

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

25¢

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Maiming— and blaming —workers



by B. Ann Lastelle

Keeping your machines clean is as important as making rate, our unit manager told us. Machines won't run when they're dirty, he said. We were scheduled at that time to produce more units per week than was possible even by making rate on every single shift. So Gloria, a young Mexican worker, lost most of the little finger on her left hand trying to clean her machine while it was running.

The supervisor took her into the office: How did it happen? Was the machine running? Gloria was crying and protesting weakly, "but you want us to clean." The company nurse arrived: Trying to get a day off, huh? "No, I was just trying to..." The unit manager was called. No one looked for the finger, no one called an ambulance—until two workers intervened.

Management had encouraged each shift to police the previous one. If your work area isn't cleaned to your satisfaction, they told us, don't accept it. Arguments broke out between workers on different shifts. Gloria's relief and his supervisor complained every night about the way she left her machine and the floor around it.

A company stooge claimed the day after the accident that Gloria always had had the option to shut down her machine to clean spills. In fact, she had shut down before the end of the shift two days before the accident. When she brought her paperwork into the office, the supervisor was all over her about not making rate. That's

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Black World

Absolute negativity and Black mind



by Lou Turner

Here the subject and object of the Idea are one—either is the intelligent unity, the notion. This identity is absolute negativity.

—Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, para. 381

You know, S.C., when I began this letter to you in response to your question about what so abstract sounding a concept as "absolute negativity" means (see "Black World" last issue), I thought it might be enough to just explain how absolute negativity (the negation of the negation), operates objectively, that is to say, how things become what they become. This, after all, is the meaning of one of the other concepts you asked about, "Dialectics." Every thing has a history and logic of its own which are not supposed to contradict its nature.

But at each stage, or what Hegel likes to call *moment*, of something's development, the negation of the negation working silently within it turns out also to involve our subjective attitude towards it and the world as a whole. (And we know how important attitude is.) This relationship of subject to object happens to be what Hegel is driving at in the above quotation from his most concrete and real philosophic work called *The Philosophy of Mind*. Hegel thinks that the mind is the most concrete of all realities.

That's why everything we've covered so far now brings up a crucial problem that the movement has struggled with for a long time, namely, what happens when you do take the immediate reality at face value? What happens when instead of questioning and challenging the immediate results of long fought struggles, you question the need for mediation, the need for struggle? Once that is your attitude, you have no use for history, for ideas, for dialectical mediation.

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New immigrants enliven U.S. struggles and its contradictions

by John Marcotte

New York—"I am now a citizen of the world." This is how an undocumented worker from Ecuador describes himself. You will find him working in the heart of Manhattan for three dollars an hour, ten hours a day, with one Sunday off every two weeks. You may see him as "the Other," the "illegal," the scapegoat of politicians who can no longer even pretend to offer solutions to our problems but can only try to set us against him.

The complex reality that the immigrant worker brings to North American labor struggles is a new phenomenon, not only in the U.S. but globally. The last 20 years have seen a tremendous increase in working class immigrants from Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and Africa, who are forced to emigrate to Europe and the U.S. by the global economic crisis, the resulting restructuring and austerity, and by failed revolutions. In their countries, there simply are no jobs and no way left to survive for millions of these workers.

And now with the anti-human welfare reform bill President Clinton is set to sign into law, food stamps, Medicaid, and any other kind of welfare assistance to legal immigrants and refugees will be cut off. Fully 40% of the savings in this bill comes from cutting off immigrants. This, despite the fact that immigrants pay approximately \$85 billion in taxes nationwide, and receive only \$5 billion in welfare aid.

The Clinton-Republican welfare bill comes on the



Mexican border activists burn effigy of California Gov. Pete Wilson.

heels of the "Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act" passed in April, which is already deporting legal immigrants for committing petty crimes; the immigration "reform" bill modeled on California's 1994 Prop. 187 that is making its way through Congress; and the passage of a House bill, August 1, making English the official language of the U.S.

Under the last bill, election ballots may not be printed in any other language than English, prompting Chicago Congressman Luis Gutierrez to call the law "the Jim Crow of the 1990s." While "Latinos are certainly its pri-

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Welfare repeal intensifies class war

by Terry Moon

With President Clinton's cowardly and opportunistic signing of the criminally cruel welfare bill, he has powerfully demonstrated how dead democracy is in the USA. He didn't care that the traditional Democratic constituency of women, labor and civil rights advocates were horrified with this bill which will legalize slave labor and impoverish hundreds of thousands of people already marginalized in this racist, sexist, capitalist society.

Clinton didn't care because he didn't need to. Even the *New York Times* could see that "liberals...have no alternative but to back him." If there is "no alternative" there is no democracy—which doesn't mean Dole isn't worse. We were witness to a man with more power than anyone else on earth holding on to it by destroying the lives of poor women, children, immigrants and workers.

Despite all the horror in this bill, we must limit ourselves to a few of its low points.

● Well over one million poor children will become poorer. The executive director of the Child Welfare League of America, David S. Liederman, said that Clinton's claim that this bill will help families "is absurd."

● Cutting food stamps and welfare benefits, the severe lifetime limits on receiving benefits, ending benefits for a baby born while a woman is on welfare, the forced labor, and the harsh eligibility requirements for disabled children in poor families seeking Supplemental Security Income, all will swell the ranks of the poor.

● As a gift to capitalists everywhere, this bill makes it harder to strike and punishes workers who lose their job for any reason by making it impossible for an unemployed worker without minor children to collect food stamps for more than three months.

● Working does not mean leaving poverty. One third of the U.S.'s 15 million poor children have at least one full time working parent. The paltry rise in the minimum wage will not bring a family of three out of poverty. As one angry 21-year-old welfare mother said of the job programs she has experienced: "They tell you you can find a good job. To them a good job is any job. You can get one of them and you're still going to be poor."

This is not a question of Clinton turning his back on the poor. Clinton has attacked the poor to ingratiate himself with right-wing capitalist America, insure his continued reign, and deepen the ideological assault on the U.S. population as he struggles to cover up capitalism's failure to solve its endemic economic problems.

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New York—Defying a rain storm, 300 angry New Yorkers gathered at City Hall, July 31, to protest against the pending drastic cuts in welfare benefits. Sponsored by the Coalition Against Hunger and other community groups, WHAM (Women's Health Action Mobilization), and the Welfare Reform Network, the demonstration aimed to have President Clinton veto the "Welfare Reform Bill" just passed by Congress. The proposed law would throw an additional 1.5 million children into poverty by cutting welfare, food stamps, and SSI for mothers, children, the elderly, immigrants, unemployed and low-income workers.

Chanting "Veto!" and "They say cut back—we say fight back," we marched with protest placards to the Federal Building. In a dramatic street theater performance, people wearing masks of the House, Senate, Dole, Gingrich and Clinton, threw multiethnic dolls representing children into a large net, the "safety net," which they then cut, to symbolize what will happen if the bill becomes law.

Speakers emphasized the disastrous effects of the legislation on the sick, women, children and the poor. One speaker from Long Island said she had been one of the poor who clean the houses of the rich. She debunked the politicians' lie that getting off welfare makes you "independent." "I'm dependent on my pay check every week, on my child care provider, and on my auto mechanic to let me pay him overtime," she said. She also mocked programs for welfare recipients that are supposed to prepare them for jobs by teaching them to get up early in the morning. "Anyone who has children already has a job and gets up early every day to do it," she said.

The concluding speaker, a Black woman who is director of centers for seniors and children in the Lower East Side and the Bronx, was furious about the idea put forth by some in government that children who can't be supported by their parents should go to orphanages. She called this a contradiction of the same officials' emphasis on family life. She also commented on the Olympics, where she saw a gold medal winning Black athlete crying as the Star Spangled Banner was played; this has never been the "land of the free" for many people, she pointed out.

A repeated theme by speakers at the rally was that we should call the president to tell him to veto the legislation. The irony is that they were exhorting people who might not have a quarter in their pockets to make a local call, let alone a toll call.

—Sheila and Anne

Teresa Ebert's regressive materialism

by Laurie Cashdan

The crying need for a new kind of confrontation between feminist theory and the current retrogressive reality has become so acute in the U.S. since the 1994 elections that several feminist scholars I know turned with great hopefulness to Teresa L. Ebert's new *Ludic Feminism and After: Postmodernism, Desire and Labor in Late Capitalism* (Univ. of Michigan, 1996).

What lured them to Ebert's book is her harsh critique of poststructuralist feminists who denigrate emancipatory, revolutionary ideas as "unrealizable" and her claim that she has discovered an alternative. Ebert defines "ludic feminism" as "poststructuralist assumptions about linguistic play, difference, and the priority of discourse." Arguing that such theories "substitute a politics of representation for radical social transformation" (p. 3), she demands a return to Marx and historical materialism.

If the yearning among many radical feminists for an emancipatory alternative is what makes a book like

Woman as Reason

Ebert's so attractive, it is the impatience to get there immediately that makes the book dangerous. Ebert's book, despite insightful critiques of postmodernism, poses a return to an old economist materialism that bears little resemblance to Marx's dialectics of "revolution in permanence." At this juncture, when a number of feminists are turning again to Marx, we must ask, to which Marx will we return? What are the consequences?

Ebert argues convincingly against many features of the "post-al" moment. Her point throughout is that we need to reject abstract, linguistic notions of "difference" that avoid the roots of ideology—including gender—in capitalism. She disagrees that a fundamental historical break has replaced the former industrial society, and its class antagonisms, with a postindustrial society in which technology becomes uncoupled from production relations.

Ebert attacks theoretical approaches which convey family and sexuality formations as discrete, localized sites of power deployment, uncoupled from the capitalist social totality. Similarly, she rejects substituting "discourse" and abstract notions of power for Marxist ideas of ideology that illuminate the relation between bourgeois thought and capitalist production relations.

The consequence of all these postmodernist points for Ebert is that they mystify the capitalist exploitation that needs to be uprooted through revolution. Nevertheless, when she poses historical materialism as the opposite of ludic idealism, she excises from Marxism exactly what makes the Marxian dialectic a revolutionary one.

First, she relies heavily on Lenin's 1908 *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Lenin's crudest expression of historical materialism. Ebert compares ludic theories to the idealists that Lenin critiques and then rejects idealism as bourgeois thought that prevents social change. However, while rejecting ludic theories, she also throws out Hegelian-Marxian dialectics.

Unfortunately, in embracing Lenin's materialism she never follows him to his 1914 study of Hegel's *Science of Logic*, where he rejected his earlier "orthodox Marxist" view that theory merely reflects the objective world. He instead concluded that "man's cognition not only reflects the world but creates it." To see what is at stake with cognition's creative powers for feminism, we need to look closely at Ebert's paltry discussions of Marx and Hegel.

Ebert critiques poststructuralists for substituting for class conflict abstract concepts of difference. By appropriating Hegelian notions of the dialectical battle between the universal and particular, they make difference

Battered women inside

San Francisco—California Coalition for Women Prisoners formed a committee called "Battered on the outside, violated on the inside" since so many women are in prison for fighting back against their abusers. During my 13-month "stay" at Valley State Prison for Women in Chowchilla, I had time to listen to women's stories. One woman shared the story of her years of abuse and final defense.

It is impossible to think that a man who lived through what this woman lived through would have been seen as a criminal. A man held at knife point, beaten with fists, kicked, pistol-whipped, tied up and left for hours to listen to his children in the next room being beaten, and then released to be brutally sodomized would not have even been arrested on murder charges if he finally got free long enough to shoot the perpetrator. He would more likely be given praise and viewed as a hero defending his life and the lives of his children.

But she is still serving time on a second degree murder charge. As if she has not already been through enough, the prison time she is doing is filled with all the degrading and dehumanizing efforts of the California Department of Corrections.

I have heard other, similar stories. Why is a woman in such circumstances subjected to arrest and convicted of murder when a man would be acting in self-defense? Of course the answer is the double standard.

We challenge that double standard. We stand with many who are not willing to allow this sex bias to go unnoticed and unanswered. We strive to get public support for women who must defend themselves and who find themselves in prison for having done so. Maybe more justice could get done if prosecutors knew that the world was watching.

—Dana Ryan

into "eternal" antagonisms outside capitalist relations. But she then claims that "ludic theorists occlude the Marxist rejection of Hegelian idealism" (p. 230). This statement belies her affinity to post-Marx Marxists like Althusser, Mandel and others who attempted to flush out from Marx's historical materialism his rootedness in Hegel's "dialectics of negativity."

She compares ludic theorists to M. Proudhon, who Marx critiqued for making abstract moral truths the determinant of history, rather than seeing ideas as abstract expressions of material relations. Ebert then plucks out Marx's remark that Proudhon's obfuscation of history produced "a phantasmagoria...[I]t is not history but old Hegelian junk...a history of ideas" (p. 230). She thus leaps over Marx's sharp contrast between Proudhon and Hegel. Where Proudhon substituted a dialectic of "absolutely pure morality," Marx wrote *Poverty of Philosophy* that Hegel posed a dialectical movement of "absolute reason," or the "negation of the negation."

The text she entirely erases from Marx's legacy for feminism is his 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*. There, in his "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic," Marx demystifies Hegel's idealism yet clings to Hegel's dialectic of negativity as "the moving and creative principle" of history, the process by which alienated humanity reaches for freedom. Moreover, Marx takes the human relation between man and woman as the measure of freedom, arguing against any resolution that would maintain that relation as one of possession and therefore halt the creative dialectic of freedom.

By totally expunging this "creativity of cognition" from her own "historical materialism," Ebert eliminates what makes Marx's body of ideas into a philosophy of revolution—what allows us to reach for new human relations, including those of gender and sexuality. Ebert, in fact, takes us back to the old and familiar post-Marx Marxist ground of class analysis of gender ideology. This is a reversal which could easily derail the small but significant trek of feminists back to Marx.



Women in Black protest weekly in Tel Aviv. Here they demonstrate against closure of West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Fanon and feminism: perspectives in motion

by T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting

Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask. Directed by Isaac Julien.

Frantz Fanon was indeed a very complex figure whose life was equally filled with complexities. As a global theorist of revolution, his ideas, his thoughts, written in the 1950s and very early '60s, continue to have significance and will reverberate well into the 21st century for those committed to liberation theory and praxis. And from that standpoint, Isaac Julien had the raw materials for a rich filmic production. Director of the intriguing and provocative *Looking for Langston*, the promising director's second project surprisingly falters.

The docudrama's potential to shine quickly begins to fade at the moment one reads the subtitle: *Black Skin, White Mask*. A play on Fanon's clinical treatise on disalienation, *Black Skin, White Masks*, the psychiatrist is ironically reconfigured as the very subject of his study.

Throughout *Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask*, one is presented with insightful portraits as well as caricatures of Fanon. Those who intimately knew Fanon paint a reflective, passionately engaged individual. Those whose engagements with Fanon are for the most part relegated to postmodern/poststructuralist academic settings and cultural studies conferences, present a pathologized, personally splintered Fanon.

This is no accident. *Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask's* raison d'être, if you will, is to demythologize Fanon, to contest through subjective interpretation the legacy of Fanon as a liberation theorist. This stalwart, "darling of the New Left," as Susan Brownmiller wrote contemptuously in *Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape*, this psychiatrist of decolonizing medicine, was supposedly plagued by psychical contradictions.

Save for the informative analysis presented by various members of the Fanon family and Fanon's friends, Martinican literary theorist Raphael Confiant, colleague Jacques Azoulay, and psychoanalyst Alice Cherki, there are at least six highly contentious Fanons offered up: the bitter, brooding Fanon portrayed by a British actor; the conservative Fanon; the Fanon in search of recognition from the colonial father, hence he wrote *Black Skin, White Masks*; the homophobic Fanon; the disalienated Fanon who berates duped women of color, yet finds solace in the arms of a French wife; the romantic Fanon

5th International Meeting of Women Against War

Budapest, Hungary—I almost did not get there. At the border between Hungary and Serbia (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), my friend Judit suddenly became the object of the state/military sanctioned violence that Women for Peace oppose.

Having handed her passport to the Serbian border guard, she resumed reading. The guard flew into a rage, slapped the magazine out of her hand, refused to give her passport back, and ordered her off the train. When she refused, he summoned a superior who promptly hit her in the face, knocked off her glasses and grabbed her so hard that she still had large bruises four days later.

Hearing all the shouting, the seven women traveling with my friend headed in her direction. When the second guard threatened to have her bodily removed from the train, we all got off. When he tried to take her alone into the station house, we stepped between him and her. Fifty-five minutes of intimidation later he allowed us to re-board.

For the next three days in Novi Sad, 250 women from every part of the former Yugoslavia, in concert with supporters from the rest of Central and Western Europe, Greece, Turkey, the Middle East, and North America plunged into an intense program aimed at ending this kind of state-sanctioned violence.

Organized by the Women in Black of Belgrade, the conference is part of an ongoing program. Women in Black protest the war, violence against women, and the painful, destructive impact of nationalism. Women in Belgrade also operate an SOS hotline for battered women, participate in a women's studies program, and work with refugees who are mostly women and children.

In Novi Sad, the focus was on the Dayton Peace Accord, the situation of apartheid in Kosova, women's identities, and the future of feminist politics worldwide.

Dayton was credited with halting the shooting, but faulted for strengthening Slobodan Milosevic. It has also diverted funds from human rights projects and to major construction projects, largely under the control of war profiteers.

In Kosova, where 90% of the population are ethnic Albanians, people have been driven to a psychological and economic razor's edge. In 1991 all Albanians working in civil service jobs were fired. Schools, universities, and hospitals were taken over by Serbs. Anyone refusing to sign an oath of loyalty to Slobodan Milosevic lost all health care benefits.

The Albanian population has vowed to avoid war, setting up a parallel government complete with schools, universities, and clinics. But constant harassment, random shootings, police brutality and murder, and the ever-tightening economic vise are taking a severe toll.

The climax of the weekend was a demonstration held in the town center of Novi Sad. The 250 women, dressed in black, held a silent vigil. In the end, hand-in-hand with an equal number of townspeople, we formed a circle as large as the square itself.

—Marguerite Waller

who simply did not understand the intricacies of Algerian culture; and the sexist Fanon, which is of particular interest here.

In light of resurgent criticisms of Fanon as antifeminist, a noticeable portion of this docudrama is spent on Fanon's gender politics. Since these critiques have emerged from within the academy, the mouthpiece for this agenda is squarely situated among the film's academic "actors."

Fanon's essay, "The Woman of Color and The White Man," is proffered as the evidence. As I have argued elsewhere,² given the degree of Mayotte Capecia's blackphobia and antiblack woman pronouncements, articulated in both *Je suis martini-quoise* and *La negresse blanche*, alternate defenses of the novelist and specious readings of Fanon as sexist because he took her to task, represent a dangerous feminist politic, unconcerned with Capecia's antiblack racism and sexually-racist logic.

But there is more to Julien's film on the question of Fanon's regressive gender politics. Issue is also taken with Fanon's "Algeria Unveiled" (*A Dying Colonialism*). His vision of a new Algeria is roundly held up as a measure of his romantic political thinking.

Fanon's feminist consciousness, profoundly articulated in his extolling of Algerian women's resistance to colonialism and traditional culturally prescribed roles, his discussion of the marginalization of girls and women in "The Algerian Family" (*A Dying Colonialism*) and his advocacy of women entering themselves into history as subjects, becomes obscured in the flurry of observations regarding his longing for an ideal model of masculinity represented in the virile Algerian and hence his blindness to Algerian women's marginalization in the *maquis* and within Algerian national culture as a whole.

Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask has revelatory intimate moments. But those moments are weighed down by undramatic drama, postmodern cultural turns, and ideological revisionism. In echoing the counsel of one disappointed viewer following the film's screening: "Read Fanon!"

²See my *Fanon and Feminisms: Theory, Thought, Praxis* (Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997); Also see my essay, "Anti-Black Femininity and Mixed Race Identity: Engaging Fanon to Reread Capecia" in *Fanon: A Critical Reader*, eds. L. Gordon, T. Sharpley-Whiting, and R. White (Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996).

Sweeney brokers SEIU sellout at Kaiser

Oakland, Cal.—On May 28 the Local 250 SEIU bargaining team shocked the membership by recommending for approval a Kaiser management proposal that was basically the same as one rejected by a 96% plurality over eight months earlier. This agreement included a wage freeze, diluting seniority rights, new management prerogatives on staffing and other takeaways. For eight months the union had carried on a boisterous corporate campaign filled with militant rhetoric. AFL-CIO President Sweeney personally appeared at the Kaiser flagship hospital in Oakland. He gave a rousing speech calling the struggle against Kaiser's restructuring plans a hallmark for the whole union movement.

Most members saw it as a lot of sound and fury signifying nothing. The prevailing view is that as soon as Kaiser ceased dues deduction the Local 250 leadership immediately grabbed onto Kaiser's first offer. Many of us are questioning the validity of the vote of approval during the first week of June because the union refuses to divulge the actual figures.

Part of the agreement contained a side letter which effectively gave Kaiser the green light to implement new job categories. CNA (nurses) and other unions, falling under the threat of Kaiser's wholesale reorganization, pleaded to no avail with Local 250 to reconsider its recommendation, which effectively destroyed the

Home risks patients' health

Memphis, Tenn.—The conditions in the retirement home where I work are bad, not only for the workers, but for the patrons who live there. We are supposed to have a 30-minute lunch and I haven't had but one since I've been here. There isn't enough help for the number of people who live here. The home is paying \$6 an hour and making three people do the work of five.

When I started working for the Visiting Nurses Association, which contracts me out to this home, they said we would be paid the same as the company we worked for before paid, and we would be doing the same amount of work.

They first said we would have to help the lady that was serving in the dining room. Then they said we would have to do it. They already have humongous bacterial growth from us coming in there because we've changed diapers, given baths, and we don't have clean clothes to change into. It's outrageous.

A lot of people say, I'm going to find another job. I like working with elderly people, but when it comes down to these other things, that's too much.

—Black woman health care worker

Workshop Talks

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an option?

Private industry in 1994 reported 6.8 million cases of injury and illness. It is true, as Karl Marx wrote in Capital, that "capital is reckless of the health or length of life of the laborer, unless under compulsion from society." That "compulsion from society," at least in the form of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, is under attack.

Repetitive stress injuries have increased tenfold in the last ten years; carpal tunnel syndrome leads the list of average time lost from work, higher even than amputations. With the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) declaiming against OSHA's "arrogance," House Republicans included in a 1997 appropriations bill a sentence that would prevent the agency not only from developing ergonomic rules for preventing repetitive stress injuries, but from "recording and reporting occupational injuries and illnesses directly related thereto"! What is next?

Despite NAM's hysteria, there are capitalist prerogatives which OSHA will never touch—production schedules, layoffs, overtime, job combinations—all of which create tremendous pressures on workers and, therefore, unsafe conditions. The 460 workers locked out at the Uno-Ven refinery in Lemont, Ill. are fighting that battle.

"Uno-Ven seeks to combine certain job classifications, and shift supervisory and safety inspection duties onto operations and maintenance personnel. While attacks on premium pay and seniority rights angered members, OCAW Local 7-517 President Michael Hendry says that members' 'concerns are for safety' but the company says safety costs too much money" (Labor Notes, August 1996). A 25-year-old worker was killed at the plant last December.

Gloria has been off work for two months. A tendon attached to the finger was torn from her elbow, and she is undergoing painful physical therapy. Safety devices were installed on her machine. We didn't have a safety meeting. Perhaps management was afraid to talk to us, so many people were angry.

The production rate is to be raised from 50,400 units per eight-hour shift to nearly 64,000 units after September. We have undergone an audit which, if favorable, will place all responsibility for quality on production workers. Preventive maintenance tasks, which are assigned to production workers and some of which require removing guards from machinery, are to be 100% complete even though we are not to shut down the line to do them.

"Capital is reckless of the health or length of life of the laborer." Marx wrote of whole generations stunted and killed by overwork; against that arose the workers' struggle for a legally limited working day. One death, one lost finger, one life lived in pain is too many! Under what banner will we struggle for our health and safety?

unity pact actively promoted between the unions at Kaiser.

The backdrop of all this is that AFL-CIO President Sweeney had a private closed door meeting with Kaiser executives. There he proposed "an innovative 'strategic partnership' to bring the workers, their unions, and management together to work out solutions." Is this sell-out contract, passed without real worker participation, his idea of an innovative strategic partnership? In the simmering feud between sister unions competing to grab more of the action under this massive health care reorganization at Kaiser, the rank-and-file voice is lost in the jurisdictional disputes. Meanwhile Kaiser management is congratulating the unions on their cooperative spirit.

—Kaiser worker

Taylor Chair victory

Mr. Lou Turner, News & Letters,

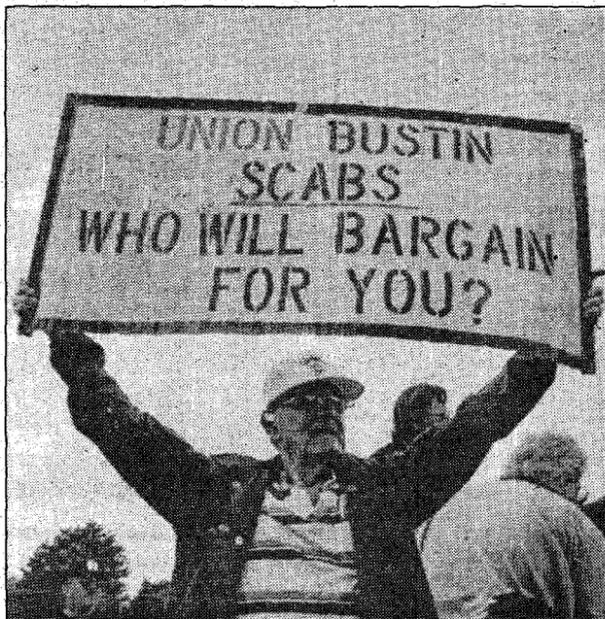
I am proud to inform you that the strike at Taylor Chair in Clarksdale, Miss. has ended with a tremendous victory for the members of IUE Furniture Workers Division Local 282.

Because of your support and the members' solidarity and determination, we were able to defeat the Company's efforts to take away their union health insurance, sick pay, and optical benefits. In addition, they defeated the Company's efforts to freeze wages, increase employees' annual deductibles from \$100 to \$3,000 and demand that the employees pay all future increased costs of their health insurance.

The contract is for 28 months, and the employees will receive a 2.5% increase each year. Thank you again for all your help and support. We couldn't have won without it.

—Willie Rudd, Local 282 President

Bury scab Detroit papers



Detroit—On July 13, the first anniversary of the Detroit newspaper strike, several thousand strikers and supporters rallied in downtown Detroit and at the Sterling Heights printing plant. The strikers had insisted on an "open mike" so they could speak for themselves. Marchers carried a coffin prepared for the Detroit News and Free Press which have continued to publish by employing scabs who they say will "permanently replace" members of the six unions who have not crossed the picket line.

One woman striker told us: "Eighty percent of us are still out. We are phoning and faxing AFL-CIO President John Sweeney to urge him to call for a National Labor March on Detroit. During this year on strike I have learned of a lot of so-called 'dead' strikes, where people have been out as long as five years. We need to reach out to those folks: I know they would support a labor march, and we need to support them."

At a recent meeting of The Labor Day Committee, strikers and supporters agreed that Sweeney needed to be pressured to support the march but debated over whether such pressure should be applied in public. Many felt the confrontation should take place within an upcoming AFL-CIO convention, because we need his support, and the scab papers would portray any conflict as divisions in the labor movement.

A union brother disagreed: "Sweeney works for us!" He added that the plug had been pulled on the July 13 rallies—which gained national media attention but no progress in negotiations. "By inaction, they're trying to write this thing off." He had coined a new slogan: "The workers have been replaced—the leaders are next."

Another striker added that the term "Deep-six Detroit" had been heard from an AFL-CIO field representative who had stated that the AFL-CIO was going to turn its focus to strawberry pickers. Someone else had heard that Sweeney would favor Labor Day as a Day of Solidarity, but in "workers' own communities." Despite this, a lot of strikers and supporters have no intention of giving up.

—Strike supporter

Organizers frustrated by limits of Union Summer

Mobile, Ala.—As students participating in Union Summer, among 1200 in the project, we have mixed feelings about it. In Jackson, Miss., we got on the news, and at one nursing home where 30 worked, 20 signed union cards. Wherever we do handbilling, cards are signed. It's an experience and people are receptive. But all workers are struggling and Union Summer is only targeting nursing home workers. They should include other workers too.

The organizers act like we are all students but there are workers here too. They treat us all like children. They tell us: "You can't do this, you can't do that, you can't get personal items, you have to sign in and out." Everyone is stressed.

A typical day starts with us on the bus at 5:45 a.m. traveling to where we handbill; lunch at noon, out again at 2:00 p.m. for a press conference, then handbill to 5:00, rest for maybe 40 minutes, then at 6:00 you hear a speaker or see a film. We don't stop until after 10:00. There are no breaks and people run out of things, or need things and can't get them.

They make it easy for the students because a lot of them are the children of union officials. They get the best shot at something that somebody else really deserves. Many of the kids really don't know anything and they are in the intern program. The union is running to get organizers but they're running the wrong way. What of those who have experience in the plant? Those should be the ones on this caravan, they make damn good organizers.

There are many serious problems, but there is no doubt that the workers here are having a big effect on the students and also getting a good response from the people we meet.

—Union Summer participants

Key Toronto hotel strike

Toronto—The 600 hotel employees at the Toronto Westin Harbour Castle have maintained a 24-hour picket line since the strike began on June 9. The hotel management wants to make changes in working conditions at the Westin, including piecework for housekeepers, effectively reducing wages by 30-50%; revoking the four-hour minimum shift guarantee; reclassifying positions, and contracting out others; and even requiring employees to clean uniforms at their own expense.

Since the workers went out on strike the Westin management has hired 200 scabs to do the jobs of Local 351 members. Ontario's new Progressive Conservative government repealed the law prohibiting the hiring of scabs during strikes. This strike is seen as a test for the government's new law. Several workers I spoke to on the picket line told me that other hotels in Toronto are waiting to see the results of this strike before signing new contracts with their workers.

Although the mood on the line was good, if a little quiet, one picketer I spoke to told me she was angry that the contracts now expire at different times, making each local weaker. Ten years ago all the hotel contracts expired simultaneously. A similar strike in the early 1980s lasted only three weeks.

A defeat for the workers at the Westin Hotel will only embolden other companies to try and roll back the wages and working conditions of their workers.

—Neil Fettes

No to 50¢ supervisors

Memphis, Tenn.—We were on strike at Dobbs Catering for a year. And we are still in the same situation only some things are worse. They play off one against another, people against people. So you're not going to get upset with your foreman, but you're going to get upset with your co-worker because they gave him a 50¢ raise and a little authority. But he's on the clock, just like I am.

Now they're giving us new over-the-road driver's tests when your birthday comes up. What most of the people are missing are the questions concerning luggage and not Dobbs Catering. But we don't load the luggage, we don't drive carts. They were giving an elderly gentleman hell because he missed some questions. They sent him home, wouldn't let him drive until he passed. Finally the union had to deal with it. They need more drivers, not less. It doesn't make sense. We don't understand why we test on something that we never deal with.

There used to be 300-plus people working at Dobbs and then they brought in a new manager who cut Dobbs in half. His pocket got big, but about 150 people lost their jobs.

We got a new supervisor who used to be a driver like us—and he was the worst kind. He was a lousy driver, didn't care, and didn't have any idea about getting along. He upset everyone, but they made him a supervisor. Since we deal with airplanes we have a briefing every morning. A briefing means short. But he goes on for 15 or 20 minutes. They tell you over and over again, as though they're talking to children—some people have been doing the job 30 years.

The new supervisor was a scab. No union workers become 50¢ supervisors. We don't want it. We know what kind of things they do so we decline. They want to play mind games. Sometimes you see beyond that and say no. I prefer to be where I'm at.

—Dobbs Catering worker

From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya
**MARXIST-HUMANIST
ARCHIVES**

Editor's note: At the beginning of 1986, in the face of a new resurgence of U.S. racism as witnessed in the white lynching of a Black man in Howard Beach, New York, and Klan marches in Forsythe County, Georgia, Raya Dunayevskaya, in collaboration with Lou Turner and John Alan, wrote an introduction/overview for a new expanded edition of Turner and Alan's 1978 pamphlet Frantz Fanon, Soweto, and American Black Thought. This year marks the tenth anniversary of that publication. However, it is Dunayevskaya's summation of ongoing Black struggles in South Africa, Haiti, and the U.S., as well as the illumination she cast on an emerging international dimension of Women's Liberation, unseparated from her discovery of new theoretical moments in Marx's work on what was later called the Third World, and the "new humanism" of Frantz Fanon, which compels our publishing excerpts from this essay for the first time in News & Letters.

I

So great is the power of the Idea of freedom that it has shaken apartheid South Africa to its foundation. The struggles for freedom against that totalitarian leadership's armed-to-the-teeth, undeclared, savage civil war upon the unarmed Black majority population are endless. The point now is: What to do to correct this fantastic imbalance of forces? How to recognize the freedom idea itself as a great force of Reason in this life and death struggle? What can be done internationally to solidarize with it?

The impulse for the first edition of this pamphlet was the fact that in 1976, the year before he was imprisoned and murdered, Steve Biko had declared the affinity of Black Consciousness in South Africa with American Black thought and with Frantz Fanon's philosophy of revolution, which Fanon had called a "new humanism." News & Letters had been detailing and analyzing all the objective events in South Africa and had turned its November 1977 lead article over to "Steve Biko Speaks for Himself." Charles Denby, the editor of News & Letters, followed this up by proposing that we develop the whole concept of the affinity of thought of these three dimensions into a special pamphlet to be entitled: Frantz Fanon, Soweto and American Black Thought. The events—of freedom struggles and of counter-revolution—from 1978 to 1986 have compelled this present expanded edition.

This was the period of the three Black uprisings in Miami. While these didn't seem to be "directly" related to the brutal treatment that the Haitian refugees were receiving at Krome [detention center] (since they were opposing the conditions of Black life right here in the United States), the truth is that the Black community in Miami, and indeed throughout the U.S., identified with the Haitians.

The "little shorties" in Miami were proof of what we had underscored in the 1978 edition when we wrote:

"Contrary to the reports in the white press, Black America's actual rejection of white capitalistic-imperialistic exploitation, with or without Black lackeys, is, at one and the same time, a time-bomb that is sure to explode, and a time for thinking and readying for action."

As ground for the present high stage of revolt, whether it be in South Africa or the United States, it becomes all the more important to remember the achievements of the 1960s and the early 1970s. We are not referring only to the turbulence of the 1960s in general, but rather to the fact that it reached a climax in 1968 only to "perish," that is to say, the revolution remained unfinished. But that was not death. On the contrary, beginning with 1969, there were all sorts of new objective developments; and though one had to work under the whip of counter-revolution, the new forces of revolution did not separate their actions from their hunger and search for theory, a philosophy of revolution to go with the actual revolution.

In South Africa, in 1969, the new activity saw the dockworkers on strike win support for the first time from white students in Cape Town and Witwatersrand. In the U.S., along with new wildcats and anti-Vietnam war demonstrations, the search for theory led to the call for a Black/Red Conference. It was on January 12, 1969, that the Conference Charles Denby had called together met in Detroit and considered the objective situation inseparable from questions of philosophy and revolution.

The analysis of this conference, and the phenomenon of Women's Liberation as a movement, led that year to our Perspectives thesis, "The Needed American Revolution." In tracing the history of the Black dimension and its struggle and idea of freedom, we wrote: "Thus, where the white rulers denuded a continent via the infamous triangular trade in slaves, rum and molasses, the Blacks were exchanging ideas—the ideas of freedom, the experiences of Black masses in action, and their aspirations for a new world."

II

In the more than a decade and a half since we wrote that 1969 Perspectives thesis, the Black dimension has further expanded and intensified. As a British revolutionary recently wrote us:

What has also happened, burst onto the historic scene, since 1978, is that the triangular trade of ideas and revolts has found a fourth port of entry—actually three ports, Bristol, London, Liverpool... The Black revolt is demanding that those demonstrators not separate their fight against

Ongoing revolutionary Black dimension



Frantz Fanon, and rally of workers at founding of COSATU.

apartheid from the fight against racism at home...

The whirlwind of events which have brought South Africa to the threshold of revolution, during the last year, reveals ever broader segments of society being drawn into the liberation process. Not only have mixed-race and Indian communities clashed with the South African Defense Forces, but reports have shown white students describing the brutal treatment they have suffered at the hands of the police for expressing their solidarity with Black South Africa. Moreover, a multi-racial contingent of student protestors has for the first time attempted to make a direct link to imprisoned African National Congress (ANC) leader, Nelson Mandela, by marching on Pollsmoor Prison.

Contrast that to the UN's Reagan-dominated Decade for Women Conference that was convened in Nairobi, Kenya. It is true that even there, at the official conference, the African women's liberationists made their presence felt. A good deal more representative of women, both in the U.S. and around the world, was the non-governmental "Forum '85," which did a good job of exposing the retrogressionism of Reaganism.

The greatest events, however, took place neither at the government-sponsored meetings nor at the Forum, but on the lawn where masses of women assembled, some just on hearing that there was such a women's conference taking place.

Elizabeth Wanjara, a Kenyan women, heard about the Decade for Women Conference on a transistor radio in her hometown of Bungoma, about 450 miles from Nairobi. It inspired eight other women to get together with her, sell honey and knit sweaters to raise enough money to buy her a bus ticket.

The fact that she is illiterate only proves that intelligence is not related to reading and writing, but to experience and your own thinking. It was this woman who said (and she was the only one who said it) that she knew exactly why she came: "I have to go back to all the women in my place and tell them the stories on all the happenings here. I have to tell them how we can be ourselves—no longer just have babies and have babies dying."

What is important about this Conference is that thousands of women, spontaneously and many without any previous experiences at such meetings, all had a passion for freedom and gained strength from knowing that there were others who felt the way they did and that they did not have to solve their problems individually.

It was clear that the women did not agree with the official conference that this was the end of their decade, but considered it to be the beginning of a totally new relationship. This is what we mean in pointing out that all the ramifications of the Conference are first now to be worked out. The very category that we made of the maturity of the women in our age—Woman as Revolutionary Force and Reason—was created to show that women are now ready to be part of the dialectic of thought as well as of revolution.

III

What is crystal clear in the high intensity of the Black dimension's struggle—whether we are talking of Labor, Women, or Youth—is that the post-World War II world manifests the presence of an unquenchable thirst for freedom. What the emergence of the Third World as a whole world has revealed is just how continuous are those freedom struggles. It is this movement from practice that is itself a form of theory which has been challenging revolutionary intellectual-theoreticians to develop a new unity, a new relation, of theory to practice.

As Marxist-Humanists, we developed this category about the movement from practice back in the 1950s, with our analysis of the Absolute Idea* as not only a movement from theory to practice, but a movement as well from practice to theory, while mass movements were erupting the world over. It was seen in the U.S. in production, where the workers were battling Automation. It was seen in East Europe in the new type of revolts from under totalitarian Communism, which erupted first in East Germany in 1953 and came to a climax in the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. Nor did they stop there, as they spread to the Third World—the Afro-Asian-Latin American worlds—against Western imperialism. Marx's

*Raya Dunayevskaya's Letters on the Absolute Idea, written May 12 and May 20, 1953, are available in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (Chicago: News and Letters, 1989).

1844 Humanist Essays were thus brought out from the dusty Archives onto the historical stage.

The todayness of Marx's Marxism is evident from the moment he founded a new continent of thought and of revolution. Thus, even what then (the 1840s) appeared very minor, his sensitivity to language, was evident in his objection to the capitalist use of the word, "Negro," as synonymous with "slave." This sensitivity was integral to his whole philosophy, which he called a "new Humanism." It characterized his entire revolutionary life. Whether it was his concept of the Man/Woman relationship or the developments he was working on in the last decade of his life on pre-capitalist societies and what we now call the Third World, or whether it was what he wrote about Iroquois women or the communal life form, it is this which led to our considering Marx's last decade a "trail to the 1980s," now that his *Ethnological Notebooks* were finally transcribed and published.

Here is how Raya Dunayevskaya expressed this view of Marx's revolutionary new Humanism with regard to the Black dimension during her Marx Centenary tour in 1983:

Marx's reference in the Ethnological Notebooks to the Australian Aborigine as 'the intelligent Black' brought to a conclusion the dialectic he had unchained when he first broke from bourgeois society in the 1840s and objected to the use of the word, 'Negro,' as if it were synonymous with the word, 'slave.' By the 1850s, in the Grundrisse, he extended that sensitivity to the whole pre-capitalist world. By the 1860s, the Black dimension became, at one and the same time, not only pivotal to the abolition of slavery and victory of the North in the Civil War, but also to the restructuring of Capital itself. In a word, the often-quoted sentence: 'Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the Black skin it is branded,' far from being rhetoric, was the actual reality and the perspective for overcoming that reality. Marx reached, at every historic turning point, for a concluding point, not as an end, but as a new jumping-off point, a new beginning, a new vision.

The global ramifications of the relationship of theory to practice, of language to class structure, and above all, of conflicting tendencies in the leadership to the masses, makes it all the more imperative to keep philosophy and revolution inseparable. That this is no academic question has recently (1983) been brought to a shocking counter-revolutionary conclusion, not alone because of the U.S.-imperialist invasion of Grenada, but because what made it easier for American imperialism to finally realize what had been its objective ever since the revolution in 1979 was that the first shot against the leader of the revolution, Maurice Bishop, was fired by his co-leaders, Coard and Austin. Differing tendencies within that revolutionary movement were kept from their international supporters as well as from their own masses. These differences have not been fully faced to this day.

IV

Toward the end of the 1950s we had completed our major theoretical study, *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* which is where we declared our goal to be Marxist-Humanism. This work, which was published in 1958, was followed with a booklet entitled *Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions*. That was the very period when Frantz Fanon was completing his *Wretched of the Earth* where he declared for a philosophy of revolution that would be inseparable from the actual revolution. He called it "a new humanism."

Frantz Fanon had given up his French citizenship to become an Algerian revolutionary. At the same time, he was sharply critical of "the native intellectual (who) has thrown himself greedily upon Western culture...Rabelais, Shakespeare and Edgar Allan Poe."

The same type of critique of intellectuals, and indeed political leaders, was voiced by the great Nigerian revolutionary essayist-poet-novelist Wole Soyinka, who has watched the monolithism that many leaders tried to impose on the revolutionary movement in Africa soon after independence. When asked, "What do you think of the view, often expressed in the United States, that Blacks should not criticize other Blacks?" he replied: "My response can only be the same as I make when I am faced with that special pleading in relation to Black leaders who mess up the minds and lives of the Black peoples they govern: Criticism, like charity, begins at home."

Fanon continued his criticism of the very concept of leader: "Leader": the word comes from the English verb,

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Essay Article

Lenin, Hegel's Logic, and what lies beyond

by Franklin Dmitryev

Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism: A Critical Study by Kevin Anderson (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995).

The retrogression of our time is not only characterized by such degeneration as genocidal wars from Bosnia to Rwanda and deteriorating living and working conditions from Africa to the U.S. A crucial component is a lack of vision among radicals, manifested in their attacks on dialectics and at the same time on the concepts of emancipation and direct revolutionary democracy. A new book, *Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism* by Kevin Anderson, speaks to today's two-sided crisis by revisiting the deep impact of the Hegelian dialectic on the Marxist whose name is most associated with revolution in the 20th century: V.I. Lenin.

LENIN AND HEGEL'S LOGIC

Like today, 1914 was a time of crisis not only for capitalism but for Marxism. The leading established Marxist parties betrayed the cause by backing their own imperialist rulers in World War I. While the greatest revolutionaries like Rosa Luxemburg and Leon Trotsky broke politically with the betrayers and opposed the war, Lenin was the only one who saw a need to rethink Marxism on a philosophic level. Without suspending his militant opposition to the barbaric war, he took the time to study Hegel's *Science of Logic*. The resulting radical change in his thinking made a lasting impact on world Marxism.

Anderson's careful tracing of Lenin's progress in his study shows that, while still in the early parts of the *Logic*, Lenin was already criticizing the "vulgar materialism" his notes on Hegel's established Marxism. As against its rigid opposing of materialism to idealism, Lenin embraced Hegel's "transformation of the ideal into the real." This constituted the beginning of Lenin's break with his own earlier *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*.

Anderson shows how the break took shape. Once he got into the Doctrine of the Notion, last of the three books in Hegel's *Science of Logic*, the dialectic, rather than economics, emerged for Lenin as the center of Marxism. His agreement with Hegel's attacked on the methodology of math and science distinguished Lenin from the prevailing scientific Marxism, and he reached what Anderson calls the high point of this study with his statement: "cognition not only reflects the objective world, but creates it." The key to social revolution was now seen as not only objective forces but the self-development of subjectivity.

This and all Lenin learned from Hegel's dialectic about contradiction and self-movement were reflected in the uniqueness of Lenin's theoretical work on imperialism, national liberation, the state, and revolution. In particular, Anderson shows Lenin's drawing out of the dialectical opposite to the new stage of imperialism and the centralized, militarized state. That opposite took shape as the national liberation movements, the "lower and deeper" layers of the working classes, and the new form of organization: the workers' council (soviet).

As opposed to "orthodox" Marxism's dogmatic insistence on enshrining the proletariat as the sole subject of evolution, Anderson sees "a wider, more multifaceted concept of subjectivity" as indispensable to Marxism and argues that Lenin laid the ground for it.

Lenin's encounter with Hegel created what Raya Dunayevskaya called the "Great Divide in Marxism" and saved the way for the November 1917 Russian Revolution. However, far from canonizing Lenin, Anderson patiently traces the "ambivalent" strands in his thought and practice—in philosophy, politics, and organization—beginning with Lenin's *Hegel Notebooks*.

PRACTICAL IDEA'S PULL

From the beginning of his encounter with *Science of Logic*, Lenin was bent on defending materialism from Hegel. By the end, he largely stopped and broke with vulgar materialism. Nevertheless, he still held a somewhat one-sided preference for materialism. Throughout the Doctrine of the Notion, Anderson shows, Lenin tied the concept of Nature in Hegel to materialism which led him at times "to subordinate the dialectic to materialism in a one-sided manner."

This could be seen halfway through the Doctrine of the Notion, in the chapter on "Teleology," where Lenin introduced the category of Practice into his discussion of Hegel. When he reached Hegel's section on the Practical Idea, Lenin still preferred practice over theory and materialism over mind, though it is just here where he articulated the creativity of cognition.

As Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism shows, Lenin was so enamored of Hegel's statement that the Practical Idea is higher than the Theoretical Idea that his reading of both was compromised. Not only did he not seem to draw anything out of his reading of Synthetic Cognition, the highest stage of the Theoretical Idea, he did not grasp Hegel's critique of the Practical Idea, seeing it instead as the resolution of contradiction. Such is the pull of the Practical Idea.

This "real barrier in Lenin's thought" (to borrow a phrase from Anderson) is the nub of Raya Dunayevskaya's 1986-87 critique of Lenin for stopping at "the threshold of the Absolute Idea." (The section on the Practical Idea comes directly before the last chapter of *Science of Logic*, "The Absolute Idea," which begins with the unification of Theoretical Idea and Practical Idea.) It was she who argued that Hegel's warning of the "unresolved contradiction" in the Practical Idea "did not faze Lenin because he felt that the objective, the Practical Idea, is that resolution." (*Philosophy and Rev-*

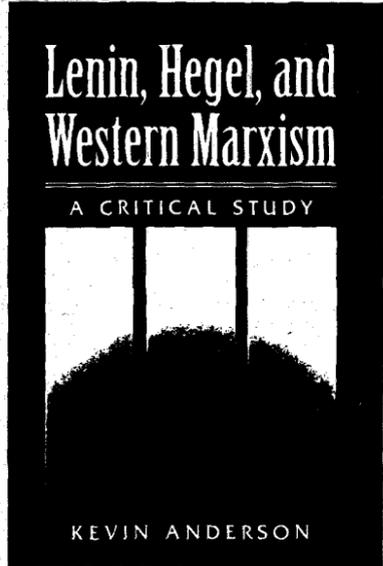
olution, pp. xxxviii-xxxix).

By the time Lenin arrived at the end of the *Logic*, his restricted reading of "The Absolute Idea" led him to disregard most of the last paragraph. He was excited by Hegel's transition from the Practical Idea to Nature, which he read as "stretching a hand to materialism," but ignored Hegel's continuation on to Mind which he must have seen as overly idealistic or theological.

This exact last passage led Dunayevskaya down a very different path, to her own "philosophic moment," that is, the birth of Marxist-Humanism. The discussion of subjectivity/objectivity and negation of the negation in Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*, she concluded, would illuminate the new society in such a way as to help Marxists find pathways to it in the post-World War II age. Furthermore, her 1953 critique of Lenin centers on his disregard of this passage (see *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism*).

Thus, in both philosophy and politics, Lenin's truncation of the content of the Absolute Idea chapter impeded his ability to help future generations resolve what Anderson calls the "central problem for Marxist dialectics in our age [of transformed and aborted revolutions]: What happens after the revolution? Is it possible to have a revolution that does not end in totalitarianism?"

Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism also discloses the consequences of Lenin's failure to reorganize his concept of the centralized vanguard party, from constraining his concept of national liberation to undermining the dialectical content of his critique of bureaucracy. The pull to pose Practice as what will resolve contradictions in the revolution may have been crucial in preventing Lenin from breaking with the old vanguard party concept. The party seemed to belong to the privileged sphere of Practice that evaded dialectical rethinking.



ing with the old vanguard party concept. The party seemed to belong to the privileged sphere of Practice that evaded dialectical rethinking.

In Memoriam: Bessie Gogol (1906 - 1996)

The words that most immediately come to mind in an attempt to catch the character of Bessie Gogol—a founding member of News and Letters Committees, who died on August 2 in Los Angeles in her 90th year—are "old Bolshevik." Not as a pejorative, for no one more hated the Stalinist characters she fought against all her life. And not as a question of age, for the deep, uncompromising commitment to the revolutionary movement the words are here meant to convey characterized Bessie from the moment she came, as a young teenager, with her family from the Ukraine to live in America.

No one who ever met Bessie could deny that she was an unforgettable character—an "original character" and, as such, an "American original"—who at the same time remained an important link for Marxist-Humanism to the Russian Revolution before it was transformed into its opposite. For it was the American revolution that Bessie was determined to help come to be. It is why she identified so completely with the Black dimension in this country that everyone in the Black community knew her and her activities for Black liberation, that began long before the Civil Rights Movement burst forth and continued through every stage of the Black revolt her entire life.

Her contributions to that struggle were legendary; she was known for moving things from being talked to death to being achieved, as when two Black women at a CORE meeting in 1961 wanted to get a contingent for the Freedom Rides started from LA and saw the whole meeting bogged down in argument over whether there was enough money to get an ad to publicize CORE. Bess took the floor to say she was all for publicity and a committee could take care of getting the ad, but what would really get publicity for CORE, and free publicity at that, was getting a Freedom Ride going from there. The house came down and the first contingent got off quickly after.

BESSIE WAS KNOWN as well for never going anywhere without a bundle of N&L. At factory gates or community meetings or cultural events or picket lines, Bess was there setting up a lit table or selling the latest issue. Workers and activists, in discussing N&L, would refer to it as "Bessie's paper."

But it was not activity per se that energized her to such extraordinary levels. It was her seriousness about ideas—in particular, the idea of Marxist-Humanism. From the very beginning of News and Letters Committees, that is what she was determined to see made real. Despite her claim that she "didn't know English" and "couldn't write," Bessie spoke so strongly about what News & Letters meant that she brought both workers



Far from being an abstract point of debate, the pull of the Practical Idea is at the heart of the incompleteness of our era's revolutions. Its pull continues to sap radical movements everywhere.

One commentator on Lenin and organization, Sam Friedman, finds Anderson's work "useful and brilliant" in its presentation of the importance of Lenin's return to Hegel (see News & Letters, July 1996). However, Friedman himself joins post-Marxists in reproducing Lenin's major limitation: he too poses Practice—equated with Party—as the resolution of contradiction.

Even so, for Lenin, the reason to return to Hegel in 1914 was an organizational question, implicitly at least. How could revolutionary Marxist parties be reduced to reformism and betrayal? Instead of seeking an immediate political answer—like Nikolai Bukharin and others who blamed the working class as a class for subjectively imperialist impulses—Lenin did not attempt an answer until after his Hegel studies enabled him to analyze the new stage of imperialism and discern a transformation into opposite of a part of the working class into an "aristocracy of labor." This, he held, supplied the objective impulses that transformed socialist parties into their opposite.

Therefore, argued Lenin, a "bourgeois labor party" is inevitable in all the main imperialist countries. But Lenin did not fully explain what was in the nature of revolutionary parties that allowed them to be transformed into their opposite. Similarly, Anderson shows, he never applied his dialectical category of transformation into opposite to the question of the danger of bureaucratization of his own Bolshevik party.

This barrier in Lenin's thought kept him from working out the dialectical opposite of this bureaucratization despite the radical vision of revolutionary mass self-activity he had worked out in *State and Revolution*. This is a barrier of the age, and not just of one person. Even those, like the Trinidadian post-Marx Marxist C.L.R. James, who thought they had conceived of the opposite—spontaneous movements as the opposite of the party—found only dead ends as they posed both spontaneity and party one-sidedly as Practice, without the subjectivity of a philosophy of revolution. Not until Dunayevskaya took up this question in 1953 was the problem posed in a way that could get past the threshold of the Absolute.

Consequently, 20th century radicals have been trapped in the land of Practice, bouncing back and forth

(Continued on page 11)

and intellectuals into News and Letters Committees, the most prominent being her husband, Louis Gogol, who authored "A Doctor Speaks" column in N&L from 1955-64. Bessie wrote so clearly to intellectuals about why Marxist-Humanism should have a voice that she found countless platforms for Raya Dunayevskaya to speak on her works from the 1950s onward.

There was good reason why Raya Dunayevskaya sent Bessie to Europe in 1958 when *Marxism and Freedom* had just come off the press, to further the kind of international relations that led not only to an Italian edition of that work but to the international conference of state-capitalist tendencies Raya organized in Milan the next year. It was Bessie who also accompanied Raya on her trip to Japan in 1965-66 to search for co-thinkers as Raya was just beginning her work on *Philosophy and Revolution*; and who made another trip with two young comrades to Europe in 1977, where the reports she sent back were of everything from her discussions with feminists active in the revolution in Portugal, to the news that the Italian edition of *Philosophy and Revolution* would be off the press by the end of the year.

Bessie's insistence that she didn't really know how to "write" is refuted by her letters, not only from all these trips but from her journeys into Marxist-Humanism as Raya worked it out and asked for discussion about the new categories she was developing. Many of these letters can be found in the discussion bulletins published by News and Letters Committees over the years.

THUS, IN A DISCUSSION BULLETIN at the time draft chapters of *Philosophy and Revolution* were being circulated, Bess had written a letter that was titled "On How I Do My Homework" in which she wrote about how important it had been to her to follow all the footnotes in *Marxism and Freedom* as not just "references" to back up a statement, but "indications on how to proceed beyond and work out something for today." What she wanted to share, she said, was "how I do my homework when I come up against daily problems." The daily problem she began with was a question that concerned the Black revolt, and turned out to be about the importance of theory. This she traced back in the footnotes to a relationship to the American role in the Second International, which thought that the goal of socialism could wait, while in the "practical" struggles they could show phenomenal gains. "And yet all these 'phenomenal gains' made them blind to the 1905 Revolution and by 1914 fully betray the proletariat," Bess concluded. "If the only thing all this makes any one think of is 1905 or 1914 or even 1917, it means nothing. But if the way I'm doing my homework makes someone think of how it relates to today, how we can avoid repeating mistakes, and catch that link of continuity Raya is always talking about, perhaps we can begin anew..."

We mourn the death and honor the memory of an unforgettable Marxist-Humanist. —Olga Domanski

CATCHING THE MEANING OF THE PRESENT HISTORIC MOMENT

What you say about Bosnia in your Draft for Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, 1996-97 (see July 1996 News & Letters) really hits home. You can see some of the parallels to the situation here, in that the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia got started by burning churches and mosques. I'd like to get a copy of your book on Bosnia to read more about what people did there.

Black worker
Memphis

Basically, I couldn't agree more with the Draft's analysis of the objective situation. Without a clear sense that there is a humanist alternative to capitalism's destruction and greed and without a Marxist-Humanist vision to guide them, the inevitable struggles run the risk of degenerating into chaotic violence or of being diverted back into the sick system. Without a Marxist vision of a possible un-self-limited revolution, hope can also be manipulated by "masters of substitution" who pretend to oppose the system. Thus, while Farrakhan preaches his reactionary Black-capitalist Utopia based on "self-reliance," the labor bureaucrats of the AFL-CIO are busy substituting uncritical support for the worst anti-labor administration since Coolidge for their much-ballyhooed drive to raise the minimum wage and organize the unorganized.

The time to project that alternative is now before the ultimate battles are joined. Are we not obliged to conclude that however awesome the task and however "small" we may feel, we have no right to turn away from this challenge?

Richard Greeman
Massachusetts

I've read some Hegel and I can sometimes follow along pretty well with some of the philosophical theories in News & Letters. However, it would greatly facilitate my grasp of some of these philosophical phrases if I could have access to the definitions of some of the terminology utilized, for instance the term "Practical Idea." Does this have anything to do with Lenin's lack of faith in the working class to achieve anything more than trade union consciousness due to the material social context of capitalism, and his resolution that the working class can only be led to revolution by a vanguardist party of intellectuals?

The commentary on the presidential election being bereft of any actual substance or remedial program is right on! To my mind, they're only concerned with form, appearance. What is it the Buddhists say? "Form is emptiness, and emptiness is form." To me it seems that all out war has been declared on the working class by the two bourgeois political parties and their ruling class pals. I thought also it was interesting that due to technological displacement of workers, no real increase in production is achieved. Translated, more profit for the bosses!

Prisoner
Texas

The Draft Perspectives critiques those who think that subjectivity has been swallowed up by the object. There is certainly that tendency within feminist thought as well, along with those that take the movement for granted as "everyday resistance." Accepting the limitations of the given is something that we even saw traces of in the aftermath of the Beijing Conference. What we learned, even—or especially—from our own meeting on Beijing, was that when the women were in China they did feel that they could see beyond the limits of the given. But despite the new level of dialogue reached, when women came back home they didn't know how to follow through.

Terry Moon
Memphis

To say that productivity growth in the U.S. economy has been very uneven over the past two decades doesn't tell the whole story. The telecommunications industry produces more with less than half the workers they had ten years ago. This furthers the illusion that high-tech is the solution and not the problem. A few

years ago the U.S. was called a basket case compared to the rest of the developed economies. Now it is deemed the "most competitive." This too will come to an end, just as the U.S.'s prominence in the post-World War II economy came to an end in the 1970s.

Ron Brokmeyer
Oakland

The rapid economic re-colonization of the world (even of formerly advanced industrial countries like Canada—not speaking of Mexico, and so on), is causing a vast financial dislocation, favoring these giant corporations and the financial elite, and impoverishing even more the vast majority of humanity (including the U.S. workers themselves). While temporarily these giant corporations dramatically increased and are increasing their profits in the short term, they are also planting the seeds of the self-destruction of the whole system and the so-called Global Economy.

While only ten years ago 90% of profits were reinvested in production and only 10% were used for speculation (stock-market, future-market, currency, interest rate speculations and so on), now the ratio is reversed and 90% is used for speculation and only 10% (mainly in Third World countries) for production! That this "house of cards" is bound to collapse is not in question, just the timing and the method of its demise and its catastrophic consequences are up to the future.

L.G.
Canada



CLINTON'S WELFARE FRAUD

On the day Clinton said he'd sign the Welfare "Reform" Bill, my friend told me the following: "I have a \$5-an-hour job. My caseworker told me they'll let me keep the first \$200 and then take 20% of the rest. How can I get ahead? Besides, what if I get laid off? I have no one to help me out. On top of that, the next day I received a letter stating my AFDC was cancelled. I was getting \$179 every two weeks, Medicaid for the girls and me, \$300 in food stamps, and vendored gas and electric. How can I meet expenses on \$5 an hour? I've been trying to get off aid for several years; I've gone to school and gotten jobs—this last time, I had put in around 30 applications.

"They told me my kids were too old to have a sitter, and I told them I would not take a night job and leave my 13-year old home alone. I don't think it's right for Governor Engler to treat me this way. I'd like to see how he'd manage with his three kids. He should put himself in other people's shoes."

Reader
Detroit

Marx wrote so movingly of the children laboring in British factories—how exhausted, malnourished and ignorant they were. Today, we see similarities in the children of welfare moms forced to "work." Children are left alone, subject to boredom, junk food, TV, and bullying from older children. No one teaches them skills, or talks to them to develop their minds. Yet they are "responsible" for themselves or for younger siblings. More and more I see one and two-year olds playing outside with no adult in sight. But even at a less extreme level, a mother who must work won't be able to take the time necessary to obtain health care or fight with the schools to get what their children need.

Susan Van Gelder
Detroit

AMERICA'S RACISM

John Alan's Black-Red column on the "threatening power of color-blind racism" (June N&L) was impressive. He anticipated precisely how the Supreme Court would justify its decision that basically said minorities have no right to equal representation in Congress. And it

Readers' Views

really is "the prevailing mood of white racism." Hardly a day goes by that the local paper doesn't print an angry letter from a white attacking anyone who dares to call an incident racist, no matter how flagrant.

Engineer
Tennessee

I live in Lathrop Homes, and for the last two years they have been moving a lot of people over to our projects from the building they are getting rid of at Cabrini-Green. They say there are going to be a lot of changes, but uh uh. They say they will get rid of the gangs, but the gangs run the joint. They say they will get rid of all the troubles and fix up the place.

But all they have done is fix up the front of their office by planting plants. In my building the roof leaks, and the roof door is broken open. They won't fix our front doors because it is not in the budget. How can they fix up the front of their office, if there is no money for improvements? The only reason they want tenants on Social Security is that they know we pay our rent, but all we get for our rent is two-and-a-half rooms that leak. My bedroom was unlivable for two years.

Angry resident
Chicago

FEMINISM TODAY

I liked your article on the Berkshires Women's History Conference. It said to me that there are many feminisms. We're centering on women, but there are faultlines between us. It's important to talk about this because the ideas of the early women's movement are being revisited because of our failures. This is why I was so excited to see the ad for Raya Dunayevskaya's *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution*. I went right to the library and got it. I loved her idea of a total philosophy, and not dismissing it because it was produced by a man, Marx. I'm going to use it in my class.

Black feminist professor
Indiana

I was talking to a middle-class abortion rights activist who said people become activated only when it affects them personally. This is an artificially produced politic. We're taught in the U.S. that you should only be worried about yourself and your family—family values!

We're also told that everything goes in and out of fashion. That women's rights will be cool for a while, then there's the "backlash," then women will fight back—as if this is a "natural" rhythm. If we accept this cycle, the revolution will never come.

Larra
Illinois

HIGH-TECH AND SWEATED LABOR



The combination of John Marcotte's column about "teamwork" and David L. Anderson's article on "New Tools of Job Control" in the June N&L was illuminating. Although technology is designed to dominate workers and suppress revolt, they showed how new forms of revolt emerge from the workers' thoughts and activities right in the high-tech workplace. This is the opposite of the theories that say technology so totally dominates workers that revolt becomes impossible.

Franklin Dmitryev
Memphis

The AFL-CIO leaders want to make a big push to unionize the South. One Black woman involved in organizing catfish plants in the Mississippi Delta told me, "I'm all for putting money into organizing the South. But if they go about it the same way they've been doing it, it doesn't matter how much money they spend." It's never just a matter of mon-

ey, it's a question of what is the relationship between the union-paid organizers and the workers.

The reason union organizers showed up at the auto parts plant in Yazoo City, Miss., that was written up in *The New York Times Magazine* several months ago, was because the workers, without any benefit of any union organization, had independently organized a group in the plant called "The Wildcat Strike." But the union didn't build on that. They said this is a "good target," sent in the troops and didn't win. Workers will tell you that the key to success in any union organizing campaign is what's called the in-plant committee, an indigenous group of people who are really in charge of how its organized. So it's great the union is pushing to organize and it will make the South look different, but whether it will make a difference remains to be seen.

Former Freedom Union organizer
Chicago

We are very skeptical about what the Labor Party will do for Black people. The only thing they have to say about race and racism is on the level of non-discrimination clauses. They asked us to submit proposals for the party's program before the convention, and we were very disappointed that not one of our suggestions made it into the final document. The Black Caucus had to meet at the last minute to make amendments to the program that opposed the burning of Black churches and the redistricting of majority Black Congressional District.

Black woman from Justice Speaks
North Carolina

Loyola University is going to start contracting our work out so they only have to pay those workers \$5-\$6 an hour and no benefits. There's only really four of us now—the others are from Manpower and student workers who don't get benefits.

We really need at least 20 people to take care of this campus. But with this contracting out and the early retirement that they're pushing on the older workers, they say that now all we will be responsible for is moving. That won't keep us busy all day and they ain't gonna pay us for sitting around; they're gonna lay us off. They're building a new stadium here to compete with Northwestern. They care more about the buildings than the people who work in them. And they say they're non-profit!

Black grounds crew worker
Chicago

The NLRB in Memphis gives Black workers nothing. It's a Black and white situation. Even though the Labor Board knows that a company is violating the law and the worker's rights, the white NLRB board member has to face his white neighbors in Memphis, so he's not going to get that involved. Not many Black people win through the Labor Board in Memphis.

Tired of waiting
Memphis

WEST PAPUA'S STRUGGLE

The West Papuans (1,500,000 people) are made of many tribes speaking many languages. Their struggle is against Suharto and Indonesia's U.S.-backed military apparatus which cooperates with Freeport MacMoran, a New Orleans-based multinational corporation operating the world's largest gold mine. Other multinationals investing there are Chevron, Shell, Arco and numerous logging, paper and mining companies.

The struggle of the Papuan people is against forced transmigration, as Indonesians are moving en masse to West Papua, threatening the very existence of their lifestyle and the environment which supports it. This is related to displacement policies which have been called "manifest destiny, Asian style." When a society sees trees as logs or paper, diverse people as savages, and both as commodities to be exploited (by brute force, if necessary), then that society can be described as exploitative, racist, and inhumane.

Student Activist
Los Angeles

**VOICES OF THE IMPRISONED:
AN INDICTMENT OF AMERICAN "CIVILIZATION"**

In my opinion the only forms of rehabilitation are here in spite of prison officials. The only rehabilitation they have in mind is to head-fix you and give you the material context to return over and over again to prison, since prisoners are now an exploitable resource. We are job security to these social parasites.

Prisoner
Huntsville Tex.

* * *

I believe that the article you ran on "Voices of the Oppressed" (see May 1996 N&L) should be more widely circulated, as the facts it discusses are ignored by the mass media. It makes me real mad to see all the senseless abuse of power and outright murder that for the most part goes unpunished when the cops do these things. The "choices" for president are both racist criminals. It makes me wonder if this country has any future. I wish there could be some way of organizing prisoners into some kind of collective voice.

Prisoner
Buena Vista, Col.

* * *

Females have a lot of problems that male prisoners do not have. Male prisoners do not get raped by their keepers as female prisoners do. At one point there were about 11 pregnancies on this compound, all conceived behind bars. As we are not allowed conjugal visits and male and female inmates don't mingle, unless the babies were mailed in, the male guards did it! An inmate was raped by a guard here last week. She had been threatened several times. She is so afraid. She has no family support, knows no laws and has a life-without-parole sentence. Naturally I picked up the gauntlet and will do all I can to help her.

Women prisoner
Arizona

* * *

Now that we are in the summer we're all recalling last year when it was so hot that many people young and old died from the heat across the nation. I suffered a great deal from this in the prison

here in Joliet, since I do not have a fan and these cells lack adequate ventilation and protection from extreme heat. Sweat and moisture would form all over me, day and night. Layers of skin would peel away like wet toilet paper. Most of my days were spent 24 hours inside the cell. Once a week I could get outside for just a few hours. It looks like I will have to endure these conditions for at least another year.

Prisoner
Joliet, Ill.

* * *

I am being continually denied parole because it seems that today's penal system is geared more toward punishment, hate and retaliation than the old laws calling for rehabilitation of the criminal offender. It is clear from the crimes done to prisoners in the 1920s and 1930s that punishment does not work. Punishment can do nothing except turn criminal offenders into monsters and create open hate for prison officials.

Paul Goffman
Illinois

* * *

There is too much discrepancy in sentencing. Without a doubt the money that one has at the time of your defense entitles you to a lower sentence, as compared to being stuck with a public defender. Politicians work through long sentences (such as the three-strikes-you're-out laws), but this doesn't work to better the person who commits the crime. Long prison sentences with no education or rehabilitation programs only work to break the person down further. In time, the convict will have nothing left for him on the outside, making him or her colder and harder in an environment that is indifferent to us.

Long prison sentences toward only one benefit, and that is for raking the tax payers out of a lot of money. Prison is big bucks! In most states the Department of Corrections is by far the largest state-run agency.

Prisoner
Michigan

* * *

Prison doesn't work, but neither does society.

F.M.
Prisoner, Texas



**STOP
DEMONIZING
GAYS AND
LESBIANS!**

In support of the Freedom To Marry National Coalition, the New York local committee is galvanizing for an "all out" letter writing campaign to the President and Senators. According to Gay and Lesbian activists the Federal Bill, DOMA, is "explicitly designed to deny federal recognition of same-sex marriages, including the denial of all federal benefits to future legally married gay and lesbian couples. By withholding federal tax, welfare, pension, health, immigration and survivors' benefits, the bill would deny gay couples many of the civil advantages of marriage."

Demonizing gays and lesbians is the same fabric of demonizing welfare recipients, immigrants, Blacks, Hispanics, prisoners etc. Choice is crucial to being fully human and free. Choosing to be other than heterosexual is a form of "revolutionary" evolution in this patriarchal society.

Sheila Garden
New York

N&L AS THEORY/PRACTICE

N&L is a good paper in many ways. The combination of philosophy, news and dialogue is refreshing and useful. I would suggest making an attempt to be less sectarian and exclusive. Left unity is essential now. I am referring to someone calling the Committees of Correspondence "Stalinist." I know several people in the C of C and they're anything but "Stalinist," whatever that could mean in 1996. I don't think but I think calling a truce with rival Marxist and socialist groups might make a lot of sense.

Subscriber
Portland

I enjoy the philosophic rigor and the "hands on" workers' perspectives combined in the same periodical. It may be too much text to become more popular—but then, I'm not sure about that.

Supporter
Harrisburg

* * *

N&L is consistently informative and enlightening. Please—keep up your greatly needed work.

Steady reader
Quezon City, Philippines

* * *

We continue to find N&L our most important source for international news and information. Most important of all is that you give your readers and correspondents freedom to express their views in your limited space without censorship.

Anti-imperialist group
Malta

* * *

You publish a fine publication; you must keep it going. It has an amazing coverage of world radical events. I'm more activist than scholar, having never got through *Das Kapital* for instance. So I can't place your operating philosophy as well as I would like. But there is so much in each issue of your paper.

B. Sloan
Windsor, Canada

* * *

Right-wing radio has always been retrogressive. There seems to be a return to an era when there was a strong racist, conservative influence—as in the 1950s McCarthy period. But this time Left-wing opposition is either non-existent or greatly deluded. N&L has done a great job in opposing racism and tyranny from the Right.

Activist
Michigan

* * *

Typically an interesting publication! Some of the columns I agree with completely. As a whole, the paper is very thought-provoking. News & Letters is not "fast food."

Karl H.
Petersburg, VA

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Fundamentalism, slavery, and ethnic cleansing in Sudan

by Robert Reed

From nationalism we have passed to ultra-nationalism, to chauvinism, and finally to racism.

—Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*

Africa is imploding. Like the core of a massive red star in the throes of death, the continent is collapsing in on itself. A colossal mass of debts and dictators, famines and fratricide, is gravitating into an ever greater density. The vortex of African misery could very well be the war in the Sudan. Its core contains all the reactionary elements necessary for an implosion: racism, fascism, and religious fundamentalism. And these reactionary ideas have organically materialized into natural by-products: slavery, ethnic cleansing, and concentration camps.

Over two million Black lives have been extinguished. The war pits the brutal military dictatorship of Gen. Omar al-Bashir and the fundamentalist National Islamic Front (NIF) of Hassan al-Turabi against the southern based Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), led by John Garang.

The current war touched off in 1983 when former military dictator Jaafar Nimieri instituted the infamous "September Laws." Nimieri, a chronic alcoholic, had seen the light—and the Islamic fundamentalists. To secure his grip on power he became a born-again Muslim, instituted the Shari'a (repressive Muslim law), and divided the south into three administrative districts, thus taking away their regional autonomy.

The north, dominated by Arab Sudanese, tried to impose Islam and Arabization on the south which is mostly African, Christian and animist. The Sudanese Arabs, though racially mixed with multiple African ethnic groups, consider the Black Africans of the south inferior. They are referred to as "abd" or slave, the equivalent of "n-----."

The south of Sudan has been bludgeoned to pieces. It is a semi-desert moonscape littered with burned out villages and human skeletons that rot in the dust. Over four million of the south's seven million inhabitants have been scattered between the capital Khartoum and the neighboring countries of Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Zaire. Hundreds of thousands have died from starvation or from the government's aerial bombardments. But one of the most horrendous aspects of this war has been the return of slavery.

As part of its strategy of war, the military devised the insidious counter-insurgency tactic of forming militias to fight the SPLM/A. Nomadic Arab tribesmen were armed with Kalashnikovs and unleashed with devastating effectiveness on their neighbors—the Nuer, Dinka, Nuba and Shilluk. This policy was the work of former General Burma Fadala, who designed it in 1985 under the civilian regime of Saddiq el Mahdi.¹

The Arab militias or Murahaleen are made up primarily of the Rezeigat and Misseriya tribes. They are the same ones who devastated the south with slave raids under the Mahdi in the late 1800s. As it turns out, the Murahaleen are more inclined to raid an unarmed village than they are to attack the SPLM/A. This was the tragic fate of the Dinka village of Nyamlell in Bahr el Ghazal province. On March 25, 1995 the town was raided by 3,000 Muslim militiamen. Eighty-two people were killed and 282 men, women and children were taken as slaves.²

One of those unlucky souls captured in this slave raid was a 25-year-old widow named Abuk Marou Keer.

1. See Obinna Anyike, "Slavery as war strategy," *African Concord*, Dec. 10, 1987, p. 9.

Abuk's daughter, Abuk Deng, 4, and her son, Deng Deng, 2, were sold off to slavery. "My children were taken captive. They were just crying out my name and asking me to help them. But as I have no way to help them, they cried until their voices died away, and I was crying for them."³ After two months, Abuk and her mother Arik Thom Deng, 53, managed to escape. That was 15 months ago. Abuk has not seen her children since, nor does she know where they are. What makes things even worse for Abuk is that she is blind. Her little girl was her "eyes." Her story appeared in the June 16-18 issues of the *Baltimore Sun*.

The two *Sun* reporters, Gilbert A. Lewthwaite and Gregory Kane, travelled to the Sudan to investigate slavery. (Its existence was denied by Louis Farrakhan, a friend of the regime, after his recent trip to the Middle East.) There, in Nyamlell, they interviewed many people who had relatives in captivity or had escaped themselves.

There are tens of thousands of Sudanese in slavery just as Abuk was. Many of the children have been sold in the north and will probably never be found by relatives.

The Rezeigat and the Misseriya, semi-nomadic tribes, lie along a fault line. Their lands abut the lands of the Nuba, Dinka, Shilluk and Nuer, their pastoralist/farming neighbors. They are in constant competition and conflict over grazing land and access to water.

The Arab and Muslim dominated government has deftly taken advantage of these rivalries by arming the Arab tribesmen. The result has been, in addition to slavery, the widescale theft of livestock and land. Poor Afro-Arab tribes have pushed equally poor African tribes from the edge of poverty into the abyss of destitution. This transfer of wealth forms part of the material drive to "ethnically cleanse."

The systematic "cleansing" of non-Arab, non-Muslim minorities in Sudan has taken its most ominous turn against the Nuba in the northern province of Kordofan. Battalions of Nuba SPLM/A are surrounded by government forces. Under commander Yousef Kuwa they have been desperately holding out for 13 years.

The Nuba had faced the harsh policies of Arabization and Islamization by successive Arab dominated governments because of their steadfastness to remain African in the Arab majority north. With the war they came under physical attacks.

These attacks intensified in January 1992. The government began forcibly relocating Nuba civilians. "A former security official from Kordofan who witnessed assaults on Nuba villages in the Tuleishi area in July and August 1992 described the government's tactics; attacks began with tanks surrounding the target area and shelling the hills to eliminate possible SPLM/A opposition:

"Then ground troops entered the villages, shooting indiscriminately and killing hundreds of civilians. Young men, if they were still in the villages, were often execut-

2. Caroline Cox and John Eibner, "Christian Solidarity International Visit to Sudan," May 31-June 5, 1995. Preliminary Draft, p. 8.

3. Gilbert A. Lewthwaite and Gregory Kane, "Witness to Slavery," *Baltimore Sun*, June 16-18, 1996.

ed on the spot. The people left behind, mostly women, children and the elderly, were gathered and trucked away to Kadugli...The purpose of the military is to evacuate the whole area because they are afraid that the villagers will join the SPLM/A.

"Many women were raped by the soldiers. The dead bodies were left behind as prey for the animals. Only when there was time were corpses buried in mass graves dug by bulldozers."⁴

The devastating results have been that out of approximately two million Nuba there are only 250,000 remaining in the Nuba mountains. At the present time over one million Nuba are captive in concentration camps eu-

4. "Sudan: 'The Tears of Orphans,'" *Amnesty International*, 1995, p. 80.

(Continued on page 11)

Black World

(Continued from page 1)

In the South, you call this state of mind "plantation mentality." People with this attitude believe that their immediate life situation has no other significance than the personal meaning that they give to it. What matters for this attitude is the faith that we have in our own stubborn way of thinking about the world, so we therefore don't need a philosophy of struggle and freedom. This attitude is a major stumbling block to getting to the second negation.

However, the second negation comes about, that is to say, we achieve absolute negativity, when that which is mediated (the immediate situation) and mediation itself (the first or immediate negation) are both transcended. Recall the great contradiction between theory and practice that Hegel began with (see column last issue)? It now turns out to be a contradiction between our notion of freedom, in which all the problems and contradictions are solved (sometimes we think theory solves them and other times we think practice does), and the real world where contradictions and crises rage on.

This then represents one other aspect of absolute negativity, what Raya calls absolute negativity as transcending mediation. It means that if you as an individual, or the people as a movement, are to liberate yourself from your own personal rejection of the status quo, or from the limits of the particular kind of politics originally practiced by the movement to fight a specific form of oppression, you have to learn a different kind of mediation—philosophic mediation.

What Hegel means by this was stated in a letter to an early follower of his who was concerned with how to "apply" Hegel's philosophy to life. Hegel preferred this man's question over the abstractions of professional philosophers because Hegel considered him to be someone genuinely trying to relate philosophy to life. "It is indispensable in logic," Hegel wrote, "to consider concepts without reference to their application and consequences."

Although it makes our job of understanding his concept of absolute negativity more difficult, Hegel's point isn't as abstract as it seems. Raya takes Hegel to mean that it is only by dealing with a concept like absolute negativity in and for itself that "the working out of ever-new unities and relations between theory and practice" is possible.

What Raya is really arguing against here is the tendency on the part of intellectuals to reduce the purpose of philosophy to nothing more than "discussing key concepts of philosophic disciplines and centrally intervening in those disciplines." What she is saying is that if we are not to become one-dimensional in the way we think about the world and about our struggles in it, we cannot give up the concept of Subject, that is, of live human beings fighting for freedom, when we try to work out what the dialectic of absolute negativity means for our times.

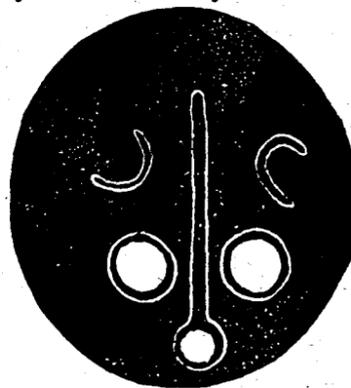
Otherwise, we end up substituting permanent criticism for absolute negativity, or for what Marx called "revolution in permanence." Raya felt this strongly about the meaning of absolute negativity, and our not keeping it to just a discussion among intellectuals, because absolute negativity to her way of thinking means uprooting this rotten capitalist society and its plantation mentality. Something so crucial for humanity and people's fight for freedom can not be kept in the ivory towers, far away from working people's lives and struggles.

For once the action of working people goes beyond this damned society's plantation mentalities and beyond even the purpose of their own immediate struggles, we will see a new relationship of theory to practice. Out of the life of this new way of thinking and acting, people will discover new dimensions of themselves that they hardly dreamed existed. This is the aspect of absolute negativity that Raya saw as representing a new beginning.

Therefore, not only does the movement from abstract concepts like Absolute Negativity and Dialectics, to concrete experiences, feelings, thoughts and struggles, necessitate a double negation, so does our comprehension of it. When we finally understand that the very way that we think, when it comes to comprehending this movement of absolute negativity, is a revolution in our consciousness, then philosophy itself will become action.

I am certain that these are the kinds of philosophic questions you and other workers will continue to bring into our work on the Marxist-Humanist Statement on the Black Dimension. And I look forward to discussing them with you in the near future. In the meantime, take care of yourself.

Sincerely,
Lou



Black/Red View

by John Alan

The Olympic Games held in Atlanta in July occurred one hundred years after the first modern games began in 1896. To celebrate this anniversary the corporate sponsors of the Olympics like AT&T, General Motors and Budweiser spent millions of dollars to build the Centennial Park in downtown Atlanta.

Entrance to the park was free and a large banner proclaimed that its theme was "diversity and harmony." Clearly, the sponsors wanted to send out an image that Atlanta was a city where people of all races and classes worked together in a "New South," based economically on high-technology and high-finance with a global dimension. This image of multiracial harmony is far from the true condition of race relations in Atlanta; the only harmony which exists is in the cooperation between Atlanta's white and Black elites working together to make the city safe for the Chamber of Commerce.

Gary M. Pomerantz tells the story of the bi-racial cooperation between these two groups in his recent book, *Where Peachtree Meets Sweet Auburn*. Both sides wanted to avoid confrontations like Birmingham, Ala. They were aware that fire hoses and cattle prods did not create a good business climate. Racism was softened by "nuances and gestures" of recognition given to Atlanta's Black elite by Atlanta's white elite, thus creating an air of tolerance which downgraded the issue of race on the city's political agenda.

The July issue of *Ebony* magazine turned "downgrading" of race into a principle of Black political success. This article praises the two former Black mayors of Atlanta, Andrew Young and Maynard Jackson, and the incumbent mayor Bill Campbell for bringing the Olympics to Atlanta by giving the city a "new image" because "they brought to the town good ideas, a color-blind men-

'New South' Olympics

tality and a winning attitude."

To whom did these mayors bring the Olympics? Is *Ebony* naive about this? To get the right to be the locale of the Olympic Games means a struggle in the world of high finance and international political intrigue. For Atlanta, it is a business operation which brings billions of dollars into the coffers of the city's corporations. To get this commercial opportunity, Atlanta's big business leaders selected Andrew Young to spearhead the lobbying before the International Olympic Committee.

Young had been a close colleague of Martin Luther King, Jr. and was once the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, which did not make Young a champion of the rights of poor Black people in Atlanta.

While *Ebony* speaks about the quality of "color-blind mentality," a Polish newspaper, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, ran on the front page of its July 17, 1996 edition a summary of a report by Human Rights Watch on incidents of stark racism in the police department, jails and courts of Atlanta. It also carried a story of the demolition of the homes of poor Blacks to make a site for the Olympic Village. Many of these people are still homeless.

All attempts to "harmonize" the historic problem of racism in America have ended up in a historical blind alley. Booker T. Washington attempted to "harmonize" a little over a hundred years ago by offering the "New South" a docile Black force "who without strikes labor your fields, clear your forest, build your railroads and cities." Black masses overruled it both by their militancy and their migrations, constantly fighting for freedom. No doubt this ceaseless movement of Black masses will overrule the "color-blind mentality" of Atlanta's mayors. But more importantly, how does a spark take a leap in Black thought to meet it and reveal its drive to transform the whole American society?

Editorial

Holbrooke shields Serb war criminals

The treacherous nature of the Dayton Agreement was once again revealed in the July 19 agreement which U.S. envoy Richard Holbrooke signed with Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, the architect of the campaign of "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia, and Radovan Karadzic, the self-styled president of the "Serb Republic" in Bosnia for whom the War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague has issued an arrest warrant. Faced with the bad image which Karadzic's participation in the upcoming NATO-backed elections in Bosnia was projecting to the world, the Clinton administration hurriedly asked Richard Holbrooke, the broker of the Dayton Agreement, to go to Belgrade and Zagreb to meet with Milosevic and Franjo Tudjman in order to remove Karadzic from the scene.

In the July 19 agreement, Karadzic resigned as head of the "Serb Democratic Party" and was replaced by Aleksa Buha, an equally murderous chauvinist Serb whose only difference from Karadzic is that he has not yet been indicted by the War Crimes Tribunal. Earlier Karadzic had already transferred presidential authority to his successor Biljana Plavsic in order to continue to wield power in the Serb nationalist-held part of Bosnia.

So shameful was this agreement that the president of the War Crimes Tribunal, Judge Antonio Cassese, had a public outburst in which he summed up the West's policy toward war criminals in the former Yugoslavia in the following words: "Go ahead, kill, torture, maim, commit acts of genocide... you may enjoy impunity." To date only seven of the 75 indicted war criminals from the former Yugoslavia are in the Tribunal's custody.

The latest agreement is in full continuity with the policy which the U.S. and other Western powers adopted toward Bosnia from the beginning of the Serbian government onslaught in 1992: collusion with the perpetrators of "ethnic cleansing" by imposing an arms embargo on Bosnia and by forcing the Bosnian government to accept a plan to divide the country along cultural and religious lines. Before the Dayton Agreement, the few instances of NATO's aerial bombings of Serb targets were aimed not at the reversal of "ethnic cleansing" but the defense of the West's credibility. Today, the stationing of 60,000 NATO troops in Bosnia including 20,000 U.S. troops, is in continuity with that aim.

The Sept. 14 projected elections in Bosnia are especially backed by Clinton's drive to project an image of himself as a "peacemaker" in the period preceding the No-

vember U.S. presidential elections. The Bosnian elections call for a three-member National Presidency to consist of a Muslim, a Serb and a Croat. They also call for a 42-member House of Representatives to consist of 14 members from the Bosnian "Serb Republic" and 28 members from the tenuous "Bosnian-Croat Federation."

These elections are a sham and a farce. First, they are based on the recognition of the "Serb Republic," a totally illegitimate entity which is the product of four years of Serb government-sponsored "ethnic cleansing" and mass rape. Second, there are several hundred thousand refugees of Muslim and mixed origin in Bosnia who cannot vote because they have been forced away from their towns. Third, those who are still defending the idea of a multicultural Bosnia are being attacked and persecuted by Serb and Croatian chauvinist forces as well the Bosnian government itself which by now has moved in the direction of Muslim exclusivism. The vicious beating on June 15 of Haris Silajdzic, the former Bosnian prime minister who is running on a multicultural platform, by goons from the Bosnian ruling party, attests to the retrogression within that government itself.

And yet the deep sentiments in defense of a multicultural existence continue to persist among many Bosnians. They were expressed in the statement made to a reporter by a gathering of Muslims, Serbs and Croats who had come to meet in the border town of Jezero: "You have to write it down that we want to live together like we did before." This message has continued to be expressed by people in Sarajevo, Tuzla and by Bosnian exiles who want to return to their homes to live together among Muslims, Serbs, Croats, Jews and Romanis.

Because this determination represents a beacon for the future and yet continues to be met with silence or rejection by the majority of the Left, News and Letters Committees has just published an expanded edition of *Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western 'Civilization'*, a book devoted to the perspective of universaliz-

ing the lessons of Bosnia's struggle.

Other analyses of Bosnia have correctly pointed out that the rise of narrow nationalism in the former Yugoslavia was made possible by the void in the articulation of an alternative to Communism and free market capitalism. That void allowed former Communist rulers to initiate a chauvinist and genocidal propaganda campaign against the Muslim and multicultural population in order to turn attention away from the deep crises of Yugoslav society. Bosnia-Herzegovina goes further than stating this problem. It recognizes that there is a new liberatory element in the Bosnian struggle for multiculturalism which has revolutionary implications that demand to be comprehended and developed.

This collection further projects a concept of a total uprooting of existing society based on a deeper exploration of Marx's Marxism and Marxist-Humanism as the ground for the creation of a truly classless, non-racist, non-sexist, non-homophobic and multiracial existence.

Bosnia-Herzegovina draws lessons from the Bosnian struggle for the U.S. where we face a Republican onslaught on people of color and the poor, the rise of racist militia groups, racist church burnings, bombings and the growing ideology of separatism. We invite you to order a copy and join us in a dialogue on how we can learn from the positive content of the Bosnian struggle and deepen the effort to fill the philosophic void in the Left.

U.S. harbors murderer

New York—Americans and Haitians demonstrated at the Federal building, July 29, to protest the Immigration and Naturalization Service's decision to allow "Toto" Constant, a notorious murderer, to live in peace in the U.S. The Haitian government wants him deported so he can be tried for his crimes—which include killing and torturing thousands of people as part of the former military government. But the U.S. is protecting him because he was on the payroll of the CIA and could reveal much about U.S. involvement in the bloody coup of 1991 and its aftermath. Constant managed to come here when the military government fell in 1994, and has recently been seen shopping and barbecuing on Long Island.

The demonstrators demanded that refugees be allowed in the U.S. and that Constant be deported. We also demanded that the U.S. return to the Haitian government 160,000 pages of documents the U.S. stole from the Haitian military and para-military organizations when it invaded the island. The documents undoubtedly prove U.S. complicity in crimes committed against the Haitian people.

—Protector

Quebec in crisis

My vacation this July in Quebec was full of rude surprises. It's astonishing how much conditions have deteriorated in a year. My first hint was at the Plattsburgh Mall just before the border. Out of 48 shops, only about eight, mostly major chains, are still occupied. Quebecers once accounted for nearly half of the trade there.

In Quebec City the next day, I went to the Old Town. All of the first floor windows of the National Assembly were broken and boarded over. Hundreds of youth had rioted on the eve of June 24, St. John the Baptist Day, the official national holiday of French Canadians. According to the media, these were nationalist youth. At the Centre-Ville Mall, half of the stores were closed and most major ones were at half floor-space and inventory.

Almost all the radio talk shows are about unemployment and the situation is seen as desperate. It is officially at 11% unemployed, but most people speak of 25% among the youth. Most available jobs are dead-end and minimum wage. Many youth seem angry and bitter, where "bonne humeur" (good humor) was once the rule.

The economic crisis seems to be fueling the present wave of nationalism and not some sort of abstract national sentiment. But the present separatist Premier, Lucien Bouchard, is tail-ending the same austerity policies as the federal Canadian government and other world leaders under the new "free-market" world economy.

Canada as we know it may very well already be over. The Sweden-style social democracy which has characterized and given a unique shape to Canadian life for so many years, the glue which has held it together, is coming undone. I believe that serious social unrest is no longer just on the horizon but has arrived. The question now is: Can this unrest become a new beginning which can lead to the much-needed Canadian revolution?

—Former Montrealer

Srebrenica commemoration

New York—Jews Against Genocide/N.Y. Committee to Save Bosnia sponsored a heart-wrenching rally, July 10, to mark the anniversary of the massacre of 8,000 men and boys in Srebrenica one year ago. Srebrenica was a so-called "safe haven," yet UN troops stood by while the Serbs killed all the men and boys they could.

Some 100 New Yorkers and Bosnians came out to remember and to demand that Karadzic and Mladic, the heads of the Serb aggressor state and army in Bosnia, be arrested and tried by the international court in The Hague for their war crimes. The two have been indicted, but Karadzic continues to run the Bosnian Serb government. Nothing has been done to bring them to trial even though the country is occupied by U.S. and NATO troops.

The rally had moving speeches about the war and so-called "peace" in Bosnia, but what struck me most was when the American speakers asked a man who survived Srebrenica to speak; another Bosnian became very agitated and after they discussed it among themselves, they decided he would not speak in public because it was too dangerous for his friends and relatives still in Bosnia. The murders continue today; the Dayton Accords are a farce. Only mass resistance inside and outside Bosnia can stop the genocide from resuming very soon.

Two years ago at demonstrations here we chanted, "Never again" (the slogan from the Holocaust) "means never again." Now we faced reality and chanted, "Never again is happening again." Is anyone listening? Or is the Left clinging to old agendas, to formulaic and vulgar concepts of socialism, while the emerging fascist face of world capitalism becomes acceptable, "inevitable"—because people see no alternative? —Anne Jaclard

Achilles Heel of Western 'Civilization'

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From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya
MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES

(Continued from page 4)

'to lead,' but a frequent French translation is 'to drive.' The driver, the shepherd of the people no longer exists today. The people are no longer a herd; they do not need to be driven." Fanon's conclusion concretized his critique of the "Leader" and his cohorts who formed the dominant party: "The single party is the modern form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, unmasked, unpaired, unscrupulous and cynical" (*Wretched of the Earth*, p. 133). This led him to conclude: "The struggle for freedom does not give back to the national culture its former value and shapes..." (*Ibid.*, p. 197).

The year 1983, the Marx Centenary year, was marked by us, as Marxist-Humanists, with a national tour around the publication of a new work, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, that dealt with this whole question of nationalism and internationalism, philosophy and revolution, not only in general or related only to the decade of the 1980s, but related both to the new moments of Marx's last decade, which we had called a trail to our decade, and to the way great revolutionaries confronted historic turning points. It is this book which, in its final chapter, threw down the gauntlet to all post-Marx Marxists, declaring that they had not fully grasped Marx's "new moments."

Marx's view in his last decade, which revolved around the relationship to the West of what we now call the Third World, led him to declare that the revolution could come first in a so-called technologically backward land, ahead of technologically-developed Europe. Marx's deep dive—into pre-capitalist societies; into the fetishism of commodities in capitalist societies; and at the opposite pole into the "new passions and forces" that would aim, with the revolution, to abolish any division between manual and mental labor, in a word to create totally new human relations—had laid a trial for revolutionaries today.

This movement from practice has international support not only for its struggles but for its ideas—ideas that, as we have shown, Steve Biko found had a strong affinity to both Frantz Fanon and American Black thought. As Frantz Fanon put it: "Let us combine our muscles and our brains in a new direction... This new humanity cannot do otherwise than define a new humanism both for itself and for others."

Now that we do have both a Third World and a new generation of revolutionaries as Reason in the period in which we finally have Marx's writings of his last decade, and thus can grasp Marx's Marxism—not Engels', not Luxemburg's, not Lenin's but Marx's Marxism as a totality—it is up to our age to work out his "new Humanism."

New Immigrants enliven U.S. struggles and its contradictions

(Continued from page 1)

mary targets," Gutierrez said, "English-only is also a threat to Polish- and Italian-Americans, to Chinese- and Ukrainian-Americans."

We would have to go back to the Chinese Exclusion Acts of the 1880s, or to the National Origins Acts of 1921 and 1924, limiting the emigration of southern and eastern Europeans, to match such attacks on immigrants. Republican leaders and racist demagogues like Pat Buchanan feel it is great election year strategy to declare war on immigrants, just as war criminals Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia and Radovan Karadzic of the so-called "Serb Republic" in Bosnia found ethnic cleansing a great formula to gain state power. Clinton's collusion, however, is for the purpose of staying in power.

Immigration is both old and new in the U.S. To Mexicans, who have historically been a presence in the U.S. labor force since the period when the U.S. stole half of Mexico in 1848, and who traditionally crossed the border to work north of the Rio Grande, have been added Puerto Ricans, who have come to New York since the 1930s. Then came Dominicans, especially after President Johnson invaded the Dominican Republic in 1965 with 45,000 U.S. Marines.

It was Central Americans and Haitians who had to flee murderous, U.S.-backed, military regimes and CIA-contra terrorists in the 1980s. Jamaicans and other West Indians have long come to the U.S.; and Asians have a long history in the U.S. labor force, dating back to the 19th century when Chinese workers were forcibly brought here to build the railroads, only to be attacked by the American Federation of Labor. Since Europeans have ceased to be the major immigrant group, racism has become even more a part of anti-immigrant hysteria.

EXILED BY DESPERATION

What is also new is that over the last ten years or so hundreds of thousands of workers from further and further away in Latin America have had to make the dangerous, expensive, overland journey through Mexico, just to end up in the sweatshops of New York. Once here, they work for wages that have declined dramatically over the last decade.

They work two years to first pay off their debt to the money lenders and smugglers who financed their trip, then work two years more to buy a small plot of land back home, and work another year to build a small house for their families there. And yet another year is worked to save a little for the day they return to the families they were cruelly forced to leave behind. But under the neo-liberal economics of Latin America, begun by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, there is no hope of a job when they return home.

For these new immigrants from Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia, as well as Central America, there is no hope of eventually legalizing their work status. The 1986 Simpson-Mazzoli anti-immigrant law was never directed at employers hiring undocumented workers. Instead, it helped create a new class of permanently "illegal" workers who are more dependent on exploitative bosses who know their status, and who have used it to fuel an explosion of low-wage sweatshops since that law was passed.

Immigrant workers' associations have combatted this, from the Chinese Staff and Workers Association and the Latino Workers Center in New York, to the California Immigrant Workers Association.

Unlike previous generations of immigrants coming to New York, today's new immigrants have no hope of resettling their families here due to the starvation wages they make. Moreover, the distance, danger and expense of the journey to the U.S. mean that they cannot afford to be deported. To be deported before the debt to the "coyotes" is paid would mean a disaster of immeasurable proportion for the whole family. This has made organizing immigrant workers more dangerous and difficult.

Desperation is the one condition which has exiled immigrant workers from their native lands. According to one Ecuadoran worker's description of this desperate condition, "It is considered normal to eat meat only once a month, and for a whole family to live in one small room. People who come to inspect from the European Community don't even understand how the people are still alive. The number of calories consumed are not enough in their calculations to maintain life. There is at least 70% malnutrition among children. A child will have nothing but black coffee for breakfast, and faint in school. I refuse to let my son die of hunger."

Nevertheless, Latino immigrant labor is very complex, with its cultural and racial differences and histories. There are vibrant struggles within Latin America of indigenous peoples, as we saw in the Chiapas rebellion. The dialectics of race and class within Latin America enriches the ferment of ideas that immigrant workers bring with them to North America's labor movement

Welfare repeal

(Continued from page 1)

Capitalism can't bring people out of poverty; there aren't enough jobs; the jobs that do exist are poorly paid and getting worse, and over the last 20 years, 80% of U.S. workers saw their real wages fall.

Clinton and his Republican friends had best not forget why Roosevelt initiated New Deal legislation in the first place. It was to stop a revolution. Clinton's latest leap to the right can only help make revolution so compelling a drive that new forces for freedom will continue to arise. Our task is to take responsibility to help that idea of revolution develop and flourish.

and social struggles.

This is seen especially on the West Coast. It was the United Farm Workers (UFW) who pioneered a new kind of labor movement in the 1960s and '70s. While the old AFL-CIO bureaucrats were mired in business unionism, not even aware that they were losing the gains of the labor movement, the UFW showed what labor could be when it becomes a real movement. Having struggled with its own contradictions, the UFW has now started a organizing drive in California's strawberry fields.

In 1992, it was the drywall workers, almost all Mexican and Central American, who shut down all housing construction in California until they won their union. In 1995, it was the farmers, mostly Mexican, who organized themselves. Rank-and-file workers in both struggles were the ones who ran the strike. This meant that instead of the usual building trades strike with only a few workers picketing, hundreds of workers picketed a job site, and convinced other workers to join the strike.

Immigrant rank-and-file janitors in the Los Angeles Justice for Janitors campaigns put that struggle on the map with their militant tactics. With Los Angeles now the manufacturing capital of the U.S.—some 717,000 mostly immigrant workers work in its garment, plastics, textile, and food processing factories—labor organizers now hope to build on the successes of the new militancy of immigrant workers. This is especially so for LAMAP (Los Angeles Manufacturing Action Project), a "multi-union, area-wide organizing drive."

One of LAMAP's organizers is Joel Ochoa, from Chiapas, Mexico, who is also head of the southeast division of the California Immigrant Workers' Association. Ochoa says that "If you look at our experience, you see immigrants reaching out to unions much more than unions reaching out to immigrants. People are coming here from Mexico and all over Latin America with a tradition and culture that gives them a rich repertoire of tactics for fighting the companies." (See David Bacon, "How California's Immigrant Workers are Revitalizing Labor," in *The Village Voice*.)

It is with the aim of repressing this growing militancy of low-wage immigrant workers and polluting the minds of native-born workers against them that politicians like the neo-fascist Buchanan and the neo-neo-fascist governor of California Pete Wilson whipped up the anti-immigrant hysteria now raging in this country.

AUTHORITARIAN WELFARE STATE

With state and federal laws and agencies blocking the school house door, immigrant workers and their children truly are facing a Jim Crowism of the '90s. And because those coming to the U.S. are more and more the descendants of the indigenous inhabitants of the Americas, North, South and Central, it is both tragic and farcical to now hear the descendants of European immigrants tell them that they are the ones who are "illegal."

What is tragic and farcical is that while the new repressive anti-immigrant legislation makes it a crime for immigrants to work, the equally repressive Clinton-Republican welfare "reform," in effect, criminalizes poor native-born workers for the inability of this system to provide them jobs with a living wage.

Poor immigrant workers, under the new legislation, would be fined a ridiculous sum of \$500,000 and imprisoned for 15 years for using false I.D. to get a job; poor native-born workers, under welfare "reform," would be denied public assistance and their children impoverished further in order to force them into competition with im-

migrant workers for low wage, sweatshop jobs.

All the while, prisons continue to be built for those who can't get hired, 5000 border patrol agents get commissioned, and INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) detention space is expanded to 9000 beds for those immigrants caught trying to get a job. Under these laws, the working poor are damned if they do and damned if they don't.

Which is why, after the 1992 Los Angeles rebellion where Blacks and new Latino immigrants both rose up, the bourgeoisie struck back with the anti-immigrant Prop. 187. Their aim was to try to undermine the beginnings of that unity of Black and Latino in the streets by turning Black and white labor against immigrants. Then came the attack on affirmative action to try to turn white labor against both Blacks and immigrants.

The challenge before the labor movement is to attack these anti-immigrant laws as anti-worker. It means not being silent on Clinton's collusion with the anti-labor Republican-controlled Congress just because they finally raised the minimum wage as an attempt to head off the growing militancy of labor, especially rank-and-file low-wage workers.

Whether it's drywallers, farmworkers, garment and hotel workers, or truckers in the L.A. and Long Beach Harbors, or immigrant workers in the sweatshops of New York, new indignant demands of labor are being heard. Immigrant workers who have led strikes, insurgent movements, and factory occupations in Latin America's industries, and whose jobs were cut in the first round of neo-liberal restructuring, have brought that rich experience to today's labor struggles in the U.S.

EMIGRATION OF IDEAS

In New York's sweatshops, it's not unusual to meet students who have studied Marxism, who have worked in liberation theology base communities, and who know the realities of both the city and the countryside of the Third World. They are here now because either those forms of resistance and survival have dried up, or because neo-liberal economic policies have crushed their organizations.

However, the crisis is philosophic, as well as economic and political. As one Ecuadoran sweatshop worker in New York expresses it:

We were catechist youth [theology of liberation activists]. Many of our leaders were forced to emigrate by the economic crisis; they could no longer feed their families. But what had sustained us also was in crisis. Our slogan had been 'Yesterday Nicaragua, today El Salvador, this is the path for Ecuador.'

When Nicaragua returned to capitalism in 1990, it was like a light going out. This had been a revolution made with a large contribution by theology of liberation. What were our alternatives? In this crisis of the '90s, what ideology, what raft would save us? There was none. The left parties divided us. We saw killing without end in Peru and in Central America, and the false alternative of elections in Colombia.

The new immigration of the last 20 years has changed everything in the struggle for freedom in the U.S. In the complex multiethnic relations within immigrant communities, and between new immigrants and what has always been the touchstone of American civilization, its Black dimension, the challenge remains: how to work out so concrete and philosophic a mediation between these struggles that they not only speak to each other, but revolution itself becomes irresistible?

1996 is the 60th anniversary of

The Spanish Revolution

DISCOVER WHAT THE SPANISH REVOLUTION REVEALED ABOUT THE ORIGINS OF TODAY'S WORLD BY EXPLORING THE RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA COLLECTION

"IT IS THAT ... EVENT WHICH ... BEGAN ALL QUESTIONS about what is a social revolution in relation to a new stage of objective development, and whether that was a higher stage than 1917. The fact that the workers were both at the point of production and very organized politically, raised the whole question of the unity of economics and politics in this stage of struggle against capitalism."

Presentation of Jan. 2, 1977.

"AS FOR THOSE REVOLUTIONARY THEORETICIANS who did oppose the Stalinists and who had no illusions about the 'revolutionary nature' of the Popular Front in Government, they failed to create a new category from the spontaneous actions from below. That is, none thought that the way the Spanish workers occupied the factories during the very heat of the struggle against fascism disclosed a new dialectic of liberation, that that combination of economics and politics was the new form of workers' rule and must become the ground for new theory as well."

Philosophy and Revolution (1973, 1989), page 124

"THE DEPRESSION SIGNALLED THE END OF PRIVATE CAPITALISM while out of the Spanish Civil War there

emerged a new kind of revolutionary who posed questions not only against Stalinism but against Trotskyism, indeed against all established Marxists."

The Myriad Global Crises of the 1980s and the Nuclear World since World War II (1986), page 12

"SINCE THE SPANISH REVOLUTION OF [1936-37], the theoretical void has engulfed also the Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists who had ended up as part of the Government, which they had always theoretically disclaimed. What is far worse than becoming bound to Russia by gold payments was to become prisoners of administrative thinking."

Marxism and Freedom (1957, 1988), page 361

"WHETHER WE TAKE THE SPANISH REVOLUTION IN 1936-37, or the Hungarian Revolution in 1956, we find that the great outburst and new forms of organization with workers as decision-makers, with workers as Reason, went as spontaneously to search for the party as the party went to search for them. And even when they were anarchists, they gave in to the single party."

Notes of May 25, 1987, cited in The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism, p. xxiv

For information about THE RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA COLLECTION—MARXIST-HUMANISM: A HALF-CENTURY OF ITS WORLD DEVELOPMENT, or to order books where discussions on the Spanish Revolution are found, see literature ad on page 7.

Youth

Revolutionary subjectivity in the '90s

by Maya Jhansi

At a recent meeting I attended, several youth spoke about the need for us, as a new generation of revolutionaries, to assess the legacy left by the great movements of the 1960s and 1970s. For us, this legacy has a two-fold character: on the one hand, the 1960s represents a time when masses of people took things into their own hands and believed that revolution was possible; on the other hand, the 1960s represents a moment of failure that has infected ongoing struggles with a pervasive cynicism about the possibility of actual freedom.

Today, the struggle goes on and the fact that there are youth whose imaginations are fired by the history of past movements shows that the revolutionary movement, for all the attempts to subsume it ideologically and contain it through imprisonment and coercion, is ongoing and continuous. As a young Black Panther recently put it: "The fact that we exist today shows, as Fred Hampton put it, that 'you can kill a revolutionary but you can't kill the revolution.'"

Though we are not living in the '60s, when the rebellions were massive and visible, we are witness to the continuity of youth's rejection of capitalist society, its values and its culture.

Indeed, it is this continuity of revolutionary struggle that a recent book by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, called *Labor of Dionysus: A Critique of the State-Form* (1994), has caught. This book is important because it directly challenges the notion that the revolutionary subject is dead, that the age of computerization has subsumed the human subject of revolt.

This book reprints some of Negri's speeches and writings of the 1960s and 1970s which show how the capitalist state consolidates itself in response to the struggles of the working class. This reprinting is in itself an important act and shows the attempt to continue those movements today.

Their project is to work out a Marxist critique of the authoritarian, postmodern state: "The Marxist critique of the State," they argue, "must grasp the real social forces in motion that sabotage and subvert mechanisms of rule. At the base of this critique, we assume, as Marx did, the idea and the experience of living labor, always subjugated but always 'liberating itself.'"

For Negri and Hardt, the subject, living labor, is never fully contained in the equilibrium that would consolidate the hegemony of capital. Living labor continues to deliver blows to the system by escaping the dominion of capital as in the movements of the 1960s. Indeed, the continuous movement of living labor has now so weakened the system, they argue, that democracy and freedom are, for the first time, actually possible.

Because capitalist development today has moved towards hi-tech production, a new type of subjectivity has emerged: a hybrid subjectivity of man and the machine which can't be organized by the labor process. This subjectivity is a collective and cooperative one, organized independently of capitalist command. Computerization and restructuring only further frees this subjectivity from capital's control: "The new era of the organization of capitalist production and reproduction of society is dominated by the emergence of the laboring subjectivity that claims its mass autonomy, its own independent capacity of collective valorization, that is, its self-valorization with respect to capital."

This hybrid subjectivity challenges the class division of mental and manual labor and creates a Spinozian "multitude"—the true subjects of an absolute democracy. This new multitude strips away the "socialist illusion." Their freedom is ontological—that is, freedom exists because they exist. By ontologizing the liberation of the new subject, Negri and Hardt seek to move beyond the notion of sporadic and contingent mass movements.

Negri and Hardt surrender the Idea of Socialism to what they call the "real socialism" of the East and West (i.e. state-capitalism). They reject any notion of what they call a "transcendental solution" and counterpose the power of living labor to the Idea of Freedom as an idea. Living labor finds in "the immanence and the immediacy of its logics the force to develop itself."

In other words, for Negri and Hardt, freedom is imme-

diated, spontaneous and untheorized. Once freedom is theorized, it becomes a tool of state co-optation. Here philosophy is seen as an opposite to the subjects of revolt that manifest actual freedom. Thus, though Negri and Hardt argue for the importance of Marxism, it is not as philosophy but as part of the ongoing practical critique of living labor itself.

In today's reality of competing ideologies and retrogressive ideas, this vision of a spontaneous and necessarily democratic multitude is utopian at best and possibly defeatist at worst. What they ignore is the reality of counter-revolution emerging from within the revolution.

It seems to me that today we can't leave concepts like "freedom" and "liberation" untheorized. We have to assume philosophic responsibility for these ideas from the very beginning to ensure that the direction and goal of the revolution is truly revolutionary.

We've seen movements as great as those of the '60s rise and collapse; we've seen successful revolutions (as in Russia in 1917, Africa in the 1950s and 1960s) transform into tyrannies and dictatorships; how can we assume with faith that a new mass, spontaneous uprising, as in the 1960s, will automatically engender the new society? It did not then—we are living proof of that. Why would it today?

The capitalist invention of the 'white race'

Editor's note: The following discussion article represents the theoretical position of activists who have been involved in the formation of a new Black Panther Party on Chicago's South Side. We invite dialogue on this.

The fate of the white working class has always been bound with the condition of Black workers. Going as far back as the American Colonial period when Black labor was first imported into America, Black slaves and indentured servants were oppressed right along with whites of the lower classes. But when European indentured servants joined with Blacks to rebel against their lot in the late 1600s, the propertied class decided to "free" them and give them special status as "whites" and thus a stake in the system of oppression.

Material incentives, as well as the newly elevated social status, were used to enlist their allegiance. This invention of the "white race" and racial slavery of the Africans went hand-in-glove, and is how the upper classes maintained order during the period of slavery. Even poor whites had aspirations of doing better since their social mobility was ensured by the new system. This social mobility, however, was on the backs of the African slaves who were super-exploited.

But the die had been cast for the dual-tier form of labor, which exploited the African, but which also trapped white labor. When they sought to organize unions for higher wages in the North and South, they were slapped down by the rich who used enslaved Black labor in their primary mode of production. The so-called "free" labor of the white worker did not stand a chance.

Although the capitalists used the system of white skin privilege to great effect to divide the working class, the truth is that they only favored white workers to use them against their own interests, not because there was true "white" class unity. They just didn't want them united with the Blacks against their rule and the system of exploitation of labor.

The invention of the "white race" was a scam to facilitate this. White workers were bought off to perpetuate their own wage slavery and the Africans' super-exploitation. They struck a deal with the devil, which has hampered all efforts at class unity for the last four centuries.

This division ultimately undercuts the living standards of all workers. Moreover, by pitting whites against Blacks and other oppressed nationalities, the capitalist class is able to prevent workers from uniting against their common class enemy. As long as workers are fighting each other, capitalist class rule is secure.

If an effective resistance is to be mounted against the current racist offensive of the capitalist class, the utmost solidarity between workers of all races is essential. The way to defeat the capitalist strategy is for white workers

Paris student protest



Students at the University of Paris demonstrated July 19 because, according to one of the protesters, "There is no room for some students in our universities. We are very numerous but the number of slots is small. The number of universities has remained the same but the number of students has doubled in ten years."

to defend the democratic rights won by Blacks and other oppressed peoples after decades of hard struggle, and to fight to dismantle the system of white skin privilege. White workers should support and adopt the concrete demands of the Black movement and should work to abolish the white identity entirely.

White workers should strive for multicultural unity, and should work with Black activists to build an anti-racist movement to challenge white supremacy. It is also very important to recognize the right of the Black movement to take an independent road in its own interests. That is what self-determination means. —Kenny X

Essay Article

(Continued from page 5)

between party and spontaneity. Endless tinkering with the form of either or both has not succeeded in showing a way out of the failed and soured revolutions of our age. It has not led any further than where Lenin himself went.

Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism shows powerfully how, even in the midst of his most serious writings of 1917-18, committed to the radical grassroots democracy of the soviets, Lenin never abandoned his commitment to the vanguard party, which "reemerged forcefully once the world revolution no longer seemed on the horizon."

Anderson then asks a series of questions that reveal deep contradictions in Lenin's thought on organization. He shows that the concept of vanguard party, which Lenin kept in a "separate compartment" from his dialectical rethinking, in many respects "came to predominate over the other features of his Marxism after 1918."

It is one thing for Lenin in 1914 to get no further. But why, in 1996, after all the aborted revolutions, should we stop at Practice just because we denote it as Party? Don't today's realities demand far deeper rethinking? If, as Friedman argues, the Bolsheviks lacked an adequate concept of democracy after the revolution, don't we have to question both that Party form and the utter lack of any projection by today's revolutionaries of a new relationship between theory and practice?

Anderson makes a cogent case that the crises of our times call for a new return to Hegel's dialectic that bases itself on a comprehension of Lenin's achievements and at the same time does not stop at the barriers Lenin could not overcome. Above all, that means we need to go directly into Hegel's Absolutes and rethink organization as well on that philosophic foundation. Nothing could be more urgent than to pick up the trail of Dunayevskaya's 1986-87 work on the dialectics of organization and philosophy. Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism points us in that direction.

Ethnic cleansing in Sudan

(Continued from page 8)

phemistically called "peace villages." The men are separated from the women and children. Summary executions, torture, forced conversion to Islam, slave labor, and starvation are daily occurrences. Is this the Final Solution for the Nuba?

"There is no doubt that genocide is being committed in the Nuba mountains," said Alex de Waal, co-director of London based African Rights. "It is unlikely that Nuba civilization, as it has been known, will ever exist again unless something is done very, very soon."

Despite the denials by the chimera of Black nationalism, Louis Farrakhan, the slavery and abolition have not gone unchallenged in the U.S. Several abolitionist organizations have sprouted up among the weeds of retrogression. Among them are Coalition Against Slavery In Mauritania And Sudan (CASMAS), the American Anti-Slavery Group (AASG), the Pax Sudani Network and the Zumbi Society.

5. Alex de Waal, "Facing Genocide: The Nuba of Sudan," *Africa Research Bulletin*, July 1995, p. 11927.

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Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution

Reaching for the Future

RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA



David Turnley photo

"Challenging, passionate, witty and deeply learned, Dunayevskaya's voice speaks in this new edition to a whole new generation. It was never more needed."
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— GLORIA I. JOSEPH, author of *Common Differences*

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

The sudden outbreak of violent demonstrations in the heart of Jakarta on July 27 put the world on notice that tensions in Indonesia have reached the boiling point. When government forces raided the opposition Indonesian Democratic Party (IDP) in the early morning hours, hundreds of youth and worker activists were ready in the streets surrounding the party offices. As they began to battle police, they were joined by thousands more from the nearby slums.

Caught unprepared by the scope and depth of resistance, it took police and the military until the end of the day to regain control. By that time, five commercial office buildings and the headquarters of the Department of Agriculture had been burned down, and up to seven people lay dead. In the next few days, police detailed hundreds of opposition activists, including labor leader Muchtar Pakpahan. Police armed with M-16 rifles are now patrolling the streets of Jakarta, and a top general has openly threatened to kill any who dare challenge the government on the streets.

While to some extent spontaneous in nature, the July 27 events were more than an elemental burst of mass anger. Many of the slogans shouted by demonstrators had a directly political character. Some people called out the name of IDP leader Megawati Sukarnoputri, the daughter of Sukarno who ruled Indonesia from independence in 1949 until 1965.

In recent months, Sukarnoputri has begun to speak out forcefully against the three decades old Suharto military dictatorship, transforming a tame, merely symbolic opposition party into a pole of attraction for many groups already discontented with the system. A few

Hunger strikes in Turkey

After 12 deaths prompted international protests, the Turkish government has partially ceded to hunger strikers in the nation's prisons. For 69 days, hundreds of leftist political prisoners had refused food in order to protest the sending of prisoners to remote locations, far from their lawyers, families, and comrades. There are today, 8,000 political prisoners in Turkey, most of them accused of membership in banned Marxist-Leninist or Kurdish organizations.

The current Turkish government, installed in late June, is led by an avowed Islamic fundamentalist, Necmettin Erbakan of the Welfare Party. The fundamentalists got into power due to a deal with Tansu Ciller, a conservative leader who is hoping to stave off corruption charges against her.

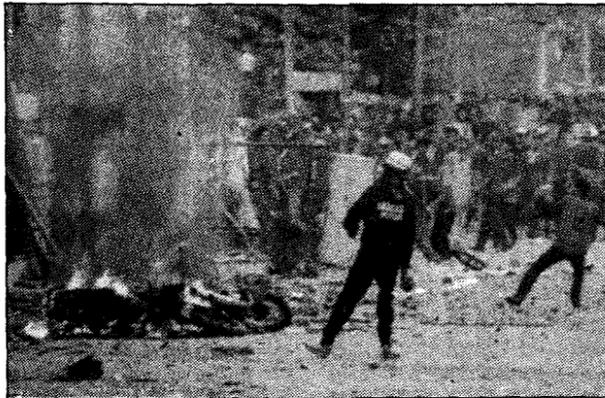
In some ways, the fact that Erbakan reached a type of compromise with the hunger strikers which the previous secular government had opposed, is an ominous sign. This is true despite the fact that so many lives were saved in what was at least a small victory for the Left.

For years, many Turkish leftists and intellectuals have posed their criticisms of Turkey's authoritarian, military-dominated political structure in so narrow a way that all opponents of the centralized state, including the fundamentalists, have been viewed as "democratic forces." The new agreement on the prisons may strengthen support for a tacit alliance between the Left and the fundamentalists, something which would be tragic for Turkey's future.

Indonesia: Behind the clashes in Jakarta

weeks ago, the Suharto regime orchestrated a heavy-handed vote by a faction of the IDP to depose Sukarnoputri from her leadership position.

Other slogans shouted by demonstrators on July 27 attacked the military directly and pointed to government repression, not only of the majority population, but also of oppressed nationalities such as the East Timorese or the indigenous people of Irian Jaya. Sukarnoputri and



her co-leaders seemed as stunned by the militancy of the demonstrations as was the government. But it did not come as a surprise to exiled East Timorese revolutionaries, who have been predicting serious outbreaks by the Indonesian people against Suharto for months.

In recent years, Indonesia has experienced a rapid increase in its gross domestic product, an influx of foreign investment, and the growth of a fairly large working class. At the same time, the minimum wage is only \$3 per day and genuine trade unions and strikes are banned. Many international electronics corporations use female labor from rural areas in assembly plants. They confine these workers to barracks behind high fences and keep them employed for only two or three years. By then, their eyesight having deteriorated, they are sent back to their villages.

These exploitative conditions have meant superprofits for multinationals such as AT&T, Thomson, Panasonic, and of course, the ubiquitous Nike shoe corporation. In the past few years, these conditions have gained international attention as a result of support campaigns for Indonesian workers waged by labor, women's and human rights groups in the industrially developed world.

Three weeks before the clashes in Jakarta, 20,000 workers demonstrated in the country's second largest city, Surabaya, demanding that the minimum wage be raised to \$4 per day. The response by the government was an attack by the military and police which prevented a planned protest march from taking place. Thirty worker and student activists were arrested. Today, Dita Sari, the 26-year-old woman who is president of the Indonesian Center for Labor Studies, peasant activist Coen Hussein Ponto, and other labor leaders still languish in jail.

Now that the most serious cracks since the 1960s have appeared in the Suharto regime, it should also be recalled that Indonesia has a very long revolutionary history in this century. That history stretches from the founding of a mass socialist movement during the colo-

rial period by the Dutch revolutionary Henk Sneevliet, to the embrace by Sneevliet and the Javanese revolutionary leader Tan Malaka of Lenin's theses on national liberation as well as their later opposition to the Stalinization of the world Communist movement.

Finally, there is the history in the 1950s and 1960s of the by then Maoist-Stalinist Indonesian Communist Party, whose leadership followed Sukarno uncritically at every turn, including his banning of independent Marxist groups. These opportunist policies brought the Communists not state power but physical destruction in the massacres which followed the 1965 military coup. With the help of lists furnished by the CIA, Suharto and his colleagues murdered 500,000 Communists and their supporters, all the while appealing to Islam against "atheistic Communism." (For an analysis, see Raya Dunayevskaya, "Indonesian Communism: A Case of World Communism's Decomposition," *News & Letters*, October and November 1965.)

Coup in Burundi

The July 14 coup which brought Major Pierre Buyoya to power is but the latest in a series of political convulsions in the Burundian state since 1993. During that same period, a slow motion genocide has resulted in the deaths of 150,000 children, women, and men.

Here, in a mirror image of neighboring Rwanda, the Tutsi minority has held onto power since independence, lording it over the majority Hutu. Buyoya first came to power in 1987. Less openly racist than previous leaders, he agreed under strong international pressure to democratize the country. In 1993 he lost an election to Melchior Ndadaye, a Hutu committed to a multiethnic society, and ceded power. But Ndadaye was soon killed by reactionaries within the nearly all-Tutsi military.

Since then, the government has been nominally multiethnic, but in fact the military has done what it wanted. Again and again, it has staged indiscriminate massacres of Hutu, also driving most of them out of the capital last year. In the countryside, Hutu extremists with an equally racist ideology have been slaughtering Tutsi civilians. During this period, the UN has debated sending in peacekeepers, but has done nothing. Not only Western powers, but also Nelson Mandela of South Africa have refused to become involved.

Today Buyoya promises ethnic reconciliation, as did the previous government, but it is doubtful that, even if he wanted to, he could control the perpetrators of genocide in the military.

Northern Ireland violence

After five days of intimidation and complaints by Protestant militants in Northern Ireland, the pro-British police force, itself 93% Protestant, in the end allowed a provocative and triumphalist annual Protestant demonstration to take place once again. As in the past, strong police barricades shielded them from the wrath of the local population.

The result was the most severe mass street violence in Northern Ireland in two decades, as several thousand pro-Irish Republican Army (IRA) demonstrators battled police with molotov cocktails for two nights in Derry. Unlike with the Protestant rioters of a few days earlier, these protesters were met with real force, resulting in the death of one of their number, Dermot McShane. The next day, 10,000 marched through riot-damaged streets for McShane's funeral.

While peace negotiations limp on, the IRA is still not even invited to the table. Given British and Protestant intransigence toward the Catholic minority of Northern Ireland, who constitute 45% of the population and yet are shut out of all meaningful political power, and given the militaristic bent of the IRA leaders, the rekindling of outright civil war has become a real possibility.

Dublin, Ireland—What set off the latest round of troubles in Northern Ireland is that the Portadown Orange Lodge, a Protestant Unionist group, insisted on parading through a Catholic neighborhood in Belfast on the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne, which is celebrated in blatant sectarian fashion as a triumph of Protestants over Catholics.

The march was planned along the Garvaghy Road. The Garvaghy Road Residents' Association opposed this, demanding that the march should be re-routed elsewhere.

Sir Hugh Annesley, the Chief Constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), at first decided that the march must be diverted, and a RUC roadblock was set up at Drumcree. While a tense stand-off developed between police and Orangemen at Drumcree, across the province Orangemen set up road blocks. In Belfast, some Catholics were driven from their homes by sectarian gangs. A Catholic taxi driver was murdered.

With an Orange insurrection looming, Annesley abruptly reversed policy, and ordered the RUC to clear a route for the Orange march along the Garvaghy Road. A non-violent sit-down protest by nationalists was broken up quite brutally; television showed people bruised and bleeding after being clubbed.

Then came the terrorist bomb attack on a hotel in Enniskillen where a wedding reception was being held. This too was evidently a sectarian attack targeting Protestants. A warning was given, and luckily no one was killed—the last person got out 90 seconds before the blast. The IRA denied involvement and no group has claimed responsibility.

—Richard Bunting

Who We Are and What We Stand For

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

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

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958); *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

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

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

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

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