatest fault is to try to put everything into every single thing. But I do want you to know all I thought of, the philosophic and historic background to it.

Thus, from Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*: "The real subject-matter is not exhausted in its purpose, but in working the matter out; nor is the mere result attained the whole concrete itself, but the result along with the process of arriving at it. The purpose by itself is a lifeless universal." [Baillie trans., p. 69]

Now this answers not only the outside on purpose, but the inside. Too many think that purpose is a matter of announcing your goal as if you were hiding something. The truth is that for us, at this time purpose is a question of first working matters out, and I do not mean working out in a week or a month but a year and, more, as a continuous process.

From Hegel's *Science of Logic*: "[T]he self-certainty which the subject has in the fact of its determinedness in and for itself is a certainty of its own actuality and of the non-actuality of the world." [Johnston and Struthers trans., Vol. II, p.60]

Which Lenin translates for us thus in his *Philosophic Notebooks* [1914]: "Confidence in self which the subject has in its being in itself and for itself as a determinate subject is confidence in its own actuality and the non-actuality of the world, i.e., the word does not satisfy man and man by his actions decides to change it."

I cannot emphasize strongly enough this strange sentence about confidence in one's own actuality and the non-actuality of the world which sounds so idealistic and so contradictory, and yet, there is no other way to express the future in the present than this confidence that the worker must have that what he wants is right and true and should be the real and the world about him is wrong and should be changed. It may be too violent a jump from that to a simple thing like our paper and giving [it over to] workers we know to write for it, and yet that is the truth of our present being, or we'd have no right to be.

At the same time as having these two philosophic quotations in the back of my head, I had the following two historic matters:

1) Lenin's "Where to Begin" where he emphasizes the need for a paper: "[the thread that will] constantly develop, broaden and deepen [the organization we desire] is to establish a newspaper...Unless we have such a paper we shall be absolutely unable to fulfill our task, namely to concentrate all the elements of political unrest and discontent and with them enrich the revolutionary movement of the proletariat."

2) American history both as to journalism and specifically committees of correspondence. (Incidentally I find that first newspaper as contrasted to just letters was called *News-Letter* and I believe I will propose that as our name...: The first regular newspaper in the colonies was *The Boston News-Letter*, a tiny four page, two column folder, established in 1704." [Charles and Mary Beard, *The Rise of American Civilization* (MacMillan: New York, 1944), p. 184]...

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Editorial

The militias: America's neo-fascist visage

We have heard so much about the growth of the far-right militias in the weeks since the April 19 terrorist bombing in Oklahoma City that one might be tempted to dismiss this as another media infatuation — were it not for the fact that it is a deadly serious phenomenon. Not only did the horrid bombing make plain the existence of an armed neo-fascist movement in this country, but the publicity generated about such groups has given them a national platform from which to spout their reactionary rhetoric.

This plays directly into their hands. The militias, after all, have not arisen out of thin air; their growth is closely connected with the political climate generated by the 1994 Congressional campaigns. The disclaimers of Gingrich notwithstanding, his effort to "complete the Reagan Revolution" has created an atmosphere in which some of the most reactionary tendencies in America feel they now can contend for a mass base. This explains the "new face" being worn by an assortment of white supremacist and anti-Semitic militias who present themselves in the guise of being "anti-government."

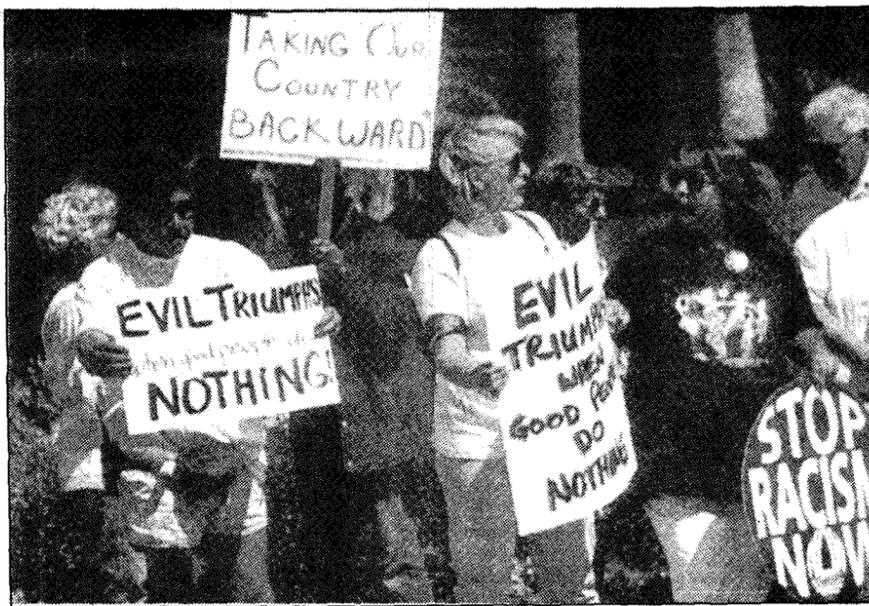
Remarkably, not only have much of the established media shown themselves all too willing to provide a platform for many of the militias, but more often than not the media take their ground by defining these groups as united around an "anti-government" outlook — as if the racism which so defines them were of no account.

KEY QUESTION IS RACISM

The growing ties between explicitly white supremacist groups and the militias were documented at the end of 1994 in a report issued by the Southern Poverty Law Center in Atlanta. The report showed that the growth in militia groups in the Midwest and Northwest especially was a consequence of a conscious organizing drive by white supremacist, neo-Nazi and "Christian Identity" groupings who have "shaped the militias' ideology, recruitment and tactics." It is no secret that many of these militias have close connections with anti-abortion fanatics and harbor a deep aversion to the very idea of a multiethnic society.

In this, the militias are not unlike the "citizen militias" that have sparked genocide in Bosnia. It is true that, unlike the Bosnian Serbs, the U.S. militias are not backed by a state power — although local law enforcement often cooperates with them — but that is not the crucial issue. Given their political outlook and ideology, if given the chance these groups (as Christopher Hitchens put it in *The Nation* of May 22, 1995) would be fully willing "to enlist in an authoritarian statist militia as an American Freikorps, fighting for race and nation."

The question of whether or not one is "anti-government" has never been the defining issue in this country. The key question always has been and remains the Achilles heel of American "civilization" — its racism.



Protesters picket militia conference in Palm Springs, California.

It is remarkable, then, that some on the Left are saying the militias should not be rejected as totally reactionary since they supposedly oppose an "authoritarian government." Some have even gone so far as to say the Left should recognize the importance of organizing in the militias' milieu — as if people drawn to them are just misplaced souls in search of proletarian revolution!

It is hard to imagine how such notions can take hold. Even if one were to look at those militias which suddenly claim to be "non-racist" the neo-fascist ideology underlying them is not hard to see. Groups such as the "Minute Men of Illinois" may claim they accept anyone as a member, regardless of gender, race or religion. Their entire outlook, however, centers on a paranoid web of conspiracy theories about how an array of foreign entities—from the UN to the IMF and from GATT to foreign bankers—are about to take over the U.S. in the name of a "global nation-state."

It would be easy to laugh off such bizarre theories, yet they do have an objective base. The integration of the U.S. into an increasingly distant and depersonalized world economy, over which no single nation or individual seems able to exert rational control, leads many stuck within the capitalist paradigm to think everything really must be engineered from behind the scenes by some intricate cabal. The more global and abstract the operation of capitalism becomes, the greater the pull to identify some particular group as responsible for all its ills.

Such theories are hardly new. They characterized the response of many whites to the rise of monopoly capitalism in the 1890s, just as they defined the attitude of many to the Great Depression. The more disconcerting economic changes become, the more sections of the petty-bourgeoisie and working class are drawn to theories of organized conspiracies — whether by Freemasons or Jews, Blacks or "foreign nationals." The same message underlies the paranoid rhetoric of the militias today.

How then, could we have reached the point where supposed "leftists" fail to see what the militias represent? Few seem more confused at the moment than many "anti-government" anarchists, who have focused so much on what they are

against that they are finding that the far Right sounds eerily like themselves. Our times have seen such strange amalgams as "Red-Brown" alliances of Stalinists, monarchists and fascists in Russia; a Serbian policy of "ethnic cleansing" against Bosnia set into motion with the active assistance of former Marxist dissidents like Mihailo Markovic; and one-time revolutionary theorists like Rudolf Bahro joining hands with "ecofascists" in Germany. Are we now to see a convergence between Right and Left "anti-authoritarians" in the U.S.?

The disorientation that the response to the bombing in Oklahoma has brought to the surface is an extreme expression of the dead end that afflicts all who base their politics on what they oppose instead of spelling out the kind of new society they are for. The root of the problem centers on the attitude to a philosophy of liberation. By failing to recognize that their role is neither to "lead" the masses nor to "drown themselves" in them, but rather to assume responsibility for a philosophy spelling out "what happens after" even before the revolution, radicals have left themselves ill-equipped to deal with the complexities of the present historic moment.

We can no longer afford to act as if the far Right will be beaten back by rallies and marches alone — though they surely are needed. The time has come to work out, in both theory and practice, a direct encounter with a comprehensive philosophy of liberation such as is found in Marxist-Humanism.

Review: 'Nazism and the working class' disputes revisionist history

"Nazism and the Working Class, 1933-93," by Serge Bologna, *Common Sense*, no. 16 (PO Box 311, Edinburgh EH9 1SF)

This 43-page paper is a survey of studies on the German working class and National Socialism during the last years of the Weimar Republic and the first years of Hitler's regime. Written by Serge Bologna, the Italian "autonomist" Marxist historian, it aims to challenge the current "crescendo" of "historical revisionism" which claims that "the working-class component was decisive within Nazism" and that "Hitler was a true social revolutionary of the twentieth century."

Bologna shows that, in comparison with workers in "Fordist" mass production economies such as the United States, by the end of the Weimar period in 1933 the German working class had been deliberately "atomised": nearly 50% worked in factories with fewer than ten employees and 16.4% of workers were self-employed. Over one million of the unemployed were "mobile" skilled workers who constantly changed jobs and moved between the engineering, construction and transport sectors. These workers have been ignored by studies which tend to concentrate on large-scale unionized enterprises.

COMMUNIST-SOCIALIST DIVISION

Productivity in Weimar Germany rose by over a quarter in the years 1925-29, but wages did not. During this period the socialist unions collaborated with employers in the "systematic and selective expulsion" from the factories of militant workers — especially (but not exclusively) those of the Communist Party (KPD), whose membership as a result was 80% unemployed by 1931. With very little base in industry, the KPD turned to "mass propaganda." The Social Democrats (SPD), on the other hand, focused on local government, public administration and social security, that is, the state bureaucracy. As a result, the SPD found itself in hostile confrontation with the unemployed and the KPD.

Contrary to what Trotsky thought the problem wasn't the Communist-Socialist division within one labor movement. "It was a question of two cultures": one which saw the Weimar Republic as a gain for the workers and one which saw it as threatening their means of existence.

In the course of the Depression, the welfare system "progressively lost almost all its character as a social service and increasingly became a supplementary policing system over the weaker parts of society." A study by Angelika Ebbinghaus shows that the "largely female staff" of the welfare bureaucracy "went over

more or less without problems" from the Social Democratic welfare administration in Hamburg to the Nazi regime to "carry out functions of monitoring, surveillance and classifying. In the meantime the Nazis were constructing a parallel structure of selecting out and marginalizing people on biological and racial grounds."

In 1929 Erich Fromm began a Workers' Enquiry "so as to identify any eventual inclinations towards authoritarianism," in which his collaborator, Hilde Weiss, questioned Socialist and Communist militants on issues such as women's liberation. The study showed alarming authoritarian attitudes in the male respondents of the SPD. Weiss' findings scared Max Horkheimer and the Frankfurt Institute into suppressing the findings for ten years. Horkheimer, it seems, didn't want to "undermine the socialists" at a time when special police squads answerable to the SPD interior minister were firing on demonstrations of the unemployed.

PROLETARIAN ARMED RESISTANCE

The Nazis grew first in the south. To lead the long "Battle for Berlin" Hitler chose Joseph Goebbels, the original "Great Communicator." In the first phase of his campaign in the Red metropolises, Goebbels relied on the Strasserite "left" wing of the Nazi SA brownshirts to pursue "workerist" propaganda. Bologna writes, "Too often you find in history books the thesis, that the Nazis and Communists went side by side against the institutions of Weimar" (for example, the Berlin transport strike of 1932, where they found themselves fighting the same enemy) "but you almost never hear of the physical clashes which took place between proletarians organized by the KPD and the Nazi gangs."

Drawing on the work of Eve Rosenhaft, Bologna insists: "It was an armed resistance. The proletariat defended inch by inch the territory and communities which over decades of struggles had become its strongholds." By 1931 the KPD had a "paramilitary" anti-fascist organization of 100,000 with more than 7,000 militants in Berlin.

The Nazis achieved their breakthrough in the "Red Belts" of Berlin by targeting the taverns, which in these areas had been the meeting places of the Left for a generation. The Nazis — now well-financed by the bourgeoisie — were able to turn their own gangs into an army of mercenaries and the taverns into military headquarters. The KPD, in response, restricted the use of violence to supporting "mass action."

Two years after seizing power the Nazis were able to claim that they had solved unemployment with a massive program of infrastructural public works. The revisionists' position is expressed by the leftist historian

Gunter Mai: "The bourgeoisie put Hitler in power, the workers kept him there." For some, apparently, Nazism was "Keynesianism in practice" — the implication being that Nazism was either bad because it negated the "free market" or not so bad after all because it was "pro-worker" and state-interventionist.

The focus of revisionist attacks has been Timothy Mason, who showed in his well-documented study in 1975 that there were "moments of insubordination" by the working class after 1933. There appear to have been extensive stoppages at autobahn construction sites in 1935 and an "identifiable cycle of strikes" in the factories and shipyards in the course of 1936-37, which were brutally suppressed with the arrest of 11,687 "agitators."

At the cost of allowing much of the economy inherited from Weimar to stagnate, the Nazi regime gave massive state support to new industries such as aeronautics, which established "a new working-class elite" with no experience of the pre-Nazi period political organization and no memory of Rosa Luxemburg and the 1919 German Revolution. Whilst these more "modern" sectors were the most "integrated" with the regime, as "defense industries" they were also the most militarised — workers lived in constant fear of incarceration for lateness or questioning an order.

Even so, it is recorded that pacifist leaflets appeared in the Fokke-Wolf aeronautics factory when war broke out. As the 1939-45 war progressed, the composition of the work force in the war economy became "multinational...and 80% of this work force was working under conditions of forced labor."

It would have been good had Bologna further discussed the role of the KPD, whose rank-and-file members, he rightly reminds us, fought with courage and determination. Yet to what extent did the dictates of Stalin's Comintern weaken the KPD and its working-class base, not just during the "Third Period" of 1929-33 but from 1923, when the German Revolution was finally crushed? What problems did the KPD have in relation to the anarchist Free Workers Union which, Bologna tells us, had at one time 400,000 members? How important were the intellectuals, and how did theory relate to practice?

The strengths of Bologna's study are: firstly, its powerful challenge to the historical revisionism which is coming from the leftist "historians of the personal and everyday" as well as from the Right; and, secondly, his well-timed warning that fascism doesn't just grow out of fascist gangs and scheming capitalists. It also grows in the town hall, the clinic, the welfare office, the classroom, the union local and the social studies department.

— Dave Black

GINGRICH, OKLA., AND 'TOTALITARIANISM: U.S. STYLE'

I'm so glad to have News & Letters because the far right scares the hell out of me. I want a new society but not the way the militia groups do. They are worse than what we have now. Now I understand why it is so important for mental and manual labor to come together. Why is it so hard to be human?

Working woman
Oklahoma

The total disregard for human life by right-wing fanatics that we saw in the Oklahoma City bombing was obvious long before that horrendous slaughter. Where was the outrage when well over 100 abortion clinics were being bombed by so-called "pro-life" thugs without regard to the human beings inside—not to mention the clinic clients, workers and their families harassed, stalked, attacked and even murdered by these monsters? Even some members of Congress are now calling for an investigation of the links between paramilitary and anti-abortion groups. Too bad it didn't come sooner.

Mary Jo Grey
Chicago

There seems a unity in the Black community concerning Clinton's anti-terrorist measures. Very different segments, from Black talk radio to Sunday pulpits, are voicing alarm that the measures will not be directed against the Right but "against us."

Meanwhile, now that the Republicans have rescinded the federally funded Summer Youth Program (there are around 14,000 applications from teenagers for these minimum-wage, 20 hours a week, 6 week long jobs) it will be a long, hot summer.

Concerned
Detroit

I appreciate your "Fascist Visage in Okla. City" and Dunayevskaya's 1970 "Totalitarianism, U.S. Style" (May issue), yet I think there is a fundamental difference between the two. Whereas your analysis of the proposed new laws states that they are intended for the Left, thereby separating the "Left" from the rest of U.S. society, Dunayevskaya speaks of the infringement on the rights of the American people thus making the Left indigenous to the U.S. Laws "protect" only as long as the state allows. Look at the complete surveillance of the Muslim communities that the barbaric act in Okla. City exposed. They picked up innocent people around the country, even around the world, in a matter of hours. Many infringements will not make the front pages.

A.T.
New York

Of course the anti-terrorism will be used against the Left, not the Right. But that is not new. What is new is that there is so much confusion in the Left about what to make of the militias who are much smarter than the Posse Comitatus militias of the 1980s. They say they are not racist. They are for liberty. They can even invoke Sojourner Truth and American Indians. To get their number you have to understand the American Civil War and "states' rights." The Civil War was fought for liberty—the liberty to own slaves. The militias want liberty—to beat their wives, kill gays, prevent Blacks from moving next door, ban abortion. Marx was right when he said liberty is so much the essence of man that no one denies liberty; at most they deny the liberty of others.

John Marcotte
New York

The seamless garment of right-wing hatred revealed another intertwining when California's Attorney General Dan Lundgren announced his office's support for Colorado's homo-hating Amendment Two. Claiming the defense of this 1992 anti-gay ballot initiative was a "states rights" issue, Lundgren signed on in support of Colorado's case before the U.S. Supreme Court. Of course, this "states rights" posture is not new: discriminatory laws and practices are always justified with phrases like "local control," "tradition," or "states' rights." What is new and dangerous here is how Lundgren is using an attack on lesbian and gay lives to buttress his proposed legal defense of the anti-hu-

man Proposition 187. Similarly, the U.S. Militia Association in Idaho recently expounded on their major themes: taxes, oppression of women, and hatred of queers. Given that the far right is using every means at its disposal to restrict human lives from self-development, it is crucial that revolutionaries be equally bold in denouncing such attacks.

Jennifer Pen
San Jose

I work as a messenger for minimum wage but had a lot of benefits that are no longer there since the company was sold to a new owner. The new boss said it was to make the workplace more efficient, and that paying for holidays and healthcare is not their responsibility. It sounds just like Newt Gingrich talking about working harder and the personal responsibility act of the Contract with America at my workplace.

Billy Zapata
New York

It is fair to say that a negative reaction to the far-right militia has occurred since the bombing. More deeply, however, there has been no connection to the militarized thinking which pervades the state and the southwest area of Texas and New Mexico due to the Defense Department presence. For example, of the three major urban areas in Oklahoma, the military is the largest single employer in two of them, namely Okla. City and Lawton. In fact, the military is considered a blessing for employing so many who would otherwise probably not have steady employment. Basically, the violence that is exported to Central America, Indochina etc. is conveniently forgotten about or dismissed as being unrelated to life in the "heartland."

Reader
Oklahoma

The effect of the California Supreme Court's *Smith vs. Regents* decision, that no mandatory student fee money could go to groups that were "political or ideological" in intent or in their programs, has had a chilling effect on freedom of expression. The left-wing student paper at Berkeley, *diatribe*, had already been defunded and political self-censorship now is the policy of most groups that had previously combined cultural and political concerns.

Worried
Berkeley

Jim Guthrie's Lead (May N&L) on Youth's mobilization against the Right, discussed the police riot that stopped the march of the CUNY coalition against educational cuts. Although there was no actual police assault at a subsequent NYC protest against the Contract on America, there were hundreds of police on foot, on horses and in police cars, sporting riot masks and with a regalia of clubs, guns, and handcuffs to menace the 4,000 who marched from one demonstration point to a second gathering. They were made up of dozens of organizations, welfare recipients, the homeless, students, union members, gays and lesbians, all joining forces to "Fight Back." Orwell's 1984 "doublespeak" lives on in the "peace-keeping force" that is actually an "army of occupation."

Marcher
New York City

The review I'm sending of Serge Bologna's writing on fascism is my way of commemorating VE Day, if you like, but consider it also my response to the fascist mass-murder in Oklahoma, while waiting to see what facts emerge. Is this the spectre of the Confederacy or what?

Dave Black
London

Editor's note: See review, p. 5.

The special character of absolute opposites in the essay on "The concept of subject in Marx's *Capital*" (May N&L) is important to grasp. Perhaps most crucial is the subjective transcendence that overcomes through "freely associated labor" what Ted McGlone calls the subject's "own false objectivity"—i.e. socially related things. A new sense of objectivity signals a new dialectic, a new beginning. The failure to grasp the totally irreconcilable nature of the opposition to capitalism accounts for much of the

Readers' Views

weakness in the response to Gingrich and the militias who have appropriated the idea of "revolution" and "idealism" to turn the country back to the pre-1930s.

The Appeal is a very important piece in the May issue in that it points not only to Gingrichism's first 100 days as only the beginning of something lethal, but also the sense in which a philosophy of revolution lets the voices for freedom ring louder by realizing their character as an absolute opposite.

Ron Brokmeyer
Oakland, Cal.

DIALECTIC OR PANALECTIC?

At the recent Bell Curve Teach-In, at the workshop on "Race and Racism: People of Color Fighting Back," I spoke in discussion about some of the contradictions I had heard from the several speakers and the compelling need I felt in this dehumanizing historical period for a total uprooting and a philosophy that gives us a vision of a new society. One of the panelists, Louis Rivera, the "poet laureate of Bayside," validated my point, concluding with: "not just the dialectic but the panalectic—changing the entire world."

Sheila
New York



NEW
LABOR
STRUGGLES

Farm workers and activists in the Sonoma-Napa Valley area commemorated Cinco de Mayo by staging an eight-mile "March for Justice." Three hundred people participated in the walk from Healdsburg to Windsor, demanding a fair contract with the Gallo wine company, but directly linking this struggle to the racism and inhumanity of Proposition 187. Marchers also made the international dimension clear — one youth carried a sign that read "The Zapatista's struggle is our struggle too!"

Supporters
Windsor, Cal.

The headline over the article on the Safeway strikers in the May issue—"Strike stops grocer grab"—is not accurate. One of the unresolved problems remaining from the strike is that the union leadership offered no wage raises. In effect the company got what they wanted: a contract which does not increase costs, even though the unprecedented support made it possible to gain much more.

Strike supporter
Bay Area

Faculty of the California State University system staged a noisy protest May 9 at a meeting of the trustees in Long Beach, Calif. The system's chancellor, political appointee Barry Munitz, unilaterally imposed an impasse in contract negotiations, and recommended an unregulated "merit pay" system, which effectively will reduce professors' salaries by reducing the pool of money available for regularly scheduled pay increases (as well as raising the specter of favoritism in relation to salaries). CFA members, whose previous contract was already abrogated by management, expressed their outrage by coming from across the state to congregate at Long Beach. Marching to the tune of "Pomp and Circumstance," about 250 protesters formed a continuous ring in the inner courtyard of the CSU headquarters. Members of the Screen Actors Guild and SEIU's "Justice for Janitors" (including drummers!) joined the protest in a show of solidarity. Over 1,700 signed cards of protest from campuses state-wide were collected and submitted to the trustees.

Angry Professor
Long Beach

INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE

There is a great need for theoretical discussion at this moment, but there is too much practical politics and party building going on. I am no expert in philosophy but I have just read Raya Dunayevskaya's book *Philosophy and Revolution* with great interest. It is full of independent thought. We have a lot to learn from what she said about Mao in 1973. It took many of us 10 to 15 years longer to arrive at that conclusion. The book needs to be translated widely.

Revolutionary
Norway

Thank you very much for sending us your paper. It represents a true revolutionary Marxist outlook. We completely agree with your opinion about the war in Chechnya (January-February 1995). The essay on Marx's critique of capitalism in the same issue is also very interesting. We would like to exchange publications with you, if you are interested.

Socialist Workers Alliance
Moscow

ON TWO N&L ESSAYS

I have been going through the new Derrida book, *Specters of Marx*, and pretty much concur with Kevin Anderson's review (November 1994, N&L). The book made me reassess my views about Derrida in a more favorable direction, especially in comparison with others of his influence and rank. I don't mind disagreeing with someone so long as I feel they are groping for something worthwhile. After all, who should be so foolish as to claim a lock on truth in this factured world?

Joel Kovel
New York

Olga Domanski's essay on revolutionary feminism and Hegel's notion of Life (March 1995 N&L) was interesting in looking at the *Logic* rather than the usual *Phenomenology*. In his discussion on life, Hegel does make it clear that logic is not a formal subject (although it is treated as such by many academics and traditional philosophers) but rather a very practical subject. In the Preface to the *Phenomenology* he mocks the idea of a lifeless skeleton as a representation of philosophy's concern with meanings divorced from history.

From a feminist standpoint I think the discussion of slavery in Hegel's work is still highly relevant as a lot of work is being done in Europe and the U.S. on the various forms of female slavery which might be informed by his insights. Approaching Hegel from a Marxist-feminist perspective can rescue him from the reactionary tendencies of postmodernist thinking!

Susan Easton
Middlesex, England

BOOKS FOR STRUGGLE



When I learned you were collecting "books for struggle" to send to Russia I thought it such a great project that I gathered up four books I want to donate. I'm enclosing a check for \$20 to defray the cost of the mailing. I hope this will be an on-going project.

Long-time supporter
Alaska

Editor's Note: N&L is serving as collection point for a project to fill a container with radical literature and ship it to the Victor Serge Labor Library that has just been established in Moscow. Russian workers and intellectuals have suffered a serious lack of serious information about labor struggles and socialist thought for over 75 years. We aim to ship the books in July.

SEND WHAT YOU
CAN TO HELP FILL
THE CONTAINER!

THE WORLD SCENE: ITALY, BRITAIN, EAST TIMOR, ISRAEL

We are in the middle of the farce. At the end of the war Italy was divided in two great movements, pro or against the monarchy; in between a middle class movement took position with the slogan: we do not take part in either of these movements, we are the "common man" and wish only an honest administration. That movement collected some two million votes in the 1946 elections but two years afterward disappeared.

The same thing is happening now with the movement "Forza Italia" of Mr. Berlusconi which states that they are not for the right or for the left, they are the "centre." The historical parties are regrouping in two movements "centre left" and "centre right" and both have the slogan "honest administration."

But the knots will come to the comb: the present government and the unions are maneuvering to extract from the pension funds millions of dollars and his matter will become law within the month unless the workers resist as they did last December in the first trial of the government. In the next few weeks we shall see who will be the loser.

Correspondent Naples

The Clinton administration recently asked Congress to renew military aid and increase arms sales to Indonesia. The request comes at a time when Indonesia's repression of East Timor, which has occupied for 20 years, has increased in brutality. The aid would virtually endorse the war of genocide there. Please help us let the American people know of this crisis, which the mainstream media has kept quiet about. For information on how to help, your readers can write to: East Timor Action Network, P.O. Box 420832, San Francisco, CA 94142.

Paul Mittig Sausalito, Cal.

It's hard not to be discouraged, working as a volunteer with Amnesty International. Accounts of human rights abuses come from all over the world, and

as many are issued on the free and glorious USA as for many of the banana republics whose regimes owe their existence to the same USA. The U.S. cases are mainly death penalty cases.

I have despised nationalism and all its evils but it is hard to be indifferent to the advances of the U.S. on Canadian culture, health standards, everything. We are about to pass a law making registration of fire-arms mandatory and the U.S. hunters are threatening they would boycott and not come here to hunt if it passes. What a favor that would be from my perspective!

Longtime supporter British Columbia

This year's council election here has shown the Conservatives that people are tired of their privatization. They can no longer take it. The Conservatives lost almost all their seats but there's no triumph since we don't know what Labour will do for the people. People only knew the Conservatives kept singing they have the best economy in Europe. But you certainly don't see it in people's living conditions.

Women's liberationist London

When there was the peace treaty with Arafat and the Palestinians (or rather, with the PLO) I was happy and excited like everyone else to see Rabin, Arafat and Clinton shaking hands. Since then, we've only achieved peace with Jordan, and as time passes terms with Syria get harder and harder. Assad wants the Golan Heights back and there is a big public argument in Israel between those who are against it for security reasons and those who say with peace there won't be a problem of security. Meanwhile, I am participating in demonstrations against the way a lot of land is being taken from Arabs living in Jerusalem and villages around it, in order to build houses for Israeli Jews. As I send this letter I wonder when the reality will change again.

Women's liberationist Israel

The 3,200 people in Neftegorsk on Sakhalin Island never had a chance when a killer earthquake leveled their town, leaving at least 2,000 buried in the rubble of the shoddily-constructed buildings of the former state-capitalist government. But the homeless survivors also face an uncertain future in "settlement camps" under their current "free market" government which is refusing aid from political rivals, neighboring Japan and South Korea, even though Yeltsin doesn't have enough rescue equipment or hospital services. The government doesn't even want to spend the money to rebuild. Is there any doubt that we need a new society where human beings come first?

Incensed Illinois

SPIRIT OF MULTI-LINEARISM



I think Adrienne Rich captured the spirit of Marx's multi-linearism in the poetry reading she had transferred to Watsonville that was written up in the May issue. I saw it in her making it a genuine multi-cultural event and presenting her vision of revolution as joining the "material and the dream." It made me think of Marx's original vision of objectivity coming out of the whole human being not seeing his/her own powers separate from the social forces, and seeing the objective world as the elaboration of innate talents and energies.

Student of Marx Oakland, Cal.

VOICES OF SUPPORT

Your paper is fabulous. I have been getting it for some time and feel it is very necessary to my understanding. I am enclosing a check to help get it into more libraries. As for writing, I would be glad to contribute to this paper.

Meridel LeSueur Wisconsin

I would be gratified if at least part of my enclosed contribution to your Appeal could be used to expand the readership. There were two letters recently, one from India and the other from a prisoner, requesting free copies and I'd like to pay for those kinds of subs. I'd also be happy to help underwrite the expenses for some ads if you would undertake a campaign to expand your circulation. Such a vital, really unique paper needs to have a much larger audience.

Professor Connecticut

Thank you for the copy of your literature catalogue. It makes me realize all the more, in this compressed, comprehensive form, how truly great is the legacy of Raya Dunayevskaya left behind.

Retired editor New York

I was recently looking through things I've saved and found a number of copies of N&L from 1993 and 1994 as well as this year. I'm a compulsive clipper and saver, but when it comes to your publication, there are too many good articles, so I just keep the whole papers on file.

Law School student Chicago

Please thank the donor who paid for my subscription. It is an informative and enlightening paper. Please keep up your good work for all of us.

University student Philippines

What is Marxist-Humanism? Why is it so damn hopeful? (Here is my renewal and an extra donation.)

For Peace and Democracy New York

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Essay Article

Africa, Frantz Fanon and the postcolonial world

by F. Shelley

Africa will not be freed through the mechanical development of material forces, but it is the hand of the African and his brain that will set into motion and implement the dialectics of liberation of the continent.

Fanon, *Toward the African Revolution*

Africa today is marked by crisis, a crisis in both reality and thought that is continent wide. Thirty five years after the high point of independence the situation is bleak. Economically the whole continent is much worse off and its peasantry labors longer and harder than ever before; the democracy movements of a few years ago are floundering; genocide and war rage in Rwanda, Somalia, Liberia and Angola; new and massive human migrations and uprootings cover the continent.

In the eyes of liberal pundits, Africa has become a "human tragedy," and though the West is very much implicated, many intellectuals are lining up under a new banner—a rekindled belief in colonialism.¹ The ex-colonial masters should be allowed back, they argue, to "finish" the job they had supposedly started—modernization. It would be laughable were this absurdity not deadly serious. They add that what is missing is the middle class that "makes democracy possible."

While conditions are worse, let's be clear that it was precisely the middle class who re-introduced forced labor under the ideological banner of "the nation." The middle class that took power after independence, Frantz Fanon argued, is a huckstering, greedy, little caste, interested only in accumulating wealth. They are unable to introduce any social program that benefits the mass of the people. The history books which tell of corruption, ethnic wars, and military dictatorship, proved Fanon's predictions right.² In the post colonial context the middle class, who view the masses as simply a source of labor power, will not introduce democracy.

Other intellectuals are similarly mistaken when they view the opening of postcolonial Africa to the ravages of international capital as a decline in the nation-state. The postcolonial, state, it should be noted, has become increasingly authoritarian as it manages austerity programs. Fanon says that "the settler's work is to make even dreams of liberty impossible." Today this has become the project of the postcolonial state.

The crisis in Africa is mirrored in the hopelessness of many radical intellectuals, who, even before the end of apartheid, shifted their thinking away from concepts of liberation. This shift has occurred simultaneously with the rise of an academic field called "postcolonial studies." "To put it bluntly," one of its critics notes, "postcoloniality is designed to avoid making sense of the current crisis and, in the process, to cover up the origins of the postcolonial intellectuals in a global capitalism of which they are not so much victims as beneficiaries."³

Fanon, of course, spoke of the need for intellectuals to break with their class, their privileges, their attitudes. But, I would add, in many cases the work of the intellectuals is complicit in the crisis. There is a connection between today's reality and the postcolonial position that has given up opposition for a "third space," not contaminated by the discourse of liberation—of a struggle between the oppressed and the oppressor. Ironically, reference to Fanon has been used to legitimate this discourse. But it is a Fanon generally without his revolutionary politics and most certainly shorn of Hegel.

However, 34 years after his death, it is not enough to simply call for a return to "the real" Fanon. On what would have been Fanon's 70th birthday, to ask, "what is living and what is dead" in the thought of Fanon necessitates an engagement with him as a revolutionary and dialectical thinker. From this standpoint one can criticize some of the current academic discourse, and begin a new point of departure for the African revolution.

THE 'POSTCOLONIAL' MOMENT

Representing postcolonial concerns, Gayatri Spivak states that she is interested not in the opposition of colonizer and colonized but their "complicity."⁴ In reality, by taking the focus away from the real source of the (post)colonial condition, she is asking for a capitulation to the status quo. Fanon critiqued this position when he considered adding color to Hegel's master/slave dialectic in *Black Skin White Masks*.

Historically, Fanon argued, the Black slave "steeped in the inessentiality of servitude was set free by the master. He did not fight for his freedom" (220), nor for a new way of life. Fanon condemned those who had not known the "anguish of liberty," and was interested instead in the Blacks who knew there was a "difference" and wanted an "alterity of rupture, of conflict, of battle" (222). Only on that basis could there be a chance for reciprocity and freedom.

Homi Bhabha is perhaps the most important of the postcolonial intellectuals to have brought about a re-reading of Frantz Fanon. Yet his introduction to the British edition of *Black Skin*, echoes Spivak's position. He avoids a conception of dialectic as a development through contradiction by arguing that the "non-dialectical moment of manicheism"⁵ in Fanon is more com-



PELLING. However, his theoretical contribution is the "reinscription" of Lacanian⁶ psychoanalytic categories into what he calls ambivalence, hybridity, and mimicry.

What is obviously under attack by Bhabha is Fanon's debt to the Hegelian dialectic, as he makes clear in his new book, *Location of Culture*: "The language of critique is effective not because it keeps for ever separate the terms of the master and the slave, the mercantilist and the marxist, but to the extent to which it overcomes the given grounds of opposition and opens up a space for translation; a place of hybridity" (25). A place free, let me add, from the realities of life in Africa.

Bhabha's Lacanian reworking of Fanon, which finds the most radical to be those unstable aspects "on the borders of history and the unconscious" (*Black Skin* p. xiii), rips away any historical dialectic. Rather than situating Fanon in the context of the African revolutions, his thought is reduced to an ahistorical tension of *Self* and *Other* expressed in the politics of narcissism (xxiv). This anti-historicism, the hope for a "hybrid space" in place of the dialectic, has been a constant theme of Bhabha's. His reading of Fanon, therefore, is one that reads out any revolutionary transformation.

The hybrid "Black skin white masks," the object of Fanon's critique, is the privileged subject of Bhabha's work. Indeed, what Fanon called the enfranchised slaves, the very nationalist bourgeoisie who he critiqued in *The Wretched of the Earth*, are the subject of Bhabha's discourse. Despite his conservatism, however, Bhabha has been influential among radicals in the academy.⁷

Because postcolonialism is a study of discourse, it is not surprising that Bhabha claims its efficacy "even before we resort to empirical historical instances." Yet his insistence on the instability and ambivalence of discourse tends to mean his analysis can hold good for any situation and not specifically the colonial one.

Colonial discourse analysis does not have to be that way. It could be grounded in Fanon's discussion of language at the beginning of *Black Skin*. What is again at stake is the master/slave dialectic and Fanon's concern with reciprocity. In Hegel's scenario, language and recognition presuppose each other. Reciprocity between individual consciousnesses requires a common tongue; and thus, to speak to others is to recognize them. Yet the language of the master/slave dialectic is one of struggle, not discourse; and in the colonial situation the language of reciprocity is not evident.

Instead of respecting the Other's culture, the colonizer communicates in the language of violence: "Every people in whose soul and inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality," Fanon writes, "finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation." If language is the way in which man "possesses the world [and] ... take[s] on the world" (18, 38), in the colonial situation it is intimately connected with a relationship of dominance. The language under consideration is specifically the "official" language which is the means of advancement within the white world. Yet the Black, who speaks "white French," is still deprived of recognition. Whiteness is judged by the mastery of correct French. Consequently recognition, which involves an awareness of similarity, is blocked by color.⁸

5. Manicheism is a system of uncompromising dualism divided between good (light) and evil (darkness). Fanon calls the colonial world a Manichean one. The colonizer is represented as everything good, human and living; the colonized as bad, brutish and inert.

6. It should not be forgotten that Lacan was among those who sat in on Alexandre Kojève's seminars on Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*. Lacan's famous essay, "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience," is indebted to Kojève's reading of Hegel's master/slave dialectic. His theory of aggressivity is influenced by Hegel's "Law of the Heart." Lacan's conceptions, nevertheless, are radically different from Hegel. For Bhabha Hegel is replaced by his Althusserian reading of Lacan. Despite Bhabha's attempt to remake Fanon into what Henry Louis Gates has called a "Black Lacan," Fanon only takes up Lacan in passing in *Black Skin*. What these polemics have failed to note is Fanon's critique of Lacan's "close associate" O. Mannoni.

7. Bhabha criticized the "English left" in the introduction to *Black Skin* for avoiding Fanon. Yet there is no mention of the Black movement that changed the face of British politics in the 1980s nor the international importance of Steve Biko, who quoted extensively from Fanon. In a 1981 issue of the British paper, *Marxist-Humanism*, there appeared an article on Fanon that related him to, among other things, the "Irish Question."

8. In the context of the Algerian revolution, Fanon argued, the French language underwent a "dialectical progression" as it became "an instrument of liberation" (*Dying Colonialism* p. 90). However the "French" here is not official, "proper," French.

FANON AND HEGEL

This is a rehearsal for Fanon's "Negro and Hegel" in *Black Skin*. It intimates the reinscription of the master/slave dialectic in *The Wretched of the Earth*, where "the very forms of organization of the struggle will suggest ... a different vocabulary" and new social relations (47).

Bhabha's misreading and purposeful misunderstanding of Fanon's debt to Hegel is manifested in his quote from Fanon that the native and settler are "not in the service of a higher unity." Of course not, I would add, since the Hegelian dialectic is not a simple synthesis of two opposites, but the clash of opposites and a development through negativity.

But Bhabha purposefully avoids Fanon's discussion of Hegel—manifested by the total lack of a discussion of negritude and Fanon's dialectical critique of Sartre. Rather than following Sartre's position that negritude was at best "a weak stage" in the dialectic, Fanon posited it as an absolute simply because a dialectic of negativity cannot close off in advance possible development. In other words, dialectic for Fanon was a humanism.

Many critics have correctly pointed out that Bhabha dehistoricizes Fanon; that he reduces his political and social critique to a psychological one; and perhaps most powerfully, that he ignores Fanon's description of the colonial manicheism which forms the point of departure for the anti-colonial movement.⁹ Bhabha scorns this movement for a position of "uncertainty."

Yet Bhabha's purposeful misreading of Fanon's engagement with Hegel means that he has absolutely nothing to say about the necessary break-up of manicheism, without which, Fanon argues, "another system of exploitation" is automatically built up (145). It is through this critique of what happened after independence is won that the radical intellectual, Fanon believes, plays an important role. Bhabha and his critics however, dominated by the discourse of colonialism, either locate subjectivity completely within the reaction-action of manicheism (i.e., Benita Parry), or deny the possibility of revolutionary subjectivity completely (i.e. Bhabha). Fanon instead locates a new history within the revolutionary movement:

The movement, if it is to develop, sees a break-up of manichean thinking, so that "an authentic national liberation exists only the precise degree to which the individual has irreversibly begun his own liberation."¹⁰

For Fanon, that "Hegelian dream" of reciprocity (a Bhabha puts it) is precisely a dream of liberation, which is realizable if national consciousness develops into revolutionary humanism, where genuine self-determination becomes the ground for a new internationalism. A he put it in *The Wretched*:

The consciousness of self is not the closing of the door to communication. Philosophic thought teaches us, on the contrary, that it is its guarantee. National consciousness, which is not nationalism, is the only thing which will give us an international dimension (247).

This is no simple embrace of Western bourgeois conceptions. Indeed, in *The Wretched* he warns that Europe should not be imitated. While Europe spoke of humanism, it murdered; and one saw, Fanon declares, a succession of negations and obliterations of what is human. It is for this reason that Fanon proclaims that one had to flee Europe where, he believed, "dialectic is changing into the logic of equilibrium" (314).

Whether or not national consciousness remains the only thing that will give Africa an international dimension, the philosophic and practical task, which Fanon attempted to articulate in *The Wretched*, depended on "profoundly dialectical" analysis. An analysis which, I maintained, "reveals unexpected facets, brings about new meanings," and gestures toward a breaking up of the division between masses and intellectuals (in the widest sense of the word). This, he continued, depends on a new type of organization:

All this taking stock of the situation, this enlightenment of consciousness, and this advance in the knowledge of the histories of societies are only possible within the framework of an organization and inside the structure of the people (143).

By returning to Fanon's engagement with Hegel can begin to appreciate Fanon's critique of postcolonialism. What is at stake in the latter chapters of *The Wretched* is precisely how the pitfalls of the new nation are linked to what Fanon calls the laziness of the intellectuals. Now, he doesn't mean they aren't clever as he is not speaking only of the cliquish nationalist middle class who take over the reins of the old colonial machine. Perhaps more importantly, he is pointing to the radical intellectual's unwillingness to attack the gulf between intellectual and physical labor.

Fanon was born 70 years ago this month, and we are living within the context of Fanon's critique. His continuing relevance is a result of his profound re-creation of dialectic of revolution and counter-revolution in the colonization period. The challenge remains to develop the connections he always insisted on: the working out of new concepts and realizing the idea of liberation.

9. See Benita Parry's "Problems in Current Theories of Colonial Discourse," *Oxford Literary Review* 1987 and "Signs of the Times: Discussion of Homi Bhabha's *The Location of Culture*," *Third Text* 28/9 (1994).

10. Fanon *Toward the African Revolution*. It is in these texts that one could begin to think of women's liberation.

1. See William Pfaff "A new Colonialism: Europe must go Back into Africa" *Foreign Affairs* Vol.74:1. This has also been proposed by Ali Mazrui in the final volume of the *UNESCO General History of Africa*. Pfaff correctly points out that the French never left Africa, but says nothing about the consequences of their role in Rwanda.

2. Christopher Miller thinks that Fanon has an essentially Western notion of "nation" and heralds ethnicity as more relevant for Africa's future. This naive and fundamentally dangerous and retrograde "anti-imperialism" misses Fanon's critique.

3. Arif Dirlik "The Postcolonial Aura" *Critical Inquiry* 20 (1994) p. 353

4. See the interview in *Block* 10 (1985), p. 9

VOICES FROM WITHIN THE PRISON WALLS

by D.A. Sheldon

U.S. control unit prisons are torture dungeons

In the late 18th century the Walnut St. Prison in Philadelphia became the first penitentiary in U.S. history to experiment with the use of long-term isolation. This was based on the Quakers' theory that by being denied social interaction a prisoner could not be influenced by fellow inmates, and therefore a religious conversion and reformation would occur during the years of enforced meditation. This theory had monstrous effects upon the incarcerated. Many fell into madness even after a short confinement, while those who withstood the ordeal were generally not reformed.

In modern times the U.S. penitentiary at Alcatraz became the first "control unit prison" used to enforce total control over prisoners. In the early 1960s, after three convicts achieved what prisonrats said was impossible—escaping from the island—Alcatraz ceased operation and the super-maximum penitentiary in Marion, Ill., became the new "end of the line" for those considered "institutional problems" or too dangerous to be housed in any other prison.

Because of appalling conditions, in October 1983 a riot broke out in Marion and two guards were killed. This gave prisonrats the excuse to lock down the entire prison population. Prisoners were confined to their cells for 23 1/2 hours a day, all visits were suspended, and (until a court order was enforced) even attorneys were denied access to the prisoners. Eventually the lock-down was eased in some areas, but stringent and restrictive policies remain largely in effect.

In the period after the riot, the idea of a "marionization" of the prison system spread throughout the U.S. Correctional administrators cried that their institutions were unsafe and control over the convicts in every way possible was deemed desperately needed.

These control units are a means of political, economic and social control over a whole class of oppressed and disenfranchised people, especially African American, Latino, and indigenous people who are a disproportionate

part of control unit populations. These torture units go beyond the usual constraints of even maximum security prisons. They are better defined as a prison within a prison. They are used to defeat revolutionary attitudes, prisoner organization, militancy, legal and administrative challenges, and anything else the prison administration deems objectionable. While conditions vary from prison to prison, the goal of these units is always to achieve the spiritual, psychological, and physical breakdown of the prisoner.

To place an individual within a control unit, an administrative classification and/or disciplinary report is issued. A hearing, if it occurs at all, is held in a kangaroo court at which the prisoner is denied due process. The presiding administrative judge always follows the recommendations of the prisonrats without considering the prisoner's statements.

Once the prisoner is confined to a control unit, gross human rights abuses take place on a daily basis. With minor differences, these units share the following features: prisoners spend years of isolation in tiny cells (usually six by eight feet) for 22-23 1/2 hours a day; the short time that they spend outside their cell is commonly within a cement or chain link "dog pen" that lacks any kind of exercise equipment and/or proper space in which to jog or do physical exercise; participation in religious services, education, work/job training, or collective dining and exercise are strongly prohibited.

Access to medical and psychiatric care is also extremely limited. Prisonrats often find it convenient and cost-effective to lock up mentally ill prisoners and those with AIDS, HIV or tuberculosis instead of treating them. This often has fatal consequences.

The most damaging aspect of control units are the physical and mental torture that it imposes upon its vic-

tims. Baton-wielding guards violently beat, choke, and kick shackled prisoners. Sometimes these cell extractions are so abusive that prisoners require extensive medical attention. Devices such as tazer-guns, pepper mace and manacles used in four-point restraint are routinely used.

Another practice is "caging," where scantily-clad or naked prisoners are held in outdoor cages for hours in cold, rainy weather. The fire-hosing of shackled prisoners while in their cells usually follows with prisoners being out in "strip cell status." The frigid temperatures make it impossible to sleep or even lie down. For those prisoners who can endure the physical cruelty, the mental torture can affect one's sanity. Especially damaging is the sensory deprivation resulting from being forbidden books, TV, radios and contact visits.

In some control units it is even impossible for prisoners to communicate among themselves. Verbal harassment consisting of racial statements are routinely made by the guards. Mail is misplaced, delayed, destroyed, or censored. The passing of false information to foster paranoia and/or fights between convicts is also used to weaken cooperation between prisoners. These oppressive policies amount to cruel, barbaric, and inhuman conditions that must be ended at all costs.

Currently there are 38 control unit prisons around the nation. The recent opening of a new control unit at Florence, Col., will have it join the maximum control complex in Westville, Ind., and Pelican Bay Prison in Crescent City, Cal., as the newest super high-tech torture chambers designed to administer deprivation and dehumanization. Iowa is building a control unit with the same features as Florence, and this writer faces the possibility of being transferred there because of my political attitude toward the capitalist system.

Control units serve only one purpose—to control society. All of them must be abolished, and the victims of these dungeons treated as survivors of torture.

Black World

(Continued from page 1)

prisons and jails, the lawyers, the police and even the jury. Justice is not blind but prejudiced against a certain segment of the population: the poor, the unemployed and working poor, the minority, the young, the women.

During the rebellion, the news media showed pictures of whites, Asians and Latinos being beaten indiscriminately by Black youth, but who sparked this revolt? It wasn't the Black or Latino communities, but the racist system, from the city officials and the courts to the police, the system's foot soldiers who have beaten and killed many Rodney Kings.

Reginald Denny knew who was at fault. He didn't attempt to sue Damon Williams [one of the youth charged in his beating], or any of the L.A. 4 defendants. No, he sued the LAPD for abandoning him and many others at the corner of Florence and Normandie. More importantly, it was the LAPD who sparked the violence at Florence and Normandie in the first place.

I am sick and tired of waiting for the "white man" (or someone like L.A. police chief Willie Williams, a Black man with the white mask Fanon said characterized the Blacks who assume a certain amount of power within the state) to determine what is right and wrong. That statement is not made to condemn all whites, but to condemn this white-male-dominated society as racist and sexist to its core; a core of thought that is reactionary and that has brainwashed so many.

You can see that from the \$3 million Stacy Koons [one of the four police officers tried for the videotaped beating of Rodney King] has received in contributions while in prison from supporters who feel that he was just doing his job in beating Rodney King. This attitude illuminates the racism that is just under the surface of the average white American that we come in contact with daily. They see Black youth as a menace to society, and fear that the L.A. Rebellion is not over, or could happen again.

That white fear was reflected in the early morning raids, called Operation Sunshine, that took place on April 2. It was a systematic attack on the South Central community around Florence and Normandie that was at the heart of the Los Angeles Rebellion, but which the media and police characterize as Eight Tray Gangster Hood. (See the May issue of News & Letters.)

This system is setting in motion a groundswell of rebellion by inflicting stricter laws in Propositions 187 and 184 (the "three strikes" law), or attacking affirmative action. These are responses by the government to the L.A. Rebellion. The doors have not been opened by the L.A. Rebellion that were opened by the urban revolts of the 1960s when new government programs were introduced like CETA, affirmative action and recreation centers as tokens to occupy our minds but not change our existence.

Today's response is to slam the door shut, leaving it locked and guarded by more abusive cops. We are locked out of jobs and training, while the only funds coming into the community are for more police. This is not to protect Black and Brown communities but to protect the outlying white community, or the property owners and businesses, from any overflow of anger fermented by the treatment of the Black community by the system.

The 1992 L.A. Rebellion was about the struggle for human recognition and the demand that an oppressed people's voice be heard. Through that, the need to transform capitalist reality arises that is unseparated from the need to create a new human society.

Mississippi's 'Local People'

by Diane Lee

Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi by John Dittmer (University of Illinois Press, 1994) 530 pp.

"The Delta is both a clearly defined geographical area and a state of mind." —John Dittmer, *Local People*

John Dittmer gives a sense of the history of the Mississippi Delta, a history that in part exists to this day. Dittmer has an ability to sum up historic events that may have lasted over a quarter of a century. He as well takes up single incidents that at first glance appear to be microscopic, magnifying them to give the reader a feeling of what it was and is like to struggle for civil rights in the Delta region from the 1940s to the present.

Dittmer begins this book with an event concerning two Black men, Medgar and Charles Evers, and their repeated attempts to integrate the polling place in the 1940s. But Dittmer makes clear that the 1940s came out of a complex interaction of events in Mississippi's history: that occurred after the Civil War during Reconstruction and the outcome for race relations at that time; the suppression of voting rights for Black people that came out of the collusion of conservative Blacks with wealthy white landowners; the fight for human and political rights against the reactionary caste system that had stubbornly stayed in place. He also takes up the difference in the attitudes of Black people toward civil rights after WWI and after WWII. And by the end of the book, Dittmer has also brought out the contradictions in the Evers' relation to the freedom movement of the 1960s.

In 1944 a Supreme Court decision outlawed the white primary; but this is not the reason the opening story is told. The 1946 Mississippi election after the Supreme Court decision reveals just how repressive it was in the region. Even with 5,000 Black voter registrants, the outcome of the primary was the same—it voted in the white supremacist politician, Theodore Bilbo. Needless to say, any Black people were kept away from the polling booths. Dittmer describes how a "climate of fear" was created "that intimidated potential black voters." Against this "climate of fear" there had been innumerable events in the struggle for human rights over the years; Chapter One is called, "We Return Fighting."

Subsequent discussions trace the decade after WWII, where discrimination and terror tactics were more rampant in Mississippi than ever. Dittmer traces discrimination in education, the courts, and the vile Jim Crow laws covering over every aspect of life. He shows a movement continuously emerging out of this atmosphere, especially voter registration drives.

These drives did not receive support from the labor movement. The CIO entered onto the scene in 1946 with "Operation Dixie" campaign. Yet as Dittmer shows, the CIO called off its Mississippi organizing drive in 1949...the union movement was not a force for social change.

In a "postwar Mississippi most blacks were still working jobs associated with slavery," he writes. "Nearly two-thirds of the black male labor force engaged in some form of agriculture-related activity...For black women the designated place was still the white woman's kitchen."

After the chapter "Toward a New Beginning," one gets a strong sense of the tremendous organizing that

took place throughout the years. Organizations like NAACP, CORE, SNCC and COFO are described in detail and are well-researched. The author tells how risky it was just to belong to these organizations during the 1950s and '60s. The racist Citizens' Council and red-baiting operated hand in hand. But what is so very striking about Dittmer's work is his descriptions of the individual activists within the organizations.

Dittmer's description of Robert Moses of SNCC verges on poetry: "Robert Parris Moses' journey from the streets of Harlem to the dirt roads of southwest Mississippi is part of the folklore of the black freedom struggle." What is especially notable is how Moses dealt with direct repression, that is, when the SNCC offices were ransacked, Moses would go directly to the office with another fieldworker and sleep there for the night—to be a witness and a lookout.

It is not without significance that the author spends some time on women's activity in the Civil Rights Movement. He takes up the organization Womanpower Unlimited, established by Clarie Collins Harvey, calling it "the most important support group" of the freedom riders. "When the first group of freedom riders came to trial, Harvey was in the courtroom: 'It was a very cool day in May and I noticed that some of the girls were shivering...I inquired if they needed sweaters...'" Harvey made appeals in her neighborhood for support for the riders. "From these modest beginnings Womanpower Unlimited 'just sort of evolved.'" It is as well especially important how Dittmer shows the development of Fannie Lou Hamer as activist and militant leader and thinker.

It would not be possible to sum up *Local People* in one review. But I felt what is so sharply posed is the last chapter of this book called, "A New Mississippi?" That chapter begins with a quote by Mrs. Annie Devine on Sept. 29, 1968: "What could have been a beautiful revolution just petered out." It certainly poses the unfinished nature of a revolutionary movement in the U.S. that needs to be rethought and discussed.

Save Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Gov. Tom Ridge of Pennsylvania has signed a death warrant for Black journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal. The former Black Panther Party member and MOVE supporter is scheduled to be executed on Aug. 17.

Mumia was sentenced to death in 1982 for allegedly shooting a Philadelphia police officer who was beating his brother. He has always maintained his innocence. Mumia has a long history of criticizing the racist practices of the police. His trial was steeped in racism and political bias, with most Blacks barred from the jury and Mumia denied the attorney of his choice. Because of these and other irregularities, his lawyers have petitioned for a new trial.

Help save Mumia Abu-Jamal! For information write or call:

Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, P.O. Box 19709, Philadelphia, PA 19143; Tel. (215) 476-8812.

Equal Justice U.S.A., A Project of the Quixote Center, P.O. Box 5206, Hyattsville, MD 20782; Tel. (301) 699-0042.

Coming to grips with post-Communist East Europe

(Continued from page 1)

As tensions have steadily increased, it has left the pundits looking to Russia's monumental economic crisis as almost a saving point. Russia, they reason, cannot afford to lose U.S. support for the \$6.8 billion IMF loan it desperately needs to survive, while the U.S. cannot ignore the recent warning from Yeltsin's foreign minister Kosyrev that the alternative to their "benign nationalism" is the malignant ultranationalism lying in wait.

RULERS AND RULED IN NEW E. EUROPE

There is no question that the new rulers of Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic are eager to join NATO because they see it as protection from Russian expansionism. So eager is Vaclav Havel that he is willing to station nuclear weapons on Czech soil to fulfill all requirements for NATO membership. At the same time, all three are also vigorously seeking acceptance into the European Union (EU) to help solve the enormous economic problems engulfing them.

As Laszlo Andor, professor at the University of Economics in Budapest, put it recently, "the prevailing liberal ideology interprets breakdown as liberation." The promises of Western aid have added to the illusions. Support has remained minimal as, simultaneously with the collapse of Russia, the West faced its own severe economic crisis.

In recent elections, from Bulgaria to Hungary and from Slovakia to Poland, some of the old Communist Parties have openly been reinstated, as the turn to the "free market" has been spelled out throughout East Europe in the sudden loss of job security, free health care, subsidized housing, transportation and food; the massive unemployment with no benefits; the sudden impoverishment of vast segments of the population. In Russia, no less than 15 million people now live below, not just the official "poverty line" but the physical survival level.

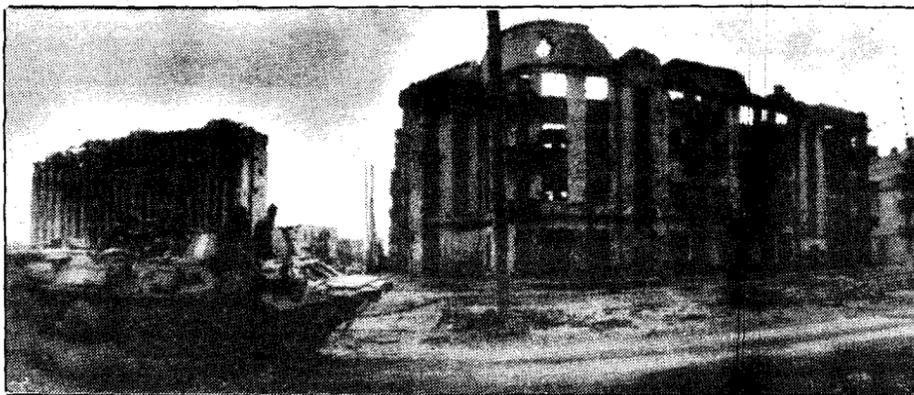
Indeed, what tells the most profound tale of East Europe in the 1990s is the shocking death rate ushered in with the fall of Communism. Of the nine countries analyzed in the most recently released UNICEF study (Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Albania, Bulgaria and Romania), Russia and Ukraine suffered the greatest of the "excess mortality" that marks every land. That term refers to the one million deaths in excess of the normal mortality rates.

The main cause of death has been a virtual epidemic of heart and circulatory diseases. At the same time, what are known as "poverty diseases"—diphtheria, cholera, hepatitis and tuberculosis—have soared everywhere. The most alarming finding of all is the shocking number of suicides. It is a sign of the despair over finding a way out of the horrors of both systems.

PROTEST: LABOR, WOMEN, YOUTH

This does not mean that there have not been protests of many kinds, but the contradictions are many. The national "day of action" called by the Federation of Independent Trade Unions (FNPR) on April 12 to demand that the government make funds available to pay the over a billion dollars in back wages owed workers, many of whom had not been paid for several months, saw agro-industry workers respond with a one-day strike in Central Siberia. Teachers, health workers and students took part in large numbers in the provinces, while in Samara on the central Volga a column of demonstrators stretched for nearly two miles. Yet the FNPR is considered more a state-structure than an "independent" union—and the hundreds of thousands who turned out were a small fraction of the 50 million who belong.

Nor has all the opposition been limited to labor. In Russia, women have continued the opposition they began in December to the genocidal war on Chechnya. Members of the Soldiers' Mothers Committee have been pouring into Chechnya and onto army bases to take their sons home with them, while draft refusals and deser-



Russian soldiers in Chechnya patrol bombed out Grozny.

tions by young soldiers are widespread. In Poland, where women had been crucial to the birth of Solidarnosc, the new anti-abortion legislation and the enormous rise in women's unemployment have reinvigorated a new and growing women's movement.

But it has been the disastrous consequences of the new, even more draconian austerity programs now being unleashed that has brought forth new protests everywhere this Spring. In Prague, over 90,000 trade unionists rallied to protest threatened cuts in social assistance. And in Hungary, when Gyula Horn's administration revealed its economic plan early in March (devaluation of the currency; introduction of import duties; fees for studies; payment for medical services; abolition of financial assistance during pregnancy and for raising families; freezing of wages below the level of inflation), thousands of students took to the streets and marched to the Finance Ministry.

A Hungarian intellectual, who had returned that very month to Budapest after 39 years in exile, wrote to N&L: "The tragicomedy is that 'comrade' Horn and his colleagues are called upon to do the dirty work dictated by the IMF, leading to the instant loss of confidence in them by the populace. In March, I was at the Vigado near the statue of General Behm, where the demonstrations leading to the revolution started in October 1956. That night there was a very vociferous demonstration in the same spot, denouncing the new policies of the 'left' government. (It was very reminiscent of 1956.) If the reinstated 'socialist' parties cannot deliver what was hoped for, will there be an attempt to find 'solutions' in ethnic-baiting, anti-Jewish and other fascist methods? Without a positive vision for the future, fundamentalism is a world-wide phenomenon."

THE WORSENING RETROGRESSION

Just how lethal is the retrogression that rushes in to fill the void when a freedom-filled vision of the future does not permeate the struggle is seen in the virulent anti-Semitism that marked demonstrations in Warsaw in mid-May. (See *Gazeta Wyborcza*, May 18, 1995.) There, thousands of workers from the famous Ursus tractor factory, on strike to "protect" their factory from privatization, marched to the executive government building, burned an effigy of premier Oleksy with a Star of David affixed to it, and accused the Polish National Bank of being a "Jewish" bank. Most shocking of all was the slogan for sending the government politicians they were opposing "to the gas chambers!"

As if this were not chilling enough, although some past leaders of Solidarnosc condemned invoking the memory of Solidarnosc in such a demonstration, another early KOR activist insisted: "The Ursus workers are 150% right. No one wants to hear their issues. The anti-Semitism comes from feeling marginalized, and is a cry of people fighting for their future." It is the mirror image on the Polish scene of what we have seen in the U.S. in the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing with all

too many "leftists" disregarding the white supremacy of the militia on the grounds that they are "anti-government." (See Editorial, p. 5.)

What kind of perspective are Left intellectuals projecting that we are faced with this critical situation in 1995? We can get a sense of the crisis of the Left by looking, not at the worst, but at one of the best—Ada Michnik, who was active in Solidarnosc and is now editor-in-chief of *Gazeta*

Wyborcza, Poland's largest-circulation daily newspaper. The theoretical impasse can be seen in an exchange that appeared in *The New York Review of Books* (March 2, 1994), between Michnik and Jurgen Habermas, a theorist who has been influential in East Europe.

Habermas, looking at the 17 million unemployed in the EU today, declares: "No one—and that includes me—has any idea how we are going to break out of the cycles of jobless growth. We need new ideas to criticize this system. But the ultimate criterion must be the creation of a radical democracy...to tame capitalism." Michnik replies: "The way I would put it is that we are what we were 30 years ago, except that we have lost our illusions and gained in humility."

He elaborates on this position in a more recent article ("Toward Europe, Without Illusions," *Central Europe Economic Review*, May 1995), writing: "We aspire to join NATO and the EU, because we fear being marginalized, trapped in our provincialism. We see contemporary democracy for all of its faults and traps, as the market economy for all its contradictions and weaknesses...We dream about Europe, because this dream, flawed and dangerous as it may be, is the only one to have a chance of making come true. We fear placing our faith in new utopias and new revolutions because they come from a world that is still recovering from earlier revolutions and utopias."

This view flows from the retrogression in thought which appeared in Poland when the intellectuals, who had helped Solidarnosc come to be, introduced the concept of "self-limiting revolution" in the mid-1980s which soon became "instead of revolution." Whatever may be the "illusions" Michnik now believes they have lost, the most pervasive illusion strangling them today is that "radical democracy" can "tame capitalism." The most fundamental truth of state-capitalism, including its "free market" form—is its non-viability.

RETURN TO AN HISTORIC MOMENT

When even the best of the intellectuals appear to have such an illusion about what confronts us today, it is necessary to return to historic experience to find the ground for an alternative. In East Europe that ground is provided by a return to the 1950s, when a new moment in the global struggle for freedom was born in East Europe.

It was on June 17, 1953, that the very first strike erupted to challenge the might of Russian totalitarianism but it was in East Germany, when the workers transformed their strike against a decreed increase in work-norm (speed-up) into a demand for "Bread and Freedom." They tore down the symbols of Communist power, opened the prisons and concentration camps to free political prisoners. Though the revolt was crushed by Russian troops, the East German workers had shown the way to freedom.

That revolt was the appearance, in life, of the "movement from practice that is itself a form of theory" that Raya Dunayevskaya, the founder of Marxist-Humanism, had singled out six weeks earlier, as the philosophic category that characterizes our age, and that demand "movement from theory" to meet its challenge.

This movement from practice had been seen thirty years earlier in the U.S. in the coal miners' general strike of 1949-50, the first strike against automation that asked "What kind of labor should human beings do?" In East Europe it burst forth again in 1956, first in Poland and then in Hungary. What was new in Hungary was the participation of the whole population—work women, students, intellectuals—creating not only Workers' Councils but Revolutionary Councils of every kind. Most crucially of all, what 1956 achieved as well as a leap in cognition, made possible because the masses found a new way to freedom. The leap in cognition occurred when the rediscovery of Marx's 1844 *Economic Philosophic Manuscripts* revealed his Marxism to be absolute opposite of what had been calling itself Communism—a "new Humanism." The most distinctive feature of the East European revolt that was continuous from the '50s, through 1968 in Czechoslovakia's "socialism with a human face," to Poland's "Solidarnosc" in 1980 was that Humanist core.

In face of the enormous contradictions that confront us today, far from that philosophy belonging to a bygone era, the need is greater than ever to hold fast to Marxist-Humanism in order to restate it anew for today. We must achieve that kind of new beginning far more is needed than waiting for the next mass outburst. Long before that outburst, the deep contradictions today demand re-organization of thought through a confrontation with the full body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism. The anniversary of our birth is a critical moment for such a confrontation, given the depth of the contradictions engulfing us both in East Europe and at home.

Bulletin of the Workers Movement of Ukraine

Editor's note: We print below excerpts from the first issue of the Bulletin of the Workers Movement of the Ukraine just published in Kiev with the support of the independent trade union "Direct Action." Their address is 252146, Ukraine, Kiev 146 POB 331/7.

The Voice of the Workers Movement

Kiev, Ukraine—The spring wave of strikes and protest actions in the Ukraine showed convincingly the growth of consciousness and militancy of the working class. The open opportunism of the leadership of so-called "independent" and "free" trade unions and their efforts to divide the workers of different industries led to the emergence and strengthening of truly independent workers' initiatives.

Some of the trade union activists became more radical, as during the hunger strike of the miners of Krivoy Rog. The workers' movement needs a real tribune for informing about our problems and activities, exchanging information and experiences and strengthening class solidarity. Our bulletin seems at present the only publication about and for the workers' movement in the Ukraine.

Workers, your fight—the fight of millions—continues.

From a social workers of Ukrainian cities

We, the representatives of workers' organizations of the cities of Poltava, Kharkov, Gorlovka, Sevastopol, Kiev, meeting in Poltava, declare ourselves to be against the line of President Kuchma for capitalization and privatization, in all their forms; against price liberalization;

against private property of the means of production and of land. We are against so-called "social consensus" in the interest of strengthening the power of the bourgeoisie. We are for establishing a firm rule of the workers from below by the workers themselves—in the form of workers' councils, workers' committees and other organs of the workers based on the principle of workers' democracy. We support the idea of calling a congress of the workers of the Ukraine with the aim of consolidating the workers' movement. Adopted 29-10-94

From trade unions of the city of Donetsk

Once more prices rise. And again our answer is silence. The community is agitated. What remains are thoughts and feelings: Where can we eat and where do we get the money for it? Everybody is in agony all alone. There are enough goods, yet prices grow by leaps: every price doubles or triples. The wages are miserable. The factories are shutting down. What next?

We are no prophets. But one thing is clear: There is no economic improvement and there will be none in spite of the President and the government's firm promises. And that means that the present conditions will continue, leading irreversibly to general chaos. A change can be brought about only by the working people. There is only one way to stop the rulers who went too far—teach them to fear their own people. It is for this reason we say today: stop believing the government and its reforms. Unite and fight!

Youth

On the anniversary of the Kent and Jackson State murders

What's new since the 1960s?

by Maya Jhansi

Last month marked the 25th anniversary of the slaying of students at Kent State University in Ohio and at Jackson State University in Mississippi. The National Guard opened fire on students protesting the invasion of Cambodia and killed four at Kent State on May 4, 1970; racist cops and highway patrolmen shot down two students at Jackson State, May 14. These brutal murders sparked hundreds of sit-ins and protests against the brutality of the war at home and abroad, and successfully shut down dozens of college campuses across the country.

REMEMBERING WITH EYES OF TODAY

Recently there has been a spate of articles in the newspapers commemorating this anniversary. Most of the articles I have read talk about Kent State where the students who were killed were white. They conveniently "forget" to mention the Jackson State massacre of Black students. Likewise many have forgotten that same week in 1970 six unarmed Blacks were killed in Georgia for protesting the murder of a 16-year-old Black youth by the cops.

In the June-July 1970 issue of *News & Letters*, all of these incidents at home were connected to Nixon's vicious invasion of Cambodia under the title "Nixon's Wars at Home and Abroad." Kent and Jackson State were hardly isolated phenomena—they were part and parcel of this war-mongering society.

In the contrast between the recent articles in the papers about Kent State and the June-July 1970 issue of *News & Letters*, what becomes clear is the extent to which today's media attempts to rewrite and water down both the brutal history of repression in this country and the history of the struggle for freedom. In his assault on the students, Nixon wanted to silence the voices of youth demanding a more human world, one without the barbarism of war. Newt Gingrich's attack on the culture of the 1960s is a calculated attempt to erase this idealism from the consciousness of today's generation.

Nevertheless, and much to the Republicans' chagrin, the type of idealism that does not compromise with the given reality is not dead. It is seen in the attempt being made today by students to organize a movement against the inhuman cutbacks in education and welfare, and the attacks on Blacks, immigrants and women.

As a generation confronting the all-out assault of the Republican Contract on America, we face the question of what to do, how to fight back so that we won't end up where we were 25 or 30 or 100 years ago. How can we fight back so that we move in a direction that will create something new in this world?

HISTORY—CYCLICAL OR DIALECTICAL?

One of the most disturbing attitudes toward student activism that I've come across is the idea that history runs in cycles. As a recent article in the *Chicago Tribune Magazine* (April 30, 1995) put it: "Activism is cyclical, and parents who demonstrated in the 1960s and early 1970s may be sending their teenagers off to college just in time for another round."

The underlying assumption in this attitude is that activism or history is something that has a will of its own abstracted from the realities of the given moment and the self-activity of human beings. This attitude is saying that it is the cyclical nature of history (not the unbearable assault of Newt Gingrich's counter-revolution) that is making people become active 30 years after the 1960s revolts. This is absurd. I can't help but think of how Karl Marx talked about history:

History does nothing; it possesses no colossal riches, it "fights no fight." It is rather man—real, living man—who acts, possesses and fights everything. It is by no means "History" which uses man as a means to carry out its ends as if it were a person

Fighting the Klan

Wheaton and Rolling Meadows, Ill.—On June several hundred people came to county courthouses in these two Chicago suburbs to counter Ku Klux Klan rallies. White, Latino, Black and Asian protesters came from as far as Madison, Wis., and Springfield, Ill. Many local residents, especially high school and college students, were infuriated that their towns had been chosen by the 15 Klansmen to spew their vile racism. The number of Latino individuals and groups present bore witness to the spread of Latino communities throughout the area, including an excellent mariachi band that tried to drown out the racists' ranting.

As usual, Klan members were protected by the police and unpopular visiting dignitaries, while the anti-racists were treated like criminals, bossed around and herded through long lines into a fenced-in area. The police in Wheaton took away "weapons" like soft plastic water bottles and boxes of crackers.

What was frightening, were those who came out to hear both sides," which underscores the danger in the false attitude of those who insist on the Klan's right to free speech. Equally frightening was that the Right was reclaiming their racist message and worldview through loudspeakers, but the answers from the Left were only simplistic slogans, mostly variations on "Death to the Klan." When will we stop cutting our opposition to the Klan short from projecting what we are for?

—Demonstrator

apart; rather History is nothing but the activity of man in pursuit of his needs.

The idea that activism is cyclical also implies that nothing ever really changes, that we're all forever destined to repeat the past, kind of like Nietzsche's idea about the eternal recurrence of the same. Marx, who called his radical vision of freedom a "new Humanism," is saying that human beings are not the puppets of "History" or economics, but that human beings are the creative agents of history. We can transform history if we assume responsibility for it by working out what direction we want it to move, what kind of society we want to live in.

Twenty-five years after the Kent and Jackson State murders, it is imperative that we not let the vision of a new society die. We need to assume responsibility for the direction we want history to take from the very beginning—a part of working that out is making sense of the past in a way that sheds light on the future. Otherwise it may seem like we are facing an insurmountable mountain. After all, if the greatest of the revolts of the 1960s and '70s couldn't change anything, then what can? This is something that we need to discuss if we are serious about trying to build a new movement to combat the growing neo-fascism of this society.



Students confront police in Seoul on May 17, the anniversary of the Kwangju rebellion of 1980. As 15 years ago, students are at the forefront of political protest in South Korea.

Silent Earth Day: environmentalism in crisis

Twenty-five years after the first Earth Day, the environmental movement finds itself in crisis. Long struggles against polluting industries had won important gains, even when Reagan was president. Now all the gains, limited though they are, are under attack by the most anti-environmentalist Congress ever.

Yet Earth Day 1995 passed with very few overt political demonstrations. The main events were the usual beach cleanups, nature walks, organic gardening seminars and recycling displays. The political side was left mainly to Washington lobbying and some press releases denouncing the Republicans' Contract on America.

Many voices from within the movement have been questioning its direction, or lack of one. The desire for new directions has only intensified the contention between moderates and radicals.

On the Right, Gregg Easterbrook's book *A Moment on Earth* claims to be pro-environmentalist, but alleges that "nearly every ecological trend in the U.S. is positive." Unfortunately some genuine environmentalists are now echoing Easterbrook's claim that the Republicans' anti-environmental initiatives resulted from "fashionable environmental doomsaying on the left," which alienated the public. Since most people still support stronger environmental regulation, this is merely an evasion of the questions arising from within the movement.

Much more to the point is an article by Robert Braile who contends that what is missing is vision, philosophy (see his "What the Hell Are We Fighting For?" in *Garbage*, Fall 1994). He reports that Dave Foreman, co-founder of Earth First!, recently declared, "We've run out of vision. We're only trying to protect the status quo." Braile writes that "environmentalism is crying out for a new philosophy."

But what kind of vision? One that poses what we are for within the confines of existing capitalist social relations, as if that defines eternal human nature? Or one based on freedom movements and ideas, past and present, that reach for a future where humanity remakes human nature?

Representing "deep ecology," Dave Foreman's solution centers on the need for new values, above all "humility," that is, accepting lower standards of living instead of transforming living conditions. In keeping with this reactionary vision, Foreman left Earth First! when much of the group moved towards supporting labor activism and feminism.

To Mark Dowie, the opposite of the "moribund" mainstream is the "fourth wave" of environmentalism "at the grassroots...democratic in origin, populist in style, untrammelled by bureaucracy, and inspired by a host of new ideologies." Robert Braile and Bill McKibben also look to the militance of grassroots groups. Yet they describe a "vision" that limits social change to ecological restoration.

By contrast, advocates of environmental justice criticize the mainstream not just for a lack of militance, and

Lane Tech walkout

Chicago—On May 25, Lane Tech. High School held the first ever organized walkout in the history of the school. The reason? To protest Prop. 187 and the "Contract on America," including all the budget cuts in Chicago education, the closing of eight schools, and the taking away of school lunches and bilingual education.

That Thursday during 1st period, Lane Tech. administrator, Mr. Foley, announced over the intercom that we should fight against Prop. 187 and the "Contract on America" by writing letters and making phone calls to government officials. This was obviously an attempt to stop us from walking out. The administrators agreed to let Rodrigo Venegas, our student representative, speak over the intercom. Rodrigo urged us to organize and participate in the rallies that our principal, Mr. Schlichting, promised would be held in our school auditorium.

After 1st period we gathered with one another and crowded the hallways in preparation to walk out. Everyone was a little nervous because we had no idea what was going to happen, since we had already been threatened with being locked in. Security made an attempt to stop us but there were just too many of us determined to show our support.

At the corner of Addison and Western, nearly 1,200 students gathered to participate in the march. After we finished marching, we stood in front of the main office entrance and received media coverage. Several students spoke towards their fellow classmates regarding their personal point of view. Then Mr. Foley addressed the students telling us that our actions had a good purpose but that we needed to go back inside because what we were doing was against the law. He promised that there would be a platform and microphone during the rallies for anyone who wanted to speak.

Once inside we all felt as though we were once again trapped. We had walked out feeling elated, and then came back inside only to realize that Mr. Foley had not kept his promise in supplying us with a microphone or a platform. We also found out that many teachers did not walk out because they had been threatened with losing their jobs. Another promise broken was that many students' homes were called and the students were threatened with suspension.

Lane Tech students still plan on continuing this fight for students rights everywhere. We plan to start a club dealing with issues such as the "Contract on America" and Prop. 187. We realize that it will be a struggle but we plan to keep on standing up. Because if you don't stand for something, you fall for everything.

—Cynthia and Marita

not just for its white middle-class character, but for its narrowness of ideas, its separation of ecology from social justice. Jim Schwab writes in Chicago's *Earth Day Times* that "blue-collar and communities of color" have become the new environmental movement.

His conclusion is that "the environmental justice movement has empowered people at the local level. It is time...for environmental movements nationwide to forge some strategic alliances....It is time to rediscover people power, and the value of working together."

The environmental justice movement is not immune to the trap of "what we are for" being confined to what is achievable within existing racist, sexist, capitalist society. Falling into that trap is precisely what led to the mainstream movement's political accommodationism and resulting weakness.

The present urge for a "new philosophy" could lead to a revitalization, if it really means that the hard labor of working out a direction is based on what we are for, and if "what we are for" is not just "radical" but revolutionary, that is, reaches to a future beyond the limits of the existing society.

—Franklin Dmitryev

20,000 combat contract

San Francisco—Some 20,000 people came out to oppose the "Contract on America" on May 6. One of the themes was rejection of racism and politics of division as seen in the attacks on the poor: on welfare, affirmative action and school lunch programs.

One welfare mother wanted to see all welfare mothers there. Since she lost her job, she feels guilty every minute she takes away from looking for another job. The whole system makes one feel so isolated and hopeless. To take the time to come to this demonstration was an affirmation that she is human, that her life is more than the everyday worry about money and a job.

An Asian worker said that immigrants do not come to this country to get social services. They come here to work. Far from burdening the state's treasury for so-called "handouts," these workers, who represent sweated labor in the garment industry, are conducting their own fight to reclaim their rightfully earned wages stolen from them by million-dollar fashion moguls like Jessica McClintock.

Another speaker, a worker from the construction industry, said he was one of those "angry white males" we've heard so much about in the media. He said he was angry for precisely all of the reasons cited by the previous speakers, as he declared his solidarity with all workers of all nationalities, in or out of a job.

People knew that this was only a beginning of the fight because the Gingrich government is showing us only the first installment of their austerity program. Many also were aware that we are at a historical turning point, and no longer are opposition movements going to be adequate if based only on immediate gains.

—Thom and Urszula

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

In the May 8 presidential runoff elections, conservative Jacques Chirac won in the second round with 53% of the vote against Socialist Party candidate Lionel Jospin, with 47%. This slender victory does serve to consolidate rightist power, since they already control the parliament, but it was hardly the landslide for the right predicted only a few months ago.

In the first round of voting, on April 23, the right was stunned when Jospin actually finished first in a field of nine candidates. Even more surprising was the fact that 1.6 million people (5%) voted for the Trotskyist candidate Arlette Laguiller, whose Workers Struggle party calls for the dismantling of the capitalist system. The Communist Party continued to lose its hold over the Left, with a humiliating score of 9%.

Less surprising, but nonetheless very ominous, was the 15% showing (4.6 million votes) for the fascist Jean-Marie Le Pen, whose National Front calls for the immediate deportation of France's 3 million immigrants—most of them people of color—as the "solution" to the country's staggering 13% unemployment rate. Le Pen also denies the Holocaust. Without the fascist vote, the more "respectable" rightist Chirac, whose colleagues have already enacted draconian anti-immigrant legislation, would never have won in the second round.

While the France of 1848, of 1871, of 1968 did not

Chinese dissent continues

On the eve of the sixth anniversary of the Chinese government's bloody repression of the Tiananmen Square uprising, a new document called "Draw Lessons from the Blood" was added to the sheaf of opposition petitions which began in early spring. It was signed by 56 intellectuals who demanded greater freedom of the press and of association, as well as an accounting of the 1989 movement and its June 4 ending in massacre.

Referring to the Tiananmen Square movement, the petition read that "one of the most important reasons for this bloody tragedy is that the ruling authorities...could not solve China's social problems through the process of democracy and the rule of law. Instead, it once again treated the citizens' acts of political participation with hostility and autocracy."

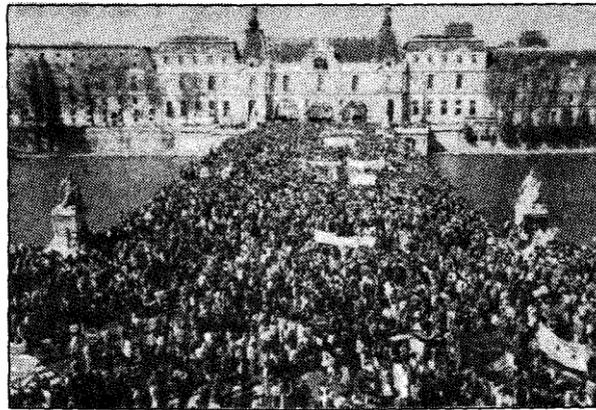
An earlier petition in May, whose signers included the "father" of China's atom bomb as well as the parents—both professors of philosophy—of a student shot and killed by the army in Tiananmen Square, called for the release of dissidents, and "tolerance" of opposition. The petition cited the persecution of intellectuals, going back to 1957 and the "100 Flowers" campaign which Mao quickly repressed when it criticized his regime.

The determination and boldness of intellectuals in this current wave of petitions—many have been detained by authorities already—ties in not only with the Tiananmen Square anniversary and the obvious demise of Deng Xiaoping, and what will happen after his death. It also reflects the underlying rage of the Chinese masses who are carrying the weight of what the petitions call "corruption"—all the rotten fruits of "free market" capitalism, which has resulted in staggering unemployment, labor exploitation and inflation for most people, and a brutal, cynical ruling state ready to clamp down on any manifestation of opposition.

Slender rightist win in French elections

speak very loudly through the election polls this year, that does not mean it is dead. One could hear the voice of that other France, albeit faintly, in the upsurge of labor, anti-racist, and women's struggles over the past several months. It was not strong enough to roll back the right on May 8, but it is certainly there, prompting the country's leading newspaper, *Le Monde*, to editorialize about two different countries, one of the election campaign, the other "of the street."

In the weeks preceding the election, perhaps spurred on by the metalworkers' victory in Germany, dozens of brief strikes over wages, job security and reducing the work week broke out in a variety of sectors. These included the auto, rubber, and chemical industries as well as workers on the national railroads and other public employees. In many cases, strikers were victorious in at



Thousands demonstrated in Paris, May 3, near the spot where a Moroccan immigrant was pushed to his death during a march by the National Front.

Brazil oil workers strike

On May 3, 50,000 oil workers from Petrobras, the national oil company, went out on strike against government privatization plans in one of Brazil's biggest and most sustained strikes in years. By late May, severe oil and gas shortages had begun to disrupt the economy.

The strikers, represented by a union close to the leftist Workers Party of Ignacio "Lula" da Silva, are mounting a direct challenge to the "free market" oriented economic policies of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso who defeated Lula in 1994. In his earlier days as a Marxist sociologist identified with dependency theory, Cardoso ardently defended national control of the oil industry by Third World countries such as Brazil as necessary to any meaningful national independence in a world dominated by large multinational corporations. Today, his plan to privatize oil would allow those corporations to strengthen their control over Brazil's economy.

Cardoso's stand against labor and for the multinationals is being praised by the country's mass media, which is controlled by a few wealthy families. The media compare his stance to that of Margaret Thatcher against the British miners in the 1980s. That same media also trumpets Cardoso's charges that the strike is really political and therefore an "undemocratic" attempt to overturn the results of the elections. And since the workers are "undemocratic," Cardoso has therefore refused even to meet with their representatives.

least some of their demands. More strikes loom in June.

There have also been new types of "occupations" by the unemployed who have taken over part of the shifts of employed workers with the latter's support and cooperation. In another dimension of the struggle against poverty, 20,000 demonstrated in April in Paris on behalf of the homeless and against racism.

Feminist groups have also been on the move, protesting the fact that women constitute less than 6% of the French parliament, far fewer than in technologically less developed Southern European countries such as Greece or Portugal. Even conservative politicians are being forced to concede that perhaps some type of minimum level representation of women in elected bodies is needed.

None of this should minimize the severe threat posed by the right, especially the National Front, who have continued their campaign of intimidation, terror, and even murder against people of color. In the most recent outrage, which came to light in late May, fascist skin heads in Le Havre beat up and then drowned Ime Bouhoud, an Arab immigrant, sparking both anti-skin head rebellion and a march by 5,000 anti-racists.

On May 1, in Paris a Moroccan immigrant, Brahim Bouraam, was set upon by a gang of skinheads and thrown into the Seine where he too drowned. The skin heads staged their attack while participating in a large National Front demonstration, their answer to the workers' holiday, May Day. In February, National Front campaign workers in Marseilles shot to death an African youth, Ibrahim Ali. Each of these racist killings has resulted in prosecutions as well as large demonstrations by anti-racist, leftist, and labor groups. But this has not dented the support of the National Front, which continues steadily to grow.

Bosnian tragedy

(Continued from page 1)

the day it was announced. The policy of the "contact group" has been consistent: allow the Serbian fascists to keep the 70% of Bosnia they seized through their campaign of military terror and "ethnic cleansing" and call it "peace." To this end, the rewriting of Bosnian history continues—from placing a unilinear focus of today's war back to 500 years ago, to designating the present battle for Bosnia's survival as a "civil war."

The UN "peacekeepers" were sucked into today's crisis from the untenable nature of their "mission." UN arms-collection depots became stop-and-shop-centers for the Serbian militias. UN-designed "safe havens" became shooting galleries for using the hijacked heavy weapons. UN "humanitarian aid" was either looted or not allowed to reach Bosnian civilians.

On the legal front, when the UN finally activated war crimes tribunal in April—the first since the end of World War II—the first criminal indicted was a low-level civilian turned militia leader, who happened to be captured in Germany. The actual butchers and perpetrators of murder, torture and mass rape—Karadzic and Mladic in Bosnia, and Serbian president Milosevic—are at the moment being courted by West Europe and the U.S. to cut a deal.

In face of this disarray and criminal activity, Bosnia has not abandoned its ground for genuine peace and greater multiethnic society. Sometimes it is a loss, no gain, which can shed some light. Maja Djokic, a young woman who was killed by a Serbian artillery shell in Sarajevo in April. Djokic, whose father is Serbian-Slovenian and whose mother is Muslim, was taken to a hospital by Sarajevan who happened to be a Serb. The Serbian fascists of Bosnia later broadcast Djokic's death as the lie: that she had been raped and then murdered by Muslims as she tried to escape to the Serbian sector of the city. A Serbian woman in Sarajevo commented, "If this is one thing that Karadzic Serbs hate more than Muslims, it is the Serbs who have remained in Sarajevo."

In this quickening maelstrom, where is the support from the left? In the U.S., it is increasingly evident that the Clinton administration's position is attuned not to strained relations with West Europe and Russia, the careening rightward reaction at home—from so early tomes supporting racism and anti-immigration policies, to the actual dismantling of affirmative action, to the rise of fascism's visage in armed paramilitary units called militias.

The latest offense by the Serbian fascists in Bosnia in large part a reaction to the recent important military gains by the Bosnian army, as well as to recent defeat in Croatia, to reverse the balance of force and retake the land. It is exactly at this moment that the UN-NATO-U.S. alliance is threatening to either force a genocidally decided partition of Bosnia, or leave with arms embargo against Bosnia still intact. We cannot abandon Bosnia and the idea of freedom still buried there.

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

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

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

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, 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.

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

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