

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

Vol. 40 — No. 7

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1995

25¢

Time to take back 'normal working day'



by B. Ann Lastelle

The Helene Curtis manufacturing unit in which I work operates on two ten-hour shifts, six days per week. Technicians work four-day weeks on a three-week schedule which includes two Saturdays out of three. Whenever production is behind schedule, we are threatened with 12-hour shifts and/or working Sundays. This is a nightmare for people with families and for younger workers with social lives. Two of the guys I work with have given up trying to go to school while on this schedule.

When I fretted about this confiscation of our time, a friend asked, "You get paid for it, don't you?" Yes, we do; but is that the point?

Members of United Paperworkers Local 7837, locked out of the A.E. Staley Manufacturing Company in Decatur, Ill., have been battling a change in their work schedule for almost three years. They voted on July 10 to reject the latest contract offer, which included 12-hour shifts, three days on, three days off, with workers rotating between days and nights for each series of days on.

A Staley worker in Decatur showed me the so-called calendar that the company had given them. It was rows of dates divided into columns of three: work days and days off. It bore absolutely no relationship to the calendar of seven-day weeks and 12-month years that workers' families, friends, schools, churches, community organizations, libraries or any other institution in the city of Decatur is operating on. Isolation and exhaustion would have been inevitable.

"The creation of a normal working day is," Karl Marx wrote in *Capital*, "the product of a protracted civil war...between the capitalist class and the working class." At the time those words were written, English workers had won the ten-hour day in most industries and the struggle for the eight-hour day was beginning in the U.S.

(Continued on page 3)

Black World

Mumia Abu-Jamal and the rest of us



by Lou Turner

The average American feels in daily life—in his work, in his home—powerless, utterly powerless. Politicians don't listen to what he thinks, they don't give a fuck. He is parodied on TV as an idiotic Archie Bunker figure. In his job, he is paralyzed by the fear of losing his paycheck, of a pink slip. So that the only expression of power that he can have is the power to express his fear and alienation....It is also a fear of a dark America. It can be as primal as the fear of change.

—Mumia Abu-Jamal, *Village Voice* Sept. 6, 1994

It would be very difficult, if not altogether impossible, to establish any principle upon which the justice or expediency of capital punishment could be founded, in a society glorying in its civilization. Punishment in general has been defended as a means either of ameliorating or of intimidating. Now what right have you to punish me or the amelioration or intimidation of others? And besides, there is history...which proves with most complete evidence that since Cain the world has neither been intimidated nor ameliorated by punishment.

—Karl Marx, *New York Daily Tribune* Feb. 17, 1853

The 140-plus years that separate the above two quotes of Karl Marx and the Black revolutionary journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal, who is scheduled to be executed by lethal injection on Aug. 17 by the state of Pennsylvania, presents no impediment to the intercommunications between the ages.

Despite the passionate immediacy with which so many of us have swung into action to stay the executioner's hand, we may be allowing the revolutionary ideas, for

(Continued on page 10)

ON THE INSIDE

FROM THE WRITINGS OF RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

On The 50th Anniversary of The Bombing of Hiroshima: The Legacy of Japan's Freedom Movements Page 4

Draft for Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, 1995-96

Can the Idea of freedom re-mobilize today's mass movements?



Students at the University of California at Berkeley protest UC Regents vote to end affirmative action.

I. 'Totalitarianism, U.S.-style,' and the need for a revolutionary new beginning

News and Letters Committees publishes the Draft of its Perspectives Thesis each year directly in the pages of N&L. We urge your participation in our discussion around this thesis because our age is in such total crisis that no revolutionary organization can allow any separation between theory and practice, workers and intellectuals, "inside" and "outside," philosophy and organization. We are raising questions and ask you to help in working out the answers.

THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY of the end of World War II is a chilling reminder that far from that slaughter of over 45 million lives having solved a single fundamental problem of humanity, they have reappeared in new and seemingly intractable forms as today's world is gripped by the rise of the most reactionary forces imaginable.

The strength of this in the U.S. can be measured by the Smithsonian Institution's capitulation to veterans groups, who were able to scuttle any historical treatment of the bombing of Hiroshima in its exhibit of the Enola Gay. Though this kind of "history by consensus" mirrors the Japanese government's refusal to acknowledge Japan's own brutal history in World War II, the U.S. bears the far more horrible onus of failing to answer to ushering in the nuclear age by unleashing the atomic bomb that killed 200,000 men, women, and children in a matter of minutes on Aug. 6, 1945. This despite documentary evidence showing that the bomb was militarily unnecessary, since Japan was about to surrender, and that Truman's own generals, including Dwight D. Eisenhower, urged him not to use it.¹

Far from the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II allowing the rulers to close the door on either the conflicts of that era or those of the post-World War II nuclear age, the anniversary has put the spotlight on the emergence of forms of genocide which our "post-Cold War" world was supposed to have terminated.

Who could look at the pictures of Grozny, the capital of Chechnya pounded to rubble by Russian bombs, and not be reminded of the rubble of European cities in World War II? Who could view the brutal bombing for weeks of even the small villages of Chechnya and doubt that this is a genocidal war on a people for daring to seek independence? That Chechnya's near-total destruction

1. See Gar Alperovitz's "Hiroshima: Historians Reassess," *Foreign Policy* 99, Summer 1995, pp. 15-34.

was not allowed to mar the allegedly good relations on display between the U.S. and Russia during the V-E Day celebrations indicts as criminal the kind of "neutrality" in the "internal affairs of other countries" that is, in fact, complicity with genocide.

But the complicity of the West and Russia in the war against Bosnia remains the test of world politics. Over the past two months they have made it clearer than ever that they oppose any attempt to help the Bosnians preserve a multiethnic society. Even the seizure of UN "peacekeepers" by the Bosnian Serbs became nothing more than an occasion for the West to back down from the most limited threats that action might be taken against the Serbian attacks on Bosnia.

As a result, the Serbs have now taken the brazen step of overrunning the UN-designated "safe-haven" of Srebrenica and Zepa threaten to plunge all of Bosnia into a new cycle of "ethnic cleansing." The three million men, women and children who have been killed, raped, or made refugees by this war have truly put all of Western "civilization" on trial as accomplices to genocide.

As we have argued from the start of this crisis, the events in Bosnia are a sharp indictment of the Left, which has largely failed to stand in solidarity with it. The Left's failure to oppose the fascist war on Bosnia raises many questions about whether it can confront the visage of fascism which has emerged right here at home.

This visage was brought to the fore by the growth of the far-right militias which have gained so much attention since the terrorist bombing in Oklahoma City on April 19. In their readiness to fight for "race and nation," they bear a striking resemblance to the "citizens militias" that have sparked the war in Bosnia. Most alarming of all is the strength and influence they have exhibited since April 19.

Who would have believed that their influence has grown so strong that a proposed Conference of the States—intended to be a meeting of leaders of state governments in Philadelphia in October to push for "states' rights"—was called off in July when rightist extremists saw in it a plot to impose a "one world government"? Despite the conference's conservative agenda, the far-right's barrage of fax and phone messages convinced so many legislators not to attend that the National Governors Association had to cancel the event.

Such a bizarre happening attests to the climate of retrogression that was firmly established when the Nov. 8 elections brought Gingrichism to congressional power as

(Continued on page 5)

Islamic fundamentalism's assault on women

by Neda Azad

Throughout the Muslim world, fundamentalist movements have been gaining strength. At the same time, there has been a failure to recognize the retrogressive nature of these movements, particularly with regard to women. Instead too many leftist intellectuals—Edward Said and Michel Foucault would be two prominent examples—and even some feminists have suggested that we need to understand that the Muslim world, long exploited and caricatured by the West, is so different culturally and historically from Europe and North America that feminism as understood in the West has little relevance there. As someone who grew up in one of these societies, Iran, I would argue that such a view is inaccurate and misguided; that it uncritically accepts Islamist propaganda with regard to what women in these societies want.

Gender relations are not a marginal aspect of Islamist ideology. Rather, an important strength of fundamentalist movements lies in the creation of an illusion that a return to traditional/patriarchal relations is the answer to the many social and economic problems that Third World countries face as part of the crisis-ridden world capitalist system.

● **In Iran** the government of the Islamic Republican Party (IRP) continues to jail and torture thousands of women who refuse to comply with their segregationist rules. Strict government enforcement of the hijab (head covering) and periodic rounding up, fines, torture, and imprisonment of women on charges of "improper hijab" continue. Women remain segregated and are restricted in their choice of career, employment, and education.¹

● There have been frequent reports of human rights violations against Sudanese women since the National Islamic Front (NIF) assumed power in a 1989 coup d'état. The process of Islamization and Arabization of Sudan, where the dissenting southern region is Black, Animist, and Christian, is rigidly pursued. The new government has enforced the wearing of the hijab and has segregated women in educational institutions.²

● **In Afghanistan** women were ordered to observe the hijab following the mujahidin victory. Golbadin Hekmatyar, a leader of the victorious mujahidin, had gained notoriety for throwing acid on the exposed legs of a female university student in the early 1980s. Women in Pashtun Taliban-controlled areas may not leave their homes unless they are accompanied by a male relative and then only with completely covered heads.

● **In Algeria**, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) has unleashed a campaign of terror against foreigners, leftists, all those educated in French schools, as well as feminists. The FIS has vowed, when it comes to power, to stop women's employment, to make sexual relations outside marriage punishable by death, and to enforce the hijab. Since 1992 over 50 women have been assassinated and many more stabbed or raped by the fundamentalists for not wearing a head scarf, for wearing Western clothing (like blue jeans), for working alongside men, or for living without a male guardian in their apartments.

Algerian feminists have strongly and consistently protested all violations of their rights, beginning with the 1984 Family Code that confirmed traditional Islamic

Mauritius feminists fight communalism

Curepipe, Mauritius—Lindsey Collen's novel, *The Rape of Sita*, is still banned in Mauritius. The violent attacks against her have abated somewhat and support for free speech has gained ground. However, communal tensions have continued to get worse.

First there was a communalist Muslim gathering that burned a newspaper with strong Hindu fundamentalist traits edited by S. Ramalingun. Then, at Hindu House there was the public burning of three newspapers accused of being anti-Hindu (most newspapers are still owned and controlled by a Catholic elite). Even a road accident created a riot, which then risked developing communal dynamics.

Two journalists were arrested, released and are on trial under the official secrets act. The recent visit of the Leader of the Opposition of the BJP (fundamentalist party in India) has added to tensions. The hierarchy of the Catholic church has systematically opposed anti-discrimination regulations in its schools, which are totally funded by the state.

The background to the social tensions has to do with IMF-World Bank politics propagated by the present government and the present opposition: the wild scramble for tenders, for grabbing bits of privatized industries and for contracts by sections of the bourgeoisie. The propaganda about "the Mauritian miracle" that the IMF and World Bank spread tends to cause a deep-seated hysteria in the poor masses, who live precariously and in poverty while the country is flaunted as a "success story" where everyone is well off.

On the good side, we in Muvman Liberasyon Fam are founding members of the Movement Against Communalism, which has become very big in its first two or three months of existence. The movement supports secularism and freedom of conscience, opposes all forms of classification and categorization of people by religion or race, and supports freedom of expression. As well as the totality of the trade union movement and big sections of the women's movement, we have also attracted music groups, sportsmen and women, preschool playgroup teachers and parents, environmental groups, and consumers' unions into this wide movement against communalism.

—Muvman Liberasyon Fam

laws that allow a man the right to divorce his wife for any reason and to practice polygamy.

● **In Bangladesh**, Islam was declared the state religion in 1988. Fundamentalist clerics have issued a fatwa (religious decree) calling for the death of feminist Muslim writer and poet Taslima Nasrin. Nasrin is the author of a popular novel *Shame* (1993) which recounts the killing of a group of Hindus by Muslim fundamentalists.³

● **In Pakistan** poet Akhtar Hamid Khan, known for his support of family planning, education, and employment for impoverished women, has been threatened with execution by the government and the ulama (Islamic clergy). The 1979 Hudud Ordinance eliminated the distinction between rape and sex between unmarried consenting adults—calling both adultery—and sanctioned the flogging of the accused woman.

This law was strictly enforced during the rule of General Zia' al-Haq and Ghulam Ishaq. Benazir Bhutto has not

(Continued on page 11)



1. See Nayereh Tohidi, "Gender and Islamic Fundamentalism: Feminist Politics in Iran," in *Third World Women & the Politics of Feminism*, ed. by Mohanty, Russo, and Torres (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991). On the 1979 Iranian Revolution, see Raya Dunayevskaya, *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1985).

2. See Ali Abdalla Abbas, "The National Islamic Front and the Politics of Education," *MERIP* (September-October 1991): 23-25; and *Newsletter of Women Living Under Muslim Laws*, July 6, 1992.

3. See "Man sukut nakhavaham kard" [I Will Not Be Silenced], in *Keyhan* (London), January 6, 1993. See also Naila Kabeer, "The Quest for National Identity: Women, Islam and the State of Bangladesh," in *Women, Islam & the State*, ed. by Deniz Kandiyoti (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 115-243.

Review article: Lesbians Talk Issues

In the brief years since the Stonewall Riots of 1969, there has been no shortage of internal debate and dissent within lesbian and gay liberation movements. But the philosophic vision needed for a fully revolutionary movement has been oft-muted, eschewed in favor of isolated activism and cultural representation. The current morass and crisis this produces is mirrored in three volumes from a new series, *Lesbians Talk Issues* (London, 1992-94). Published in Britain, they aim "to provide a forum in which topics of current interest within the international lesbian community can be dissected and discussed with immediacy and flexibility" (*Lesbians Talk Queer Notions*, p. 63).

Three political volumes tackle the contemporary situation from vastly different perspectives. Cherry Smyth, an Irish lesbian poet, teacher and activist, embraces the pro-sex, transgressive, and anti-assimilationism of queer politics in *Lesbians Talk Queer Notions*, noting that the presence of queer movements "in the early '90s marks the shape of the territory to come with an irrevocable and necessary passion" (LTQN, p. 60).

Yet Smyth cannot hide the fact that queer politics doesn't address systemic questions such as racism and capitalism; indeed, queer activism could land us in an infinite "transgress." "Queer offers the terms of transgressive and subversive, but transgressive of what? Subversive of what? Those elements seem unsaid, lost in this wave of energy that is being named queer," notes Philip Derbyshire, a gay activist who combats police brutality (p. 46). Others fear "the movement is in danger of a typically postmodern slippage from ethics to aesthetics" (p. 34).

Lesbians Talk Making Black Waves is the most consequential of these volumes. Even the title suggests a purposeful disruption of a racist, sexist, homophobic status quo. Taking up the lived intersections of class, race, gender, sexuality and immigration, Valerie Mason-John and Ann Khambatta are aware that this is the first book to single out lives of Black lesbians in Britain. (All these books use Black as it is understood in the U.K., to include all people of color, immigrants, and foreigners.)

The history they record moves from the lesbophobia in OWAAD (Organisation of Women of African and Asian Descent) in the late 1970s to the establishment of two national Black lesbian conferences dubbed "Zami" in recognition of Audre Lorde's recovery of this Afro-Caribbean term for women who love women.

Activity included the Haringey Black Action (HBA): "In 1987...HBA organised a national demonstration, Smash the Backlash, which was attended by 4,000 people" (p. 17). The authors note that in "the 1990s racism in Britain has increased, alongside homelessness, unemployment, cuts in local authority services, homophobia and repressive immigration measures. The impact on Black lesbians has been profound" (p. 18).

Their inclusion of immigration issues is increasingly urgent. Zehra, born in Turkey, points out that "[t]he most racist face of the British state is its immigration controls, and it exercises these in a very thorough way...Everywhere you are there are extensions of those controls. Everything centers around the fact that you don't belong here—so what the hell are you doing here?" (pp. 33-34).

These Black lesbians critique "ahistorical" attempts

Illinois Clemency Project

Chicago—Eighteen women serving time in Illinois prisons are seeking clemency from Governor Jim Edgar on the grounds that they were abused by the men they killed or attempted to kill. Lawyers for the Illinois Clemency Project for Battered Women obtained clemency for four women in 1994 and hope for similar results this summer.

The women in each case suffered serious violence at the hands of a spouse or boyfriend, who controlled them through physical, sexual and mental abuse, often for years. If they tried to escape they were stalked and their lives, and lives of family members, were threatened. Each woman believed she had no alternative but to defend herself.

Many of the women received poor legal representation from public defenders who did not mention the abuse. The judge didn't permit the abuse to be presented at all or it was not given adequate consideration in sentencing. Where women's lives have been threatened for years, the law fails to recognize that the women were acting in self-defense.

The fact that these women had to resort to violence speaks to the problem of domestic violence worldwide. In the U.S. a woman is beaten every 15 seconds and domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women age 25 to 44. Yet the indifference to this crime is woven into our legal system and our male-dominated society. Police do not respond seriously to calls for help, prosecutors won't seek penalties, and judges won't impose them.

The Clemency Project attorneys presented petitions before the Prisoner Review Board in mid-July. They contend the courts ruled harshly despite the fact that most of the women had no prior criminal background. Each of the women was convicted of killing, injuring, or conspiring to kill, an abuser. Amazingly, sentences for conspiracy to kill are sometimes as stiff as first degree murder.

Governor Edgar may make his decision as early as August. To support these women, call, write, or e-mail Governor Jim Edgar in Chicago at 312/814-2121; in Springfield, 217/782-0244; address: Governor Jim Edgar Springfield, IL 62706; e-mail: governor.illinois@accessil.com. Contact the Illinois Clemency Project for Battered Women at 312/583-8016.

—Sharon M

to defend racial purity and resist having "our identities...pared down or silenced in the name of black unity, which they categorize as an "ineffective and dangerous response to White racism" (p. 36).

But this emphasis on difference leads even these perceptive writers into a quagmire where individual and particular have forced the universal out of the picture. In the desire to honor all our "complexities" and "potential" (p. 8), the need to create an entirely new society is not articulated. Instead there is a flood of discouragement:

The feeling of optimism and faith in the possibility of real political change has waned as successive legislative measures curbing the rights of all marginalised people have been passed...[Y]ears of Thatcherism and now Major have killed a lot of people's spirits...[W]e are scurrying around like headless chickens with no solid strategies for creating and setting a movement's focus (p. 52).

This type of discouragement is patent in *Lesbians Talk Left Politics*. Here Kristina Studzinski "aims to establish whether there is still a space for Left politics in the fight for lesbian and gay equality" (p. 9, emphasis mine).

(Continued on page 11)

Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

International support is growing to protect the life of Flor de Maria Salguero de Laparra, an organizer in the Guatemalan maquiladora industry. Flor de Maria was savagely beaten and repeatedly raped on May 17 in retaliation for representing 27 young women workers. Juana Modas garment factory in Guatemala City. They are accusing the U.S. owner, Grek Sung Bank, of sexual harassment and illegally firing workers involved in union organizing. Despite phone threats and fears she could become "disappeared," she continues her work. U.S. women trade unionists and activists have formed STITCH (Support Team International for Textileras) support Flor de Maria and other maquiladora organizers and urge people to contact the Guatemalan government to protect her.

Alabama may soon become the last state to stop charging rape victims for the gathering of evidence needed to prosecute their attackers. The Alabama House of Representatives voted on July 24 to require the state to pay the \$200 for such forensic examinations. They were forced to take such action by the 1994 Federal Violence Against Women Act or lose \$35 million in federal money. As recently as 1985, 45% of the states offered little or no assistance to rape victims in the collection of evidence.

The 800,000-member National Housewives Federation, formed 13 years ago in Italy as a social action group, has voted to turn itself into a union to bargain Italy's nine million full-time and six million part-time women homemakers. They plan to demand a state pension plan and salaries for those women who stop outside work for the first five years of their children's lives.

—Information from *Feminist Voice*

Support key to Detroit newspaper strike

Detroit—Two weeks after the Detroit newspaper strike began on July 13, all you can hear in front of the scab operation building in downtown is drivers honking in support and the response of striking workers, and the yells against scabs whenever they are vanned in or out of the building. The strike has received widespread support from subscribers who have cancelled subscriptions, as well as other unions whose members join the picket line.

Advertisers have initially pulled their accounts, but none of the strikers believe this is genuine support—just economics since for now paper delivery is erratic. The newspaper agency has dumped thousands of bundled papers (to drive up circulation statistics) and carriers have

Motor Cargo union fight

Newark, Cal.—Drivers and dockworkers at Motor Cargo, a freight company based in Salt Lake City with a terminal here in Newark (south of Oakland), have been on strike since March. After having certified the union in a unanimous vote and entered into negotiations, the company wanted to discuss having an open shop, where each worker would choose to be in the union or not. The union refused to discuss this since it's illegal in California; the company figured it could get away with it because they're based in Utah, a right-to-work state.

Many drivers in Local 70 (the Teamsters local the Motor Cargo employees voted to affiliate with) are angry about this strike and see it as crucial because this is one of the many non-union carriers paying low wages and undercutting the freight charges of better union shops like Willig and Yellow. The picket line is up daily in Newark (6700 Smith Ave.) and many of the trucks that leave the yard are followed by Local 70 members who set up an "ambulatory picket" wherever the scabs take their freight.

This has put a lot of pressure on the customers to take their freight elsewhere, especially because no union drivers will deliver there while the pickets are up. It has been effective, but the company fights back by telling a lot of lies, both to their scabs and their customers. They tell the customers they don't have a labor dispute going on—but of course our pickets tell a different story.

So the company has to aggressively look for new business all the time, which it does with its salesmen. One recent morning on the picket line two of these young, sharp looking salesmen came out to talk with us, acting very innocent by saying they didn't know what the strike was about (supposedly they had just been hired) and wanted to "find out what's going on."

One driver who had worked there for a year before the strike started was telling them the company is lying when it says they're not losing business "because I stand here and see all the equipment in there that isn't going anywhere, so all the graphs and statistics they put out to prove everything's okay with them mean nothing to me." Then he called those two salesmen the company's "human toilet paper" because they "clean up the man's rap." On that note they turned around and went back inside to their work.

—Teamsters Local 70 driver

Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

Today in the U.S. we have the illusion of a basic 40-hour workweek, but the "normal working day" seems to be more and more rare, at least in manufacturing. All across the country workers are suffering from and struggling against overtime, and ten-hour and 12-hour, often rotating, shifts. Why?

At least part of the answer involves what today's capitalists call "utilization." "Constant capital, the means of production," Marx wrote, "only exist to absorb labor.... While they fail to do this, their mere existence causes a relative loss to the capitalist, for they represent during the time they lie fallow, a useless advance of capital.... To appropriate labor during all the 24 hours of the day is, therefore, the inherent tendency of capitalist production." Utilization becomes more important to capital as, with new technology, the investment in constant capital grows.

Workers, on the other hand, need time off—and not just to eat and sleep in preparation for another round of work. "The laborer needs time for satisfying his intellectual and social wants," Marx wrote. The struggle for a normal working day was important for Marx because it was a demand which arose from the workers themselves and it prefigured a new, non-capitalist, truly human society where production would be regulated by the workers themselves and time freed up by shortening the working day would be available for individual self-development.

The movement of workers that grew out of early capitalist conditions of labor was for "a legally limited working day, which shall make clear 'when the time which the worker sells is ended, and when his own begins.'" Leaving aside the question of "legally limited" (there is a legal limit to the working day in Illinois), is it enough in the 1990s to know when work will end and our time begin?

In other words, if Sundays are no longer off limits, if 40 hours is no longer the standard (except, perhaps, in the abstract), if sleep patterns are totally disrupted, if "our own time" is so contorted by the demands of capitalism that we are isolated from the means to satisfy our intellectual and social wants, isn't there a need for a movement for a normal working day? Or has that struggle begun and we have yet to catch its presence or significance?

also dumped them (in disgust).

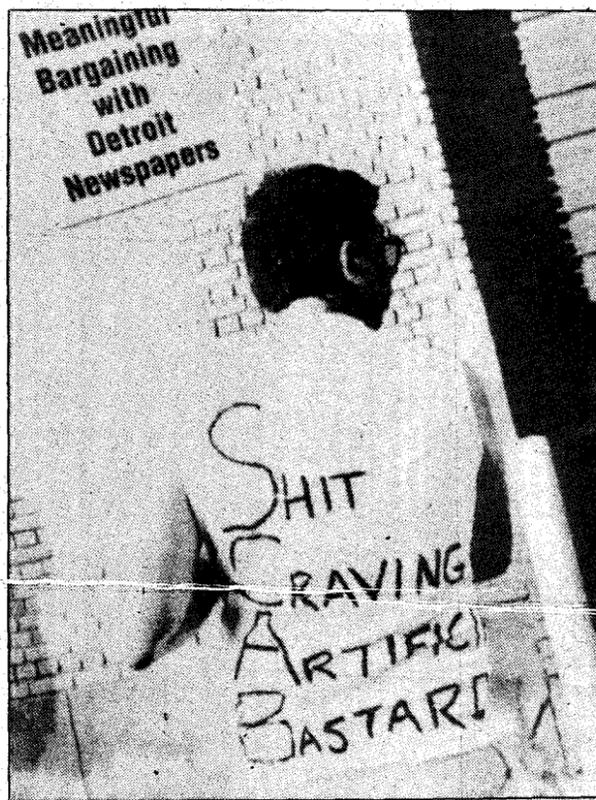
This is a union-busting strike, set up by the Detroit Newspaper Agency which manages both struck papers, the **Detroit Free Press** and the **Detroit News**. In the second week, they withdrew their offer and there have been no negotiations since. A woman in the customer service department said that scabs had been lured into Detroit with promises of free meals and rooms, and up to \$800 a week, only to find \$6 and \$7 an hour jobs in chaotic conditions.

A reporter talked about how important the union was in fighting for ergonomic computer equipment and furniture after they had researched repetitive injury problems from keyboard work. He said it was a sad comment that parts of the movie "Hoffa" had been filmed in the **Detroit News** newsrooms because the furniture and lighting had not changed in 40 years!

The strike involves reporters, sales staff, printers, drivers, mailers and other staff—six unions who have stuck together thus far. Management's strategy is to break apart the striking unions. Already some high profile reporters have crossed the line to file stories, and others (over 40) still on strike recently signed a letter urging the Guild to return to the bargaining table independently of the other unions, especially the Teamsters.

But most workers said they are in this strike to the end. Two women told me they had lost their previous jobs in non-union shops without the chance to fight and save them. Many workers commented on the importance of financial and person-to-person support the strikers are getting from other workers. This strike is going to be long and important, not only for a labor town like Detroit, but for all U.S. workers.

—Strike supporter



One striker's opinion of scabs in the Detroit newspaper strike

Pain to follow OSHA cuts

Evanston, Ill.—The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) killed its proposed ergonomics regulations in June. Under development for five years, the rules were supposed to slow down the epidemic of repetitive strain injuries (RSI), injuries caused by repeating the same motions again and again. But the Republican Congress, which was already cutting the OSHA budget, added cuts of \$3.5 million more to wipe out the ergonomics program intended to help adapt the work environment to the worker.

Each year, hundreds of thousands of workers get RSI. It has doubled since 1984 because of the proliferation of computers in offices. Computer users—now 40 million strong in the U.S.—typically spend many hours in the same position repeating the same motions with few breaks. The first time I wore splints to work for my own tendinitis, I was shocked at how many co-workers confided in me that they too had RSI problems. Then I started noticing how many people are walking around wearing splints, like lots of supermarket checkout clerks.

The risk is even greater for workers in factories that process meat, poultry and fish, for the same reason: human bodies forced to adapt to the demands of a work process designed to maximize production, pushing the destruction of nerve and muscle tissue beyond the point that rest can heal.

OSHA already has only 1,000 inspectors to monitor conditions at 3.6 million work sites. Now the Republicans want to cut that even more. They cry over the poor capitalists who have to spend money to make work safer, and don't give a damn about the 10,000 workers killed on the job each year and the 100,000 that die from long-term occupational diseases. Or the six million injured and 60,000 permanently disabled.

What businesses, government and doctors are mainly interested in is increasing production and reducing the costs of medical care and disability payments. The only real cure for this crippling epidemic is to transform the inhuman working processes that cause pain and disability.

—Office worker

Staley buyout bait rejected

Decatur, Ill.—In the contract [between Paperworkers Local 7837 and A.E. Staley] there was something decent for anyone who wasn't going to go back. If you wanted to go back, it was no good. After two and a half years, a lot of people have gone on with their lives. They wanted an end, to get it over, emotionally and financially. The vote, July 10, was 318 to reject and 241 to accept.

What Staley is saying with this offer is we don't want you back. They offered a "Voluntary Hourly Separation Incentive Program" which lets you sever out if you are alive and had a birthday. It's for everyone in the plant if they want to take it.

Staley offered early retirement too. You also got to choose a severance plus a pension multiplier for every year of service. The contract included a list of everyone to see exactly who was eligible by their birth dates, not their names. For people not eligible for retirement, there was the "Voluntary Bridge Program" to get you to retirement. Not very many people were on the "bridge," but quite a few are eligible to retire.

They made the contract bad to stay in and good to get out. The shift schedule Staley wants is twelve-hour shifts, rotating every three days. So you have three days on, and three days off.

Now we're in a Russian stand-off with Staley. The local wrote a request to Staley to meet after we turned down the contract. They sent a return letter dated July 26. It said, "Your proposals are based on outmoded systems from the 1960s, and we will not return to those." It called them "unworkable and archaic." It then asked if we are willing to accept rotating shifts, a system to resolve grievances in a "timely" way (meaning sweeping them under the rug), and setting up a "skill block" system where you would have to learn three jobs in a year, then take a test. Staley could promote—or demote—you at will, depending on what you learn after three years. And they asked us to accept unlimited subcontracting too. "We will not meet unless you are willing to accept all that" is what they were saying.

Staley wants 350 people back, no more. Maybe if they put the fear of God in them and maybe dangle the bait again, enough people will take it. But there were a lot of older guys, even though it was advantageous to take the offers, who felt they couldn't do it to the guys who had to go back, who maybe were old enough but did not have too many years of seniority. They didn't want to stick it to them. And a lot of the younger workers knew they could not survive.

—Staley support worker

* * *

People were pissed off because when they got the proposal, it was worse than before, and they realized the bargaining committee wasn't lying to them. It came to a vote because there was that fraction of people always looking to get what they could. They already had new jobs somewhere else. The others feel pleased about voting down the contract. However some voted for it because they are having financial hardships. I told one guy that the local has programs to help them out, which we put out in the newsletter. Once you let the committee know, they give you some help, secretly, so no one knows. This one guy didn't know anything about the committee, and he got in trouble.

Everyone has heard about the federal investigation at ADM [Archer Daniels Midland] for unfair competition. Back in the '70s, when they had their last strike at the Decatur plant, ADM broke their unions, the Grainmillers and the Allied Industrial Workers (now Paperworkers) the same as us. We can look across town and see what would have happened to us if we took Staley's "best and final offer" three years ago.

—Road warrior

After the Ralston strike

Battle Creek, Mich.—Tensions were pretty high when workers went back after the 12-week strike at Ralston Foods here that had begun at the end of February. Although the members of Local 66 of the American Federation of Grain Millers ratified the contract they were finally offered, many weren't happy with it.

I had thought they would stay out longer, until all their demands were met. They included everything from retirement benefits, health insurance, job security and seniority rights. A lot of issues were not resolved and will have to wait for the next negotiations. But when you consider that this was just one isolated group of 300 workers who were seeing the work from their plant shunted off to other Ralston plants, it isn't surprising that they settled. You can't blame a worker for wanting to hang on to a good-paying job.

As soon as that strike was settled, there were rumors here that the Grand Trunk Western Railroad workers may strike over job cutbacks. I worked as a "gandy dancer" during the Vietnam War, laying track. It was the only time in my life that I participated in a wildcat strike. There was an electrical storm and the GTWRR steel gang I worked on refused to work in the dangerous conditions. If lightning struck near the rail, you had it. The foreman threatened to fire a couple hundred of us on the spot, but since we were out in the sticks somewhere between Edwardsburg and Cassopolis, Mich., he would have had a hard time finding new employees, so we won that day.

There are all kind of strikes like these by small groups of workers, who put up great fights but are ultimately defeated. But, as I wrote to you earlier (see Readers' Views, July N&L), if a spark is all that is needed for a revolution, we can be sure the stinking capitalist system will provide plenty of them.

—Postal worker

From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya
MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES

Editor's note: Fifty years after U.S imperialism dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki—to this day, the only country to dare such barbarism—it still refuses to acknowledge the utter inhumanity of that act. To express our opposition to such depravity and to solidarize with the legacy of Japanese freedom struggles which the rulers on both sides of the Pacific try to conceal, we are publishing excerpts of Raya Dunayevskaya's "The New Left in Japan: Achievements and Goals," originally written as a report of her lecture tour in Japan in 1965. The piece first appeared in *News & Letters*, February 1966, and an edited version serves as a chapter in her *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution*. We have combined the two versions in what follows below.

A lecture tour through Japan is an exhilarating experience for one coming from the United States where Marxism is not exactly the most popular doctrine. In contrast to the political atmosphere in the States, where even the youth with a cause feels it necessary to vie with non-committed groups in denying an "ideological" foundation for his struggle for freedom, the New Left in Japan is all proudly Marxist, "anti-Stalinist and anti-imperialist, East and West." These sharp outer differences notwithstanding, there is a deep affinity of purpose between the New Left in Japan and in the United States. Both the date of birth—1960—and the parallelism of actions—great mass demonstrations in Japan against the American-Japanese Security Pact and, in the U.S., the sit-downs signaling the start of the Negro Revolution—symbolize the beginnings of a whole new epoch of development in both countries.

The 700 that came out, Dec. 4, to hear my first talk at the Telephone and Telegraph Workers' Union hall in Tokyo were representative of the whole spectrum of the New Left. This was seen both from the introductory speeches which showed that, although the meeting was under the auspices of *Zenshin*,* independent Marxists were also there, and it was made clear from the questions and discussion which followed the talk on "The Negro Revolution, the New Left, and Marxism in America." Furthermore, the questions disclosed an intense desire to develop relations with the second America—the America of the Negro Revolution, of the Free Speech Movement, of rank-and-file labor struggles, of the anti-Vietnam War teach-ins as well as the analyses of these developments by Marxist groups. And the preponderant presence of youth was made manifest by what I would call the sheer adventure of philosophic explorations, ranging from the historic gulf that separates the "Oriental concept of Void and Nothingness" from the "European (Hegelian) concept of negativity" through Sartre's Existentialism, to the concrete urgency with which the Hungarian Revolution invested the Humanism of Marxism.

The focal point of the discussion, however, remained the need for revolutionary regroupment, the need for solidarity between freedom fighters the world over—between workers and students and those who were fighting for and had won national independence from Western imperialism that would not fall prey to Stalinism of either the Russian or Chinese variety.

I do not mean to give the impression that the whole of the New Left is anti-Stalinist. The oppressive air of Maoism which dominates the Communist Party of Japan (JCP) hangs heavily also over a good part of the intellectual left. As was evident from another meeting, this time at the Waseda University, which was attended by nearly 1,000 students on Dec. 19, more than a little residue of Stalinism is imbedded also in some anti-Stalinist groupings...

The Waseda University Students Paper invited me to write for it. In the article, entitled "The Humanism of Marx is the Basic Foundation for Today's Anti-Stalinism,"...I wrote:

...it is not some "bourgeois scholars" who brought Marx's Humanism onto the historic stage, but masses in motion, masses in motion against established Communism, masses in

* *Zenshin* (Forward) is the organ of the NC-JRCL. To avoid confusion which would arise from the fact that the Japanese Revolutionary Communist League contains the Trotskyist grouping as well as those like *Zenshin* and *Liberation* who have split not only from the Communist Party but from Trotskyism, we will refer to each group by the name of its organ.

On the 50th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, Nagasaki

The legacy of Japan's freedom movements

motion against American imperialism, masses in motion against British, French, Belgian imperialism, masses in motion against all existing societies. Stalinism, be it in Russian or Chinese garb, should not be allowed to sully Marx's concept of revolution and vision of the "all-round" man...

There must be no more Hiroshimas and Nagasakis. And something a great deal less honorary than "a degenerated workers' state" should be reserved for retrogressionists, for any who expound the barbarous view that a "new civilization" can first be built on the ruins of what would be left of the world after a thermonuclear war...

I. HIROSHIMA INTERNATIONALISM

The deep internationalism of the Japanese youth can be seen in the peace rally held in Hiroshima on Dec. 8. If you recross the international date line, you'll find it is Dec. 7 in the States.

Now, anyone feels very small and very humble when

where Harry McShane had distributed leaflets calling for common action between Scottish and Japanese shipyard workers. And there was also deep concern with ideas.

In contrast to what is the situation now among trade unions in the U.S., the political groups in Japan have shop papers that are openly Marxist. Just as a group among the shipyard workers—the Social Science Research Club—were the ones to translate and publish a Marxist-Humanist analysis of The Soviet Economy and the Law of Value—A Revision or Reaffirmation of Marxism?, so auto, coal, and steel were most interested in publishing Workers Battle Automation by Charles Denby, editor of *News & Letters*. In what other countries did groups of trade unionists publish such theoretical as well as class struggle analyses? And where else would a Marxist group that does not fully agree with another Marxist grouping in a different country publish the other's views precisely on the points in disagreement—state-capitalism, and the philosophical essays on Marx's Humanism Today and the Afro-Asian Revolutions?

That this dynamism of ideas characterizes not only workers who are "politicalized" was most clearly evident in Toyota.

ZENKAKUREN, MARXISM, AND THE ACADEMIC MILIEU

...The highest point reached by Zengakuren (All Japan Federation of Student Governments) was in that pivotal year 1960 when it led mass demonstrations against both U.S. imperialism and its own Kishi government. And because by then the Zengakuren was not merely a student movement, but a political one that truly represented the majority of the people, they succeeded in stopping Eisenhower's projected trip to Japan, and in forcing Kishi to resign.

These, however, were not its greatest achievements. The greatest achievement was this: Outside of the bourgeoisie, every strata of the population, labor and women included, came alive.*

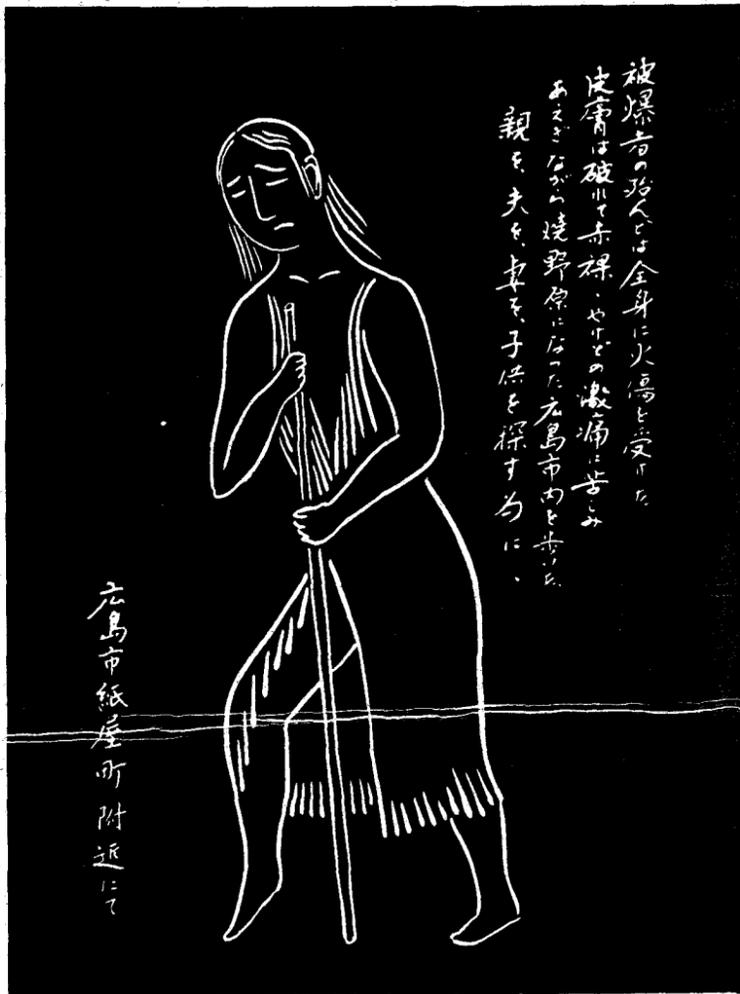
In those struggles against the American-Japanese Security Treaty, as both symbol of continued American domination and the resurgence of its own bourgeoisie the self-development of the so-called common man reached so high a point that it created a true basis for independent Marxism...[but] the very success of its ventures meant the end of one type of cohesiveness. The political tendencies within it, the very ones that helped lead it away from the CP, now found their theories tested in practice, and prepared to shift their concentration from the student movement to the class struggle, and "the building of a revolutionary Marxist party"...

Merleau-Ponty once expressed the true

purpose of philosophy most succinctly and profoundly when he stated that it must be "spontaneity which teaches." One hundred years before Merleau-Ponty Marx, in arguing against those who wanted "to negate philosophy by, as he put it, "turning one's back on philosophy...and murmuring a few trite and ill-humored phrases," insisted that the only way "to abolish" philosophy is "to realize it," that is to say, make the theory liberation and freedom itself real. To grasp the meaning of spontaneous action and have philosophy merge with praxis is the only way to realize it. Each by itself is on-sided; only in unity can reality be transformed and the philosophy realized. It is toward this end that the New Left strives. Therein lies the affinity of ideas between the New Left in Japan and in the United States.

*My discussion about the activity of the women was by means limited to discussions in Japan. I kept raising the international aspect on my return because of the unevenness in development of Women's Liberation everywhere. In a talk WRAP (Women's Radical Action Project) at the University of Chicago in April of 1969, during the demonstrations around Marlene Dixon's tenure, the question came up again. Here what I said then:

I was invited to Japan in 1965 to make a tour around Marxism and Freedom when it was translated into Japanese, and I had many meetings with the left of the left, the left of Zengakuren. The women had been every bit as active as men in the struggles there. Indeed, the Zengakuren demonstrations against Eisenhower led to one death and that was a woman, Michiko Kanba, a student from Tokyo University. Yet, I was there for two weeks before I heard a woman take the floor. I finally asked them where they were keeping the women? They men said that though they had known I was a woman before I arrived, to actually see me standing up there lecturing for hours every day was a "shocking sight." At one meeting I finally got some women to open up (and that's only because they were teachers, but not college teachers). They said that there is any woman in a leadership role in the party, and they were not as free as women in America. Well, it is true that women in America speak up more. But Marx insisted that no matter how free we think we are, we shouldn't fool ourselves that the ideas of the ruling class aren't the ideas of society—and no matter how hard we work, there will be certain taints that we carry with us...



Painting by Kazou Akiyama, survivor of Hiroshima bombing

he arrives in Hiroshima. A visit to the Peace Museum is a most harrowing and sobering experience, guaranteed to fill your night with ghoulish nightmares, and by morning kindling such wrath in you against America for that fiendish act of dropping the A-bomb that you are quite ready to forget that you too are American, and that there is a second America, one that is determined that there be no more Hiroshimas, no more Nagasakis.

It seemed inconceivable that the very city that American imperialism atom-bombed would hold a rally in commemoration of all who died the night when Japanese imperialism attacked Pearl Harbor. Yet that is exactly what took place in Hiroshima on Dec. 8, 1965. I felt trepidation when I arose to speak and I began very slowly:

"While I do not wish to minimize Japanese militarism's role in the second imperialist world war, the day of infamy that will never be erased from history is not Dec. 7, but Aug. 6. And when that day of infamy was extended, and on Aug. 9th, Nagasaki was atom-bombed, hell on earth seemed to be the only reality left. Because we are gathered here to make sure that that dehumanized version of reality does not repeat itself, our anti-war struggles must be inseparable from those aimed at eradicating that which is at the root of all wars: class society."

Besides the peace rally, there was a public meeting under the auspices of the Marxist Student League, the Marxist Young Workers' League, and *Zenshin* that was attended by about 300. There were also smaller meetings with the students and the student press of Hiroshima University who were interested in all the details of the Berkeley Revolt.

The most impressive part of those meetings with *Zenshin* which concerned themselves specifically with those questions on which we did not agree—the theory of state-capitalism and my emphasis on the working out of the philosophy of Marxism for our age as taking precedence over the question of "the vanguard party"—was the presence of workers from all basic industries, auto, electric power, shipyards, etc., etc. They were concerned with establishing relations for action, as the Nagasaki Shipyard workers with those in the Clyde in Scotland

NEWS & LETTERS
Vol. 40, No. 7 August-September 1995
News & Letters (ISSN 0028-8969) is published 10 times a year, monthly, except bi-monthly January-February and August-September for \$2.50 a year (bulk order of 5 or more, 15¢ each) by News & Letters, 59 E. Van Buren St., Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605. Telephone (312)663-0839. Fax (312)663-9069. Second class postage paid at Chicago, Illinois. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to News & Letters, 59 E. Van Buren St., Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605. Articles may be reprinted verbatim if credited to "News & Letters."
Raya Dunayevskaya
Chairwoman, National Editorial Board (1955-1987)
Charles Denby
Editor (1955-1983)
Olga Domanski, Peter Wermuth, Co-National Organizers, News and Letters Committees. Lou Turner, Managing Editor. Michael Flug, Marxist-Humanist Archivist. Felix Martin, Labor Editor.
News & Letters is printed in a union shop.

CAN THE IDEA OF FREEDOM RE-MOBILIZE TODAY'S MASS MOVEMENTS?

(Continued from page 1)

Phase II of the counter-revolution Reaganism launched in the 1980s. The speed with which the Right has been able to move us back by decades since then is unprecedented. It has achieved draconian congressional cuts in welfare, education, and preservation of the environment, while Black youth, single mothers and immigrants have been demonized, if not criminalized.

No less shocking was the rate at which the Supreme Court in the last weeks of its 1994-95 session overturned landmark decisions established through four long and turbulent decades. Even the historic 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education case, which had supposedly destroyed the moral and legal rationalization for educational segregation, was under attack in a ruling that undercut a desegregation plan in Kansas City.

The Court also struck a blow at the constitutionality of Federal affirmative action programs and seriously undermined the redistricting provisions flowing from the Voting Rights Act which the Civil Rights Movement had forced Congress to adopt back in 1965. It could pave the way for decimation of Black representation in Congress in some southern states on a scale not seen since post-Reconstruction.

In decision after decision there was no "left wing" on this Court. Indeed, the Court has become the new standard-bearer of the kind of "states' rights" that has long been the battle cry of American racism, from the Civil War to the attacks on the Civil Rights Movement during the 1960s. Its pull is now at work in everything from the Proposition 187 attack on immigrants in California to the Colorado vote to deprive gays of protection from discrimination, which the Court will rule on at its next session.

How fully the Right now feels it can get away with anything it chooses is manifested in the unabashed determination of the abysmally ignorant Old South bigot Jesse Helms to drastically cut the amount spent on AIDS—because, he says, it is "transmitted by people engaged in unnatural acts"! It is also manifested in the government's determination to put former Black Panther Mumia Abu-Jamal to death Aug. 17—a Black man framed in 1981 for the murder of a policeman, whose trial made it clear he is being punished, not for the murder he did not commit, but because of his radical political beliefs.

Far from any "separation of powers" providing a "balance" of competing interests, the U.S. today is characterized by an unprecedented political realignment in which everything is tilted to the Right. The irony is that at a moment when so many have embraced the notion of "civil society" (the notion of a plurality of institutions which "balance" each other and thereby act as a check upon the power of the state) as an alternative to revolution, there is less "balance" in American "civil society" than at any time in this century.

There is surely no balance to Newt Gingrich in Bill Clinton, whose call is not to battle but to wage less combat in order to find "common ground" with the most reactionary Congress in half a century. And while the "anti-big government" rhetoric of Gingrich helped create the climate that nourished the far-right militias, it was Clinton who seized the opportunity to seek legislation to increase wiretapping and monitoring of suspected anti-government organizations—a threat directed not at the Right, but at the Left.

The looming oneness of Congress, the Presidency, and the Supreme Court presents us with much more than the "tweedle-dum, tweedle-dee" nature of Republicans and Democrats that has long defined the "two-party" system in this country. When the retrogression has reached the unprecedented state we confront today, it is totalitarianism U.S.-style which has to be confronted.

What defines this is a drive for single party-state control rooted in a reactionary ideology shared by forces ranging from the Christian Coalition and the Republicans to many Democrats. This emerging totalitarianism reflects the changes occurring on the shop floor, as seen in the partnership between labor, management, and capital embodied in "team concept," "quality control circles," and other efforts geared to have workers participate in their own oppression.

Reagan set the ground for this in the 1980s, but he did not succeed in bringing it to fruition. What then has to be confronted is not so much the determination of the Right to push us back, which is hardly new, but how they have been able to get away with it.

What a Black working woman in Memphis told News & Letters has the answer:

I don't think the Republicans ever stopped trying to take over. The problem is that we stopped. I'll never forget after the elections last November, Gingrich said, 'We've been struggling 40 years for this.' So all the time we stopped struggling and went about our business thinking things were resolved, they were waiting for an opportunity to turn things around. They beat us with me, even if that time was 40 years. I decided you're never a 'winner.' You're just a fighter. If you ever stop fighting, you lose. Nothing is going to change until we get to the root of things. Dealing with things from the surface will never solve anything.

We need to ask why we have witnessed such a demobilization of the kinds of movements which won so many battles in the early decades of the post-World War II era. This is needed not for history's sake, but to answer the

burning problems of today, when we are in need of a massive and unified opposition to Gingrich-Republicanism. While only a start, this has begun to emerge in the protests of Blacks, Latinos and youth against the Contract on America and Proposition 187.

Yet the history of the movements of the 1960s that ended in failure at the very point youth and labor began to come together is a striking reminder that to depend only on more activity and broader coalition building is not the guarantee of a way out of today's retrogression. History shows that mass movements do not arise just from the horrors and limitations of existing society; they also unfold when an idea of freedom, a concept of a new society is present which can excite the human imagination. Marx projected this long ago, when he said theory becomes a material force when it seizes the masses.

Yet many still seem oblivious of this, as if one more effort at coalition building or "mass recruiting" will succeed in beating back the Right. This lack of serious rethinking does not just characterize activists, as can be seen from a recent exchange between two of Europe's foremost intellectuals, Jurgen Habermas and Adam Michnik. Though both acknowledge the severe crisis of modern society, all they pose as an alternative is the old idea of using the welfare state to "tame capitalism."²

The failure to project a viable concept of liberation opposed to both capitalism and state-capitalism that called itself Communism lies at the heart of today's political crises. To dig out why this problem persists is to confront what the Black working woman called "getting at the root of things."

To do so we need to return with eyes of today to the concept of "post-Marx Marxism as pejorative," which Raya Dunayevskaya developed in the period just before a retrogressive changed world emerged in the 1980s.

This category, developed as a serious reexamination and critique of the greatest revolutionaries, showed that even the most important post-Marx Marxists had failed to build upon the inner core of Marx's Marxism—his refusal to separate his new continent of thought and of revolution from a concept of organization.

In Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution, Dunayevskaya specifically showed that all post-Marx Marxists suffered from an underlying Lassalleism. Ferdinand Lassalle's notion, projected when he was a leader of the German workers' movement in Marx's day, that the need for and building of organization takes precedence over working out a new relation between organization and a philosophy of liberation, defined the attitude of all Marxists both reformist and revolutionary.

Marx alone was the exception, as seen from his 1875 Critique of the Gotha Program, in which he sharply criticized the underlying Lassalleism of his own followers. In insisting that no organizational unity should occur except on the basis of the principle of the kind of new society one is for, "Marx was ready to eliminate any distinction, not only between economics and dialectics, but between organization and principles, that is to say, theories of revolution, dialectics of philosophy." The tragedy, however, is that "The totality that was Marx as organization man, as political theorist, as visionary of a future social order" did not inform the development of post-Marx Marxism.³

The ramifications of this became most telling in our time. There certainly has been no shortage of organization. The building of organization in fact took precedence over projecting a liberating vision of the future—whether by those who narrowed the concept of a new society by equating it with state-capitalism which called itself Communism, or by those who opposed such societies from the Left without, however, projecting a comprehensive philosophy of revolution.

This had devastating consequences by the 1980s. Because of the failure of the revolutionary movement to project a viable alternative, the collapse of both existing Communism and of welfare-state managed "socialism" made it easy for the ruling ideology to claim that capitalism is here to stay. The notion that capitalism represents the only available option hangs like a pall over all, defining the very contours of thought itself in this historic period.

This has everything to do with the demobilization experienced by today's movements. Seriously confronting the question of "how to begin anew" in the struggle for freedom means breaking through these mind-forged manacles by reaching for philosophic new beginnings.

What can help illuminate how to meet this awesome challenge is Marx's work of his last decade (1875-83), when in very different circumstances than those prevailing today he too confronted the question "how to begin anew." What made this question so real to Marx in his

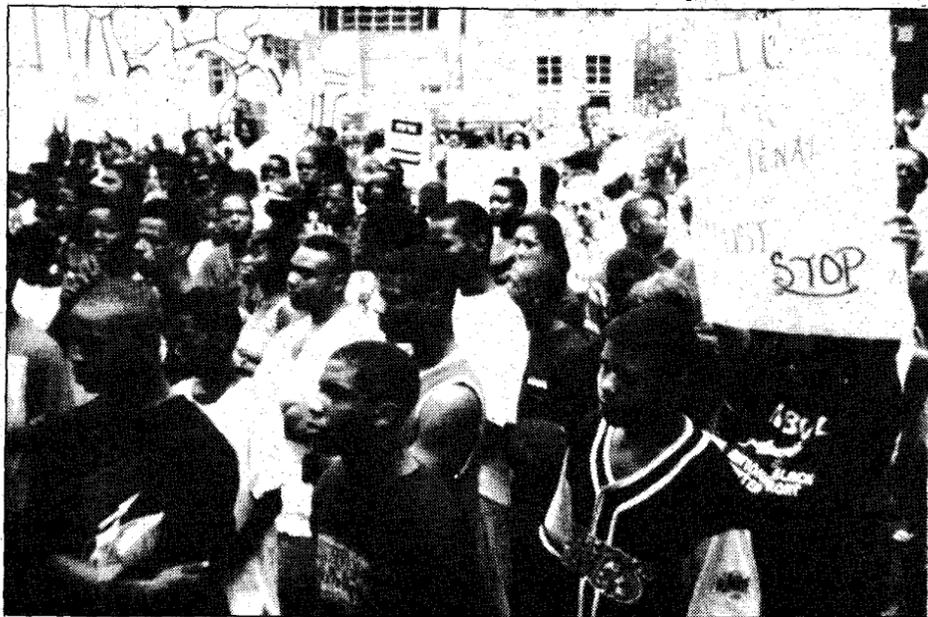
2. See New York Review of Books, March 24, 1994.

3. Raya Dunayevskaya, "Why Hegel's Phenomenology? Why Now? What is the Relationship either to Organization, or to Philosophy, not Party," in Supplement to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection (RDC), Vol. 13, microfilm #10894, Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution, p. 158.

last decade was the new stage of revolt disclosed by the Paris Commune of 1871, on the one hand, and on the other hand, the subsequent collapse of the First International and his realization (voiced in the Critique of the Gotha Program) that even his closest followers did not grasp the depth of his vision of revolutionary transformation.

To ensure that such highpoints of revolt as the Paris Commune "would not die along with any physical death, i.e., historic disappearance because of defeat by the counter-revolution," in his last decade Marx "asked the Marxists to go lower and deeper into the proletariat, as well as to the oppressed in general, whether they be peasants or minorities like Jews, while he went searching for pre-capitalist social forces and passions (in what we now call the Third World. The result was his very last work, the Ethnological Notebooks."⁴

As Marx dug into such forces, he developed a multilinear view of human development. He denied that



Chicago Black youth at an 800-strong downtown protest against the Aug. 17 scheduled execution of Black revolutionary Mumia Abu-Jamal.

all countries are fated to follow the course of capitalism in the West; he was looking at the possibility that a new path to revolution could emerge in the East that would bypass the vicissitudes of capitalist industrialization.

Yet in trying to reconstitute the idea of freedom through this intense theoretic labor, Marx resisted any tendency to draw up a blueprint for the future. This is because, as he repeatedly stated, "everything depends on the historic conditions in which it is situated."

This is no less true today. The task of filling the void in the projection of a liberating alternative does not depend on developing abstract blueprints about the "new society." It hinges on eliciting those elements within today's reality which can point us beyond the contours of the present system. This does not only entail singling out the potential forces of revolution. It also entails unearthing the philosophic points of departure developed in our historic period which can provide direction for projecting a comprehensive liberatory alternative.

In this sense, to work out a revolutionary new beginning everything depends on the liberation of the mind which means the freedom of the people.

The task of filling the void in a liberating vision of the future surely seems overwhelming—until one discovers what Marxist-Humanism as a body of ideas has to offer. That is because since its birth, Marxist-Humanism focused on how to overcome the central reality of our era: the emergence of counter-revolution from within revolution. Whereas others limited themselves to the critique of what is, or mere first negation, Marxist-Humanism centered on the need to work out a new beginning from second negativity by posing the question "what happens after?" before the revolution.

This focus on second negativity permeates the entire development of Marxist-Humanism, as seen in Dunayevskaya's "trilogy of revolution"—from Marxism and Freedom (1958), which focused on the humanism of Marx in relation to both the freedom struggles of our age and the vision of a new society contained in Hegel's Absolute; to Philosophy and Revolution (1973), which developed the concept of "Absolute Negativity as New Beginning"; to Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution (1982), which projected

(Continued on page 6)

4. Dunayevskaya, "Why Hegel's Phenomenology? Why Now?," microfilm #10894-95.

Questions for the freedom movement

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

ACHILLES HEEL OF "WESTERN CIVILIZATION"

- Articles from NEWS & LETTERS on the crisis in Bosnia
- "A post-World War II View of Marx's Humanism, 1843-83: Marxist-Humanism in the 1950s and 1980s." an essay by Raya Dunayevskaya

\$1 (plus 85¢ postage).....Order from
News & Letters, 59 E. Van Buren, #707, Chicago IL 60605

CAN THE IDEA OF FREEDOM RE-MOBILIZE TODAY'S MASS MOVEMENTS?

(Continued from page 5)

the notion of "post-Marx Marxism as pejorative" and the discovery that the whole of Marx's work represented the concretization of a philosophy of "revolution in permanence."

So rich is this historic-philosophic development that Marxist-Humanism truly provides the basis for the "liberation of the mind." But for this to occur this body of thought must be projected and concretized by a living body of people. It calls on us to measure up to our most unfinished task: assuming organizational responsibility

for the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism.

To achieve this requires giving organizational expression to the "philosophic moment" of Marxist-Humanism—Dunayevskaya's 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes." These letters were written as part of an effort to work out the alternative to the elitist concept of the "vanguard party to lead." They also represent a divide from those who view spontaneous forms of organization as the absolute opposite of the elitist party.

These letters centered on a deep journey into Hegel's dialectic, beginning with the final chapter of Hegel's *Science of Logic*, the "Absolute Idea," in a letter of May 12, 1953. Yet Dunayevskaya did not stop her journey here. She felt impelled to go further, into the work which follows Hegel's *Logic*—his *Philosophy of Mind*. In breaking down its dialectic for the freedom struggles of our day, she concluded that the realm of Mind does not represent the "knowing" of the proletariat by some new form of "the Party," as C.L.R. James had maintained. She instead viewed the *Philosophy of Mind*, the work in which

Hegel most fully presents the Idea of Absolute Negativity, as the realm of the new society.

In not having "a word to say about party or any other form of organization" in her commentary on the final paragraphs of the *Philosophy of Mind* in her letter of May 20, 1953, she was indicating that the determinant of revolutionary organization is not just the form of organization but most of all its relation to the Idea of Freedom itself.⁵

Achieving historic continuity with this concept of organization has never been more urgent than now. To see how to achieve this, however, we first have to confront the challenge to thought presented by today's world economy.

5. The 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes" can be found in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (Chicago: News and Letters, 1989), which also contains Dunayevskaya's "Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy" of June 1, 1987, in which she discusses these letters in light of the problem of dialectics of organization.

II. The fetish of high-tech in today's world economy

...Cognition is reconstructed and united with the Practical Idea; the actuality which is found as given is at the same time determined as the realized absolute end,—not however (as in inquiring Cognition) merely as objective world without the subjectivity of the Notion, but as objective world whose inner ground and actual persistence is the Notion. This is the Absolute Idea.

—G.W.F. Hegel, *Science of Logic*

A. The 'new' class warfare

AT NO PERIOD in the 20th century before now has the world economy been characterized by such an absolute disparity between the concentration of wealth, at one pole, and growing poverty, unemployment and disease, at the other—and all signs indicate that the gap will only increase in the coming period.

Underpinning this is such sluggish economic growth that many call the 1990s "The Great Stagnation." Whereas the world economy grew at an annual rate of 4.9% in the 1960s, 3.8% in the 1970s and 2.7% in the 1980s, its growth rate is less than 1% in the 1990s. The global economic restructuring which has accompanied this "Great Stagnation" is leading to a differentiation between rich and poor with profound consequences.

According to a recent report of the World Health Organization, one-fifth of the world's 5.6 billion people live in extreme poverty, one-third of the world's children are undernourished, and half of the globe lacks access to essential medicines. Entitled "Bridging the Gap," the report says that poverty has become "the world's deadliest disease. It wields its destructive impact at every stage of human life, and for most of its victims the only escape is an early grave...[F]or many millions of people for whom survival is a daily battle, the prospect of a longer life may seem more like a punishment than a prize."

Such conditions are not foreign to the U.S. Income inequality between rich and poor is greater in the U.S. than in any industrialized country, and the gap is growing yearly. While the average productivity of U.S. workers increased 30% from 1977 to 1992, average real wages fell by almost 15%. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, for the past decade 80% of the U.S. labor force has been on a "downward escalator" earning lower wages, while corporate profits have soared.

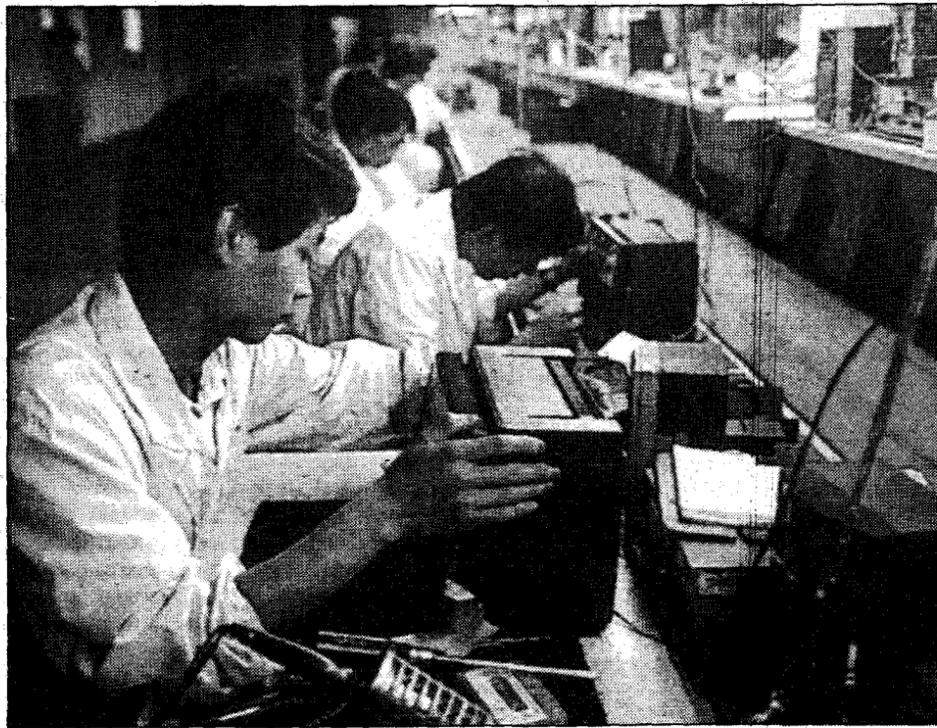
Those most affected by this "downward escalator" are youth and women, who work primarily in the low-wage service sector and are especially vulnerable since reductions in welfare benefits and social services fall mainly on their shoulders.

The implementation of Gingrich's "Contract on America" will only exacerbate these conditions. Two-thirds of the spending cuts implemented in the Contract will come from programs for low-income families, while half the money saved from these cuts will go to the wealthiest 10% of American households.

Perhaps the sharpest expression of this new class polarization is the continued mass layoffs in "profitable" industries. Though corporate profits were up 13% in 1993, 516,000 jobs were eliminated in 1994—200,000 more than in the recession year of 1990. Clearly, corporate America has discovered that the way to increase profits and "productivity" is to extend layoffs even into non-recessionary periods. If those too discouraged to look for work and part-time workers seeking full-time jobs are counted, the real U.S. unemployment rate turns out to be 15%. The figure is twice that for Black America.

Today's economic situation is characterized not alone by conditions of mass unemployment and near-stagnant economic growth, but also by the persistent notion that we have entered a "post-industrial information age" which renders obsolete the structures of the post-World War II era. The outcome of the Nov. 8 elections has further accentuated the pull of this fetish of high-tech. Each day we hear of how the supposed transformation of the U.S. into a "third wave" information society means everything associated with the old "second wave" industry-based economy—the welfare state, environmental and labor laws, government regulations related to the safety of consumer products, etc.—must now all go out the window.

Gingrich's embrace of Daniel Bell, Peter Drucker and



Workers in an electronics factory in Shanghai, China.

Alvin Toffler's notion that we have entered a "post-industrial information age" is serving as an ideological weapon to complete Reagan's effort to roll back the gains won by workers in this country. The "philosophy" of Gingrich is to embrace the "new world" of high-tech as a guise for returning to the brutal kind of class warfare characteristic of early 19th century capitalism.

But today's fetish of high-tech is by no means restricted to the likes of Gingrich. It has become so pervasive that it now defines much of the thinking of the Left as well. It is seen in the view that our high-tech society has reached the point where economic reality has become "uncoupled" from industrial production and employment. So extensive has this become, the argument goes, that the exchange of abstract forms such as money has replaced productive capital investment as the engine of the world economy.

This fetish of high-tech has been embraced, not just in the West, but also in such "Communist" lands as China. In the mid-1980s China's rulers became greatly interested in Toffler's theory of the "third wave," since it seemed "to offer a vision of transition from a 'first wave' (rural) society to a 'third wave' (information) society without the need of going through all the expensive traumas of 'second wave' (industrial) society."⁶ Deng Xiaoping and others were drawn to the idea that by incorporating cybernetics, computers, and other forms of high-tech from overseas, they could achieve a new "great leap forward" in which China's primarily agricultural society could compete with the main players on the world market.

But how has this illusion that economic reality can be "uncoupled" from industrial production and employment fared in light of the events of the past year?

B. The 'globalized' economy and the crisis in Mexico

One might think the illusion that the economy can be "uncoupled" from productive investment, as if it now revolves around computer-generated stock transfers and monetary transactions, would be punctured by the economic crisis which has overtaken Mexico.

Only a year ago Mexico was applauded as a textbook case of the "new economics," since it had undertaken an extensive privatization of its state-controlled industries, removed obstacles to the influx of foreign investment, and promised an "open border" for the movement of goods and capital between Mexico and the U.S. through the North American Free Trade Agreement. In response, foreign capital flooded into the country. Between 1990 and 1994 Mexico was the world's second largest recipient

6. Bill Brugger, "From 'Revisionism' to 'Alienation,' from 'Great Leaps' to 'Third Wave,'" *China Quarterly* 108, December 1986, pp. 643-51.

of foreign private investment, after China. This allowed Mexico to run up huge budget deficits, which it financed through the capital inflows from abroad.

But most of this foreign investment did not represent investment in actual production. In 1993 for instance, Mexico received \$5 billion in direct foreign capital investment, much of it going to the *maquiladoras* along the U.S.-Mexican border. But in the same year it received \$28 billion in foreign portfolio investment—that is, monetary investments in its stock and bond markets. Though Mexico received a record flow of foreign capital in 1994, two-thirds of it was in the form of portfolio investments of a highly speculative nature. Mexico's growth was thus more a function of speculative monetary transactions than any real productive investment.

This had nothing to do with any "conspiracy" on the part of international "speculators." Capital has increasingly migrated toward speculative transactions because of the low rate of return earned on productive investments, as in manufacturing.

Such speculative capital investments are rather fickle in today's high-tech world, since international investors can pull their money out of a country just by striking a key on their computers. This is exactly what happened to Mexico, when investors fearful of the impact of the revolutionary upsurge of the indigenous people of Chiapas decided to take their money elsewhere. The sudden massive outflow of capital led the Mexican government to devalue its currency and impose a rigid austerity program.

These events help expose the hollowness of the claim that an economy can operate irrespective of real capital investment. Despite the talk of a "third wave" information age, capitalism is still ruled by the law of value and surplus value—and surplus value and profits come not from the exchange of different colored monies, but only from living, sweated labor.

The events in Mexico have also exposed the hollowness of the claim that the move to privatization and the "free market" uncouples the economy from dependence on the state. This is evident from the \$53 billion rescue plan for Mexico that Clinton pushed through Congress earlier this year. Today's "free-market" capitalists demand removal of state control of the economy when it comes to having the "freedom" to lower their workers' wages, but as soon as they get into trouble they embrace the marriage between the market and the state which has helped define the world economy since the 1930s.

This needs to be kept in mind given the prevailing view that our high-tech world has created a globally integrated market in which corporations operate regardless

(Continued on page 7)

The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism

Selected Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya

- Introduction
- Not by Practice Alone: The Movement From Theory
- Origin and Development of State-Capitalist Theory
- State-Capitalist Theory Within Marxist-Humanism
- Selected bibliography

To order, see literature ad on page 12.

(Continued from page 6)

of national borders and state powers. It is true that capital now moves with blinding speed from one part of the world to another. Yet when we subtract the financial operations that are of a purely speculative nature and look strictly at real capital investment, it turns out that the total amount of capital flowing across national borders—a percentage of global production was higher in the period before World War I than it is today.

As one analyst put it, "The notion that there is one global, borderless, stateless market is 'globaloney.' There are companies operating in many countries, but none has slipped the national leash to become a stateless body. The global market is not an anonymous market: it is operated by companies with legal and ownership roles in distinctive national capitalist systems."⁷

C. State-capitalist restructuring in Russia and China

The extent to which today's "free market" economic restructuring remains wedded to the state-capitalist underpinning of the world economy is especially evident in developments in the former Communist countries.

Russia, like the rest of the world, is facing the drive to privatize industry, scale back the size of its work force, and free up larger sectors of its economy to foreign investment. This is driven by the same force that dictates the move to "neo-liberal" economics in Latin America, "modernization" in China, and restructuring in the U.S.—capital's need to overcome the decline in the rate of profit which has plagued state-capitalism especially sharply since the 1974-75 world recession.

Marx showed that the tendency of the rate of profit to decline is endemic to capitalism; it flows from capital's drive to replace living labor—the only creator of surplus value and profits—by ever larger proportions of dead labor, or machinery, at the point of production. From the capitalist viewpoint, however, the decline in the rate of profit is the result of an "unfavorable" distribution of income between the recipients of wages and those of surplus value or profits. When faced with a profound economic crisis in the mid-1970s, capitalism therefore embarked on a global strategy of lowering wages and living conditions in order to obtain the capital needed to reproduce the system on an ever-expanding scale.

The mechanism for achieving this was to throw everything to the whims of the "free" market. The strategy which capital had employed since the 1930s—using the "welfare state" to prop up effective demand, protectionism to protect national industries, and state intervention to soak up excess labor—now went out the window. The economic crisis compelled capital to either increase "efficiency" and lower production costs through "privatization" or face total economic collapse.

Though the Western rulers were the first to embark on this restructuring, it soon took hold in the East as well, especially in China. Russia was much slower to respond, and it fell further behind the rest of the world. By the late 1980s this led to so deep a crisis that its ruling class jettisoned the bankrupt "Communist" ideology in favor of the "free" market. Its embrace of this "new thinking," however, did not mean the Communist rulers were willing to give up their class privileges or state power. Their sudden embrace of the ideology of Reaganism became a way to graft "free market" economics onto the state-capitalist structures which had prevailed in the Russian economy since the period of Stalin.

Russia is now proceeding with plans to "privatize" ever larger sections of the economy. The rush to privatization, however, is running up against the rulers' fear of throwing tens of millions out of work in the unprofitable state-owned industries. As Marx foretold a century ago, the unemployed do not just help maintain capitalism by holding down wage rates; they are also a creative liberatory force which can bring it down.

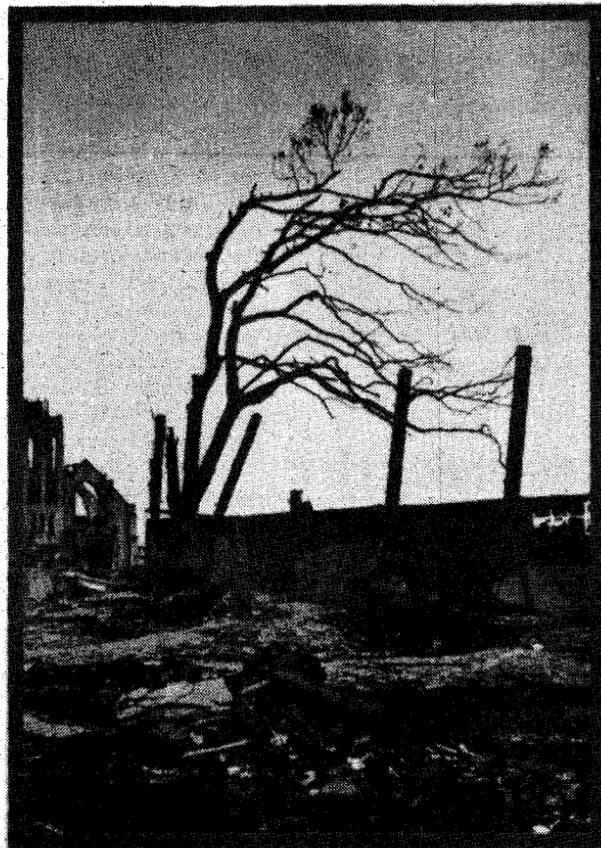
Precisely because the move to the "free market" in Russia has occurred without any class uprooting of the old state-capitalist order, "privatization" there has mainly amounted to "insiders in the firms," or the managers of old, receiving "the lion's share of ownership, without a strong role for outside investors."⁸ Former state-owned industries have been transferred to "private" concerns largely under the control of the same bureaucrats as before. This partnership between the government and business is the source of the corruption that has permeated all sections of Russian society.

Things may appear somewhat different in China, for unlike Russia it has experienced massive economic growth. Yet many of the problems experienced by Russia now confront China. Here too, much of the "privatization" consists of the managers of state-owned enterprises taking over the ownership of "private" corporations through their government connections. Here too, the marriage of the "free market" with state production has led to massive corruption on all levels of society. And here too, there is a huge web of state-owned industries that the regime has not subjected to the whims of the market because it fears that laying off tens of millions of

workers will ignite a new Tiananmen movement that could bring the regime down. On the eve of Deng's expected death, this fear of revolt is so overwhelming that the rulers are arresting scores of dissidents.

In light of this it is remarkable to see "radical" theorists argue that the "chaos" in Russia, as against the economic growth in China, is a result of Russia's failure to follow China's example of linking "market reforms" with centralized state power. They have not learned the most basic lesson, not just of the new reality which has emerged since 1989, but of the era of state-capitalism which emerged from the Great Depression—that private vs. state are not absolute opposites.⁹

This was demonstrated in Raya Dunayevskaya's theory of state-capitalism, which she developed from 1941



The wasteland left after the U.S. dropped the first A-bomb on Hiroshima.

onward.¹⁰ In light of the emergence of totalitarian Communism in the Stalin period, she worked out a detailed analysis of the Russian economy with eyes of Marx's Capital. She showed that though Russia had "abolished" private property and the market, it operated according to the law of value and surplus value which Marx held was specific to capitalism. From the beginning, her view of Russia as a state-capitalist society was never limited to a "Russian Question." She viewed state-capitalism as a new world stage of capitalism that included the New Deal in the U.S., the co-prosperity sphere in Japan, and fascism in Nazi Germany.

This theory of state-capitalism showed that the contrast of private vs. state and of market vs. plan, which had disoriented radicals for decades, had to be totally broken with if one were to avoid falling into the mind-forged manacles of a new form of class exploitation. That is even more true today, now that the rulers are trying to return to the "pure" private capitalism of the past without, however, giving up their reliance on the statist structures of world reality.

D. The logic of capitalist accumulation vs. the dialectics of philosophy

There is little indication that the pundits have learned that their "third wave" information society is not as independent of "second wave" industrial capitalism as they claim. In fact, the fetish of high-tech now defines the thinking of radical theorists and activists. The prevailing view, whether on the part of postmodernists, critical theorists, or independent Marxists, is that the technological transformation of society has reached the point where the subjectivity of the human being has become totally subsumed by the object, i.e., the machine.

As a result, the effort to relate the idea of freedom to subjects of revolution—whether they be workers, women, Blacks or youth—has been completely abandoned by an array of radical thinkers and activists.¹¹ Whether technology is endorsed as the "subjective factor" that will ultimately cause the contradictions of capitalism to "implode," or whether the contradiction is attacked through the terrorism of a crazed anarchist, the human dimension totally drops from sight.

What explains the persistence of this fetish of high-tech? In large part it flows from the phenomenal form of today's capitalist restructuring, which centers on an effort to reduce the amount of living labor in the labor

CAN THE IDEA OF FREEDOM RE-MOBILIZE TODAY'S MASS MOVEMENTS?

process by increasing the relative proportion of computerization, automation, and other forms of "dead labor." While this has been most evident in such manufacturing sectors as steel, and mining, the effort to streamline the work process through ever greater reliance on dead labor is now reaching into the service sector as well, which employs 80% of the U.S. work force. The specific phenomenal form of today's capitalist restructuring creates the appearance that capitalism has "uncoupled" itself from its former dependence on the living laborer.

Though some claim this represents a totally new phenomenon, it actually represents the further development of what characterized the post-World War II period—automation. It also represents the logical development of what Marx considered an inevitable characteristic of capitalist production—the concentration and centralization of capital. Marx's theory of the accumulation of capital showed that capital's effort to pump ever more unpaid hours of work from the laborer forces it to reduce the amount of living labor relative to machines at the point of production. The accumulation of capital leads to ever greater speedup and automation, on the one hand, and the creation of a permanent army of the unemployed, on the other.

Yet this presents capitalism with an inner contradiction: while it is driven to reduce the relative proportion of living to dead labor in the labor process, this threatens to eliminate the only source of value and surplus value—the living laborer. Marx showed that capitalism cannot overcome this absolute contradiction. Despite capitalism's relentless drive to eliminate labor in favor of capital, it remains dependent on sweated labor for its reproduction. And by throwing ever larger numbers of workers out of the production process, capitalism finds itself confronted by a new subjective, human force which rises up from within to uproot it—the unemployed.

With this conception in hand, Marx developed a theory of capitalist accumulation which was inseparable from a concept of "revolution in permanence."

By not rooting themselves in Marx's theory of the accumulation of capital, today's critics fail to grasp that: 1) high-tech production does not free capitalism from dependence on sweated labor—a dependence vividly illustrated, in the U.S., by the growth of low-wage service jobs and the reindustrialization of parts of the South, in which Black women employed at poverty wages have launched new freedom struggles; and 2) the elimination of living labor by dead labor at the point of production is producing a new source of subjective, human opposition in the permanent army of the unemployed. Very few have even tried to theorize how the emergence of such new revolts as the Los Angeles rebellion of 1992, in which Blacks, Latinos and some white youth converged against the system, can become a basis to articulate and elicit "new powers and passions" for liberation.

In a word, by separating their analysis of the new stage of capitalist restructuring from the whole of Marx's theory of the accumulation of capital, radicals are unable to discern the human forces of opposition which reside within today's objective reality.

This situation not only discloses the importance of bringing Marx's methodology to bear on the analysis of present day reality. It discloses the importance of the self-determination of the Idea, the whole body of Marx's Humanism, for discerning the "positive in the negative"—the human forces which can uproot capitalism.

The crisis is so deep, the social transformations so rapid, and the disorientation in thought so profound, that it takes the whole body of ideas of Marx and Marxist-Humanism to discern today's forces of liberation as ongoing. The jamming together of philosophy and reality is imperative, because without articulating and eliciting

(Continued on page 8)

11. The most current examples are Andrew Feenberg's *Critical Theory of Technology* and Stanley Aronowitz and William di Fazio's *The Jobless Future: Sci-Tech and the Dogma of Work*, which argues that "intellect no longer appears as a derivation of concrete labor; the abstract symbolic system is now imposed on concrete labor, as if from the outside" (p. 38).

Incisive analyses of international crises and freedom movements as well as penetrating views from lands across the globe appear every month in

News & Letters.

Practice solidarity!

Subscribe!

Only \$2.50 per year

See literature ad on page 12.

7. Will Hutton, "Nova Scotia's load of globaloney," *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, June 18, 1995. See also "The Localization of the World Economy" by Paul Krugman, *New Political Quarterly*, Winter 1995. The total volume of world trade as a percentage of global GNP, as contrasted to actual capital investments, is higher today than it was in 1913.

8. Michael Bleaney, "Economic Liberalization in East Europe: Problems and Prospects," *The World Economy* 17 (4), July 1994.

9. One of the more glaring examples is Paul Bowles and Xiaoyuan Dong, "Current Successes and Future Challenges in China's Economic Reforms," *New Left Review* 208, Nov./Dec. 1994, pp. 49-77.

10. Dunayevskaya's first essay on Russia as a state-capitalist society (entitled "The USSR Is a Capitalist Society") was written in Feb. 1941 before her association with C.L.R. James in what became known as the "Johnson-Forest Tendency." It has only recently been found, and is available from News & Letters.

CAN THE IDEA OF FREEDOM RE-MOBILIZE TODAY'S MASS MOVEMENTS?

(Continued on page 7)

such new forces of opposition as Reason, it becomes impossible to avoid accommodating oneself to the structure of today's reified world.

This is precisely what the founder of Marxist-Humanism warned us of over a decade ago. In "Not by Practice

III. Philosophic-organizational tasks for 1995-1996

THE URGENCY of jamming together philosophy and reality in order to discern the "new passions and new forces" that can pose an alternative to today's retrogression explains the importance of one of our central perspectives for this year—the creation of a new Marxist-Humanist Statement on the Black Dimension.

There are an array of new realities facing Black America today which are in need of a comprehensive historical-dialectical analysis. Foremost among these are the transformations resulting from the capitalist economic restructuring which has been a critical component of the U.S. landscape since the 1974-75 global recession.

The seismic shifts in American capital accumulation over the past two decades have weakened or dissolved many of the underlying social structures which had hitherto existed in the Black community. In the North, we have witnessed the deindustrialization of the inner cities, leading to the conditions of permanent Black unemployment, endemic poverty, and lack of educational facilities which helped set the context for the Los Angeles rebellion of 1992. In the South, we have witnessed capital's effort to take advantage of low-wage Black labor by embarking on a strategy of reindustrialization, which has led to new labor and civil rights struggles led by Black women, especially in the Mississippi Delta.

Yet these developments are being hidden under a layer of ideological pollution. This is seen in the efforts to portray the crisis in Black America as flowing from the rise of the so-called "underclass," the predominance of Black female-headed households, or an alleged "culture of poverty." The tendency to separate the phenomenal expressions of the crisis in Black America from the underlying law of motion of the present stage of capitalist restructuring does more than conceal the true dynamic of today's objective crises. It also demobilizes the forces of opposition by reinforcing the bourgeois ideological notion that today's conditions of poverty, unemployment, and racial discrimination cannot be uprooted through revolutionary transformation.

This is what we will overturn with our Marxist-Humanist Statement on the Black Dimension. Developing this statement calls for both the fullest comprehension of the empirical reality facing Black America and the deepest internalization of how the writings of Marx and Marxist-Humanism illuminate the reality facing the Black Dimension today.

The determinant for this work is *American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard*, which represents the concretization of Marxist-Humanism for the American scene. Our aim is not to write an update of *American Civilization on Trial*, but rather to practice the perspective of bringing the dialectical method and the self-determination of the Idea to bear on the realities of our changed world. At a moment when so many have forsaken the effort to relate the Idea of freedom to subjects of revolt, we aim to maintain the historic link with Marx's notion of the inseparability of theory and practice by exploring anew how the Marxist-Humanist philosophy of revolution speaks to the Black Dimension.

In this sense, our collective work on this statement is

NEW FROM UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS PRESS!

Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism

A CRITICAL STUDY

"The first full-length treatment of Lenin's studies of Hegel presents Lenin as a major figure in Hegelian Marxism, providing a more nuanced portrait of his work than that of either official Marxist-Leninist or most Western accounts."

KEVIN ANDERSON

Special offer: \$14.50, postage included (regularly \$15.95 plus \$1.80 postage). Offer ends October 1. Send to News & Letters, 59 E. Van Buren St., #707, Chicago, IL 60605

Alone: The Movement from Theory," Raya Dunayevskaya wrote:

These political principles of revolution must under no circumstances be separated from the philosophical principles. That is the whole significance of our expression of the whole body of Marxist-Humanist philosophy contained in the "trilogy of revolution"—Marxism and Freedom; Philosophy and Revolution; and Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution.... Marx's theory of the philosophy of revolution in permanence [is] not an abstraction but [is] the actual concrete needed in order to be armed against being pulled into the world market of the whirlpool of capitalism, state as well as private...

Indeed, not only ground, but "Absolute." Philosophy of "revolution in permanence," cannot possibly be only

a central part of our response to the new stage of reaction ushered in with the Nov. 8 Congressional elections and recent Supreme Court rulings. This does not mean, however, that we can afford to limit ourselves to mere critiques of the Right.

The reason for this can be seen in the Supreme Court's recent undermining of a desegregation plan by the Kansas City school system. The deciding vote in the case was cast by Clarence Thomas, who used it as an occasion to lambast the historic *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision of 1954. As David Garrow noted in *The New York Times* of July 2, Thomas developed much of his position that "mere de facto segregation does not constitute a continuing harm" from the arguments put forward by such leftists as Harold Cruse and Alex M. Johnson, Jr. While he opposes state-imposed segregation, Cruse has made much of the argument that "separateness has the potential of achieving equality in its own right."¹³

The fact that some of the ideas developed by leftists are now being used by the Right to push this country backward says volumes about how much the theoretic limitations of the Left impact today's reality. Far from being shut out of this historic period, the limitations of post-Marx Marxist, as well as non-Marxist, alternatives to Marx's Marxism, continue to impact the objective situation, even if the "agency" that is implementing such ideas is now the Right.

In light of this situation, it is absurd to think that relying on the mere critique or expose of the Right, or first negation, will suffice. To hew a path out of today's retrogression as much requires overcoming the theoretic limitations that have predominated in the Left. The objective necessity of this historic period is to begin from the position of the "negation of the negation"—that is, not alone the negation of bourgeois politics and ideology but also that of the false alternatives defined by the category "post-Marx Marxism as pejorative."

The urgent need to make a new beginning from the dialectic of second negativity likewise explains the second major new task which we are undertaking this year—the collection of a new book containing some of Raya Dunayevskaya's major writings on dialectics.

In her development of Marxist-Humanism Dunayevskaya developed a unique view of the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic, in which the dimension of second negativity was paramount. This can be seen from her repeated emphasis upon and return to Hegel's Absoluteness—the realm in which the concept of second negativity is most fully developed. Whereas traditional Marxists tended to dismiss Hegel's Absoluteness, Dunayevskaya viewed them as the philosophic ground for projecting the vision of a totally new society of new human relations.

The fullest expression of her concretization of the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic of second negativity is found in Marxist-Humanism's "trilogy of revolution." This is and will remain the foremost philosophic expression of Marxist-Humanism. There are, however, a vast array of other writings on Hegel's dialectic by Dunayevskaya—in the form of essays, lectures, draft chapters of books, and correspondence—which are not now widely available. As part of ensuring that this generation has access to the philosophic subjectivity for articulating a new revolutionary beginning, we will issue a compilation of some of these writings this year.

There is a vast collection of documents in the Archives of Marxist-Humanism which we will be able to draw on

13. See David J. Garrow, "On Race, It's Thomas v. an Old Ideal," *The New York Times*, July 2, 1995. Johnson has argued that *Brown vs. Board of Education* was a "mistake," as proven by the failure of integration in American society since then.

Two important discussion bulletins on works in progress

The Marxist-Humanism Statement on the Black Dimension

Selected Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya on Dialectics

Each for \$2 plus \$1 postage

Order: NEWS & LETTERS, 59 E. VAN BUREN, Room 707, CHICAGO IL 60605

ground, or even content, substance; it is Subject, and that both objectively and subjectively. The unchained dialectic—both as dialectics of liberation and dialectics of thought, dialectics of self-development—that self-development is both Individual and Universal. The achievement of that can only come with sharp awareness of the absolute contradictions in the nuclear world state-capitalist reality; to project Marx's philosophy of revolution concretely, its Absoluteness as concrete Universals, not abstractions, becomes imperative. This lays ground for daily practical work and not just books or essay writing. That is our organizational task.¹²

12. Raya Dunayevskaya, "Not by Practice Alone: The Movement from Theory," *The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism* (Chicago: News and Letters, 1991), pp. 1-14.

for this book. They include the 1949-50 three-way philosophic correspondence between Dunayevskaya, C.L.R. James and Grace Lee, in which the importance of Hegel's Absoluteness for the era of state-capitalism was first raised. The documents which can be considered for this collection likewise include: summaries of Hegel's major works in the early 1960s, the same period in which Dunayevskaya undertook an important dialogue on the dialectic with Marxists such as Herbert Marcuse; writings on the "dialectic proper" in the period following the publication of *Philosophy and Revolution* in 1973; when she projected the concept of "Absolute Negativity as New Beginning" for the forces of liberation of our age; her work of the 1980s, when she embarked on a new, but unfinished, work on "Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy: The 'Party' and Forms of Organization Born out of Spontaneity."

Since the work of choosing and compiling these writings will entail the broadest organizational input and collectivity, we view it as a central part of our effort to come to grips with the philosophic subjectivity which can point the way to the transformation of reality.

In addition to these two central tasks, which will define the focus of our upcoming national gathering, we face a number of other pressing tasks in 1995-96.

● Given the importance of our work in the South, we will aim for an active organizational presence there through the establishment of a new local in Memphis.

● At the same time, our international relations have grown extensively over the past year, as seen in new translations of our work being undertaken by Japanese and Chinese scholars and activists, and in a forthcoming German edition of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, as well as a Slovakian edition of *Philosophy and Revolution*. At the same time, the publication of *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution* in Mexico this year underlines the importance of our continuing dialogue with revolutionaries from that land. In light of these and other new developments, we will need to work out closer in-person contact with our friends in these different lands.

● Throughout the past year we have been tested concerning the politicalization of philosophy in *News & Letters* newspaper, which has always been a measure of whether we are developing a philosophic nucleus of Marxist-Humanist philosopher-activists. The development of our coverage of both political and theoretic topics, as well as the distribution of *News & Letters* to new audiences, will need to be extended this year.

● For Marxist-Humanists, Archives is never a mere question of recollection of the past, but rather that which can provide an anticipation of the future when the dialectic of a body of ideas is truly internalized. For this reason we will donate a new supplementary volume to *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism, a Half-Century of its World Development*, consisting of the period 1983-85, as well as a tape collection of Dunayevskaya's major speeches.

● Finally, we cannot concretize any of our tasks and perspectives without assuming financial responsibility for the continuance of *News & Letters*. Towards this end, we propose a Sustaining Fund of a minimum of \$40,000 to ensure our further work of the year to come.

July 17, 1995

—The Resident Editorial Board

How to contact

NEWS & LETTERS COMMITTEES

CHICAGO	NEW YORK
59 E. Van Buren, Room 707 Chicago, IL 60605 Phone 312 663 0839 Fax 312 663 9069	P.O. Box 196 Grand Central Station New York, NY 10163 212 663 3631
MEETINGS Call for meeting information	MEETINGS Sundays, 6:30 p.m. Washington Square Church 133 W. 4th St. (Parish House)
OAKLAND	LOS ANGELES
P.O. Box 3345 Oakland, CA 94609 510 658 1448	P.O. Box 29194 Los Angeles, CA 90029 213 960 5607
MEETINGS Sundays, 5:30 p.m. 2015 Center St. (at Milvia)	MEETINGS Sundays, 5:30 p.m. Echo Park United Methodist Church 1226 N. Alvarado (North of Sunset, side door)
DETROIT	FLINT, MI
P.O. Box 27205 Detroit MI 48227	P.O. Box 3384, Flint, MI 48502
MEETINGS Thursdays, 7 p.m. Central Methodist Church Woodward and Adams	INTERNATIONAL MARXIST-HUMANISTS ENGLAND BCM Box 3514, London, England WC1N 3XX

BOSNIA REMAINS THE TEST OF WORLD POLITICS

Though I long ago gave up any illusion that the Western powers would lift a finger to aid Bosnia, I must confess to being startled at how open they have been about letting the Serbs get away with murder. They allowed the Serbs to overrun the very areas they designated as "safe havens"—Srebrenica and Zepa—and then meekly said they'd bomb the Serbs if they attacked Gorazde. So the Serbs have just decided to focus their attack on Bihac instead, to which the West says nothing.

Solidarity activist
Michigan

People forget that it took decades of ideological indoctrination to bring Germans to the point of pushing Jews into gas chambers. Likewise, the present genocide in Bosnia came out of a conscious, premeditated, and decade-long effort on the part of the Serbian government to convince its populace that the "Muslim" Bosnians were some alien entity that needed to be dismembered. Some of the most prominent intellectuals in Serbia participated in this.

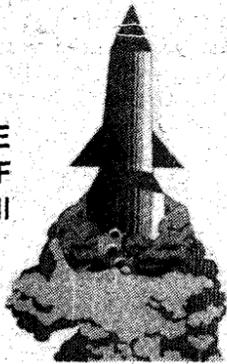
What worries me about the U.S. today is that I see some of the same logic at work—whether it be The Bell Curve's argument that Blacks are genetically inferior or the notion that a "culture of poverty" explains the economic impoverishment of Blacks and Latinos. The road to genocide is always paved with certain ideas.

F.L.
New York

I still say the act which drove the nail into the coffin of Bosnia was the Nov. 8 congressional elections. The green light that gave to racial chauvinism in the U.S. has made it all the easier for Democrats and Republicans alike to turn their backs on Bosnia—despite the recent vote of the Senate to lift the arms embargo. They're only interested in covering over a little of the blood on their hands.

P.W.
Chicago

50 YEARS SINCE THE END OF WORLD WAR II



Europe has been busy celebrating the 50th anniversary of the victory over Hitler. People are being told the danger for anything like that is now absent. It is made to seem that only Europe and the U.S. have the right to claim victory over Nazism and fascism. Where were the non-Europeans and non-Americans during World War II? Those who were forced to take up arms and died in the name of Europe? There is a note of madness here. The rising racism is terrifying. Something must be done.

African-in-exile
Europe

I was radicalized in the army in World War II and hoped a new world would be possible when I got out. Then came the disastrous McCarthy period, the Smith Act trials, all under a Democratic administration. Agents compiled dossiers, the FBI was paranoid. It was like Sartre's play "No Exit." I don't see how Newt Gingrich is worse than McCarthy. The difference seems to be the mean-spiritedness today toward the poor, the idea that the poor did it to themselves.

Veteran fighter
New York

Dunayevskaya's 1970 article on "Totalitarianism-U.S. Style" (see N&L, May 1995) poses the continuity/discontinuity of today and yesterday. We can't directly apply the analysis. Rather, the article teaches us how to think about today. Two particularly important points she made that illuminate 1995: the attempt to outlaw a state of mind and that fascism could take new forms here.

Victor Hart
New York

Readers' Views

DEMAND THE FREEDOM OF MUMIA ABU-JAMAL!

When I first heard and read commentaries by Mumia Abu-Jamal, I felt inspired to fight for my own freedom and freedom for my grandchildren. Mumia has been an activist since the age of 14, and he has always shown the courage and strength to speak out against this unjust system in America. Even the fact that he is facing execution has not stopped him. He has pulled together people of all races in the fight for his case. At a demonstration here in L.A., there were African-Americans, Asians, Latinos, Caucasians—and that is what he stands for and that is the spirit the government is trying to break.

If we allow the government to execute him—it could be ourselves next. The anti-terrorism act passed after the Oklahoma City bombing takes our freedoms away. The government can label any group they want as "terrorist," and you can be imprisoned for ten years just for being a supporter of that group. For myself, I now feel that the spirit and strength we can take from Mumia is to continue to support all those who stand for truth and justice. In supporting Mumia, we are supporting our own future.

African-American journalist
Los Angeles

Mumia speaks directly to youth, confronting the misconception that we are a "Lost Generation." He ends a piece on that very subject by proclaiming that we are not lost, we are all potential revolutionaries. In most instances I would resent an adult trying to speak for young people, but Mumia contributes to the de-

bate without ever devaluing my experiences as a youth or saying he knows better than me. His respect for young people shows in his writing.

Lynn
Bay Area



In the writings of Mumia Abu-Jamal, he shows the truth of what Malcolm X had said—that anything south of the Canadian border is "down South"—in showing the total racism within Philadelphia and how in the 1980s Rizzo ran on a "white power" ticket in the elections there. The Philadelphia police show that same type of racist mentality. I agree with Mumia on his critique of Russia and how he came to also have a critique of Maoism, but where I disagree is his view that the Communism of those states is "Marxism." Marxism has been turned into just an issue of economics, but the Humanism is at its center. The "economics" of capitalism means taking blood from human beings and shows the total need for a new, Humanist society.

Gene Ford
Los Angeles

WHAT RELATION OF PHILOSOPHY/ORGANIZATION?

Your articles on different parts of the world updated us on the latest happenings as far as political issues are concerned. Your analysis on philosophical views is an important tool to awaken consciousness of the present situation in countries the world over. We look forward to every issue.

GABRIELA
National Alliance of Women's
Organizations
Philippines

In order to increase N&L's readership and influence I believe several things should be done. First, the emphasis on theory should be cut to the bone. I say this knowing very well that unless theory is understood we face a repeat of the Soviet Union, China or a police state. It's been my experience that new potential members, most of whom were like recipients of a lifetime of brain washing, feel inundated with Raya Dunayevskaya's and others' theoretical pieces that are, at this time for them, way over their heads.

The second step would be to involve people in day to day actions. At that point the study of theory becomes more acceptable.

Gerald S.
Los Angeles

I like most of your letters from workers and I think highly of providing a forum for workers who have so little voice, and upon whose exploitation capitalism thrives. In counterpoint I find your philosophic and analytic articles to be academic and unnecessarily hard to follow. Is yours really an academic publication, or does the juxtaposition of the workers' voices and those of the "intellectuals" reflect a condescending vanguardism?

D.B.
Kansas

When I look at what has taken place since November 1994 it makes me feel that time has already run out. But that is a retrogressive feeling and I cannot give in to it. Life to me is a struggle to stay alive and reproduce life. Marxist-Humanism is not an abstraction. It expresses the methodology to analyze seri-

ous crises and action to uproot the system that created them.

Activist
California

American history is full of manifestations of the spontaneous form of organization, from the Kansas Committees formed to fight the extension of slavery into the plains states, to rank-and-file workers' committees appearing to fight not only their employers, but also bureaucratism and racism in their unions, from the self-activity of the Montgomery Bus Boycott movement to the work of Woman Power Unlimited. What Marxist-Humanists need to discuss and consider is how their activities can bring out a current of unifying dialectical philosophy in today's freedom movements. With the quickening pace of youth struggles against the Contract With America, the stirrings of rank-and-file workers, and the appearance of mass mobilizations against legislative attacks on immigrant labor, this task is now more important than ever.

Kevin O.
Bloomington, Ind.

N&L is a good paper: unlike so many of the British Left newspapers, it is not afraid to link theory with practice and vice versa and is adequate to the challenge of our times.

James Young
Scotland

HELP IRANIAN REFUGEES

Hundreds of Iranian refugees in Turkey are being deported by the Turkish government with the full knowledge and cooperation of the UNHCR. Some of these refugees have been deported even after being accorded refugee status by the UNHCR. Upon return to Iran they face the reality of jail and execution for their opposition to the government.

The Iranian Refugee Alliance has been providing material and legal support for the refugees who are fighting deportation as well as the hundreds of other refugees who are living in subhuman conditions. To contact the IRA and send them contributions please write to IRA, Cooper Station, P.O. Box 316, NY, NY 10276-0316 Tel: 212-260-7460.

ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The Supreme Court decisions striking down affirmative action are galling, especially that aspect of their reasoning which asserts that we have achieved a race-blind society. Toni Morrison wrote something that hits on this reasoning, especially as it relates to more liberal leaders and even the Left:

"[T]he habit of ignoring race is understood to be a graceful, even generous, liberal gesture." But "excising the political from the life of the mind is a sacrifice that has proven costly ... A criticism that needs to insist that literature is not only 'universal' but also 'race-free' risks lobotomizing that literature, and diminishes both the art and the artist ... All of us ... are bereft when criticism remains too polite or too fearful to notice a disrupting darkness before its eyes."

Whether out of politeness or fear, the conservative, liberal and radical alike ignore at their peril the "disrupting darkness" standing in the way of racist, capitalist culture.

Jim Mills
Illinois

I don't know if the Supreme Court decision on affirmative action is a turn backwards or if there's nobody there to carry the struggle forward. Everyone has drifted away from their morals or principles, saying we just want to get along, no matter how bad it is. This has especially hurt the NAACP, which used to be so strong. They're so busy trying to get along with whatever politician gives them money at their fundraiser. Their priority used to be helping people. Until people get back to their principles, they can't help people of the U.S.

Black woman worker
Fayette County, Tenn.

The fact that Clarence Thomas supports the idea of doing away with affirmative action is because of the ones that are supporting him. They've gotten him to turn his head, to do what he has to do. You never get done paying. There's always a price. Whatever decision he makes is never based on his heart, but on how he's going to get rewarded. To me Clarence Thomas has always operated like a computer. Whatever they punch into him, that's what comes out.

Observer
Memphis



NEO-FASCISM IN THE U.S.A.

I don't agree with your assessment of the militia groups. Our point of address should be not to condemn individuals for feeling disempowered or being alienated, but to say "here's what the Left should be doing to reach them."

Mitch Cohen
Brooklyn, N.Y.

I believe that the reasons for the growth of the militias will become clearer if we pursue further their parallels to the Freikorps. The Freikorps were ex-soldiers who had fought for Germany in World War I. These ex-soldiers felt that they had won the war on the battlefield, but had been "stabbed in the back" by Germany's civilian government. Likewise, embittered Vietnam veterans consider Vietnam the first war the U.S. ever "lost."

Now that the "Cold War" is finally over, these men are understandably reluctant to return to a civilian world that offers fewer job opportunities today than ever before. That is why the end of the "Cold War" coincides with an upsurge in militia membership. In the militias, these ex-soldiers re-create the reassuring certainties of military routine in an uncertain civilian economy.

Ivan Bachur
Warren, Mich.

Black/Red View

by John Alan

Two political events in July indicate that affirmative action is going to be a major, and probably a nasty, contentious issue during the 1996 presidential campaign. The first was the speech President Clinton gave at the National Archives supporting affirmative action before an invited group of Black leaders and prominent, aging civil rights activists. And the second was the meeting on the San Francisco campus of the University of California (UC) when the Board of Regents voted to end 30 years of affirmative action, a decision which was orchestrated by Governor Pete Wilson and Ward Connerly, Wilson's Black mouthpiece on the Board of Regents.

A closer look at these events brings to mind the perceptible opinion of James Baldwin regarding the issue of race in the U.S.: It "compromises, when it does not corrupt, all American efforts to build a better world."

CLINTON'S TEFLON EMBRACE

Clinton's speech embracing affirmative action, in spite of previous doubts that he would do so, has been hailed as a great, historic speech by many liberals. Christopher Matthews of the *San Francisco Examiner* wrote that Clinton "sees the American Revolution not as a one-time only event in 1776, but as an ongoing struggle to extend the country's freedoms beyond those white men of property who constituted the colonial electors."

If Matthews is saying that Clinton's speech was an endorsement of the American revolution in permanence, as the way to overcome the contradictions of race, sex and class in U.S. society, then he is seeing in that speech an idea that is not there.

On the contrary, the President's speech represented a bending toward right-wing critics of affirmative action. He went out of his way to acknowledge that white males had an honest concern, and that he would order all Federal agencies to eliminate any program which imposed a quota and gave preference to the "unqualified instead of to those who deserve it."

Obviously, Clinton's political motivation is to break the "angry white male" away from its conservative leadership. But, politically, what is he going to offer in trade to get the vote of those who blame African Americans for their insecurity? This is why many African Americans are doubtful about their future political relationship with the President.

The political storm in San Francisco, created by the ending of affirmative action on the University of California's nine campuses, caused a few protesters to reflect on the limits of affirmative action; how it is far removed from the dire economic conditions and resulting social dislocations in the lives of African Americans. Jesse Jackson, a possible presidential candidate, articulated his own concerns about the limits of affirmative action, telling reporters that his "concern is beyond defending

The dismantling of affirmative action

affirmative action. We've got to now look at urban policy, which has been basically put on the back burner."

Later Jackson said: "Affirmative action only created the Black middle class." Historically, this is not really true, but affirmative action did help to create the present generation of Black middle class political leaders, academics, professionals and business people. At the same time, it has also created a type of Black personality with antipathetic attitudes regarding Black masses, like Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas and Ward Connerly, the Black millionaire contractor and UC Regent who organized the opposition to affirmative action.

BLACK CONSERVATIVE RESPONSE

However, the shortcomings and limits of affirmative action should not prevent one from defending it against the reactionaries who would abolish it on their implied

grounds of Black inferiority.

A great deal of implicit and explicit racism plus ideological inversions has been used against affirmative action. At the UC Regents meeting, a Black critic of affirmative action said that he rejects it because it assumes that Blacks are intellectually inferior to whites.

Other opponents of affirmative action have called it "reverse discrimination." While not based on reality, these charges nevertheless contain a powerful, historical American concept that African Americans are an inferior people. Senator Helms of North Carolina, when he was running for the Senate in 1990, carried the message of Black inferiority to white voters this way: "You need that job, you were the best qualified, but it had to go to a minority because of racial quotas."

A day-long debate and the final decision of the University of California Board of Regents to end 30 years of affirmative action as a guideline in admissions has been called an historic event by conservatives. Its true status, however, is found in its relationship to the general drive of conservatism to use racism and sexism as forces to reconstruct social relations in this country. The reach of this reconstruction is total; it goes from the Supreme Court to so-called welfare reforms. It has even had an impact upon the minds of some Black leaders.

Bob Herbert wrote: "The clearest message to emerge...[from the] NAACP convention in Minneapolis was that African Americans will have to look elsewhere for the sophisticated leadership that is desperately needed to guide a besieged Black population through increasingly harrowing times." (*New York Times*, 7/14/95)

This problem of leadership is not simply one of guiding the Black population, but how do we begin to work on the crucial problem of creating a philosophy of Black liberation in conjunction with the Black masses. This is where we will find the needed new leadership.

Black World

(Continued from page 1)

which the state has actually condemned Abu-Jamal, to be condemned by the right-wing forces in the U.S. that are clamoring for Black blood.

According to the facts surrounding the gross miscarriage of justice that culminated in Abu-Jamal being sentenced to death 13 years ago, and the political environment in 1995 that impelled newly-elected Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge to sign his death warrant on June 1, Abu-Jamal is facing death for his ideas. This, rather than his alleged killing of a rookie cop that he came across one night in Philadelphia's Center City in 1981 carrying out the kind of brutal street justice on his brother Philly's notorious police department is known for, is why Abu-Jamal sits on death row.

If there was a conspiracy to railroad Abu-Jamal, as the facts of his 1982 case demonstrate, it was because the Philadelphia police department and J. Edgar Hoover's FBI were out to suppress what Abu-Jamal represented as a Black revolutionary voice. That is clear from the 600 page file the FBI compiled on him from the age of 14 when he formed the Philadelphia branch of the Black Panther Party in 1969.

If there is a political motivation to finally still that voice in 1995, as Gov. Ridge's rush to sign the death warrant to ameliorate the right-wing, law and order forces that got him elected on Nov. 8 attests to, it too is because of the revolutionary defiance that Abu-Jamal represents. The defiance of an idea of freedom that is neither coopted nor intimidated by Newt Gingrich's and Bob Dole's virtual America is what quickened the timing of Ridge's sanctioning of state-sponsored murder.

(That two "liberal," journalistic institutions—National Public Radio (NPR) and the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ)—would so easily cave in to right-wing pressure to silence the voice of Abu-Jamal reveals to what extent revolutionary ideas are at the root of the state's attempt to intimidate the Black community, after the Los Angeles rebellion, and demoralize the Left by taking out Abu-Jamal.)

Of course, the "fear and alienation" of the social strata that the state can't ameliorate by the "ethnic cleansing" of the "dangerous classes," it seeks by the same act of barbarism to intimidate. It seems to me that we do appear intimidated when we make Abu-Jamal, the man, and not the revolutionary ideas he represents and which need discussion, our cause.

Mumia Abu-Jamal is condemned to die because he is an enemy of the state, especially an enemy of the subjugated state to which American capitalism condemns the mass of Black and working class people in this country. More importantly, he has voiced revolutionary ideas that are inimical to the continuation of that state of affairs.

In the end, the American people are made to assume the same position as the Chicago jury who sat in judgment of the Haymarket martyrs in the 1870s. Then, as now, the state admonishes America to "convict these men, make examples of them, hang them and you save our institutions, our society." Which is why America cannot escape that it, not Mumia Abu-Jamal, is on trial.

* See Carolyn Ashbaugh, *Lucy Parsons: American Revolutionary* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr, 1976), p. 96. For a Marxist Humanist history of Haymarket and other events of that most revolutionary period in U.S. history, and how it intersected with Marx's development of his philosophy of revolution, see Terry Moon and Ron Brokmeyer, *Then and Now: On the 100th Anniversary of the First General Strike in the U.S.* (Detroit: News & Letters, 1977).

Students fight UC rollback

Berkeley, Cal.—Over 200 students from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds attended a spirited rally in Sproul Plaza at noon on July 24 to support affirmative action. The rally followed the decision by the University of California (UC) Regents, backed by Governor Pete Wilson, to eliminate affirmative action in admissions, employment, and contracts by January 1997. Many students intend to build a movement to stop it before then.

Many are concerned that the rollbacks will reduce the current enrollment of Blacks at UC Berkeley from the already meager 207 students to between 44 and 74 students. One Black woman student from South Central L.A. spoke very eloquently during the rally: "This isn't just about someone else. It's about me and my right to be here. Affirmative action helped me to come here, but it isn't keeping me here, my grades and my hard work are. Affirmative action may not be all people think it should be, but the idea is there and needs to be built upon, not destroyed!"

She and other students who spoke related this attack on affirmative action to other racist and sexist attacks, like blaming welfare women for the problems of society, police brutality against Blacks, Latinos and women, and Proposition 187. One student said, "I used to think 187 was just about Latinos, but it's about all of us. These attacks are just the beginning."

One speaker who really revved up the crowd with his speech was a Rev. Brown. Students cheered as he shouted, "We will not tolerate racism, sexism, classism, homophobia and all the other divide and conquer tactics of the rulers!" After the rally, participants marched through the streets of Berkeley chanting, "Down with [Gov.] Wilson," "Racism has got to go," and "Affirmative action is our right!" —Julia Jones

Environmental justice wake-up call

Editor's note: Below we present an interview with Cheryl Johnson, Assistant Executive Director of People for Community Recovery (PCR), an environmental justice organization in the Altgeld Gardens housing project on Chicago's Southeast Side.

In 1979 my mother, Hazel Johnson, and a group of other parents at Altgeld Gardens started organizing to deal with maintenance problems. Then she heard on TV that the Southeast Side had the highest incidence of cancer in the city. She wanted to know why, since my father had just passed from lung cancer, so she started researching. That's when the whole organization switched to dealing with environmental issues. PCR was chartered in 1982.

We've got the worst concentration of air pollution in the country. The Southeast Side of Chicago has over 50 landfills and 96 polluting entities that should qualify for Superfund. We call ourselves the toxic doughnut. In every direction there's some kind of polluting industry, and the community lies in the center.

In our neighborhood, cancer and respiratory problems are considered the norm. Three or four youths died of asthma attacks in the past few years. We've had a lot of birth defects. A baby died at three, with six different kinds of cancer, and there was a baby born with its brains protruding from its head. Our community health survey in 1993 confirmed the high rate of respiratory and reproductive problems; 23.5% of the babies had been hospitalized for two weeks or more.

Altgeld Gardens was supposed to be temporary. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) started building it in 1944—on landfills. It was a mixed race community. When men, particularly Black men, came back from World War II, they had no houses to live in, so HUD decided to make it a permanent residence. In the 1950s the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) was created. From then Altgeld's racial composition started to change. By 1965 it was 99% Black.

I've seen the transition of this community from working class to a fixed income, dependent community. That was the result of something deliberate. When this became public housing, the CHA put on a lot of stringent rules, like no children over 18. Dorothy Gatreux fought that and won. Then they made a new rule that everyone over 18 in a household had to pay 30% of their income for rent. Some families were paying \$1,500 a month for slum housing! That took the working class out of the community. Now Altgeld has 80% unemployment, with over 10,000 people living here.

Before deciding to site in a community, companies

that pollute look to see how much resistance there will be. They pick one that has lots of social problems and no economic base and is apolitical. Waste Management sits on every board of community organizations where they operate, so people will keep their mouths shut. This is not about jobs, it's about life. It's about genocide.

CHA is required by law to handle problems like lead, asbestos and leaking underground storage tanks. PCR trained 60 residents as lead abaters. None have been hired by the CHA. There's a law that requires hiring residents, but a loophole let them use CHA residents already on the payroll. They're not doing lead education.

Lead and asbestos are being handled piecemeal. We need prevention programs—with or without the CHA. Lead poisoning is the most preventable disease in the U.S. You just need a general inspection, then follow-up education on what to do. One child poisoned is too many.

Groups like the Sierra Club have given us some minute assistance. They have to change their agenda. The whole environmental agenda is switching towards urban communities, the massive problem that can destroy the country. They have not been addressing those issues. They've mainly addressed wilderness issues.

Those bourgeois Black political organizations like NAACP, Urban League, Operation PUSH were never intended for people like me to be involved with. They never seem to care about my interests as a poor Black person. I've never seen any of them come here.

The environmental justice movement is bringing all people of color together, all socioeconomic backgrounds. It has a global perspective. Look at what happened to lead—they closed down some plants and moved them to underdeveloped countries. That's not right, and it's all based on money.

Program and research funds from the Environmental Protection Agency only go to white communities. We don't qualify for Superfund money because the main criterion is contamination of drinking water, and we get water from Lake Michigan—even though we have so much contamination of the air, soil and groundwater.

It's time for Congress to get a wake-up call from the grassroots. We as people are under attack. What hasn't been done since civil rights times is a mass callout to bring out environmental and social justice issues. We want to build for a May 1996 March on Washington. We'll be having a conference at Chicago State University Nov. 11 and 12 to form a regional network. It's needed for cities to get together to develop a strong coalition to deal with issues from a national perspective.

Western powers fiddle as Bosnia burns

On the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II and the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps, we are witnessing the most horrible televised genocide of the people of Muslim and multicultural origin in Bosnia.

In Srebrenica, 45,000 refugees were murdered, raped and displaced in the ongoing campaign of "ethnic cleansing" by the Serbian Chetnik army last month. Twenty thousand of those refugees, mostly men, are still missing and have either been killed or are in concentration camps. The news of atrocities, the separation of men and boys from women, the public lynching and execution of men and boys and the mass rapes of women and girls rival what we know about the Nazi period.

The U.S. Senate vote on July 26 to lift the arms embargo on Bosnia does not change the fact that this genocide is being perpetrated with the direct complicity of the U.S., the Western governments and the UN. The Senate vote allows for the lifting of the arms embargo only after the UN withdraws from Bosnia. It also gives Bill Clinton the right to ask for unlimited 30-day waivers on lifting the arms embargo.

Neither the Republicans nor the Democrats have shown any interest in helping the Bosnian people in their struggle against "ethnic cleansing." They only want to preserve the "integrity" of the "Western alliance."

It is precisely their complicity in genocide which has allowed the Serbian army to take over Zepa after the massacre in Srebrenica. In Zepa, the Bosnian population of 16,000 mostly refugees fought bravely against the latest siege of the Chetnik army before they were forced to surrender. The last appeal over the radio waves from Zepa's mayor pleaded to the world media: "Help us. Do not let the Srebrenica tragedy happen again."

The Croatian army of Franjo Tudjman has now renewed its attacks on the Chetnik army in Bihac. It has also acquired some territory in the Krajina region of Croatia where the Serb population has fought as Chetnik soldiers for a "Greater Serbia." But throughout the history of the war in Bosnia, Tudjman has had his own territorial ambitions. His army too has engaged in acts of "ethnic cleansing" against the Bosnian people.

All these attacks are the response to the latest attempts of the Bosnian army to fight to the death to stop the Chetnik campaign of "ethnic cleansing." In the period from April to June, the Bosnian army was making some gains and had blocked some key Serbian army routes—even after three years of war, starvation and a one-sided arms embargo which denied the Bosnians the right to defend themselves.

The deployment of the UN Rapid Reaction Force in Sarajevo, and the latest threats of NATO air strikes on Serbian artillery if the Serbian army invades Gorazde, do not mark a discontinuity with the U.S. and NATO's complicity in genocide. The truth is that they have never opposed "ethnic cleansing."

In the U.S., the Republicans' support for lifting the arms embargo on Bosnia also has not been based on the idea of supporting a multicultural society. Newt Gingrich put it bluntly in an interview with *The New York Times*: "I don't think the Bosnians are any angels either. If they were winning, they'd be about as brutal as the Serbs." The reporter asked: "So if the Bosnians are not freedom fighters or victims, but brutes just like the Serbs, why spend taxpayers' money to help the Bosnians at all?" Gingrich responded that it was because the way "the Serbs have humiliated, undermined and treated the UN with contempt is dangerous for the entire planet." But the U.S. would give up, he said, if the Serbs overran the positions of the Bosnians, even if it created the worst refugee flow in Europe since World War II.

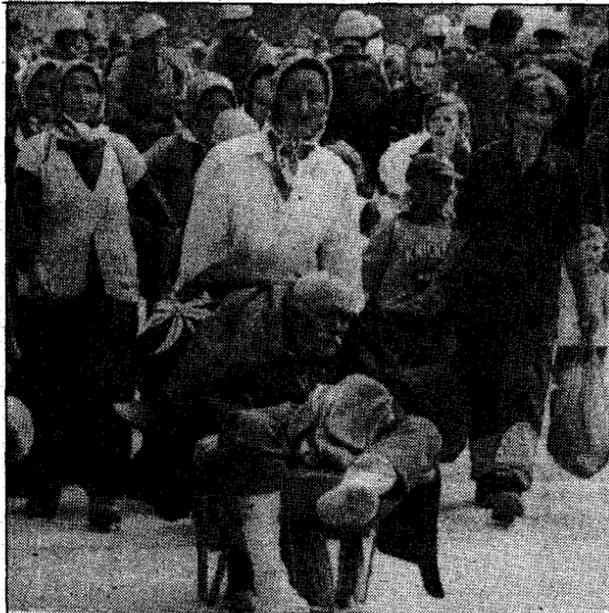
News and Letters Committees has never advocated U.S. military intervention in Bosnia as the basis for its solidarity with the Bosnian people. The truth is that the U.S. has intervened in Bosnia all along, by allowing the Chetniks' "ethnic cleansing" campaign to continue.

This is the time to solidarize with Bosnia and Bosnian refugees by collecting material support for them and by helping to develop the idea of a multicultural existence

which they have fought and died for.

The Western complicity in genocide in Bosnia and the Left's failure to discern the uniqueness of the Bosnian struggle have signalled the green light to the forces who advocate racism, anti-Semitism, anti-immigrant hysteria and misogyny globally. Solidarity with Bosnia is a life and death issue if we are serious about stopping the ideology of "ethnic cleansing" from spreading globally.

—Sheila Fuller



Bosnian refugees—mostly women, children and the elderly—flee Serbian attacks in eastern Bosnia.

Refugees speak out

Chicago—What people in the U.S. can do to support the Bosnians is to bring to the attention of the media that this is not a national war between nationalities. It is "ethnic cleansing."

Yesterday I heard about a poll which asked people in the U.S. if they should help the "Muslims" in Bosnia. Fifty one percent said no. Why do they say help Muslims? They paint the Muslims in Bosnia as Islamic fundamentalists and they don't say that there are still a lot of Serbs, Catholics and Jews fighting for Bosnia. We just want the lifting of the arms embargo. We don't want American soldiers to come there and fight for us.

We don't believe the U.S. will do anything to help the people in Bosnia. Gorazde will be next. There are 60,000 people there and what will happen to them will be like what happened to the people in Srebrenica. But in Gorazde they have no place to go. They are surrounded by Chetniks and the river. UNPROFOR has always helped the Chetniks. It does not distribute the food that is supposed to be given to refugees for free—it sells it. It even sells the milk for the babies.

When the war started in Bosnia in April of 1992, people had no idea there was going to be a war. We had lived and worked together for so long with Serbian people that we trusted them. We didn't care who you were as long as you were a human being.

We had been protesting the war in Slovenia and Croatia. If we knew there would be a war in Bosnia, we would have prepared by collecting arms and food. Later we found out that the Serbian government had planned this war since Tito's death. They had been secretly preparing the army. We should have paid attention to what was going on.

In the U.S. you had the bombing in Oklahoma City. In Bosnia that happens every day. That is why it is so important for people in the U.S. to pay attention to what is going on in Bosnia. You shouldn't allow people like Karadzic or Milosevic to be interviewed on TV. They are mass murderers. Now that Zepa has fallen, Gorazde, Tuzla and Sarajevo will be next and no one will do anything.

—Refugees from Sarajevo

Review article: Lesbians Talk Issues

(Continued from page 2)

On a topic that implies some attention to ideology, the author lacks any cogent philosophic base. Rather than suggest anything dialectical, Studzinski lavishes more than 10% of this slim volume to "put aside all preconceptions to explore the theory and practice of the Right and the Liberal camps in relation to lesbians and gays" (p. 38). The silliness of wasting time attempting to positively weigh the benefits and strategies of the Right would be less offensive if she had treated the Left similarly. Instead, her definition is philosophically shoddy (I will comment parenthetically):

*At the heart of most forms of extreme Left politics lies a broad family (sic!—in a lesbian work, she un-self-consciously uses this metaphor!) of theories derived from the world of Karl Marx...The common tenets...of Marxism are the beliefs that economic matters determine (apparently she believes Marxism is determinism; she is hardly reconsidering Marxism as she so liberally reconsiders the Tories) political and cultural life...that it is necessary to abolish the capitalist system of private property in order to achieve an equal society (equal for whom? equal to what? some new form of determinism?)...The origins of the Marxist link between capitalism and sexual oppression can be traced to Frederick Engels' *The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State* (p. 27).*

Here is how Studzinski describes her own brand of so-

cialism: "I see socialism as characterised essentially by the fight for social justice, the values of equality, community and radical democracy, and the belief that the state has a legitimate role to play in creating a more just society, in contrast to those of the Right who champion individual freedom and the free market" (p. 25). From casting the social and the individual as opposites, to her unqualified acceptance of "the state," she leaves little room for revolutionary humanism, for totally different human relations.

Indeed, she quotes U.S. activist Sarah Schulman, co-founder of the Lesbian Avengers, in a similar temperament: "If you think there will always be homophobia, there will always be sexism, there will always be racism...you stop trying to convince other people to like you and your effort is based instead on building political power for your constituency. That's where I am right now" (p. 47). This tragic capitulation to the limits of the given is ahistorical and anti-progressive.

One could read the discouragement of these writers as a measure of the depth of the retrogression we are experiencing globally. But the overwhelming tone of impending checkmate, or at best stalemate, which emanates from these volumes should ring a clarion call to urgently develop lesbian philosophies of revolution which are not mired in old games of pre-ordained reactions to the moves of our enemies.

—Jennifer Pen

In Memoriam: A. Langer

Alexander Langer, 49-year-old leader of the Italian Green Party, committed suicide on July 3. His body was found hanging in a tree on a hill near Florence.

Langer, vice-president of the Green's parliamentary group in the European Parliament, in a letter to his wife wrote: "Forgive me all this. The burdens on my shoulders are overwhelming. I cannot continue. I am leaving in the greatest despair ever." "He was crushed by the tragedy in Bosnia," said his friend Adriano Sofri. "He felt, in his activities for Bosnia, that he was completely alone."

—Reuters, Dawar

I was with Alexander in Sarajevo. I got used to the horror; he refused to get used to it. I will not forget his anger and his tears.

The last time I saw him was in the European Parliament when he was trying to mount another action for Bosnia. They didn't even want to listen to him. So he slammed the door and left.

It's not possible here to forget Szmul Zygelbojm's suicide in London over the uncaring about the murdered Jews. It's also not possible to forget that 144 people died in Sarajevo in June. Twice as many as in May. How many will die in July?

Is there a number of deaths, or a kind of death, which will yank us out of our uncaring masked by powerlessness?

—Dawid Warszawski

Translated from *Gazeta Wyboreza* by Urszula Wislanka.

Islamic fundamentalism's assault on women

(Continued from page 2)

taken any major steps to revise laws that deny women's rights since her re-election as premier in 1993.⁴

● **Turkish women** have campaigned around domestic violence and helped to create shelters for battered women. They have formed consciousness-raising groups, become active in environmental issues and demonstrated in the streets against sexual harassment. Recently, Turkish feminists have had to compete with the fundamentalist Islamic Welfare Party which last year won the mayoralty of Istanbul. The Welfare Party claims that by criticizing pornography and prostitution, and providing social services for the community free of charge, it represents issues of concern to women. A return to religious values, they insist, would solve the myriad social and economic problems of Turkish society.⁵

● **Palestinian women** in the occupied territories became instrumental in forming decentralized popular committees once the *Intifada* movement was initiated in 1987. They addressed divorce, women's income, and greater respect for women. Many young women activists broke with earlier traditions of arranged and semi-arranged marriages and pursued marriage based on love. Others tried to remain politically involved even after marriage.⁶ An expected political compromise between the Palestine Liberation Organization and the fundamentalist group Hamas in the new peace negotiations with Israel would surely mean greater limits on women as Hamas openly opposes the women's organizing, and projects a theocratic and sex-segregated state as its ideal.

Fundamentalist organizations have attempted to fill a void created by the collapse of the secular leftist and nationalist movements which are now lumped together with pro-Western politics as essentially foreign and un-Islamic. But we should also realize that fundamentalism is a reaction to the problems of modern capitalism—migration, unemployment, poorly paying jobs, lack of medical care and economic support for families, as well as alienated labor—and not just to the existence of highly authoritarian and secular states in the region. The strength of fundamentalism lies in the creation of an illusion: that a return to the familiar, the traditional, and the non-threatening, in this case religion, is the answer to modern alienated social relations. As such, it is a deadly, retrogressive movement which needs to be opposed in all of its forms.

In response to the growth of Nazi ideology in Germany in the 1930s, Erich Fromm argued that modernization and capitalist relations of production freed human beings from the traditional authority of the state and church, but then subjected them to exploitation and alienated labor, as well as powerlessness, insecurity, and isolation.

At times, through the labor movement and other forms of collective action, people were able to challenge the monstrous power of capitalist relations. At other times, however, they submitted themselves to authoritarian leaders and organizations who claimed to bring back the relative security of the earlier period.

This certainly seems to be the case in parts of the Muslim world today. The call for humanist and non-alienating social relations can thus become the only alternative to both capitalist relations and fundamentalism, as authoritarian ideologies once again crop up in both the East and the West in the late 20th century.

4. See *Newsletter of Women Living Under Muslim Laws*, October 27, 1992. See also Paula R. Newberg, "The Two Benazir Bhuttos," *The New York Times*, February 11, 1995, p. 50.

5. See Nukhet Sirman, "Feminism in Turkey: A Short History," in *New Perspectives on Turkey* 3, no. 1 (Fall 1989): 1-34.

6. See Rita Giacaman and Penny Johnson, "Palestinian Women: Building Barricades and Breaking Barriers," *Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising Against Israeli Occupation*, ed. by Zachary Lochman and Joel Beinin (Boston: South End Press, 1989), 155-169.

Our Life and Times

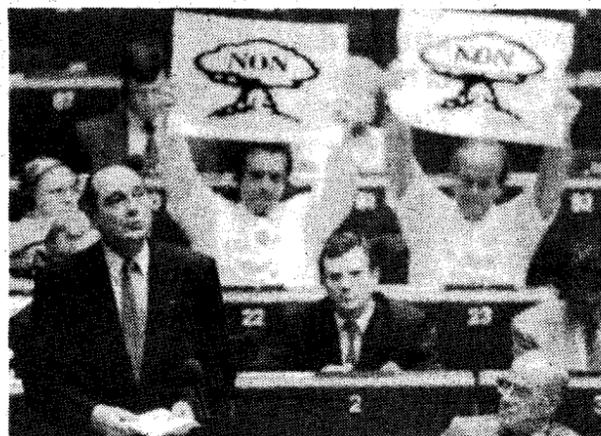
by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

A storm of protest greeted French President Jacques Chirac's plan to hold a series of nuclear tests this fall in the South Pacific, in callous disregard of the 50th anniversary of Hiroshima. While even big conservative powers such as the U.S., Japan and Germany diplomatically criticized Chirac's plan, and there have been small anti-nuclear demonstrations inside France itself, the biggest opposition has come from the Pacific region.

After the Australian government issued a verbal protest, mass demonstrations by ecological and labor organizations called for more decisive action, including a boycott of French goods. The French consulate in Perth was also firebombed. On July 11, 10,000 people demonstrated in Sydney, the largest outpouring since the 1991 protests against the Gulf War.

In Tahiti, a French colony very near to the test site, a truly massive demonstration of 10,000 people took place on June 29. This turnout constituted 10% of the island's entire population! Organized by groups such as Tavini Huiraatira, an independence movement, and the Polynesian Liberation Front, a regional group, the rally included slogans such as "Stop killing people with your nuclear bomb" and "Think about Moahi [indigenous Tahitian] children." This was followed up by an equally massive rally a few days later. For over a week, barricades blocked many major streets in Papeete, the capital.

New protests were planned there and elsewhere after the French navy commandeered the Rainbow Warrior II, a Greenpeace ship on its way to the test site. The first Rainbow Warrior was mined and sunk by French government terrorists in July 1985 in New Zealand during an earlier series of French nuclear tests. Fernando Per-



European Parliament deputies jeered French President Jacques Chirac as he announced plans to resume nuclear testing.

eira, a Greenpeace photographer, was killed. Today, his daughter Marelle Pereira is still fighting to get the facts about 1985 from the French government.

In New Caledonia, a French colony which in the 1980s saw the rise of a large independence movement among the indigenous Kanak people, 3,000 mainly Kanaks demonstrated on July 1 against the tests. This led the white French community to organize a pro-nuke counter-demonstration a few days later.

Susanna Ounei-Small, a prominent Kanak leader, stated: "France started nuclear testing in Tahiti in the 1960s, after the people of Algeria won their independence. Today the Moahi people want their independence as well. Decolonization is very important. It is the only way to denuclearize that the French cannot reverse."

Crisis in Egypt

The crisis in Egypt surfaced in Ethiopia when a well-organized assassination attempt on Egyptian President Mubarak nearly succeeded at the end of June. It took place as he was being motored to opening sessions of the Organization of African Unity summit. While Mubarak was sped back to Egypt and accusations of complicity were being levelled against Ethiopia and especially Sudan, an Islamic fundamentalist group based in Egypt claimed credit for the attack and shifted the focus back to the disintegrating social and political fabric within Egypt.

Two other recent events reflect the crisis at home. First is Mubarak's order in early June to silence the press. While the Egyptian government already controls TV and radio news in a country nearly 50% illiterate, Mubarak supported a law which criminalizes, with heavy fines and prison sentences, any newspaper criticism of the government. This law aims to stifle any reporting of the near civil war between the state and religious fundamentalists.

Second is the persecution of Nasr Abu Zeid, an Arabic literature professor. In June, an Egyptian court annulled his marriage to Ibtihal Younis, on the religious grounds that his writings showed he had renounced Islam and therefore could not remain married to a Muslim. Abu Zeid's writings, the basis for the fundamentalists' lawsuit, include criticism of clerics for quoting the Koran out of context as well as making factual errors.

Not concerned with any appeals, fundamentalist lawyers said they would apply the verdict "by force." Zeid's lawyers dropped his appeal in July when their lives were threatened. Zien al-Abdin Fouad, a poet and one of Zeid's defenders, said "You are giving some people...the right to determine what is in the mind or heart of somebody else...If we open this door, then it is not just freedom of thinking that is affected, but of breathing, of walking."

Arrest of Harry Wu

The arrest of Harry Wu on June 19 by Chinese authorities has increased U.S.-China tensions, strained at the time by the U.S. welcome of the "unofficial" visit by the Taiwanese president, Lee Teng-hui. Harry Wu, who had taken on U.S. citizenship after release from nearly two decades in Chinese prison camps, had become known in the West for his daring trips back into China to document exploitation of Chinese prison labor.

While hardly a leftist or associated with any of the opposition within China, Wu's unearthing of brutal conditions in the prison labor camps producing goods for export to the U.S. and other Western "democracies" had struck a raw nerve. He was arrested while trying to enter China at a remote border post and could possibly face life imprisonment or death.

Despite the support for Wu in the Republican-controlled Congress, including by arch-reactionaries like Jesse Helms, it is unlikely that the Clinton administration will change course from its abandonment of "human rights" in China to sanction "favored nation" trade status. Looming behind Wu's arrest are the scores of intellectuals who have been prosecuted during the latest petition campaign against the government, and the tens of thousands of workers and peasants whose voices have not yet been heard.

Burma frees opposition leader

The release of opposition leader and Nobel Prize laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi after six years of house arrest has also allowed the student youth and the urban masses to come out onto the streets for the first time in years to express their desire for a dismantling of the totalitarian military regime, in place since 1962.

Suu Kyi has been extremely cautious in her initial public statements, suggesting that she might agree to work with the military if they simply liberalized rather than ended the dictatorship.

Outside observers have stressed that the military are in a stronger position today than in the 1988-89 period, when they killed and arrested thousands to crush a near revolution. Since then, the army has been expanded from 180,000 men to over 300,000, thanks to massive aid from China. The army has driven a number of liberation movements among oppressed nationalities out of territory which they had long controlled.

Such estimates of the regime's strength leave aside the historical tradition of the Burmese youth and labor movements. Groups such as the All Burma Students Union (ABSU), always leftist and revolutionary in their politics, have never completely accepted Suu Kyi's moderate stance, already evident in 1988. Banned in 1962 when the military took power, the underground ABSU helped spark a revolt in 1974 and was a crucial force in the 1988 uprising, forging important links with the working people. (See Bob McGuire, "Burmese Students Refuse to be Crushed," N&L, December 1994.) If such groups are able to emerge openly, some of their members will surely demand truly radical change.

One year later: Rwanda abandoned after genocide

A year ago, in July 1994, the genocidal Rwandan army and militias fled across the border into Zaire and other neighboring countries rather than face the freedom fighters of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) on the battlefield. The RPF victory finally put an end to the genocide of 1994 in which up to one million people—most of them members of the Tutsi minority or non-chauvinist members of the Hutu majority—were massacred, often after unspeakable torture.

The RPF, although dominated by Tutsi, has created the most multiethnic government in Rwandan history. The government has arrested and plans to try for genocide many of the perpetrators.

Many problems remain, however. Even those targeted by the Hutu chauvinists who managed to survive bear deep scars, often being the sole survivors of an entire family. Women and girls were killed in disproportionate numbers because, often carrying small children, they could not run fast enough. Some women did survive capture, but virtually all of those "spared" by the killers were subjected to gang rape and sexual slavery. There are today over 15,000 of these sexual assault survivors living inside Rwanda.

Although millions of Hutu who fled in 1994 have by now returned safely to their villages, two million Hutu remain in refugee camps outside the country, many of them terrorized or propagandized against returning by the old army and militia. Especially in the camps in Zaire, the very military and political leaders who orchestrated the genocide strut about, bragging that they will return to power and claiming that they are the victims. They receive massive food and other humanitarian aid, while at a clandestine level, as reported recently by both Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, France and Zaire are helping the perpetrators of the genocide to rearm.

In a pattern that Bosnians would surely recognize, a UN arms embargo remains in effect, making it harder for the Rwandan government to defend itself against attacks across the border by the war criminals. Although \$600 million in aid was promised to the new Rwanda by wealthy donor nations in January, virtually none of it has arrived. In the corridors of international aid conferences, it is whispered by Western diplomats that RPF leader Paul Kagame is secretly a Marxist, that he could become "the Fidel Castro of Central Africa."

On July 13, when UN Secretary General Boutros Ghali visited Rwanda, he told the government that they should stress "reconciliation" with the Hutu groups who control the refugee camps. Two weeks earlier, it was announced that the UN War Crimes Tribunal on Rwanda had finally been established, but it was also revealed that the UN still hadn't gotten around to giving it a budget!

Selected Publications from News & Letters

☐ **Marxist-Humanist Literature Catalog.**
..... 55¢ postage

BOOKS

By Raya Dunayevskaya

☐ **Marxism and Freedom: From 1776 until today.** 1988 edition. New author's introduction
.....\$17.50

☐ **Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao.** 1989 edition. New author's introduction.....\$14.95

☐ **Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution.** 1991 edition. New author's introduction. Foreword by Adrienne Rich.
.....\$12.95

☐ **Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future.....**\$15.95

☐ **The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism: Selected Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya.....**\$8.50

☐ **The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism: Two Historic-Philosophic Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya**
.....\$3 paperback, \$10 hardcover

By Charles Denby

☐ **Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal.** 1989 edition includes Afterword by Raya Dunayevskaya
.....\$14.95

PAMPHLETS

☐ **American Civilization on Trial, Black Masses as Vanguard.** Includes "A 1980s View of the Two-Way Road Between the U.S. and Africa" by Raya Dunayevskaya, and "Black Caucuses in the Unions" by Charles Denby.....\$2

☐ **Marx's Capital and Today's Global Crisis.**
.....\$2

☐ **The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.** by Andy Phillips and Raya Dunayevskaya.....\$2

☐ **25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.: A History of Worldwide Revolutionary Developments** by Raya Dunayevskaya.....\$1.50

☐ **Myriad Global Crises of the 1980s and the Nuclear World Since World War II** by Raya Dunayevskaya.....\$2

☐ **News and Letters Committees Constitution**
.....32¢ postage

ARCHIVES

☐ **Guides to Collection and Supplement to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection: Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development.** Full description of 15,000-page microfilm collection.....\$4.50

NEWSPAPER

☐ **News & Letters subscription.** Unique combination of worker and intellectual, published 10 times a year.....\$2.50/year

MAIL ORDERS TO:

News & Letters, 59 East Van Buren,
Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605
Phone (312) 663-0839

Enclosed find \$_____ for the literature checked. Please add \$1.00 for each item for postage. Illinois residents add 7% sales tax.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____